

Cambridge English

Transforming Language Education

FERE-CECA Madrid Schools Bilingual Programme

Client: FERE-CECA Madrid

Country: Spain

Cambridge English Language Assessment is working with a network of schools in Madrid and Castilla-La Mancha, Spain, in the implementation of their bilingual education programme, BEDA (Bilingual English Development and Assessment).

FERE-CECA Madrid, a network of 340 schools with around 210,000 pupils, has initiated this programme in order to improve efficiency in language education within the school network.

The BEDA programme has three key components: assessment for students and teachers (provided by Cambridge English Language Assessment), a teacher training programme and the promotion of a bilingual ethos. As part of the programme the schools have a language corner and native-speaker English language assistants are provided by FERE to work in each of the BEDA schools.

The BEDA programme aims at the gradual introduction of bilingual education and to boost and extend language use within the school, as well as in the curriculum. In the long run it is hoped that the majority (80%) of secondary school learners will leave school having achieved Level B2 (*Cambridge English: First level*).

Since the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2008, we have been the official provider of external certification for this project and the *Cambridge English: Young Learners (YLE)*, *Key (KET)*, *Preliminary (PET)* and *First (FCE)* tests have been offered to students, teachers

and other staff of the BEDA programme according to their age and ability.

We also play a key role in the teacher development aspect of the project. Support is offered to teachers through a teacher seminar programme, and Cambridge English exams including the *Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT)* are offered as a way of evaluating the teachers' skills.

The first phase of a research project has been carried out in order to measure the effectiveness of the BEDA programme and the use of Cambridge English exams. The impact project has used interviews with FERE staff and online questionnaires to explore their views on the BEDA programme and Cambridge English exams. The phase one report demonstrated positive perceptions of the programme from teachers, students and parents.

Student and teacher motivation and confidence in using English are seen to have increased as a result of the programme and the introduction of Cambridge English exams. Teachers appreciate the external reference they receive from internationally recognised tests and believe they are more aware of student strengths and weaknesses as a result of the exams. Students are also

seeing the benefits and feel their proficiency has improved as a result of the school joining the BEDA programme and using the Cambridge English exams.

The project has also identified future improvements such as the introduction of tailored teacher training sessions to meet the diverse needs of the teachers involved.

In 2012, BEDA received the European Language Label: an award that encourages new initiatives in the field of teaching and learning languages, rewarding new techniques in language teaching, spreading the knowledge of their existence and thereby promoting good practice. The European Language Label is awarded every year to the most innovative language-learning projects in each country participating in the scheme, and is co-ordinated by the European Commission.

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