



Minimus Newsletter 53

Dear Supporter,

The 2014 campaign is well under way and I have been contacted by many people since Christmas wanting further information about the project and the book, sometimes from unexpected sources.



Sue Balmer (Newcastle), a Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) teacher who is a great supporter of Latin, spoke recently at the ALL (Association for Language Learning)

conference about Latin and Minimus, and at a meeting of Headteachers in Newcastle.

Her talks have generated interest and I was contacted by **Suzie Bewell**, another MFL specialist who trains teachers in MFL in York. When I received her email at 7.30 a.m. saying "I am convinced that Latin must be part of their PGCE course" "I knew it would be a good day! I will be joining Suzie for a day in York in the Autumn to train her students in Minimus.

I was contacted by **Anna Donnelly**, an English Language Advisor who works with primary schools in Solihull. I will be spending a day with some of her group on July 14, to train them to use Minimus. Anna is convinced that Latin will support their literacy skills and be the basis for MFL learning later on.

Marvellous emails to receive!

Please do continue to spread the word this year. Primary schools need to know that Minimus can be taught by non-specialists and that grants and training are available.

If you could use our **free publicity leaflets** or **bookmarks**, please get in touch; we would be delighted to send some to you.

Copyright

Please be aware that Cambridge University Press (CUP) holds the copyright for the text of ALL the Minimus books and Helen Forte holds the copyright for ALL the Minimus Illustrations. I meet many creative teachers who make their own Minimus resources.

Please contact CUP and/or Helen for permission to use the text and pictures. This should only be for use within your school. Producing materials for distribution to other teachers, especially if payment is involved, is breach of copyright and is a serious matter.

Please note that I am not in a position to give permission for the copying of Minimus text.

Minimus Publications

The word is spreading about the new Teachers' Resource book - **Minimus in Practice** - and the feedback has been very positive. The first half of the book explores the cross-curricular possibilities while teaching Minimus and the second half contains games, quizzes and suggestions for special events in the school year.

Minimus iBook

The first pupil's book is now available as an **iBook** and you can order it from the Apple iBook store. Unsurprisingly, the iBook has been bought by teachers in the UK and North America but also in the Netherlands, Austria, Norway and Switzerland.

Minibooks

Helen Forte and I plan to write another set of **Minibooks** this summer; please check the website and the September Newsletter to see availability.

NB The Minibooks and Minimus in Practice are only available from our business - Minimus et cetera.

Minimus - the first 20 years:

It is now 20 years since I first had the idea of writing Minimus and its rapid expansion has astonished me. I want to record the extraordinary growth of the Primary Latin Project while I can still remember the story! I hope to complete the task this year.



"**Minimus –the first Twenty Years**" will be published by Whitehall Printers, in Bristol. Watch this space!



Recent Events

In February I visited [Fairfield Prep School](#) near Bristol and enjoyed delivering a first Minimus lesson to Year 6. Their teacher [Alex Plumb](#) sent the following message as to why she introduces Minimus in the second half of their final year: "I use Minimus to introduce my Year 6 class to Latin in the second half of each year; they are always very enthusiastic about the characters, the opportunity for drama and role play as well as learning about the links between Latin and English. Our children move on to a variety of senior schools, both independent and maintained sector, and their introduction to Latin gives them an excellent start for learning languages in the years ahead."

In March I visited [Richard Pate School](#) in Cheltenham and spent a morning doing drama and singing with children in Years 5 and 6. I also gave them a talk on the historical basis of Minimus.

Also in March I visited students at [Swansea University](#) at the kind invitation of [Evelien Bracke](#). I was pleased to tell them about Minimus and the Primary Latin Project and how things have spread. There were certainly some potential teachers in the group and sowing seeds to undergraduates in this way is always so valuable.

In March I also judged a Minimus Play Competition in Southampton. This was set up by [Diana Sparkes](#), and it was thrilling to see hundreds of children crammed into the hall at [Cantell School](#), where they read and performed Latin plays with great enthusiasm and accuracy. Diana is willing to give help and advice to anyone who would like to set up a similar event in their area.

Minimus Advocates Conference – March 2014

I was delighted with the success of the first Minimus Advocates Conference. There were 20 of us who met in my home in Bristol and shared ideas about teaching and promoting Minimus. I outlined 20 reasons why this is a particularly exciting time in the history of the project and a year of great opportunities to spread the word about Latin. The two main speakers were [Diana Sparkes](#) (grants and running a Minimus Reading Competition) and [Jane Maguire](#) (Norfolk Project.) Advocates made many useful contacts over lunch and in the afternoon several of the Advocates gave brief talks on Minimus events that they had taken part in, the Minimus Mythology Competition, etc. The feedback from the conference has been extremely positive, and their request is that we turn this into an annual event.

* I can now confirm that our committee has agreed to an annual conference. The proposed date for next year is Saturday March 21st in Bristol

Reports and Notices

Grant Fund Report

From the beginning of September 2013 until the beginning of April 2014, 31 schools received grants to teach 'Minimus'. This consisted of 23 state schools, 5 independent schools, 2 home educators and 1 U3A group. These are:

BEDFORDSHIRE: [King's House Preparatory School & Nursery](#), Luton.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE: [Woodside Junior School](#), Amersham; [Ickford Combined School](#), Aylesbury.

CHESHIRE: Vicki Jordan ([Home Tutor](#)), Disley.

CLEVELAND: [Normanby Primary School](#), Middlesborough.

CORNWALL: [Gems Bolitho School](#), Penzance.

DERBYSHIRE: [Newhall Junior School](#), Swadlingcote.

DORSET: [BournemouthU3A](#) (yet another group!), Bournemouth.

EDINBURGH: [George Heriot's Junior School](#), City of Edinburgh.

ESSEX [Burnham-on-Crouch Junior School](#), Burnham-on-Crouch.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: [Rendcomb College Junior School](#), nr Cirencester.

HAMPSHIRE: [Otterbourne C of E Primary School](#), Winchester.

HERTFORDSHIRE: [Mandeville Primary School](#), St Albans; [Chaulden Junior School](#), Hemel Hempstead.

KENT: [Parkway Primary School](#), Erith; [Gravel Hill Primary School](#), Bexleyheath.

LANCASHIRE: [St Bede's R.C. High School](#), Blackburn.

LONDON: [St John's Walham Green C of E Primary School](#), Fulham [Twyford C of E Primary School](#), Acton; [Yeading Junior School](#), Hayes; [Holy Trinity C of E Primary School](#), Northwood; [Torriano Junior School](#), NW5 2SJ.

MERSEYSIDE: [Blacklow Brow Primary School](#), Knowsley.

NORFOLK: [King's Lynn Academy](#), King's Lynn.

POWYS: [Crickhowell Community Primary School](#), Crickhowell.

SURREY: [Grand Avenue Primary and Nursery School](#), Surbiton.

TYNE AND WEAR: [Arthur Hills Primary Schools](#), [Westgate Hill Primary School](#), Newcastle-upon-Tyne:

WARWICKSHIRE: [Newdigate Primary and Nursery School](#), Bedworth; [Penny Montford \(Home Tutor\) Rugby](#).

WILTSHIRE: [Leehurst Swan School](#), Salisbury; [All Cannings C of E Primary School](#), Devizes

Many thanks again to the Classical Association for their generous funds.

[Wendy Hunt](#)

Norfolk Report, March 2014

Update on the North Walsham Project

Primary Schools The project is technically over (no more funding). However, all Headteachers have been interviewed to find out how/if Latin is continuing in their schools. The situation now is as follows:

Schools currently continuing with Latin are the 3 largest ones - 2 primaries & 1 junior.

In all 3 the staff trained to deliver Latin are Teaching Assistants or Higher Level Teaching Assistants (not teachers). Schools currently not teaching Latin - Reasons are understandable. One school had a change of Head and its Latin teacher went off long-term sick; at another the Latin teacher left; one regretted that it needed to prioritise as a result of Ofsted; one had always planned to deliver Latin every other year.

From September 2014

- * All schools say they hope to be delivering some Latin and want to retain the resources provided by the project.
- * All are declaring an interest in teaching it to whole classes.
- * 3 schools have already asked for training sessions to train new staff

We have had interesting discussions about Latin in Years 3 & 4 as the children's first language, laying the foundation for MFL in Years 5 & 6.

High School

The Head remains committed to Latin, certainly in KS3. Numbers and staffing will decide its future in KS4.

The Head has reported back the support for Latin in all the primary feeders and this will hopefully influence the situation.

Update on the Aylsham and Dereham Projects

Primary Schools

- * All are delivering as planned.
- * This includes one Infant School teaching to Year 2s.
- * There will be Norwich Castle days for them.

High Schools

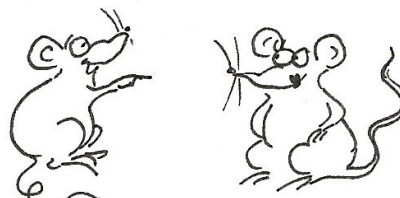
*School 1 delivering as planned in KS3 and employing a Classics teacher from the Sixth Form College for an extension course.

* School 2 was slow to start but is now delivering as an after-school club.



Other

The BM Roman exhibition at Norwich castle has broken all records. Several schools have had Latin taster sessions as part of their visit to the exhibition. A Saturday Family Latin Workshop was held. As a (somewhat unusual) spin off, I was asked to do a Latin taster session for a group of "Countryriders" (Junior Young Farmers). Senex MacDonald was an obvious activity.



Useful contact has been established with an independent language consultant (former LA advisor), who is happy to promote Minimus.

Two seminars have been delivered to primary PGCE students at UEA. (University of East Anglia)

The Norfolk projects are currently being written up as a short document, designed to show case studies and different models.

A group organised through Classics for All (CfA) recently met with [Liz Truss](#) at the Department of Education to tell her about developments and issues surrounding the growth of Latin in state schools. She clarified that, whereas it would be her preference for schools to choose one language and teach it for all four years of KS2, it would nevertheless be possible to do one or two years of Latin and then change to MFL or to teach Latin alongside MFL.

We have a further CfA grant which is being used to fund top-up training for the High School teachers trained last year, to evaluate their training and the progress they have made and to look at teaching to GCSE level.

Recent suggestions from teachers of useful things to have on the website:

- * Coloured flashcards and card games (the family, animals, soldier's equipment etc.)
- * Schemes of Work (SoWs) for Minimus.

The absence of these was given as one reason to prefer MFL to Latin. If Latin is adopted as a school's "official" language, it may be that SoWs will become necessary.

Jane Maguire

Minimus IT Report

The Minimus website continues to attract plenty of visitors from around the world.

The major development on the website this year is the addition of a special area to support Minimus in Practice. There are templates and image sets to download, so that people can try out the ICT and Art activities mentioned in the book. There will be more resources added when I have time to draw them! Username and password are supplied with each copy of Minimus in Practice.

There are plenty of freely available resources available, but there is always room for more. Most of the existing support sheets are already available as pdf files, and are regularly downloaded; the remaining Teachers' Support Sheets will be added in a downloadable form. We welcome suggestions for worksheets and activities, as well as news and photos of pupils' work.

I have continued to add to my own Minimus blog, concentrating on my re-created artifacts' and pupils' work. Barbara's blog will be more regularly updated with the addition of more people to the blog team, and should be the first stop for news and event reports.

Future developments for the Minimus website include a vocabulary tester, if I can find a suitable format.

We are still hoping to develop a Minimus app, and also to make ebook versions of the MiniBooks – especially now that there's an electronic version of Minimus. For teachers with access to an iPad and projector, the iBook is an excellent resource, and I think that the MiniBooks would also work well on an IWB or screen!

Helen Forte

Congratulations to [Zee Ann Poerio](#), one of our American PLP Committee Members, who has won a most prestigious award – “Teacher of the Year” from the PAECT (Pennsylvania Association for Educational Communications and Technology.)

She is a most gifted teacher and always spreads the word about Minimus when she gives talks.

It has been a pleasure to work with her in the past and I am looking forward to greater collaboration at the ACL conference in Virginia. We are very proud of you, Zee Ann!

Twitter Report @minimus_latin

Tweets	Following	Followers
1,912	1,235	1,292

Following on from my last Twitter report – Minimus tweets continue to go out as reported. If I can tweet daily I try to do this.

A taste of the subjects covered:

What Minimus and the family might be doing at Vindolanda that day according to the weather conditions; tweets can follow an illustrious day/event in the Roman calendar/ modern English calendar et cetera

What current Twitter trends might be e.g. the Vatican reporting on something...Peter Jones writing something on Latin in the Telegraph, archaeology, Classical World etc.

Publicising what Barbara and the committee are doing/what can be done e.g. Minimus in Practice; Minimus i-book; foreign editions of Minimus being published; Minimus teaching and INSET days; Advocates; Classics for all/Norfolk; events in the USA, grants, mythology, interactions with schools, teachers and children....

This is just a small sample of what is happening

I feel that we are very lucky to have many talented people following @Minimus_Latin. There is a lot more which can be done with the Twitter account with Minimus and family spending more time 'on site' at Vindolanda and at York. This will require a tad more time and energy. Nevertheless the foundation is now there for @Minimus_Latin and it has a very 'solid' Twitter presence. Thus with a little more time spent on it, the numbers of followers will soon increase.

pipio!



Catherine Jarvis

Future Events

Roman People - Power and Empire: A splendid touring exhibition with artefacts from the British Museum will be touring Britain for another 18 months. It has already been a huge success in Bristol and Norwich (see Jane Maguire's report above.) It has generated a lot of interest in learning Latin!

It is a great opportunity to take our bookmarks and publicity leaflets and meet families who are interested in Latin for their children. The Bristol and Norwich bookshops have also been willing to sell "Minimus".

Here are the venues and dates; please let us know if you live near these venues and can help with promotional work. And enjoy the exhibition!

May 17th – Aug 31st Coventry, The Herbert Museum and Art Gallery

Sept 20th – Jan 4th, 2015 Leeds City Museum

Jan 24th - May 10th, 2015 The McManus, Dundee

May 30th – Sept 13th Segedunum Roman Fort and Baths

In June I will be running 2 workshops as part of the **Classics in Communities Project**; these will be in Oxford on 4th June and in Birmingham on 10th June. If you or anyone you know would like to attend one of these events for some Minimus training please get in touch with me.

Saturday 7th June – Minimus Training Day at James Allen's Girls' School in Dulwich, London. This is specifically designed for beginners but those who have used Minimus before are also most welcome to attend. To book a place please get in touch with Rachael Jones, the PLP Administrator (Rachael-darren@hotmail.com) or download an application form here

On 14th July - I will be visiting Solihull to train representatives from 6 primary schools who are interested in making Latin their compulsory language. This is another important school project in the Midlands and I will do my best to enthuse the teachers and give them the confidence to teach it.

On 11th July I will visit Our Lady's Catholic Primary School in Hitchin where I will run inset training for 10 of its staff.

Sunday 22nd June to Sunday 6th July The big event of this term is our visit to the USA. Along with Zee Ann Poerio and Ruth Ann Besse I will be running an official Minimus training event at the pre-institute part of the American Classical League Conference, See the League website www.aclassics.org for more details of this course and how to book.

Minimus website: www.minimus.com

82 Swiss Drive, Ashton, Bristol BS3 2RW

Monday 3rd November Looking further ahead I am most grateful to Annette Thornton who has invited me to visit the University of Reading and speak to Classics students about Minimus.

Other Classical Events

Events at Vindolanda

The 2014 excavations are now underway, *26th May – 31st May*: A Roman Festival of the Roses; *28th June* – Friends of Vindolanda evening; *2nd August – 3rd August*: Roman Army Encampment; *28th October* – Family Discovery Day at Vindolanda, for more information contact www.vindolanda.com.

ARLT Summer School for Classics Teachers – This will take place at St. John's College in Durham and will include an optional workshop on Minimus. Other workshops which will be particularly useful for Minimus teachers are Greek and Latin Pronunciation, Junior and Prep School Latin and Brush up your Latin and Greek. For more information on this very stimulating week contact the summer school secretary: Alison Henshaw, 1 Quaker Close, Melbourne, Derbyshire, DE73 8GW.

JACT Greek and Latin Summer School – July 19th -26th at Durham. This is a marvellous place to learn Latin and Greek. Tuition is offered at various levels. For more details see the website:

www.greeklatinsummerschooldurham.org

Exploring Hadrian's Wall, new Summer School - Sept. 6th -13th . For more information see www.durham.ac.uk/summer.study

As you can see this is a particularly busy time for Minimus. The Committee and I have been delighted by the interest shown in Minimus over recent months; please keep spreading the word and get in touch if I can be of any help. Thank you to everyone who has sent donations to help fund the project. Your gifts help in so many ways, especially in funding the unglamorous but vital administration costs of running the project. Donations, however small, are always gratefully received.

With very best wishes as always for your interest and support

Barbara Bell

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