

Benchmarking language levels across an education programme

Kids&Us

Spain



Cambridge Assessment English benchmarked the language levels of students enrolled in programmes at Kids&Us schools in Spain as a first step to enhancing English language teaching, learning and assessment.

Kids&Us is an education provider that operates over 435 schools in Spain, Andorra, Italy, France, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Mexico, Morocco and Japan. They deliver English language programmes to more than 135,000 children across the world with a focus on innovative methodologies for teaching English. The vision for Kids&Us is to make it possible for children to learn languages using a fun and effective method in order to build a better world in which communication is no longer a barrier.

Kids&Us contacted us for discussions on collaboration to enhance their approaches to English language teaching, learning and assessment. The first step was identified quickly as benchmarking the English language levels of students, and we were ideal partners to deliver given our experience in the development of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and benchmarking language levels in school systems. The project was deemed an immediate priority in order to understand the actual CEFR level of the students against the target exit level of their Animal Planet 2 (A2) programme (for ages 10, 11 and 12), the Fairy Tales 2 (B1) programme (ages 12, 13 and 14) and the Mysteries 2 (B2) programme (ages 14, 15 and 16).

We worked with Kids&Us to select a sample of students from across their network of schools in Spain. Students were assessed using our computer-adaptive benchmarking test for listening, reading and use of English. Using this online adaptive test meant that it could be easily administered by schools at a time that was convenient to them, and did not disrupt their classroom schedule. Twenty-six schools were involved in the project, and just under 1,000 students completed the test.

We submitted a detailed report in which results were analysed in terms of CEFR level and performance by skill across the programmes. Our analysis showed that the schools were performing strongly, with over half of all candidates meeting or exceeding the target CEFR level for their programme, with listening being the strongest skill.

The benchmarking activity has been an important first step in collaboration between Kids&Us and Cambridge English. Our report also provided recommendations to guide further improvements to the English language programme and we will continue to offer our support in delivering these initiatives.

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“We are very satisfied with the findings of this study and we are delighted to see that it confirmed our beliefs regarding our students' excellent listening skills. We are eagerly awaiting the chance to assess their speaking skills too, as we are convinced that these results would be even better than those achieved in listening.”

Natàlia Perarnau, founder and creator of the Kids&Us method