

## Recruitment

Example letter to parents introducing the programme and inviting them to apply (May 2016)

Dear Parents

### **Re: Mandarin Excellence Programme**

I am writing to share with you an exciting opportunity available to your child from September 2016. [name of school] is one of a small minority of schools in the country to be successful in bidding with the University College London to deliver the Department for Education's Mandarin Excellence Programme. This is an intensive immersion course in Mandarin Chinese and those students selected to participate in the programme will be part of a privileged minority who will have access to the best teaching and enrichment opportunities over the next five years.

Learning Chinese is an exciting, challenging and hugely rewarding experience. China is one of the world's oldest and richest cultures, with over 5000 years of history and the world's longest continuous writing system. China is also the most populous nation in the world and Chinese is spoken by one fifth of the world's population – Mandarin Chinese is spoken not only in the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, but also by Chinese communities in other Asian countries, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Mongolia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand. In today's global society, speaking Mandarin and having an understanding of Chinese culture is hugely important and with the thriving Chinese economy, its importance is only set to increase.

The Department for Education's Mandarin Excellence Programme (MEP) will be delivered by University College, London's Institute Of Education Confucius Institute in partnership with the British Council. The purpose of the programme is to deliver a minimum of 5,000 speakers of Mandarin on their way to a high level of fluency by 2020.

#### **The aims:-**

- Our students will be amongst 100 students in the first year of the programme who will aim to achieve a high level of fluency in Mandarin Chinese within 5 years. They will learn Chinese for four hours a week in school. This is an intensive and accelerated programme, consisting of a taught element, on-line learning, enrichment days, University immersion weeks and visits to China.
- To produce highly motivated, highly skilled global citizens who will be ahead of their peers in terms of communication skills and employability.
- Establish Mandarin Chinese as part of the core language offer at [name of school], developing a new curriculum model and innovative blended learning opportunities for linguists.

#### **Curriculum Offer:**

Students will learn Chinese as a single language option in Year 7. This means students will have sufficient time and focus to build the foundation they need to make real progress in the language and would also have the advantage that they can continue with the rest of their curriculum as normal. This group would have:-

- 4 hours a week taught Chinese
- Homework, including access to on-line resources
- 2 Saturday schools
- 2 enrichment days
- 1 week Chinese summer school

### **Year 8/9:**

Students will continue with 4 hours a week of taught Chinese, but we will endeavour to offer students a second, European language. In addition, students will take part in a China immersion course in Beijing in Year 8, and a UK-based Chinese immersion course in Year 9. Hanban (a public institution affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education, committed to providing Chinese language and cultural teaching resources and services worldwide) will part fund this linguistic and cultural summer course in Beijing, which will include 4 hours of intensive language learning every day, plus immersive experiences to allow students to apply their learning.

### **Year 10/11:**

Students will progress to GCSE in Mandarin Chinese and will also have the opportunity to take part in an international work experience placement in China at the end of Year 11.

### **How to get involved...**

Only 30 students can be selected to take part in this programme. If you would like your child to be considered, please complete the initial expression of interest below and return to the school by **[date]**.

Those interested will be invited to a parent meeting prior to the Induction Day to introduce the programme in greater depth. During this period, we will contact your current Headteacher to seek a reference on your child to ensure they feel they will be able to cope with the level of independent study required and the intensity of the immersion courses.

On the Induction Day, interested students will take part in a Chinese taster lesson where their aptitude for language learning will be assessed further. They will also be invited to a further day of Chinese language learning and cultural activities to engage their interest and allow the Subject Leader for Chinese, [name of teacher], to make some more detailed assessments and conduct a languages aptitude test.

Those who are successful will be invited to take part in the programme by letter in July. These 30 students will form their own tutor group and their Form Tutor will ensure their progress and well-being is closely monitored and students will be well supported.

This programme affords a unique and exciting opportunity for our students and I hope that you will want to engage in this with us.

Yours sincerely...