

Case Study – UK Schools Teaching Japanese



Hartley Primary School

Newham, London



JAPAN FOUNDATION

Key Facts about the School:

Address: Hartley Avenue, East Ham, London. E6 1NT
Telephone: 020 8472 2523 Fax: 020 8472 4976
Email: info@hartley.newham.sch.uk

Website: www.hartley.newham.sch.uk

Number of students: 770

Age range: 3-11

Type of school: Community Primary School

Brief description of the school:

Hartley Primary School is a large Community School based in the centre of East Ham, London. The school is highly multicultural and most pupils speak English as an additional language.

Japanese set up:

Number of Japanese language students: 22

Japanese is one of the options available as part of the creative curriculum, which consists of 90 minute lessons held every Thursday afternoon. Compared with other lessons, the creative curriculum classes are highly pupil-led, with the children deciding what they would like each lesson to cover. The lesson planning and delivery is also less formal and more relaxed; games and other fun activities feature heavily, with pupils winning points for their teams each week.

Despite the informal nature of the classes, the pupils do keep a portfolio of their progress in Japanese, which includes lists of new vocabulary and phrases acquired.

Japanese time-table:

Year Group	Study Hours per Week	Number of Students	Number of Groups
Years 3 and 4 (mixed group)	1.5	22	1

History of Japanese

Mr James Berry, the Assistant Head and Year 6 Class Teacher, was formerly an Assistant Language Teacher on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme from 2001 to 2004 and taught English at schools in Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan. He started sharing his knowledge of Japanese language and culture with the pupils as part of the creative curriculum in September 2013.

Japanese compared to other MFLs:

The school has a very proactive and enthusiastic approach to foreign language teaching. Pupils are taught French for 30 minutes a week and additionally, every term a world language is picked and pupils throughout the school learn key phrases (such as answering the register) using that language.

Autumn 2013



Case Study – Hartley Primary School



Sample Japanese Lesson at Hartley Primary School

(90 minutes):

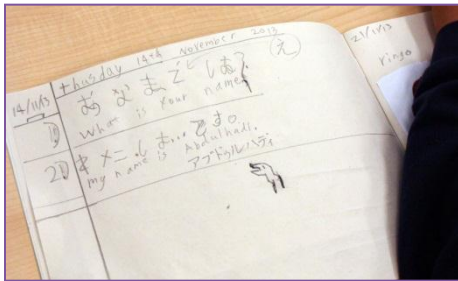
1. (2-3 minutes) Greetings
2. (5 minutes) Revision of Japanese numbers 1-10, using online flashcards from *Ready, Steady NihonGO!* on Interactive Whiteboard and gestures accompanying each number
3. (5 minutes) Practice numbers 1-10 as a group with gestures, increasing speed each time
4. (10 minutes) Introduce the names of seven fruits in Japanese: *ringo* (apple), *banana*, *ichigo* (strawberry), *mikan* (orange), *suika* (melon), *momo* (peach) and *nashi* (Japanese pear). Native-speaking volunteer provides model for correct pronunciation.
5. (10 minutes) Play “Fruit Basket” to practice new vocabulary. In this game, the pupils sit in a circle and each are assigned a fruit. One pupil stands in the centre of the circle and says the name of a fruit in Japanese. All those pupils assigned to that fruit must then get up and find a new spot to sit in the circle as quickly as possible. The last pupil to find a spot must stand in the middle of a circle, and it is their turn to say the name of a fruit. If any pupils say “Fruit basket,” all pupils have to stand up and find new seats.
6. (15 minutes) Play “Karuta” in groups of pupils to reinforce vocabulary. In this game, pupils are given small pictures of fruit, which they put on the table in a random order. The teacher calls out the name of a fruit in Japanese, and the pupils must quickly slam their hand on the correct fruit. The fastest pupil takes the fruit, and the game continues. The winning pupil is the one with the most fruit pictures at the end when all the fruit have been taken.
7. (10 minutes) The pupils stick pictures of the 7 fruit they have learned in the lesson into their books and write their names in Japanese beside them.
8. (20 minutes) The native-speaking Japanese volunteer demonstrates how to make an origami samurai helmet, and the pupils follow her instructions to make their own.
9. (10 minutes) The teacher shows pictures of example *Pokémon* characters on the Interactive Whiteboard. The pupils must then draw their own *Pokémon* character and give it an appropriate Japanese name that uses the vocabulary used in the lesson (numbers, fruit).
10. (2-3 minutes) Tidy up and finish



Case Study – Hartley Primary School

“The children are enthusiastic to learn about Japan and it complements the other international projects running in school.”

James Berry, Assistant Head at Hartley Primary School



Budget:

The main costs to the school are for resources; the lessons are run as a voluntary part of the syllabus.

Resources:

Teaching materials specifically for primary Japanese can be difficult to find. However, the school has been making use of free online resources, including the *Ready, Steady NihonGO!* resource for primary Japanese created by the Japan Foundation and the Japan Society.

Challenges of Japanese:

Finding appropriate teaching materials has been one of the main difficulties, although recent contact with organisations such as the Japan Foundation should help to provide greater access to these. Additionally, the Japanese lessons do not take place in Mr Berry's own classroom, meaning that there are no Japanese displays and resources need to be taken into the classroom each week.

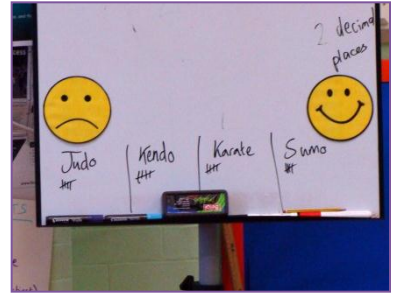
Japanese Teaching Staff :

Mr Berry is currently the only qualified teacher at the school who teaches Japanese. The school also has a native Japanese volunteer who assists with the Japanese lessons by demonstrating native-level pronunciation of vocabulary and assisting with cultural activities such as origami.

Long-term future:

Mr Berry intends to continue teaching Japanese for as long as he is in a class-based role. If he were to move into a non-class based role, the future of Japanese at the school may be uncertain, as another teacher would need to take over this voluntary position. However, the Japanese class is still in its infancy at Hartley Primary School, and with pupils showing so much enthusiasm for the subject already there is much potential for Japanese to expand and develop. It is hoped that as the profile of Japanese in the school rises, its long term future can also be secured.





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:

Josephine Audigier, Programme Officer
Japan Foundation London Language Centre
Russell Square House
10-12 Russell Square
London WC1B 5EH

Tel: 020 7436 6698 Fax: 020 7323 4888
Email: josephine.audigier@jpf.org.uk
Website: www.jpf.org.uk/language