

## BORDEAUX MINI ASSISTANTS SCHEME 2016 REPORT

Thanks to the generous support of the Quartet Foundation, six Masters students from Bordeaux University Teacher Training Faculty were able to take part in this year's scheme. Four of them returned evaluations and all expressed positive comments. So far none of the contact teachers has returned an evaluation.

Alix Hughes from the Bristol Bordeaux Partnership was responsible for meeting the mini assistants at the coach station and arranging drop-offs to their respective host families. All hosts expressed their enjoyment in hosting the students. Host families were either staff members, governors or parents. Staying with a staff member does seem to improve the teaching experience for the mini-assistants.



The mini-assistants each had different teaching programmes arranged for them and were welcomed and used much more comprehensively than in previous years partly due to some new and enthusiastic contact teachers. Using previous experience and teacher evaluations we offered some new best practice examples and ways of sharpening up the experience. The quality of preparation on the mini-assistants side was markedly better with each one bringing a range of teaching materials and planned lessons. In particular they had worked on presentations and images which they used in assemblies and lessons with every year group as a new idea required by their Bordeaux tutors and which they had planned in advance with their Bristol contact teachers. The previous criticism that in some cases staff, pupils and parents did not know much about the twinning was thus addressed directly.



For the second time in the fourteen year history of this scheme, Bordeaux University sent tutors to monitor the mini-assistants in their schools and evaluate their progress. Mon. Charles Mercier and Mme Camille Horsey visited two of the six participating schools with Mr Hughes in half a day and observed each student teaching. The schools were very excited to have the Bordeaux Charles and Camilla arriving!

This year once again we worked closely with the South Bristol Co-operative Learning Trust to arrange a special French Morning at Ashton Park Secondary (APS) for the 2 primary schools within the Trust who teach French, namely Compass Point and Luckwell, as well as Ashton Gate primary and Kingfisher primary. Over 200 children took part with teachers and four of the mini assistants in French language based activities in the sports hall and in a French style café. This was funded by the Trust itself for the fourth year and proved more dynamic and exciting than 2015. Year 11s studying French from APS ran the activities.

It's clear from the feedback that the scheme continues to provide a fun and exciting way to support the delivery of French in south Bristol primaries as well as contributing to longer term links between teachers and schools in both cities. The scheme was oversubscribed at the Bordeaux end this year and thus clearly delivers a valued and important element of the mini-assistants professional development. The energy, enthusiasm and innovation which the mini-assistants bring to their host schools is a welcome boost for the teachers delivering French and I am sure they all want to take part again next year.

Thanks to the Quartet Foundation, the Bristol Bordeaux Partnership and to ESPE Aquitaine School of Education at Bordeaux University for their collaboration.

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