**IConnecT**

**Erasmus+ Project**

**2015-2018**

**Project Journal Year 2**



Welcome to the project journal for our Erasmus+ project on the theme of IConnecT. In this journal there is a summary of the key projects that were undertaken by partner schools as well as examples of work completed by students and photographs of the exciting and varied projects that took place. The philosophy behind the project is to improve achievement in Modern Foreign Languages and basic skills (especially mathematics) for all students through research into innovative and creative teaching strategies, especially using ICT. We hope you enjoy reading about it!

**Partner schools:**

Ounsdale High School, Wombourne, United Kingdom

Scheeleskolan, Köping, Sweden

Pershore High School, Pershore, United Kingdom

Gymnasium Georg Ernst, Schelusingen, Germany

Liedon Keskuskoulu, Lieto, Finland

**Project Coordinators:**

Sue Laffey, Ounsdale

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Simon Kemp, Pershore

Sieglinde Bastick, Schleusingen

Susanne Nuttunen, Lieto

Project Website

For more information about any part of this project, please visit our project website at

<http://erasmusplus-iconnect.weebly.com/>

Use the TAGS on the left hand side to choose which aspect of the project you wish to look at.

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| **Year 2: Workshop in Finland "MFL in PE"**  **When: September 2016** |

**What happened?**

In September 2016, 2 students and a PE teacher from each school met in Finland for a week of PE related activities. This was part of the **Using MFL to enhance teaching and learning in other subjects (CLIL)**strand of our work and involved the students using a foreign language to support the PE activities they did. The students took part in a variety of normal PE lessons in Liedon Keskuskoulu school. These included for example orienteering and Finnish baseball. The lessons were delivered mostly in English or Finnish.

The international students also visited language classes, the German student visited German classes and so on. They introduced themselves and their schools and learned some Finnish. Lieto students really appreciated the chance to talk with the international students.

During this week the visiting students stayed with Finnish host families and were able to have social time together with the other international guests in the evenings, e.g. baking pizza, playing disc golf and visiting a shopping mall. The students and the teachers also visited the 13th century Turku Castle. A lot of the PE activities were located in a forest nearby Liedon Keskuskoulu but the guests also saw a piece of the beautiful Turku archipelago during a boat tour on Sunday. They got another glimpse of Finnish scenery when hiking through the marshlands in one of the Kuhankuono hiking routes in Kurjenrahka National Park. We had hoped to watch some professional sport during the visit but this was not possible since there weren’t any home games in the area during that week.

The PE teachers took part in PE lessons and changed information about different national games and starter activities. They also did some professional development work as to how to increase the usage of MFL in PE lessons. They also had an opportunity to visit other subject classes during the week.

Considering that the visiting students participated in both normal PE lessons and language lessons and the PE teachers got to know many teachers in the staff room, we can contentedly state that a huge part of the host school was involved with the project somehow. So, all in all, the week was a great success.

We hope that the week in Finland increased both the students’ and the teachers’ willingness to use MFL in PE lessons as well as in other lessons too. Overall this was a very successful week and we are very grateful to our Finnish partner school for organising it so well.

**Here is a more thorough look at the activities during the PE week.**

Saturday was the day of arrival so our guest students and their hosts spent the evening getting to know each other. The teachers had a meal together and the new Finnish coordinator was introduced to the other coordinators and the PE teachers became acquainted with each other.

On Sunday the students and the teachers, including the headteacher and some colleagues from the Finnish school, went on a Welcome Cruise from Turku to Naantali and back, including a buffet lunch. Naantali is a very picturesque small town near Turku. The weather was sunny and everyone enjoyed the beautiful archipelago. We also did a getting-to-know–each-other game on the boat which was a great success. In the evening the students were with their host families. Some of the teachers walked in the centre of Turku to see some sights before it was time to have a dinner in a restaurant by the River Aurajoki.

On Monday the guest students introduced themselves to the whole school via Intercom. This was followed by a short tour of the school with a chance to peek into some classrooms too. After that all the guests and hosts had some games where the students learned to know each other’s names better. Then the guest students took part in the normal PE lessons playing Finnish baseball and frisbee golf. In the afternoon the guest students took part in orienteering in our 7th graders normal lesson.

In the evening the students made some pizza at the home of Kaisa, one of the host students. The students were also singing Singstar and had lots of fun. Meanwhile, the teachers had a dinner together with the headteacher and some other colleagues from the Finnish school.

On Tuesday the guest and host students introduced and taught national games or starter activities used in their schools to the others in English. Just to mention a few, they did cricket, rugby, Völkerball and capture the flag. The day was full of sport and at the end of the school day students were tired but happy. Many of the students considered Tuesday the best day of the week. In the evening the students had an opportunity to visit one of the local shopping malls.

On Wednesday the guest and host students took a bus to Turku and visited the 13th century Turku Castle. After a guided tour of Turku Castle they walked to the centre of Turku and since it was a very beautiful weather the students had a chance to eat their packed lunches sitting by the riverside. In the afternoon it was time to play indoor mini-golf. Afterwards the students stayed in Turku to do some shopping. In the evening some of the students played Frisbee golf near Keskuskoulu.

On Thursday morning our guests visited several language classes. They told some things about themselves and their school and our students taught them some Finnish. Our students found the international students very inspiring, all the students were very eager to chat in smaller groups and also got new friends to follow on the net. Furthermore, they found this kind of project work very interesting. Meanwhile the PE teachers did some professional development work, developing ideas for using MFL in PE lessons at home.

In the afternoon all the international students and teachers went to Kurjenrahka National Park by a coach. The six-kilometre hiking route around Lake Savojärvi led them through the marshlands on footbridges. They enjoyed the amazing Finnish autumn colours and had a chance to taste for example cranberries and crowberries. One of the highlights of the hike was roasting marshmallow over the campfire after eating some more typical Finnish camping food like sausages and cinnamon buns. There was also time to play different kinds of children’s outdoor games which included running and hiding in the forest. Just a hint from the teacher and all the students were running around and enjoying themselves.

On Friday morning the international students attended music lessons. After that all the students took part in PE lessons where they had funny athletics games in teams. The athletics included for example 400m hurdles carrying the hurdle, aided high jump and some brain games with ropes.

Since Friday was the last day of our project the students and the teachers had a Goodbye Dinner together. We watched a PowerPoint presentation including photos that had been taken during the week.

For most of the students the farewell evening was emotional and ended up with tears and smiles.

Saturday was the day of departure for our guests.

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| Getting to know you | Games in MFL |
| Picture |  |
| Making pizza at Kaisa’s home | National games |
|  |  |
| Hiking | Kuhankuono Natural Park |
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| Visiting Turku Castle | |
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| Team Photo | |

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| **Year 2: Coordinators’ Meeting in Finland**  **When: September 2016** |

**What happened?**

Coordinators from all five schools met in Finland for a long weekend meeting. We welcomed a new coordinator to the group – Susanne. As well as getting to know each other, this weekend provided the ideal opportunity to make sure everyone understood the work that is planned for the second year. Specifically, we discussed:

**1. Project work plan with special focus on Year 2**

We discussed the project work in detail. We also discussed deadlines for various project activities.

**2. Interim Report**

We discussed the wording of the interim report and especially the results and impact sections

**3.  Plan the Meeting in Sweden**

We decided dates for this meeting- 11-18 March 2017 – and started to think about the programme of activities

**4. Evaluation questionnaires and communication issues**

We discussed both of these which had been causing some concerns. We have all agreed a way forward.

**5. Future projects**

We decided that this will be out last project and that the meeting in Germany in September 2017 will be a celebration of our work over nearly 20 years

6. **Teachers’ Professional Development**

We took part in a variety of activities. An evaluation of this is below:

**Sue** – I visited a lesson with Juha who is a full time SEN specialist teacher working with a small group of disaffected boys with behavior issues. There were 4 boys in the lesson aged from 14-16. There was lots of equipment to help them such as laptops, audio-visual equipment etc. The furniture consisted both of formal desks but also a more informal seating area with a sofa. The work seen for most of the lesson was Maths but towards the end of the session we did a question and answer session in English.

The work done by the students was differentiated – for example by different materials and exercises. The teacher explained the work patiently and employed the useful strategy of “tactical ignoring” of behavior which would have been challengeable in order to focus on the work and not allow the behavior to distract. The boys did all make some progress in their Maths during the lesson.

**Simon** – I visited an SEN lesson which involved a full time SEN specialist teacher working on a one to one basis with a student with Swedish as an additional language. The student worked at practising topic based vocabulary on an iPad, matching key words in Swedish to pictures and having an opportunity to repeat these key words with the support of the teacher.

In the same room there was another SEN teacher working with a student completing activities in English with the aid of a textbook, dictionary and various visual aids.

**Sieglinde** – During our meeting in Finland I had the chance to be guest in a lesson for students with special needs. It was an extra lesson for a boy from Syria who has some difficulties in concentrating. The teacher gave him a lot of time and attention. Subject in this lesson was romance in literature. Because I do not speak and understand Swedish both, teacher and student were so kind and did the lesson in English. It was very interesting to me.

**Josef** – I visited a lesson with Arto, who is a SEN specialist teacher working with a mixed group of 15-year-old students, whose performance in school had been badly affected by different kinds of personal difficulties or tragedies. In this particular lesson, there were two boys and two girls in the classroom. The equipment was basically traditional, including a blackboard and formal desks with seats for approximately 12 students, but there was also a large gym ball for one of the students to sit on. Although there was only one, Arto told me that any student who wanted a gym ball instead of a normal chair could have one. It is considered a good way to help restless students or those who feel uncomfortable in traditional chairs.

The four students had individual work to do, either in Maths or in English. They did not change subject during the lesson. Arto approached them one by one to make sure they would engage in their assignments. He did it gently, in a low voice, speaking in Finnish or in English according to what seemed appropriate in each case. At one point, he asked me if I could help a student with his assignment and I agreed, sat down next to the boy and asked him some questions that he had answered on his worksheet. This was quite successful.

I learned that the most important thing was to be calm and to make the young students feel secure. Arto told me he would never yell at a student who had misbehaved or even insulted him. Instead, they would have a conversation to make things straight.

We would like to thank all the Finnish colleagues who allowed us to visit their lessons. We found it very interesting to see how another school approaches its work with SEN students.

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| **Year 2: Videoconferencing in MFL lessons**  **When: December 2016-February 2017** |

**What happened?**

One of our objectives was to do videoconferencing in MFL lessons. This proved quite challenging due to differences in timetables in different schools. Also, we had some technical problems. However, we have managed to do some skyping and are eager to do more.

**Köping – Lieto**

These two schools have set up two Skype sessions during English lessons. The topic was to discuss how the students would spend their sports holiday. The students had fun videoconferencing. The teachers also enjoyed the co-operation and are eager to continue Skyping during the spring.

**Pershore - Lieto**

These two schools have set up two Skype sessions in French. The first time they introduced themselves and talked about hobbies. The next time they learned more about each other and school life. The students were excited about videoconferencing and the teachers have already got plans to continue skyping. Among the Finnish students skyping also brought up the question of how they could participate more in Erasmus+.

**Lieto – Schleusingen**

We have been able to set up one Skype session with Germany so far. The main topic was hobbies and free time. The internet connection wasn’t very good, we had trouble hearing each other. However, the students were eager to participate and would love to do it again.

**Ounsdale – Schleusingen**

These two schools did a class Skype together using French. They introduced themselves and asked open ended questions too. They had a few technical problems in the beginning but the students enjoyed the experience and hope to continue Skyping.

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| Köping-Lieto connection | Lieto-Schleusingen connection - the Finnish students had trouble hearing the German students! |
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| Ounsdale-Schleusingen connection | Ounsdale-Schleusingen connection |

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| **Year 2: MFL teachers use more drama and music in lessons**  **When: Spring 2017** |

**What happened?**

MFL teachers in each school have been using more creative and innovative methods in their lessons. Pictures showing samples of these methods can be found on the website page for each school.

In Köping, the students wrote sketches in French, German and Spanish. The topics of these sketches were related to school world or eating out. The students filmed their sketches or made voice recordings with an iPad.

In **Schleusingen**, the students prepared sketches in their English lesson. The students were very eager to act and had a lot of fun.

In **Lieto**, the students learning Russian acted as guides. During the Swedish lessons the students used finger puppets. In addition to this, several classed filmed short pieces of news in English. The teachers also used various methods to increase physical activity during the lessons e.g. games and hiding the tasks on the walls around the school.

In **Ounsdale**, they practiced different tenses through drama. Some students created dialogues and either filmed them or made puppet shows or animated them. Other year-group students used their creativity and invented characters and described their lives in different tenses. Furthermore, other students videoed a guided tour of their bedroom. You can see some of their videos on the website.

In **Pershore**, holiday and the perfect tense were combined in a project where students created a Holiday rap and then acted out the raps to the rest of the class.

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| Picture |  |
| Köping | Schleusingen |
| http://erasmusplus-iconnect.weebly.com/uploads/1/5/3/4/15341008/005_orig.jpg |  |
| Lieto | Lieto |
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| Pershore | Pershore |

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| **Year 2: MFL students review lessons in other schools**  **When: Winter 2017** |

**What happened?**

Our objective was to video one language lesson per school and put it a ten-minute video clip on the website for others to see. The students in other schools were then supposed to comment these bearing in mind the previous definitions of effective MFL lesson.

The videoing of the lessons proved to be too difficult. In Lieto for example, the students didn’t want to be filmed, they hid from the camera and also became very stressed and agitated.

As a result, we had to make a change in the plans. We made a PowerPoint of the topic *How to teach animal words in MFL.* This presented five different ideas as how to teach. The students then had to choose the best idea and justify their choice.

**Idea 1** included puzzles and a game which required acting and listening skills and increased the physical activity of the students.

**Idea 2** started with deduction, following a pantomime and a draw-and-guess game.

**Idea 3** included Quizlet, guessing the photos and producing sentences.

**Idea 4** began with a song to pick up animal names and ended in writing an extra verse to the song.

**Idea 5** used flashcards to teach and discuss, following a guessing game and building sentences.

The students liked Idea 3 the most because they like the idea of using Quizlet. They also stated that they like quizzes and brainteasers. The students who chose this idea found it an easy and fun way to learn languages.

Many of the students preferred Idea 1 or 2 because they like acting. The students also liked the variety of activities in Idea 2.

Students who preferred to learn by listening or liked to sing chose Idea 4. They thought that singing helps them to remember things.

Many students liked the interactive part of Idea 5, some of them also find pictures helping the learning process. Some students chose this idea because of the independent work.

All in all, it’s very important to keep in mind that the students learn in different ways and so a great variety of methods should be used. Furthermore, we should bear in mind that learning should be fun, too.

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| **Year 2: Workshop in Sweden "An Ideal European School"**  **When: March 2017** |

**What happened?**

On Saturday 11 March, two students and one teacher from each partner school arrived in Köping to be accommodated before the actual start of the project week. This means a total of eight students from England, Finland and Germany were met at the train station by Swedish host families (although these too had various national backgrounds) and brought to their Swedish homes for the seven days to come.

The next day the teachers and students made a trip by coach to Västerås to engage in physically and intellectually challenging activities in ”Prison Island”, located in the city centre, and to visit an interesting historical site called Anundshög. In between these two activities we had a lunch break at a fast food restaurant where a separate room of perfect size for our group had been reserved. The students had thus many opportunities to talk and to cooperate, which lay a good foundation for their joint project work starting Monday 13 March.

Monday morning, the visiting teachers presented themselves to the staff of Scheeleskolan before the start of lessons at 8:10 am. Shortly thereafter, the assistant headteacher gave the visiting students a quick tour of the school. They were then invited to take part in so called ice-breaking activities, led by the PE teacher who had been to Finland for another Teaching/Training/Learning activitiy in September last year.

At about 10 am, students and teachers from all partner schools gathered in a suitable conference room where the visiting students would show PowerPoints of their respective schools to peers and instructors. The presentations were really impressive and gave good insight into many aspects of the schools. For example, the two students from Germany showed excellent speaking skills in English on the one hand and creativity in making a slideshow plus a film about a day in their school on the other hand. There was a lunch break and then the presentations went on for an hour or so. After that, the visiting students prepared interview questions for the Swedish headteacher and Swedish students regarding Scheeleskolan. The English teacher leading the workshop activities concluded the day in school by some reminders to the students. In the late afternoon, the visiting students and their hosts spent time together in a leisure centre called Kuggen.

On Tuesday morning, the visiting students had an hour-long interview with the assistant headteacher. Then, after attending Maths classes in two separate classrooms, these students also had the opportunity to interview some of the Swedish students and teachers about their experience of Scheeleskolan. Finally, they visited Modern Foreign Language lessons in French, German or Spanish from 2:10 pm to 3 pm.Their presence was much appreciated, especially as the about half of the Swedish students who would come to these lessons were having work experience during the week instead. At 5 pm, students and teaching staff met at the bowling arena in Köping to have a good time together.

On Wednesday, a group of ten students and five teachers, i.e. three people from each school, went for an educational study visit to Hammarskolan in Surahammar, a small town situated about 25 kilometers north-east of Köping. There they made arrangements for the visitors to look around at the different buildings that belong to the school, to attend lessons in different subjects and to interview students and teachers during the day. Hammarskolan offered a free lunch for all the visitors, as was also the case at Scheeleskolan the other days of the week. Thus, the students were allowed to compare many aspects of the schools before making the final product of the project week: A presentation of their concept of the Ideal European School.

The following day back in Köping, the Swedish speaking students taught basic expressions in Swedish to their new international friends in a classroom. Later that Thursday, the Erasmus+ students started working in teams with three or four members per team. They discussed how they perceived an ideal school based on the qualities of the European schools that they had seen, either in real life or by means of a PowerPoint on the first day of the week. They put down their ideas in English, as a first step toward making PowerPoints about the Ideal European School in three languages, i.e. English, French and Spanish. This teamwork continued during Friday morning and early afternoon in a rather relaxed atmosphere in the conference room. The PowerPoints were due to be presented at 2 pm to the headteacher, part of the teaching staff and most students of Year 7. However some of the Erasmus+ students weren’t quite ready at that time. We also had trouble turning on the projector in the big hall, but it all worked out well after some 15 minutes of confusion and trial. The audience had a great deal of interest, patience and respect for the students on stage during the presentations. Many contributed to the success of the event, but the visiting teacher from Ounsdale was particularly acclaimed for his part in making things work. Copies of the final PowerPoint presentations are on the project website.

While the students took part in all of these activities, teachers from the different schools took advantage of being in a different school to undertake some professional development, focussing on the theme of MFL teaching. A report of their findings is available on the project website.

The whole week of Teaching/Training/Learning activities was coming to an end, but there was going to be another highlight before the end of Friday. The evening meal with funny games, delicious food and musical entertainment, including students and teachers singing a wide range of material in different languages, became a memorable finale to this week of intense activity and international rapprochement. An adult from each host family was also invited and some of them expressed how happy they were to have one or two guests at home for a week.

7 am on Saturday morning the students gathered at the train station of Köping to start their journey back to their home countries, accompanied by their teachers. The PE teacher mentioned earlier was there to say goodbye to everybody and the guests expressed their appreciation of the arrangements for the project week.

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| At Prison Island, Västerås | The Schleusingen Students’ Presentation |

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| At Hammarskolan in Surahammar | The Final Presentation |

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| **Year 2: MFL in PE work**  **When: Spring 2017** |

**What happened?**

The PE teachers who attended the workshop in Finland continued to use MFL in PE lessons as well as encouraged their students to use MFL, too. One of the easiest ways to apply MFL to PE lessons is to ask the students to count or calculate e.g. scores or distances. There is a list of ways to use different languages in PE lessons on our project website but here are some specific examples from each school.

In **Ounsdale** the PE and MFL teachers worked together to produce a range of commands for warm up activities in French to be used during PE lessons. These included e.g. “Vous mettre en groups de X” and “Courir à la ligne et retourner”. You can find all these commands on our website as well as a video of students in action.

In **Köping**, the teachers integrated PE and MFL in warm-up games. Two of the games have to do with collecting different alphabets by orienteering or shuttle-run and then making up as many words as they can out of these words. The PE teachers also co-operated with MFL teachers to produce instructions for strength activities in German, French, Spanish, English and Swedish. They made nice posters with words and pictures, you can see two of them below.

In **Schleusingen**, the PE teachers have used MFL when giving instructions to the students. There is a video clip on our website where you can see a teacher instructing the students in English before they start practicing badminton. On the same video you can also see students counting in English while they are doing various strength training activities.

In **Lieto**, MFL has been used in PE lessons every now and then in short activities. Sometimes the use of MFL is planned beforehand, on other occasions it is more spontaneous. There is a video on our website of students counting in various languages while doing some exercises.

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| Instructions in different languages | Instructions in different languages |

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| A Schleusingen PE teacher giving instructions in English |

Below some Schleusingen and Lieto students doing strength exercises while their partner is counting in MFL.

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| **Year 2: Students teach each other**  **When: Spring 2017** |

**What happened?**

At first, students made videos to teach their own language to other schools across the partnership. The **Ounsdale** video contained English slang words. Year 10 students in **Pershore** made a video on idioms and sayings in English. On the video they told their favourite idiom and then explained the meaning of it. They had also drawn a picture to visualize the idiom. The **Köping** video contained for example some animal words and the **Schleusingen** one body parts. The students from **Lieto** made a video on some important phrases and words in Finnish.

Then students in partner schools watched each other’s videos and tried to learn the new words. The students in **Ounsdale** really enjoyed learning some Swedish and Finnish of which they had no previous knowledge. The similarities and differences between the different languages gave the students food for thought and discussion. The **Köping** students, having just studied the body parts in German, especially enjoyed the German video and watched it many times. In **Schleusingen**, the students liked the English video presenting idioms so much that they decided to teach us all some German proverbs with the help of a picture, you can see one of those in the pictures below. The students in **Lieto** enjoyed the English Slang video the most. They were really keen on learning these words and began repeating them eagerly. The written list containing the slang and proper word was very useful addition to this video.

All the videos can be found on our project website.

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|  | Picture |
| “Barking up the wrong tree” | Studying English idioms in Köping |
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| A German proverb | English Slang |

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| Teaching some Finnish words | Ounsdale students learning Finnish |
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| Teaching body parts in German | |

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| **Year 2: Innovative MFL work (by students with or without SEN) for younger students**  **When: Spring 2017** |

**What happened?**

Students (both with and without SEN) worked on innovative projects in MFL to produce some material for promoting MFL for younger students in their own school, local primary school or local special school. Before the project begun, we asked the students to tell us how they would know whether their work had been successful or not. We combined the success criteria suggested by students in each partner school and the criteria is as follows.

The project has been successful if the younger students

* say positive things about our work or MFL in general
* appear to learn something
* are interested, participate and are eager to do more
* smile, look happy and have fun

and if the students in charge of the teaching

* feel good about being involved
* are more positive about MFL

**Ounsdale**: Y8 students chose to teach food and drink vocabulary in French at a local primary school. They based their work on a book called *La Chenille qui fait des trous (The Hungry Caterpillar).* One group of students worked on ways to teach the basic vocabulary and story. The other group made games and other activities to reinforce the words. The third group of students organized an activity where the younger students could act as customers in a café.

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**Schleusingen**: The students made nine videos to promote MFL to local primary school students. These videos can be downloaded from our blog. Another example of innovative MFL from Schelusingen is how the students integrated a SEN student in their preparation for a performance of a Russian fairytale. First the students repeated the narrative aloud for several times. After that he got the easier parts of the text to present them free and finally in front of the audience. Everyone had a lot of fun and felt proud of what they had accomplished.

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**Lieto**: Some 7th grade students, including SEN students, worked in group of 4-5 students to work out ways to promote Swedish for primary school students. They then went to one of the local primary schools to work with a group of 5th graders. A group of SEN students taught the 5th graders e.g. the days of the week in a memory game based on way on the blackboard. Other group of students taught them colours in a bit similar way. The students also got to practice animal names by guessing the pantomimed animal and by playing Kahoot. The students could also practice some Swedish verbs through motion. The students were quick and eager to learn and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. All our SEN students, as well as the other students, felt good about being involved in the project and everyone had a great time.

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Thank you

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* To our national agencies for their support and advice
* To the European Union for funding this fantastic opportunity