Case Study

Establishment name: FYLDE CLUSTER NETWORK

Schools involved:
- St Joseph’s Catholic Primary school 04/040
- Weeton St Michael’s 04/029
- Ribby with Wrea 04/038
- Wesham C/E 04/041
- The Willows, Kirkham 04/038
- Weeton Primary School 04/043

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Award granted: Innovative Practice

Project title: ‘To develop Speaking and Listening through the learning of a modern foreign language’

Project summary:

- Six schools came together to form a Primary Strategy Learning Network in 2005 with the aim of improving speaking and listening through the learning of a modern foreign language. In September 05 a target group of Y3 children were identified across the network and a lead learner and lead teachers from each school were released monthly to work together on providing professional development support.

- Headteachers met half termly to maintain a strategic overview of the project and were fully supportive of the initiative.

- At the end of the first year, nearly all children in the target group had reached at least Level 1 in Oracy from the Framework for MFL. The biggest impact was the ‘buzz’ that learning another language brought to the children. One school that was inspected by Ofsted was commended for its work in developing MFL, stating that the teaching of MFL had ‘lit up the learning’ for pupils. The learning of a MFL was most effective where it was delivered as a cross-curricular subject combined with direct input of language learning. Pupils learned songs, made dual language dictionaries and counted and named shapes in the target language.

- The highlight of the year was a Network Celebration Day held at one of the Network schools where all the target children enjoyed sampling food, made banners, played boules and learnt flamenco.

- Networking has brought the six schools much closer together and the network is now looking to extend its work to include other schools in the locality.
### Specific aspect of practice accredited

- The development of modern foreign language teaching and learning across the network

### Aspect of Every Child Matters addressed:

| ☑ Be healthy | ☑ Stay Safe | ☑ Enjoy and achieve | ☑ Make a positive contribution | ☑ Achieve economic well-being |

### What were you hoping to achieve?

- Y3 target group in each network school to have attained Level 1 in Oracy in the Framework for MFL by end of the year.
- Increased pleasure in learning a foreign language.
- Enriching the curriculum and raising self-esteem.

### How did you identify the need for this practice?

- Initial audit amongst network schools identified some practice already established but a desire amongst staff to develop further.
- Concerns about children coming to school with less developed skills in speaking and listening identified through Foundation Stage profiles.

### What did you do?

- Launch event in summer term 05 brought staff from all network schools together.
- Some of the network schools included MFL as part of their SDP for 2005/06.
- Pupil attitude questionnaires at start and end of project.
- Network Twilight training event for all staff.
- Establishment of Lead Learner allowed lead teachers to move learning forward in a measured and enthusiastic manner!
- Lead teachers in each school met monthly in term one and each half term in subsequent terms, identified training and resource needs which were met from Network funds.
- Purchase of dual language books, songbooks and scheme of work to be used on IWB.
- Minutes from meetings circulated electronically and a termly newsletter produced.
- Links with Mantra Lingua publishing group allowed network to test ‘Talking Pen’ book and IWB resources.
- Purchase of CILT portfolios for all Y3 pupils in Network will allow for an ongoing and summative assessment annually as children progress through school.
- Network Celebration held at Weeton primary school in July where all Y3 pupils were involved in a variety of MFL themed activities.
### Which members of the establishment and/or wider community have been involved and what was their role?

- Headteachers from the Network kept a strategic view on the progression of the activity, a ‘lead learner’ collated data from schools and undertook additional training and supported staff; lead teachers in each school met monthly and disseminated good practice, pooled resources and ideas.
- Networking has brought all schools much closer together. Heads have developed more collaborative ways of learning, staff are sharing expertise, resources and enthusiasm.

### How has the practice been modified or improved during development?

- As the year progressed all staff began to see the benefits of 'cross curricular' learning of MFL. The issue of sustainability was addressed through CPD identified by lead teachers at monthly meetings.

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

- Level 1 in Oracy achieved by majority of pupils in Y3 for MFL.
- Biggest achievement has been the ‘wow’ factor and the buzz in learning a new language.
- Many teachers report increased confidence in children on SEN register who can see that they are all starting from the same baseline. One child with serious SpLD problems has become a class star in French.
- Professional development opportunities for staff to develop confidence in MFL teaching and learning puts the network school well on the way to meeting the government’s MFL entitlement.
- Lead teachers have taken on additional responsibilities in cascading learning and have development confidence in leading whole school initiatives.
- All schools are committed to continue with the networking beyond Year 1 of the Network Project, this is seen as a very positive outcome for pupils and staff alike.
- Enquiries from other schools, not yet involved in MFL, will allow us to offer support in the future.

### What are the next stages in the development process?

- The network is looking to extend its good practice to other schools within the locality. Additional support has been requested to allow lead teachers to continue to meet termly to develop staff confidence and move the learning forward across the new partner schools.
- Some schools are now confident in taking on an additional language using the pedagogical skills acquired this year.
- Develop further resources- in particular ICT based to further enhance learning and teaching.
- Develop links with High Schools and partner schools in European countries.
What aspects of this practice may be useful for other establishments to consider?

- Effectiveness of working as a network—has been paramount in our experience this year. So much so that the group is working hard to maintain the impetus into and beyond year 2 of the initiative.
- Keep talking to each other! Set up a Group e-mail to make communication easier.
- Remember that the outcome is to make learning more exciting for children—think of ways of keeping the ‘wow factor’ alive!
- Be prepared to be ambitious at the start but accept you can’t do everything in one year!

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