

Case Study – UK Schools Teaching Japanese



Hendon School - London



JAPAN FOUNDATION

Key Facts about the School:

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Website: <http://www.hendonschool.co.uk>

Number of students: 1269 (2010-2011)

Age range: 11 - 18

Type of school: Foundation School (State Comprehensive)

Specialisms: Specialist Language College

Brief description of the school:

Hendon School is a 11-18 Foundation School located in North London in the borough of Barnet. The school enjoys a high level of multiculturalism with over 75 languages spoken. Hendon is also socially diverse: 30% of pupils receive free school meals and 54% of Sixth Form students received Education Maintenance allowance in 2011. Hendon School became a Specialist Language College in 1996 and currently offers four foreign languages within the curriculum: Japanese, Spanish, French and German. In addition, the school offers a successful Saturday languages school to give students the opportunity to develop skills in a wide range of languages.

Hendon School is one of the UK's largest Japanese teaching centres at secondary level with Japanese firmly embedded into the curriculum from Year 7 all the way through to Year 13. Pupils take part in a language carousel in Year 7, to give them a taste of each language, then in December they choose to study Japanese or French. From Year 8, pupils choose between German or Spanish and study 2 hours of both their first and second language. In Year 10, pupils must choose one language to study at GCSE level, but many decide to keep their additional language going as well.

Japanese set up:

Number of Japanese language students: 453

Year Groups: Year 7 -13 inclusive

Japanese time-table:

Year Group	Study Hours per Week	Number of Students	Number of Groups
Year 7	3	110	4
Year 8	2	110	4
Year 9	2	110	4
Year 10	3	57	3
Year 11	3	54	3
Year 12	4.5	5	1
Year 13	4.5	7	1

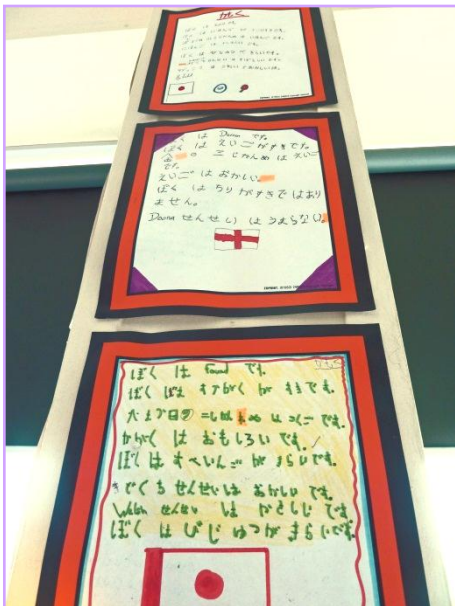
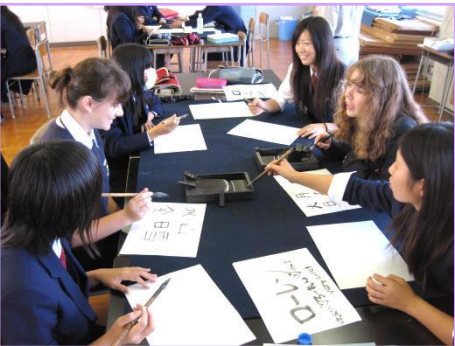
Case study updated: Summer 2011



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Benefits to the students:

- The opportunity to travel to Japan as part of one of the Japanese exchange activities.
- Pupils LOVE Japanese - they are motivated and love the challenge of studying. Many students do better in Japanese than any of their other subjects.
- Learning Japanese 'makes them sparkle' - they stand out from the crowd in University and job applications
- Studying Japanese promotes good handwriting and can also improve pupils level of concentration.
- Some pupils love *anime* and *manga* which motivates them to study extra Japanese.



Exams:

Overall GCSE results:

5 A*-C Grades = 82%

5 A*-C Grades including Maths/English = 69% 2010
(This has increased from 49% in 2005)

Japanese Exam Results:

Students studying Japanese may take the Edexcel GCSE long course, AS and A2 exams. Their results are consistently the best MFL results for the school:

2010 GCSE A*-C = 94%

Including 21 A*s

2009 GCSE A*-C = 97%

Including 27 A*s

2008 GCSE A*-C = 100%

AS/A2 A*-G = 100%

2010 AS: A= 43% B= 43%

A2: A*-A= 29% B= 43%

Challenges of Japanese

At Key Stage 5, Japanese is one of the most challenging A-Levels as students need to be able to read and write accurately and convincingly.

History of Japanese

Hendon School became a language college in 1996, and then added Japanese to the curriculum from scratch in 1997 with two teachers and 60 students. Early on, the first teacher of Japanese established a language exchange with Konan High School in Japan, which has continued as an exchange partner school since then.

The current Head of Japanese has worked at Hendon since 2002. The huge demand for Japanese allowed the school to double the number of students and employ more teachers. Presently the school has the capacity to teach 120 pupils per year group.

Support:

The school enjoys very supportive senior management and a long-term approach to teaching Japanese within the curriculum. It has also benefited from the following programmes:

- Most of Hendon's textbooks were acquired through the Japan Foundation's Materials donation Programme.
- The British Councils programme for Japanese Language assistants.
- Entered students into the Nihongo Cup.
- Hendon has used the Japan Foundation website as well as TES to advertise possible Japanese teaching vacancies.

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School Trips:

Each year, twenty Year 10 pupils from Hendon School take part in a language exchange with Konan High School in Japan. This is partly funded by parents, but pupils also take part in fundraising activities to help cover the expenses. The cost is between £900-£1,100.

In addition to this, Year 13 students use their Japanese language skills to organise and book their own trip to Japan as part of their course for the Japanese A2 exam. Last year they travelled to Hiroshima, but in previous years they have been to Osaka.

Other Japan-related activities at Hendon:

Japan Peace Week - A week of activities that raise money for charity. This includes breakfast for teachers, film viewings, making sweets and students singing Japanese songs at lunch. This year the school raised over £30,000 for the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami appeal.

Japanese coffee morning for Parents - This event held is for Year 7 parents so they can get an idea of what it is like for their children to learn Japanese.

Japanese Club - This is normally run by the Japanese Language Assistant so changes every year depending on the interests of the present assistant.

Primary Taster Days - This event is for Year 6 pupils from Hendon's three main feeder schools. Children have a Japanese taster session and learn what it would be like to study Japanese from Year 7.

Japan Days - Staff and students from Hendon recently the also helped at a Japan Day run by Finchley School for boys (Year 8).

Japanese Teaching Staff 2010-2011:

Hendon School currently employs a part-time teacher of Japanese who is also the Head of Japanese. There are also two full-time teachers of Japanese (one native one non-native). These three teachers all qualified via a PGCE course and teach Japanese exclusively.

Some other members of staff teach a little Japanese in addition to their other subjects, leading to a total of six staff that can teach Japanese language classes (including one GTP teacher who teaches two Japanese lessons a week as well as their main subject classes).



Long-term future:

Hendon School's Headteacher and Head of Faculty are both very supportive (describing Hendon as 'Japan-tastic'(!)) They aspire to make Hendon a centre of excellence for Japanese, and so the school anticipates a long-term future that in teaching Japanese. The number of students that want to study Japanese has remained steady. Recently more children have started to study French or Spanish at primary school so many of their parents are keen for them to continue with those languages, but as yet this has not affected the popularity of Japanese.

Advice to other schools in a similar position:

Please contact Hendon School to arrange a visit if you would like to observe their classes or get advice from the excellent MFL department.



“When you have a language that captures the hearts and minds of kids across the ability range, it must be promoted!”

Kevin McKellar, Headmaster of Hendon School



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Would you like to know more about how the Japan Foundation can support Japanese at your school?

Contact us today to find out how we can help you:

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