

## Erasmus+ Key Action 2 Strategic Partnership 2015-18

### Project: IConnect. Coordinator: Ounsdale High School

End of Year 1 Evaluation Meeting at Ounsdale High School, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016

#### Present:

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**Project Plan.** All planned activities for Year 1 under the four strands of the project have taken place as scheduled. The very detailed and carefully planned project overview is proving to be an excellent working document for scheduling activities and tracking planned outcomes and progression of the project as a whole. Year 2 activities are now well underway, with the first planned Transnational Project Meeting having taken place in September. There is a good sense of progression in all four areas of the project, and the project coordinator has a very clear vision of the project's direction and purpose. The key and associated strategic areas of focus are largely up-and-running via the project activities which have taken place both in the individual partner schools and also jointly during the Transnational Teaching and Learning Activities, and are set to progress during Year 2. Entrepreneurship and Active Citizenship will become more prominent as Year 2 and Year 3 activities progress.

There is anecdotal evidence that the planned outcomes are being met. More formal evidence will emerge during Years 2 and 3 and ***will need to be more formally documented.*** For example, students found the investigation into effective language teaching and learning methodologies stimulating and motivating; students have produced good work in project-related MFL work; students have been exposed to less well-known languages; the CLIL maths activity was well received by students; staff have upskilled in the use of Skype communication technology. It is expected that all expected outcomes will continue to be met on an ongoing basis during Years 2 and 3, including the general sharing of good practice in eg. example assessment, marking and feedback.

The project overview clearly summarises targets for the year's activities under Monitoring and Evaluation, Dissemination and CPD opportunities for teachers, and these have all been achieved satisfactorily. For example, the evaluation tool devised jointly by students from the partner schools during the first Transnational Teaching and Learning Activity has been used effectively to elicit student feedback following the various activities. ***It could also be used for staff feedback following their involvement in project activities, (eg. the maths project) and could be considered for wider use outside the bounds of the project.*** Meaningful analysis of the feedback collected via the evaluation tool has been published on the project website.

It is noteworthy and commendable that the original partners in the UK and Germany are still working together on this project, and have now been collaborating since 1996 in various different activities including several previous Comenius partnerships. ***This might be of interest to the UK-German Connection as a case study.***  
<http://www.ukgermanconnection.org>.

**Dissemination.** The project website provides an excellent hub for dissemination of project activities. There is a separate area for each of the project partners for their individual activities as well as an area to record the joint project activities and outcomes. There is a link to the project website from each of the partner school's individual website, affording good visibility and accessibility. The linked project journal provides clear and informative details of project activities with accompanying photographs and videos. As per the project plan, after a period of research and investigation, it was decided that the Weebly website/blog is more suitable for the project requirements than an eTwinning twinspace. All partners have access to the site to upload materials and contribute to the project journal, and it provides a visually attractive site which has public accessibility. The website will grow and expand as the project progresses. Hard copies of the project journal have been circulated to school governors, local MEPs, MPs, town councils. Newsletters to parents have included news of the project and links to the project website and journal. *For whole-school dissemination to students, it was discussed that participants in Year 1 project work could talk about the project to current Year 9 students in an assembly, as a means of engaging interest for the next round of Transnational Teaching and Learning Activities. The innovative project work could also be disseminated to curriculum networks and ITT institutions.*

**Communication and Coordination.** Project coordination is efficient and effective. There have been changes of coordinator in two of the partner institutions (Finland and Sweden), but new coordinators are now in place. Some slow response from partners has been addressed by the coordinator and taken on board by the respective partners. The mobility tool is being used effectively to ensure that mobilities and expenditure are tracked. The coordinator has set up an additional spreadsheet to aid budget management which provides rigorous tracking and record keeping and the model has been shared with partners. Each partner school has its own system for recruiting students for the Transnational Teaching and Learning Activities. The coordinating school has a fair and rigorous system for student recruitment involving teacher recommendation followed by interview with coordinator and accompanying teacher, with the same questions for all candidates. Skype is working well apart from in the German partner school, where a firewall issue is preventing good function. It is hoped that this problem will be overcome shortly. New equipment purchased from the project budget (eg. Skype) is being used effectively for project activities. The use of Skype will progress during Year 2 to enable video conferencing between students engaged in project activities.

**Monitoring and Evaluation.** The project overview clearly summarises targets for the year's activities under Monitoring and Evaluation. The coordinator confirms that these have all been achieved, and there is feedback in the project journal. There is a separate area on the project website dedicated to Evaluation, and outcomes of the M&A activities are being recorded in this area. *Minutes of evaluation discussions during Transnational Project Meetings could also be included in this area as the project progresses.*

**Impact.** The coordinator has anecdotal evidence that project activities are already having positive impact on students, staff and whole-school. *As the project progresses this will need to be formalised. The impact section of the project bid can be revisited and reviewed at a partner meeting during Year 2.*

**Summary.** It is an ambitious and innovative project which is running smoothly and according to schedule. The project is having positive impact in different areas, and outcomes are emerging as planned. Project coordination is highly efficient. The project website and associated project journal provide very good dissemination and recording of activities and outcomes. Activities are stimulating and relevant to current priorities and trends. All partners are participating and contributing as planned. The project is well positioned to flourish and progress in Years 2 and 3.

### **Recommendations**

- formal documentation of planned outcomes as the project progresses;
- consider wider use of the evaluation tool (eg. for staff feedback following the maths project, and in other areas outside the bounds of the project);
- dissemination to students in an assembly led by student participants in Year 1 Transnational Teaching & Learning Activity;
- minutes of evaluation discussions posted on Evaluation area of project website as the project progresses;
- consider dissemination of innovative project activities to curriculum networks and ITT institutions (MFL, Maths, PE, SEN);
- consider dissemination of long-term collaboration between UK and German partners to UK-German Connection <http://www.ukgermanconnection.org>.

Hazel Chadfield - 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016