

## Primary school pupils in North Tyneside make Breakthrough to Preliminary

A group of budding linguists from a North Tyneside primary school are celebrating success after passing exams in French at a level usually achieved by secondary school pupils up to five years ahead. The 10 and 11 year olds have received qualifications that are equivalent in standard to lower grade GCSE passes.



Ten Year 6 children at Greenfields Community Primary School, Wideopen, North Tyneside, are among the first primary-age learners in the country to receive new Asset Languages qualifications for their French reading or listening skills at Preliminary Stage. Other classmates have also been rewarded for their achievements in French at the earlier Breakthrough Stage of

the Asset Languages scheme. The scheme, from exam board OCR, is a national initiative designed to recognise the acquisition of language skills.

“These results surpassed our expectations”, said Lynda Phillips, Headteacher at Greenfields. “We are happy to provide an extra challenge to children, who proved they were confident last year, but we did it in a relaxed way. There was no special preparation beyond the regular weekly French lesson. We are also delighted that all Year 6 had the chance to prove their skills with Asset Languages in listening, reading and writing French at Breakthrough Stage. Greenfields is committed to encouraging its pupils to learn a second language and now teaches French from Reception Year.”

Greenfields, along with Bailey Green Primary School in Killingworth, is part of a national language learning project led by Monkseaton High School that now delivers complete primary language learning courses to over 1200 schools across England.

Pupils at Bailey Green Primary School are also celebrating the excellent results that their Year 6 pupils have achieved; nearly 90% received the top grade in exams at Breakthrough Stage for listening, reading and writing French.

Primary Language Consultants, Mike Butler and Jane Dawson, who have worked for many years to support language teaching at Greenfields, were thrilled with the results. “These are all significant achievements. We often under-estimate what primary school children can do in languages and this will really boost their confidence for studying languages at secondary school. Secondary schools are also usually thrilled to have helpful data on their new pupils.”

They continued, “This is no leafy green suburb school, many of the children enter the school with below average levels of literacy and numeracy. Yet learning and achieving in French is viewed very positively by the children themselves. We are really proud of the achievements of the pupils at Greenfields, and of all the schools using Monkseaton’s languages courses, who have demonstrated with the results this year that they enjoy and respond to the challenge.”