CHECKLIST: IMPROVING MOTIVATION

Experience in schools has shown that programmes which succeed in improving the motivation of low-achieving or under-achieving students often include one or more of the following features. To what extent are any of these features already embodied in the programme you are offering to low-achieving or under-achieving students? Can you see any opportunities to enhance your programme in any of these ways?

Note that the features described can be used to support learning and motivation of learners of all abilities. Able pupils respond particularly well to opportunities for creative work and challenges which link language learning to personal interests and activities beyond the language classroom.

1. **Build-in a variety of learning styles**
Learning tasks are active and multi-sensory; pace and level are geared to students' learning needs; there are opportunities for reviewing and consolidating learning; support is provided. Most of the work is 'do-able' by most of the class for most of the time. All students experience some success on a daily basis.

2. **Reduce conflict**
Conflict between teacher and student is reduced by accepting that certain aspects of student behaviour, though undesirable, are inevitable, at least in the short term; and that the causes of such behaviour are probably outwith the control of the teacher, and possibly also of the student, at least in the short term. Strategies are put in place to minimise the effects of such behaviour.

3. **Personalise the programme**
The content of the programme is linked to students' own interests and aspirations and there are elements of choice.

4. **Show how foreign language classes relate to other parts of the curriculum**
Some activities are linked to work in other subject areas.

5. **Show how foreign languages relate to the world outside the classroom**
People / places / events in the local community are used to resource the programme (i.e. the 'foreign' element is linked to the 'familiar'. There may also be an element of PSD and/or Citizenship in this)

6. **Use ICT whenever possible, to consolidate learning and to aid creativity**
ICT and media resources are used for learning / information / forging links / providing a context for learning. Young people like using technology, and it doesn't shout at them for making mistakes. Trial and error are part of the process.

7. Providing a purpose for learning

A specific event or activity in school or in the local community provides a purpose for learning and a context for using the language learned (e.g. Open Day, European Awareness, Enterprise activity, Careers, etc.)

8. Learning other things through the medium of the foreign language

The programme is linked to targets on other areas of the curriculum (e.g. core skills, citizenship, enterprise) or to personal development goals.

9. Is there an end product?

Whenever possible, work is linked to the preparation of an end product the student can feel proud of and which will be appreciated by others. Some or all of such projects are produced collaboratively.

10. Link the idea of learning languages to the learner's own community

The language being learned is perceived by both teacher and students in the context of language learning generally, so interest in all languages/any language is evident, especially those which have particular significance to members of the class (home language, relatives abroad, holidays abroad, inter-school project with a school from another linguistic area.) Where relevant, this may include acknowledgements of dialect, regional variation, etc.)

NOTE It's often easier to turn learners on to 'languages' (plural), than to the particular language he/she is obliged to study. Help them to see the obligatory language as only one of many, but a good place to start since you have all the resources to make it interesting. Tell them you're going to use this experience to show them how to learn other languages. Encourage them to demonstrate their knowledge of any other languages and to teach elements of them to the class.