

*Teaching English as a second language to the very young - a Norwegian experience at the  
British International School of Stavanger (Anne Howells, BISS, Norway)*

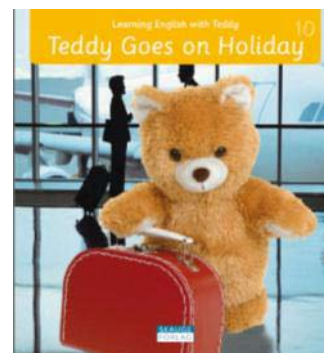
A new language programme, originally designed to teach English to Norwegian pupils with significant learning difficulties, is proving a great hit in a local international school which has significant numbers of foreign pupils arriving with no prior experience of the English language.

The programme 'Learning English with Teddy' has been written by Julie Monsen, originally from England and trained at Leeds University. Julie has lived in Norway since 1984 and started her career in Norway at the British School of Stavanger. She then moved on to become a specialist teacher in the field of special needs education working in the Norwegian sector.

The success of the programme is such that the Norwegian government has now formally recognised the programme and teachers across the country are using 'Learning English with Teddy' not only in special needs centres, but also with pupils in Norwegian nursery education. A local British International School in Stavanger is using the programme with its youngest overseas students who have no prior experience of English when they arrive at the school.

BISS makes good use of the programme with regular cohorts of EAL students aged between three and five years being introduced to English with Teddy's support. A particular favourite is Teddy's tourist guide to the beautiful port of Stavanger, a port which regularly hosts visits from some of the largest cruise ships in the world. Anne Howells, Principal at BISS has found that 'taking the children on the tour when they first arrive in the school helps them become familiar with local landmarks in the city centre and provides them with an initial insight to Norway, the host nation and its culture. Most importantly, the children recognise these local sights and when they visit the city outside school hours with their families it quickly becomes a familiar place to which they have a special attachment.'

The potential of this programme to assist very young children gain an initial understanding and acquisition of English extends well beyond its original intention to make the language accessible to Norwegian children in special schools. The strengths of 'Learning English with Teddy' are proven and Teddy's adventures and influence deserve international recognition.



Any other news from schools or features should be sent by email to: [executive.director@cobis.org.uk](mailto:executive.director@cobis.org.uk)

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