

PGCE primary placement in France



Last September I started a PGCE Primary with French at Liverpool Hope University and, as part of my training, spent one month living and teaching at a school in St Lô, Normandy. I was based in a rural school which had just 84 pupils, I was working mainly with 7–9 - year olds and teaching English throughout the school.

Interestingly, French teachers do not have access to the same level of resources as we do. The very idea of interactive whiteboards was totally alien to them. Despite this, both children and teachers seemed to enjoy spending time in the teaching and learning environment, exploring new

concepts and ideas together. One of the main things that I noticed was the importance placed on handwriting and neat presentation. The children always took great pride in what they did and were always keen to succeed and learn more, actually enjoying the regular homework that they were given.

If I had to name just one advantage of teaching abroad, although there are many, it would be the increased confidence that it gave me. My main concern was the language barrier that I was presented with when standing up in front of the class to teach them. The fact that I was able to communicate effectively with the children and they produced what I wanted them to without too many language problems raised my self-esteem no end.

My teaching practice abroad really boosted my confidence in my ability as a teacher and meant that I went into my final teaching practice believing that I could succeed in helping my pupils to achieve their best in an enjoyable way. I now take the lessons learned in France and mix them with what I have learnt from my training in the UK to give my pupils the best lessons I can, involving them in their learning as much as possible.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time abroad and think that it was an invaluable part of my teacher training. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the PMFL staff and Liverpool Hope and all the teachers and children at Canisy Primary School in France for making the experience so rewarding and worthwhile.

Clare Westwood

PGCE Student, Liverpool Hope University

Italiano alla fiorentina

Thursday 18 to Saturday 27 October 2007

British Institute, Florence

A ten-day residential course for teachers of Italian from all sectors

- Thinking of brushing up your Italian and getting up to date with what's going on?
- Would you also like to spend ten days immersing yourself in Italian (particularly Florentine) life and culture?

Then this course is for you. Whatever your level of Italian, we aim to improve your language skills and provide you with the opportunity to explore life and culture in one of the most beautiful cities in Italy. The course is held at the British Institute of Florence which is situated either side of the river Arno in the heart of the centro storico, a few minutes' walk from art galleries, museums and *palazzi*. The course will be run exclusively in Italian and you will be encouraged to use Italian as much as possible throughout!

This course is organised by CILT, the National Centre for Languages in the UK, and The British Institute of Florence. You can apply for a grant through the Comenius

Professional Development programme (managed by the British Council) or Grundtvig programme (managed by ECOTEC) to contribute to the course fee, subsistence and your travel.

Deadline for grant applications is 31 May 2007, please ensure that you return your pre-registration form as soon as possible to avoid missing the deadline date for funding. Find more details at www.cilt.org.uk/cpd.

