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Newsletter 60 – September 2016

Dear Supporter,

I do hope you have had a good summer and have managed to find some warm sun. I was extremely fortunate to spend time in Sorrento, where I worked on various *Minimus* writing projects, and in the South of France. On a short four day break I was able to visit the splendid Roman theatre at Orange, the amphitheatre at Nimes and the Pont du Gard. The Pont du Gard was particularly moving; I stood in the centre of this marvellous aqueduct and looked down at a very beautiful view and a happy scene as families enjoyed swimming, picnics and canoeing in and around the Gard river on a blissfully hot summer afternoon. Following the atrocities in France this year it seemed particularly reassuring that families were able to spend time simply enjoying the warm sunshine together. If you have not seen these sites I thoroughly commend them to you.

RECENT EVENTS

School visits

It was good to be back meeting teachers at training events in the Summer term. At the invitation of Helen Currie, I spent a day at Chew Valley Secondary School, where a small group of local Primary teachers were trained to teach *Minimus* and in late June I enjoyed two training events as part of the Solihull Project run by Anna Donnelly. I trained the whole staff at Fordbridge School, which has recently adopted Latin as its designated language, followed by a return visit to Codsell Heath, where a small group of staff felt the need for an update on *Minimus* materials.

PGCE

Throughout the Summer term it was excellent to run the *Minimus* course for PGCE students at Bristol University. 29 students (both English and Modern Foreign Languages) received certificates which indicate their ability to teach *Minimus*. In the Modern Language group, as well as students from different parts of the British Isles, there were Italians, Spaniards, Welsh, Germans and a Luxembourgian. Word derivation exercises are particularly stimulating in a group with such a wide linguistic experience. It is very gratifying to help to produce a new generation of teachers who can offer some Latin as part of their portfolio.

MINIMUS RETURNS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

In May and June *Minimus* returned by popular demand to the University of Bristol Graduate School of Education. More than 30 student teachers of English and Modern Languages attended a twilight training course focussed on the delivery of *Minimus* at Key Stage 2 and 3. As several of the student teachers had some prior experience of Latin, it was possible this year to run a beginners and an advanced course. As was the case in 2014-15, retention and completion rates were high, with most students receiving a well-earned *Minimus* certificate at the end of the course.

The *Minimus* module has now become a valued part of the English and MFL PGCE programmes which enriches the training which we offer. Students were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences on the course. Evaluations were populated with the words 'fun', 'thank you' and 'enjoyment'. It was clear that participants appreciated the many ways in which Latin could enrich and feed into their subjects, particularly in terms of increasing literacy and language awareness and teaching language through a narrative framework. They also commented enthusiastically on the interactive nature of the sessions with opportunities for singing and drama.

Most students expressed the desire for a follow up meeting next year in which they could receive further training and perhaps even share experiences of setting up Latin clubs in their schools!

We are grateful for the energy and enthusiasm with which Barbara Bell delivered the course and also for the supportive leadership we have here at the Graduate School which appreciates the added value which *Minimus* brings to our programme.

Helen Aberdeen (PGCE MFL coordinator)

Lorna Smith (PGCE English coordinator)

Bean Primary School, Dartford

I spent a day training the whole staff as the Head, Graham Reilly has decided to make Latin their designated language. We were joined by 3 staff from **Sedley's Primary School**.

Jubilee Academy, Walsall

At the invitation of Kelly Vaughan (Vice principal & *Minimus* teacher) I was delighted to work with the Staff of Jubilee Academy in Walsall. *Minimus* is already taught in the school but this is expanding as they embrace Latin as their designated language. The staff were keen to work on pronunciation and the teaching of grammar, in particular.

Recent Training from Jane Macguire:

25th May - **Hurstpierpoint College**: Independent school in Sussex introducing Latin from September to Yrs 3 – 6.

10th June - **Our Lady of Pity RC Primary, Birkenhead**. School moving from KS 1 club to teaching all KS 2 children. Whole day observing lessons then twilight feedback.

Mythology Competition

Since Pam Macklin left the PLP Committee we lacked someone to organise our Mythology Competition. I was very grateful when Linda Soames agreed to do this and the competition remains as successful as ever. It is an International competition and we were pleased to receive entries from Chicago, Australia and Tasmania. Please see the website for the illustrations showing the winning entries.

Minimus Mythology Competition 2016

It was another bumper year for the annual Mythology Competition with entries from the USA and Australia adding to the mix. The judges were delighted with the quality and originality of the entries. It was also impressive to see that many pupils had gone to great length to read around and research the stories. We had more entries for Level 1 (Medusa and Perseus) than for Level 2 (Pegasus) and more for Art than Creative Writing, but the standards were high across the board. Special mention should go to the Drama entries: the time and organisation involved to get a script together, plus costumes and scenery are significant and it was a pleasure to see the co-operation between different age ranges in the schools involved.

Our thanks go to the Jowett Trustees for again generously funding the prizes this year. It's not too early to start planning for 2017 when the topics for Level 1 will be Odysseus and the Cyclops and for Level 2 Demeter and Persephone. Look out for more details on the website later this Autumn.

Linda Soames

Quote from a child:

Dear Mrs Soames,

Thank you for generously awarding me a special creative writing prize in the Minimus myth competition. I am overjoyed to be awarded such an honour. I enjoyed writing my piece very much and I hope the competition continues in future. Wishing you and the Minimus team well. (Sarah)

REPORTS

Grants – During the summer I have been contacted by a number of schools who are planning to make Latin their designated language.

Grant Fund Report from the beginning of APRIL 2016 to the beginning of AUGUST 2016:

Although the numbers of applications have now slowed down, they are still coming in and there were 12 schools in the last four months. These were:

- DERBYSHIRE: Dale Community Primary School, DERBY;
- DEVONSHIRE: Broadclyst Primary School, BROADCLYST;
- ESSEX: Hamford Primary Academy, HAMFORD;
- LANCASHIRE: Blackpool Sixth Form College, BLACKPOOL;
- LANCASHIRE: Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, BLACKBURN;
- LONDON; Chapel End Junior Academy, WALTHAMSTOW;
- LONDON: Oratory R.C. Primary School, SW3 6QH;
- OXFORD: West Oxford Community Primary School, OXFORD;
- OXFORD: St. Christopher's C.E. Primary School, COWLEY;
- WEST YORKSHIRE: Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, ILKLEY
- YORKSHIRE: Dixon Trinity Academy, BRADFORD;
- YORKSHIRE: Cavendish Primary School, Eccleshill, BRADFORD

Thank you once more to the CA for their very kind contribution to the Primary Latin Project Fund, to Diana Sparkes and Bob Bass for their thoughtful and speedy decisions, to Rachael Jones for sending out the cheques so quickly and to Jeremy Paterson for keeping an eye on the coffers!

Wendy Hunt