**Introduction**

This assignment intends to provide evidence of a sequential, progressive set of lessons for a year 7 class to be taught in my first placement school in January 2009. It draws upon academic reading, university teaching, discussion with colleagues and my own classroom experience. The assignment gives an overview of the school, department and class, followed by the lesson plans and rationales.

The school is a voluntary aided Church of England School with 1009 pupils in the 11-18 age range. The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average and the number of pupils with statements is average. On entry to the school, the overall attainment of pupils is average but the proportion of pupils with higher attainment is low (Ofsted, 2007). The school has 5 pupils with English as an additional language although all speak English fluently.

The MFL department operates on a rotational basis, teaching different languages each year. Year 7 pupils are currently studying either Spanish or German for 3 hours a week.

The department uses the German textbooks ‘Auf Deutsch 1’ (McHab and O’Brien, 1993) and ‘Klartext’ (Marsden and Gobey, 2003). However, the department tends to use the books as a basis for what to teach, rather than as a resource as they are quite outdated. The teachers create the majority of materials themselves. I do try to be aware of the contents of the books as a back-up in case of ICT failure and for useful listening activities.

The tables in the classroom are set out in two sets of 4 rows with 4 pupils to a row. The room is not ideal as there it is very small and there is little scope for altering the table arrangement. However, it does allow for group work in 4s and there is sufficient space for pupils to stand up/sit down during the lesson.

The class for which these lessons have been planned is a mixed ability class of 30 pupils with the majority expected to be working at NC level 5 at the end of KS3. Each lesson plan has 3 targeted learning outcomes to account for the ability range. Several pupils in the class have a Special Educational Need (SEN); these needs (along with any differentiated provision) are detailed in the relevant section in the lesson plans. There is currently no Gifted and Talented (G&T) register for year 7 but some pupils are working at a higher level and differentiated activities are provided. One pupil is on the SEN register as he struggles with writing but also has advanced linguistic ability, especially in oral work. In two lessons out of three a non-teaching assistant (NTA) is assigned to him as a scribe and I take this into account when planning differentiated activties. According to the results of a survey carried out at the start of the year, 70% of pupils in the class are kinaesthetic learners, although most also show some elements of other learning styles. As such, the lessons have a high kinaesthetic element but also address other learning styles.

The lessons follow the scheme of work (SOW - appendix A) used for year 7/8 (due to the language rotation). The SOW shows KS3 National Curriculum (NC) Framework references for year 8 only. I have included references for year 7 in the lesson plans, along with details of the National Curriculum Programme of Study and Attainment Targets addressed.

The aim of the three lessons is for pupils to learn how to add time indicators to discussions about their free-time activities (which they have learned previously). I have omitted the 24-hour clock from this sequence as I felt that 3 sequential lessons on telling the time could make pupils lose interest so have broken this up by introducing days of the week in lesson three. I will come back to the 24-hour clock when looking at timetables in lesson 4.[[1]](#footnote-0) Pupils are expected to be working at NC level 3 for all attainment targets by the end of the unit.

Target language (TL) is used in lessons wherever possible to maximise pupil exposure to the language. The use of TL can also have a positive effect on behaviour; it can diffuse a situation by turning it into a learning opportunity and also make it more difficult for pupils to argue (Macdonald, 1993 in Meiring and Norman, 2002: 33). However, some complex elements of lessons require clarification or explanation in English and “learners need to have recourse to a range of strategies which include comparison of L1 and L2” (Meiring and Norman, 2002: 29.

To avoid repetition, the rationale for common parts of lessons (for example, starters and introduction of new language) is outlined below.

Before each lesson, I open any files on the Interactive Whiteboard (IWB), have all other resources available and write the learning objectives, date, weather and title on the board[[2]](#footnote-1). The MFL policy to reinforce the date and weather in every lesson is simple and effective.

Immediately before the lesson begins I display the Einstieg activity on the IWB and put notebooks and exercise books out in each pupil’s place to avoid disruption during the lesson. These routines ensure that pupils arrive into a calm environment and settle quickly. Pupils know that they must get on with the Einstieg as soon as they come in (hence instructions in English so they do not need to ask questions) and any latecomers can easily catch up without missing the presentation of lesson objectives or any new language.

In each lesson I have a copy of the lesson plan available and I check periodically on the pace. If the lesson moves too quickly, pupils become lost and disruptive and if it moves too slowly, pupils become bored and restless. “Using short, focused tasks creates a sense of pace and forward momentum which is useful in engaging those students whose attention tends to wander” (Cowley, 2003: 79). However, timings given within the lesson are approximate and flexible depending on the needs of the class. Pupils tend to take a few minutes to arrive, so an hour-long lesson has around 55 minutes of teaching time - the 10 minutes allocated for the introductory section account for this.

‘Monitoring’ in the lesson plans refers to my circulating around the classroom checking for understanding (especially with lower ability or SEN pupils), formatively assessing progress through checking pronunciation/correctness of exercises and ensuring that pupils are on-task.

At the end of each lesson pupils are instructed in German to pack away (before or after the plenary), stand up and put their chairs under. The lesson ends formally with the teacher/pupil dialogue “Auf Wiedersehen” and “Auf Wiedersehen Frau X”, after which the pupils are dismissed row by row to prevent behavioural problems (pushing) at the door and leave the lesson on a positive note.

1. Four hours are allocated in the scheme of work so the lessons do not form a complete unit. I would have preferred to write this assignment based on a distinct unit of 3 lessons. The scheme of work for term 2 does not provide an opportunity for this. I have to keep to the same topics as the other host teacher with whom I also team-teach a second year 7 class so cannot deviate from the scheme of work. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Within the lesson plans and rationale, IWB refers to the interactive whiteboard and board refers to the standard whiteboard. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)