

Bring French to life in your primary school with a primary-trained French language assistant

This new scheme from the British Council makes it easier than ever before.

You are invited to take advantage of a new offer from the British Council to support French in your primary school with the placement of a primary-trained French language assistant.

The benefits of a primary French assistant:

- Authentic language and culture, oral practice for the children and staff, language support for staff, resources, activities, clubs and links to France – all of these (and more) are possible with an assistant.
- Share an assistant with up to five other schools to minimise cost and deploy your assistant in the most effective way.
- Benefit from support and training from the British Council.

Why now?

With languages now statutory at KS2 in England, and a majority of primary schools choosing French as their language, a primary French assistant can be of huge benefit to pupils' learning and make a real difference in your school. The British Council and the French government have teamed up to make it easier for primary schools to have an assistant in 2016-17.

Who are the assistants?

These are **primary-trained young people** from France – either trained to be a teacher (early in their career) or already a trainee – and have some experience, and plan to work as a primary teacher. Assistants will therefore be suitable for the role and 'ready to go' - a genuine asset for teachers and pupils.

What can assistants do in the primary classroom?

They can work together with a teacher or work on their own with small groups of students to introduce language and practice. They can develop lesson plans and extra-curricular activities (e.g. lunch time clubs) focused on their country's culture and even support the creation and/or development of an international partnership with a school in France. Most of all, they bring their culture and authentic language with them into the classroom; it can be a transformative experience for the children.

'Having a Language Assistant has supported teachers to have the confidence to deliver French across our schools'

Amelie Thompson, Deputy Head, Gipsy Hill Federation London

What are the cost implications?

Assistants can be employed for 12 to 18 hours' teaching per week over 8 months. The basic salary is £887 per month, for 12 hours teaching per week. Extra hours are paid at a fixed rate. (Placements in London attract an extra allowance; amounts may vary slightly in 2016-17. See details at <http://tinyurl.com/PLAsalaries>).

1 assistant **can be shared by up to 6 schools.**

There is no 'finders fee' (previously £2000) – the British Council will source the assistant at no cost to the school(s).

You should discuss your particular circumstances with the British Council to formulate the best value arrangements possible.

Who will supervise and guide the assistants?

Schools will want to nominate a member of staff, such as the MFL coordinator, to guide the assistant at the school. The British Council will provide training to the assistants before and during the placement and offer support to schools throughout, with access to the British Council's *Schools Online* resources including *Connecting Classrooms* and the International Schools Awards.

'I loved hearing her speak!'

'It's better to have someone from the country who knows all the words and how to say them'

'She could say everything properly and quickly'

'I like how her voice goes up and down when she speaks'

Primary school children on their French language assistant

Specific benefits of this programme:

- Assistants are provided by the French government's CIEP agency, and placed by the British Council, as part of the official bilateral agreement between the UK and France.
- Primary French assistants will be **primary-trained young people**: either trained to be a teacher (early in their career) or trainees with some experience, who plan to work as a primary teacher.
- 1 assistant **can be shared by up to 6 schools.**
- **No finders fee** (previously £2000) – the British Council will source the assistant free of charge.
- **British Council support for the assistants (training and materials) and schools (administration support and advice).**

Next steps:

If you have any questions or would simply like to explore whether this offer would be right for you, please email vicky.gough@britishcouncil.org to register your interest in this programme so we can get back to you.

Please do get in touch - we hope to hear from you soon!