Case Study
Ormskirk Asmall Primary School

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<th>School name:</th>
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<td>Lancashire school no.</td>
<td>08/009</td>
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<td>Award granted:</td>
<td>Innovative Practice Award</td>
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<td>Project title:</td>
<td>“Introducing Modern Foreign Languages”</td>
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What were the initial success criteria?

- All classes to be involved in learning a new language.
- Languages to be perceived as fun.
- Parents and staff learn the language and develop the skills and knowledge needed to help the children.
- Children become aware of the similarities and differences with another country and participate in a valuable cultural experience.
- Establishment of links with a school in Spain.

What was the starting point for the practice?

- Initial discussions between staff as to the most effective way to introduce MFL. The school had no previous involvement with MFL but staff were keen to introduce this element. The School Development plan was committed to this.
- A Newly Qualified Teacher, a language specialist, was appointed to the school and was keen to pursue this interest.
- The Headteacher became aware of the scheme organised by the British Council in partnership with the Catalonian Education Department. This innovative scheme, funded mainly by the Catalonian government, aims to place practicing primary teachers in British schools for a period of eight months. The Spanish teachers are available to teach Spanish for twelve hours per week to the host school. The teachers are paid by the English schools as language assistants (approximately £6,000 per teacher) The remainder of the week is to be devoted to developing resources to teach the primary curriculum in English in Spanish schools.
What were the significant milestones and actions in its development?

- Spring 04: staff discussions re: MFL.
- Feb 04: discussion with cluster headteachers, invitation for shared involvement.
- Feb 04: application to British Council.
- May 04: notification of success of bid. The allocation of two Spanish teachers to the cluster allowing for one full days teaching in each of four schools.
- June 04: Headteacher liaises with other cluster schools and British Council and makes initial approach to Spanish teachers.
- July 04: details finalised, offers and contracts exchanged.
- August 05: Headteacher visits Barcelona to meet teachers.
- Oct 04: Spanish teachers start work in schools.
- Nov. 04: visit by representatives of Catalan LEA.
- Dec 04: initial exchange of information between the Spanish and English schools.
- Jan 05: exchange of e mails between pupils and classes

Which members of the school and/or wider community have been involved and what was their role?

- Involvement of the whole school community, pupils, parents, staff and governors in Spanish lessons.
- Pupils learn about the Spanish culture.
- Cluster of local schools work together, share good practice and ideas.

How has the practice been modified or improved during development?

- Spanish language is given a higher priority than originally expected.
- The curriculum was planned to be mainly oral but is now expanding to include more written work with the juniors.
- The link with the Spanish school has evolved more quickly than planned. Emails have been exchanged and booklets about the school sent to Spain.
- Discussions are taking place with the British Council to develop further links.

What has been the impact of the project on pupils’ learning, achievement or enjoyment and how has this been measured?

- Language learning is seen as fun. All classes are eager to participate. It has been of notable benefit to the less able children. Staff have been surprised by their enthusiasm and success. This has had a positive effect on their self esteem and transferred to other areas of learning. The children of parents in the adult class master the language more quickly than others.
- Pupils are keen to learn about children in another country and are eager to communicate with them. This has given their learning a purpose and provided a positive incentive to improve.
- Pupils have used ICT to great advantage, both to communicate and for research.
- Pupils are starting to be aware of similarities between their own and another
language and to be aware of grammatical structures.
• Pupils are aware that they are citizens of the European Union. Citizenship is given a higher profile.

What are the next stages in the development process?
• For pupils, staff and parents to become more fluent in Spanish
• To apply for membership of the scheme in future years.
• As the pupils and staff become more proficient, move towards implementing the Scheme of work for MFL with a view to having it fully in place within three years.
• To develop the European dimension across the curriculum.
• To foster further electronic links with partner schools.
• To apply to the British Council for funding for staff exchanges and possibly in the future pupil exchanges.
• To liaise with cluster schools and the high school to provide a transition programme.

Do you believe this practice could be replicated or developed in other schools? In what ways?
• Yes. The programme is effective. It is a very cost effective way to introduce MFL and make the European dimension meaningful. But it does require careful co ordination.