

## **Kent primary school measures progress informally**

French has been on the curriculum at Borough Green Primary School in Kent for more than a decade. From reception up to Year 6, children are taught the language in lesson time, with follow up activities that can be incorporated into other subjects, such as music or literacy, during the rest of the week.

Hilary Burdess, primary teacher and MFL co-ordinator explained. "30 minute French lessons take place for all year groups on Mondays and Tuesdays. The children are very quick to pick up listening and speaking French. Writing and reading the language are bigger challenges. We are currently using Asset Teacher Assessment Packs at Breakthrough Stage with Year 6 and plan to extend this to Year 5 next year. Together with another colleague at the school, I got involved in the Asset scheme early on and we are now at the end of the second year of using the assessment material. My teaching during each term is not affected by the assessments. I don't emphasise the concept of 'tests' at all but we make the children feel they are lucky to be involved in Asset Languages.

"We follow our own scheme of work as developed by colleagues and supplement it with other schemes such as Tout Le Monde which is used in many schools in Kent. We cover all the topics required by the primary languages framework, which are compatible with the topics which come up in the TAP tasks. Tout Le Monde, for example, has its own 'Can Do' statements which are very close to the 'Can Do' statements of Asset and the DCSF Languages Ladder. However we have also been reporting to parents using the criteria set out by the Languages Ladder for a number of years. This is the second year that we have sent Asset levels achieved to secondary schools as part of transition – even though this school feeds more than 24 secondary schools.

"In the first year of using TAPs with pupils learning French in Year 6, I did all the assessment tasks during the summer term. This year, I have organised things differently. The pupils did the Grade 1 listening, reading and writing tasks at the end of the Autumn term, the Grade 2 tasks in the same skills at the end of the Spring term and the Grade 3 tasks in the last few weeks of the Summer term. We still find it easier to do all the speaking tasks in one burst at the end of the year though. The children are more confident in their oral tests anyway and we will go straight for Grade 3.

"As far as results go, our pupils perform most strongly in speaking and listening tasks. Results in reading tasks are slightly less strong while writing is the greatest challenge. This may change with the new emphasis on these skills in primary teaching though. We give out certificates during lessons and all children achieve success at some of the skills and at some levels. We have a number of children with special educational needs and it is pleasing that they can receive at least one certificate in recognition of their skills."