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## What's going on with languages in Aberdeenshire?



### Portlethen School

We had our P1/2 Assembly on 13th May, which the class (not me!) decided that they wanted to do in French! It evolved into us showing the rest of the school how we learn

French: i.e. greetings, the weather, ordering lunches etc. We sang '*Frère Jacques*', '*Tête, épaules, genoux, pieds*', and '*L'arc en ciel*'. We also acted out '*Ours Brun*'. The parents came to watch and were most impressed at what their bambinos could do. The older children were aghast at the wee ones knowing so much French!

We had a P1/2 *petit déjeuner français* to which we also invited our parents.

The hall was decorated with French *penants*, a big "*bienvenue*" sign, a picture of the Eiffel Tower and all the tables were covered in the colours of the French flag. French music was played too. The children had written a menu, in French, for their parents to peruse and choose from and had to ask them what they wanted in French. We served *thé, café, chocolat chaud, jus d'orange* and ate *baguette, croissants, pains au chocolat* and *brioche*. There was a wonderful atmosphere in the hall and the parents were again thrilled to see what their children could do.



Pupils performing Ours Brun.



French breakfast



Singing Frère Jâcques in a two part harmony!

## Torphins School

### Language Linking, Global Thinking



Our Primary 6s to be of 2016/17 are absolutely delighted that we have secured a student link from the SCILT Language Linking, Global Thinking project for next academic year. Antonia Uri, a former Mintlaw Academy pupil who is now a student at Aberdeen University, will be spending next academic year abroad teaching English as a foreign language as part of her studies. Initially Antonia will be in Valencia in Spain and will then be moving to France. Antonia will be our cultural link telling us about her experiences and the different things she encounters on her travels. We will update her with her key dates in our calendar for her to share with her students.

The aim of the project is to make cultural links and encourage pupils to aspire to learning about other cultures and realise that studying abroad is a realistic aspiration. Strathclyde University are supporting us to set up a blog link with Antonia so we can share experiences. The university has suggested that Antonia and P6 have 6 agreed contact sessions throughout the year but this can be more if it suits her and us.

Antonia is coming to visit us before she sets off on her travels, she is taking Torphins Ted with her and will take his photo as she goes on her travels. The children also have a list of questions for her to take with her. What else happens in a bullring? Do they have cubs in France? What are the best crisps you can get in Valencia? Will you be throwing tomatoes at the La Tomatina Festival? It will be Bon Voyage Antonia we look forward to hearing from you.



## Banchory School

Banchory Primary French Café.

Pupils were involved in making up the menu, designing posters and inviting parents. The hall was decorated with French posters and flags and pupils learnt the relevant vocabulary to conduct the café in French. It proved to be a very positive, enjoyable and hands on experience for pupils who embraced their roles and enjoyed the real life experience. Proceeds went to a local charity, the Forget me Not club which provides support for dementia sufferers.

This photo of the wall display on preferences relating to sports was the culmination of a series of lessons with P7 on expressing preferences and reasons for these in French using sports as an example.



## Newtonhill School

At Newtonhill we were a little terrified at first when we discovered we had been allocated Spanish as our L2 as none of us spoke any Spanish at all! However, Sylvia stepped in and rescued us by persuading Nicole Kennedy, a probationer teacher of Spanish at Portlethen Academy, to run a 6 week twilight course to enable us to upskill in the Spanish language. It did wonders for our confidence and we were able to go back to our classes every week and try out the new vocabulary.

We covered a variety of topics including Introductions, Feelings, Colours, Days of the Week, Classroom Instructions, Weather, Likes and Dislikes, Foods, Animals and Pets, Questions and Family. We looked at verb endings and tenses to give us a bit of support with grammar. We really had a great 6 weeks thanks to Nicole, who made it fun and light-hearted, which was just what we needed at the end of a day's teaching.



Using what we've learned in conjunction with the Power Learning Platform and various other website and YouTube videos has been a great start to teaching Spanish throughout the school, and we're looking forward to doing this in greater depth in the 2016/2017 session when we will attempt to be teaching Spanish from Nursery to P7, and French from P5-P7. If you are offered something similar in your cluster next session, we can thoroughly recommend it!

Around the school this year, as well as the teachers all trying out some Spanish with their classes, we had a whole school assembly in French, with the whole school singing in French, and an assembly for parents and the rest of the school from P2 who shared their learning in Spanish. P2 also buddied up with P6/7 to teach them some of their new language skills, which was brilliant – P2 had used Spanish songs to learn a lot of their vocabulary and their pronunciation skills were amazing, which made it very easy (and fun) for the P6/7s to copy and learn the words correctly in their songs and games. And we're delighted to hear even our smallest P1s saying "gracias" to the dinner ladies at lunch time! ☺



## Alford Cluster Primary Teachers Trip to Lyon, Easter 2016

Three teachers from the Alford cluster participated in an immersion course in Lyon, France during the Easter holidays. The course run by L.F.E.E and funded by a grant from Erasmus was intended to improve speaking in French and also support the teaching of French back in schools.

### **Sight-seeing around Lyon, an important part of the course**



Alford cluster have decided to focus on the languages of French and Spanish for the 1+2 project and have been looking at ways to improve teachers skills and confidence. Teachers from the cluster have attended previous immersion courses and we have also had C.P.D. from our languages specialist as well as support from modern languages staff in Alford Academy.

On this immersion course was Derek Gray, principal teacher Alford cluster, Suzanne Munro, class teacher Craigievar Primary and Andrea Drummond, Head Teacher Craigievar Primary.

The week long course passed by in a flash and the French speaking tutors led us through extremely good learning and teaching sessions where we quickly began to see an improvement in understanding and increased confidence in speaking. Daily classes, held close to the hotel in the School of Architecture, developed our skills in French along with loads of ideas on how to teach French to our classes. This was complimented with a well thought out programme of out of class events including French cinema, guided tours, meals in local restaurants and wine tasting event.

On the first day we were given “pocket money” to buy our lunches which immediately encouraged us to visit local cafes and shops to purchase our meals, speaking in French! We were also informed that on the last day we would be presenting for about 5 minutes to our class in French! This was a scary thought indeed....

### **Active learning made our learning fun!**



Cleverly, however, the tutors used fantastic techniques and games to enable us to develop our skills, all of which are transferable to the classroom. By the last day, we had made a video, photo slide and were speaking and writing in French.

There were over 20 teachers on the course from around Scotland and we were joined with 3 from Bristol, England and 2 from Bulgaria. Very early on we were able to choose the ability of class we

wished to attend and spent time in ability based groups. These were flexible and you could switch between both if you felt confident or needed it a bit easier.

Personally, I felt that my French was very poor to begin with, having not really improved much since school nearly 30 years ago (or remembered). However, since returning the course has given me the confidence to have more of a go with my P1-4 class using some of the ideas from Lyon. It also helped me to understand exactly what I need to focus on across primary 1-7 as we built our confidence.

Travelling home, exhausted but happy, we realised that whenever we spoke to someone we automatically spoke in French – a “bonjour” here and “pardon” there, so much so that we continued to speak French after we left the country! It took us a wee while to realise we were in Holland, on route home, and needed to switch our French immersed brains off!

### Lots of photos brought back to use in class



I would encourage any teachers who are looking to improve their own language skills or teaching of language skills to consider such a C.P.D. experience. It is a total immersion learning experience but spent in the country, with people who only speak to you in French.

Back home, and in school I am now continuing to develop confidence in myself and also my

class. I brought back tickets, photos and books in French to use along with all my notes and a copy of every resource, activity we did in class. I definitely would consider returning to a similar event in the future, indeed I am considering applying to go to do a Spanish immersion course.

Any teachers, or indeed school staff, considering applying for such an opportunity, do not hesitate to get in touch for more information.



Andrea, Derek, Suzanne after their presentation

## Aberdeenshire Confucius Hub launch in Ellon Academy



On Thursday 2 June, Aberdeenshire Council's Confucius Classroom Hub was launched in Ellon Academy and hosted by Mrs Emma Mathers. The event was well attended with representation from the Consul General of the Chinese Consulate, Maria Walker, Director of Education, Fhiona Fisher, Director of Confucius Institute for Scottish Schools, and Ellon staff and pupils. The two cultures came together in a happy and inspiring celebration. Guests were shown round a showcase display



of a week-long S2 interdisciplinary Scotland/China project and were then treated to a celebration of the cultures of China and Scotland with music, dance, Marshal Art displays and poetry. Our resident Mandarin Teacher, Shu treated us to a beautiful rendition of Auld Lang Syne in Mandarin and spoke of the highlights of her time here in Scotland.

Highland dancing and Chinese fan dances were performed by our very talented Ellon pupils, all accompanied by the fantastic Ellon Academy Ceilidh band. Among the many attendees was Mr Limin Shang, Depute Consul General of the Chinese Consulate who spoke of the virtues of

building relationships between China and Scotland.



As an independent hub, Aberdeenshire are now looking forward to giving even more youngsters the opportunity to learn about the language and culture of China.



## Training Events

Next session will see 1+2 pedagogy and language training coming to your cluster. More details to follow through your Ambassador, on Glow and here in the next edition of the 1+2 Newsletter.

### **Flash News!**

Watch out for some new faces in Aberdeenshire next session. We are delighted to welcome twelve modern language assistants and German exchange teachers from France, Germany, Spain and Mexico who will be working in our Secondary schools from September.

Having just arrived from a native-speaking context, language assistants will be up-to-date on their local culture and news, meaning they are best placed to work with students on developing their conversational skills and increasing their awareness and understanding of another culture.

More news will follow on assistants in our Term 1 Newsletter.

## Resources

### Primary

#### **Education City**

Sign up for a **free trial** of engaging educational content, which helps students aged 3-12 years learn, and time-saving tools that support teachers in the classroom and at home. Resources are available in various curriculum areas including languages and EAL.

[More information](#)

<http://web.educationcity.com>

### Secondary

#### **Savoirs**

This website contains a range of resources to help learn and teach French with news and articles about the world we live in.

[More information](#)

<http://savoirs.rfi.fr/>

**PL Platform** – if you haven't yet had a look, please do. It's packed with easy to follow plans and lesson ideas as well as a great IDL section, all accompanied by authentic sound files.

[www.plplatform.net](http://www.plplatform.net) UN: Aberdeenshire PW: Aberdeenshire1



And finally...

A big thank you to all our 1+2 Language Ambassadors, Head teachers and class teachers who have attended 1+2 training this session and who have been 'giving it a go' in their context. The 1+2 'snowball' is really gaining momentum and young learners across Aberdeenshire are gaining valuable insights into other languages and cultures.

## Happy Holidays



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