

## ERASMUS + visit to Lille, France March 2022



On Sunday 27th February we arrived in Lille. The city is nestled close to the Belgium border and is the main city in France's Nord-Pas-de-Calais region. We took a stroll along the streets of the old city (Le Vieux Lille) which showcased the city's French and Flemish architecture. The streets are paved with stone and lined with tall red-brick buildings and golden sandstone houses which are now established upmarket shops and flats.

### Lille

The people of Lille are proud of their reputation for friendliness. That doubling down on something good is common to many things in this fourth-largest metropolitan area in the country. The historic old town has local fine arts museums, that has the second largest collection of art in the country. As a major international crossroads, Lille was designated the European Capital of Culture in 2004.



The main language spoken is French. French is the official language as everywhere in France, since France does not officially acknowledge other languages. But some people might also still speak Flemish or Picard (chti as it is known in and around Lille).



## Culture

Known as “The Capital des Flandres”, Lille is particularly well-known for its culture and its Flemish roots. The city only became French when Louis XIV besieged and conquered it from the Spanish Netherlands in 1667.

The Palais des Beaux-Arts museum (pictured below), home to France’s second largest art collection after the Louvre, displays work from Goya, Rembrandt and Rubens.

Alongside the highbrow culture, Lille is historically a market town. The Wazemmes market in the city centre is a real Ali-baba cave, selling everything from fruit and vegetables to furniture and electronics.



## Education

The purpose of this mobility was to visit a local primary school (Albert Camus Primary School). Its enrolment is 235 students, where the school offered 15 classes for a total of 235 students at the start of the 2020 school year. The general average of pupils per class is therefore 16 pupils. What stood strong from the moment we walked into the school was the utmost importance they put on internationalism and this was integrated into the school’s curriculum and policy. Similar to us, they have many exchange programmes and international partnerships in place with many schools from around the globe.



We were given a tour around the school by Armelle, where we met children from all classes, who were proud to show us their classrooms and other learning spaces. What's always wonderful about visiting a school abroad is looking at our school's similarities and differences. It is the similarities that unite us and the differences that we learn from and perhaps go onto explore more when we return home.



## **Our Focus- Digital creativity**

Our visit to Lille took us on a journey focussing on digital creativity and art. We began this journey by focusing our attention on upskilling staff and pupils in learning how to develop creative thinking skills, including creating within a digital context

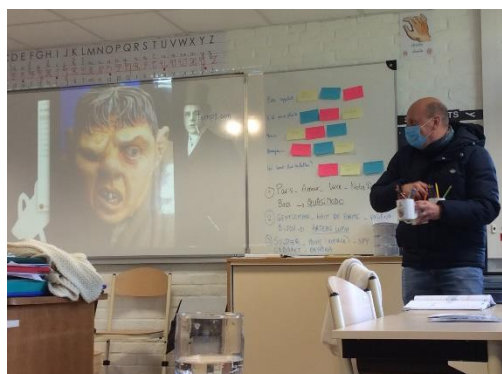
In an increasingly digital world that has only been exacerbated by the challenges posed by the pandemic, we believe this visit was invaluable to all teachers.

### **This visit focussed in the following themes:**

- A better understanding of creative thinking techniques, not only to use with the children in school, but also to take home and use outside of a work setting
- Increased opportunities for professional development - continuing CPD - increasing a teachers' toolkit of skills - impact on teachers adopting collaborative and innovative practices
- Greater confidence in the teaching of arts-based subjects



Over the week, we worked together, where we took part in workshops provided by the school's local digital arts organisation. The workshops provided us with an insight into different technology and software to aid in teaching digital creativity. We very much enjoyed creating digital art using the different apps, sharing our ideas and gaining an insight into the projects the school has created, using the technology.



Following this work, we then looked closer at the Erasmus + KA227 framework for key impact. These are as follows...

### **Pupils:**

- An increased capacity to think creatively and to use these newly developed skills to plan and execute a concrete project to benefit other children in their local area through an arts based event
- Increased sense of working together as global citizens towards shared values of the global community
- Develop their ability to be responsible and effective global citizens who will continue to care about the community that they live in

### **Teachers:**

- A better understanding of creative thinking techniques, not only to use with the children in school, but also to take home and use outside of a work setting
- Increased opportunities for professional development
- Continuing CPD - increasing a teachers' toolkit of skills
- Impact on teachers adopting collaborative and innovative practices
- Greater confidence in the teaching of arts-based subjects

- Nurture attitudes of openness to Europe - policies might be more reflective of on

As individuals, we explored how we could achieve these key objectives whilst working collaboratively.

### The IMPACT of this visit

By collaborating together and learning new methods of teaching creative thinking skills, we believe this visit has helped acknowledge the different ways we can use technology to help develop creative thinking skills in order to strengthen children's ability to engage with the curriculum in a meaningful way.

This visit has made us re-evaluate our current teachings and reconsider how international work can and should be an integral part of our weekly plans. Here are a few things we will carry out at Mayflower to continue to promote digital creativity and internationalism within the school

**Most importantly:** The activities from this mobility has expanded our intercultural competencies, where we continue to develop partnerships with colleagues from abroad, improve different (foreign) language skills and apply learning practices that were acquired abroad.

