



Rosetta Stone Customer Spotlight:

NORTH-EAST TSST

Upskilling Teachers to Support Language Learning Growth

Language education for professional and personal development

North-East TSST is a cluster of six schools in County Durham in the northeast of England. The group comprises of: The Academy at Shotton Hall, St John's School and Sixth Form College, Easington Academy, Sacred Heart School, St Leonard's Catholic School and Browney Academy. All schools are dedicated to creating a stimulating learning environment, to responding to the interests and needs of learners, and to making effective use of new technologies.

As part of a highly innovative government-funded initiative to improve the subject knowledge of non-specialist teachers and returning teachers in secondary mathematics, core maths, physics and MFL in England, North-East TSST embarked on a programme to develop new and existing language skills among teachers in its locality. This would further the personal development of participants and develop the skills needed to teach languages in the schools in the future. North-East TSST also hoped the programme would go some way towards combatting the deficit in language teachers in education in England.

The Department for Education in England fully supports language teaching and uses Teacher Subject Specialist Training (TSST) as a way for schools to develop bespoke courses to help ensure that future generations of modern foreign language (MFL) students receive the best possible education in French, German and Spanish from highly competent, enthusiastic linguists.

"It's a sad situation in England – there is a huge deficit in language teachers and the skills don't exist to fill the gaps. We have to do something to protect languages for future generations and also to be able to offer our students the best learning experience we can."

Phil Robertson, Head of Languages,
St John's School & Sixth Form College



North-East TSST originally considered developing their own language learning programme but soon realised this would be incredibly difficult to do. The team sought a blended learning approach which would encompass both language and pedagogical training.

A Flexible, Comprehensive Programme

They began the search for a language learning provider that would cater to all language abilities and that would provide a stimulating learning experience. Programme flexibility was a requirement so that teachers could tap into language learning whenever and wherever it suited them, including at home.

Another priority was programme longevity so that teachers of all language capabilities could benefit and not solely beginners. The long-term objective was to create a progressive and supportive environment, where schools could recruit from within to fill language teaching positions.

Having researched numerous options in order to meet their requirements, North-East TSST decided that nothing competed with the range of content within a Rosetta Stone® program, which they saw as a "polished product".

In 2016, the Group initiated its Subject Training in Languages for Educators programme, in conjunction with Rosetta Stone. A blended learning approach was adopted whereby Rosetta Stone delivered the core pedagogy digitally, while certain North-East TSST language teachers delivered 12 sessions of face-to-face training to build skills around how to teach language subjects.

The Rosetta Stone® program was a perfect match for North-East TSST because the learning could take place in or outside of school to fit in with teachers' professional and personal commitments. This flexibility was highly valued by the teachers who did their studies during free moments in school, at weekends and on lunch breaks. The face-to-face pedagogy training was also flexible with consistent sessions held at each of the schools so that teachers could participate in any location.

"It's one of those courses where you don't feel like you've had to go out of your way to do it and yet it's contributed a lot to your personal and professional development. It's an interesting and engaging programme that has all the elements of learning and fun and encourages you to want to do more."

Varsha Nigoshkor, Sixth Form psychology teacher and year 8 Deputy Head, St. John's School & Sixth Form

Teachers embrace language learning

The implementation has been a great success and across six schools, 107 teachers seized the opportunity to learn a range of languages including Spanish, French and German. Schools encouraged teachers to learn in short, regular bursts and this 'little and often' approach proved to be a winning formula..

The programme has been so successful that North-East TSST plans to extend it in its second year, increasing the number of participants to 120.

Each school within the cluster has enjoyed its own success with the programme and all are excited by the prospect of doing more in the second year. What's more:

- The initiative has been highly successful across the North-East region
- Of the TSST initiatives the group runs, teachers have enjoyed language learning the most
- St. John's has been able to utilise teachers who have taken the course to fill language teaching gaps, with some starting in their new course next academic year
- Teachers like the fact that the learning counts towards their Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Teachers valued the opportunity to learn something in their free time. Other CPD programmes require them to stay for two hours at the end of their school day
- Students have been inspired by the example teachers have set by taking up language learning and have even helped teachers with their studies

Government-sponsored learning

The government target for the 2017-2018 cohort is for participants to complete a minimum of 30 learning hours per learner but North-East TSST ambitiously started out with a target of 90 hours last year. While some achieved this, for many it was a challenge to meet this commitment alongside the many demands on teaching time. As the schools continue with the programme next academic year, they plan to set bronze, silver and gold awards, with 'gold' level learners needing to rack up 90 hours.

Leaders of the programme put its success down to the pleasure of learning languages and the design of the Rosetta Stone course. They cite the flexibility it gives teachers to learn at a time and place that is suitable to them.

"Language learners need total immersion in the language to succeed. The closest you can get to this - apart from living where the language is spoken - is with this kind of course where you are speaking and listening constantly."

Kerry Siddle, Lead TSST, The Academy at Shotton Hall

Measuring success

Rosetta Stone Administrative Tools provide a valuable means of tracking and measuring progress. At St. John's, league tables generated from usage reports supported light-hearted competition among colleagues and helped to keep them motivated. Individual achievements were measured in terms of the amount of progress made.

Ultimately though, the school believes the main measure of success will come in the number of staff that add value to the language department.

Teacher feedback from St. John's

Varsha Nigoshkor is a Sixth Form psychology teacher and Year 8 Deputy Head. Varsha studied Spanish through the Rosetta Stone® course and liked the fact that she gained both personal as well as professional development.

Varsha says: "It has helped me support my students who come to me for help. That helps student confidence but it has also helped with my confidence too." Varsha believes language proficiency is highly important and adds: "It isn't just about academics, it's important for students to understand the wider world we live in."

John Lamb is a cover teacher. John improved his German using the Rosetta Stone program and was able to put his skills to good use when the school hosted visiting teachers from Germany. John says: "The course improved my conversational German and gave me the confidence to just be in a group and talk. Before, I would have been nervous doing that."

John particularly enjoyed the live tutorials with native speakers. He says: "I'm not into online learning at all, but this course has been really good. I haven't felt as if I'm sat in front of a computer; the live tutoring feels like you're in the room with the tutor having a conversation. It's helped with my pronunciation, listening and understanding German in different accents."

John has been inspired to continue learning languages and has decided to study Spanish in the second year of the programme.



Angela Smith is a Special Educational Needs teacher. Angela studied Spanish and has improved her vocabulary and her ability to read in the language. Angela valued the way the learning experience brought teachers from different departments together, saying: "Varsha and I would get together half an hour before school and help each other. The teachers would leave messages on the board in the language they're studying; it's been a really enjoyable way of learning through the day."

Angela plans to study French in the second year.

About Rosetta Stone

Rosetta Stone is a global leader in technology-driven language and learning solutions for individuals, classrooms, and entire organisations.

Our scalable, interactive solutions have been used by over 12,000 businesses, 9,000 public sector organisations, and 22,000 education institutions worldwide, and by millions of learners in over 150 countries.



**The Academy
at Shotton Hall**

The Academy at Shotton Hall is a fully comprehensive Academy in Peterlee which provides a vibrant and stimulating learning environment for 11 to 16 year olds. For more information visit shottonhallacademy.co.uk.



St John's Catholic School is a Coeducational Roman Catholic secondary school and sixth form with academy status located in Bishop Auckland in County Durham. For more information visit stjohnsrc.org.uk.



Easington Academy is situated in the picturesque village of Easington, County Durham. Originally formed through a merger between Easington Secondary Modern School and Murton Secondary Modern School in 1978, at first it was known as Easington Comprehensive School. The school was awarded Specialist Science and Mathematics status in September 2007. For more information visit easingtoncsc.durham.sch.uk.



SACRED HEART

Sacred Heart Catholic High School in Newcastle Upon Tyne is a Roman Catholic girls school for 11 to 18 year olds. It devotes itself to the pursuit of excellence and the education of women. For more information visit sacredheart-high.org.



St Leonard's in Durham is a highly successful comprehensive school and sixth form centre with state of the art teaching facilities. From its beginnings in 1936 it has grown in stature and reputation as well as size and now accommodates over 1400 pupils and 150 staff. For more information visit st-leonards.durham.sch.uk.



Browney Academy is a small primary school of 85 pupils in Browney, close to the city of Durham. Staff at Browney pride themselves on giving each and every child the individual care and attention they need to thrive at school. For more information visit browneyacademy.co.uk.