



Mandarin Excellence Programme: Delivery Case Study

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Introduction

We asked schools delivering the Mandarin Excellence Programme to describe how they introduced and developed the programme in their schools. The different approaches listed here have been put together with the purpose of helping other headteachers and teachers to establish the programme in their school.

The guidance explores different methods schools have employed to meet the requirements of the Mandarin Excellence Programme, in addition to the resources and approaches they used to support students participating in the programme. Analysing your own school's particular context is important when making any decisions related to how the programme can be delivered at your school.

Delivering the four taught classroom hours

It is a requirement for all schools participating in the Mandarin Excellence Programme to deliver [four hours of face to face Mandarin teaching](#), and a minimum of two (and preferably three or four) hours should be part of the core timetable (i.e within standard lessons typically run between 9 and 3pm). On average, schools that started the programme in September 2016 deliver over 2 and a half hours of face to face Mandarin teaching within their standard school timetable, with the remaining 90 minutes delivered outside of the timetabled provision.

Schools have adopted a variety of approaches to ensure they are able to deliver four hours, with some of these listed below:

Schools focus language provision on Mandarin

- Some schools, like the Anglo European School, already committed several hours a week to MFL
- In these schools that already had a strong emphasis on MFL the Mandarin Excellence Programme students focus on studying Mandarin at a greater depth, as opposed to two or three languages
- The other students at the schools still continue studying the other languages offered

After school provision

- Some schools have introduced around one – two hours of compulsory after school teaching per week to deliver these four hours
- Fortismere School also deliver one Saturday class each month
- A number of schools have reported there tends to be a lack of concentration at these classes due to student tiredness, and therefore this might not be the best long term solution

Enrichment classes

- Fortismere school plan to deliver an hour of the Mandarin Excellence Programme through the schools weekly 'enrichment class'.
- Other schools joining the programme in 2017 will make use of the school's 'sixth period' to deliver some of the four hours of face to face teaching.

Content and Language Integrated Learning

- Bohunt school delivers four hours of Mandarin language classes, in addition to Chinese immersion lessons in drama, PE, Art and PHSE. This is in addition to roughly 2 hours tutor time which is delivered in Mandarin.
- Bohunt has adopted a Content and Language Integrated Learning approach for one form group each year, with a focus on Mandarin.

Delivering the four non-taught hours

Students must also study for four additional hours each week outside of taught hours - this could consist of after-school teaching, independent study and periods of [intensive learning](#) held at the end of the school year (including a funded 2 week trip to China in Year 8). Your school should work with pupils to decide how best to spend this time.

These four hours can be utilised in different ways – you might want to find ideas through looking at guidance put together by the Department for Education’s [Expert Panel](#). Schools participating in the programme this year have integrated some of the following into their four non-taught hours:

Creating targeted objectives

At the Anglo European School students are given a list of focussed activities to improve their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Students who are struggling in certain areas are also given personalised targets with clear tasks to complete each week, designed specifically for that student.

Independent Learning Booklet

Homewood School give all Mandarin Excellence Programme students an Independent Learning Booklet every week to guide them with their learning. The booklet is designed on the daily task basis to ensure the students carry out their independent learning daily, with parents asked to sign the top page of the booklet if their child finishes the work. The books aim to:

1. Reinforce the knowledge the students have learned during the lessons
2. Challenge the students with extra vocabulary
3. Encourage the students to research more about Chinese culture.

Edmodo

Schools have used an online Edmodo classroom to set extension tasks and share additional resources. In some schools this is utilised on an ad-hoc basis, whereas Queen Mary’s Grammar School require students to spend at least one hour a week completing an Edmodo assignment.

Mandarin Excellence Programme Student Projects

The Mandarin Excellence Programme team have developed a series of projects for students to complete outside of the face to face teaching hours. These activities can be [downloaded](#) from our Mandarin Excellence Programme Edublog, alongside accompanying teacher notes. These projects have been used in different ways: at the Anglo European School students are asked to complete one project every half term, at Queen Marys Grammar School students are required to complete one project every 2 weeks, and other schools use some of the projects inside the classroom.

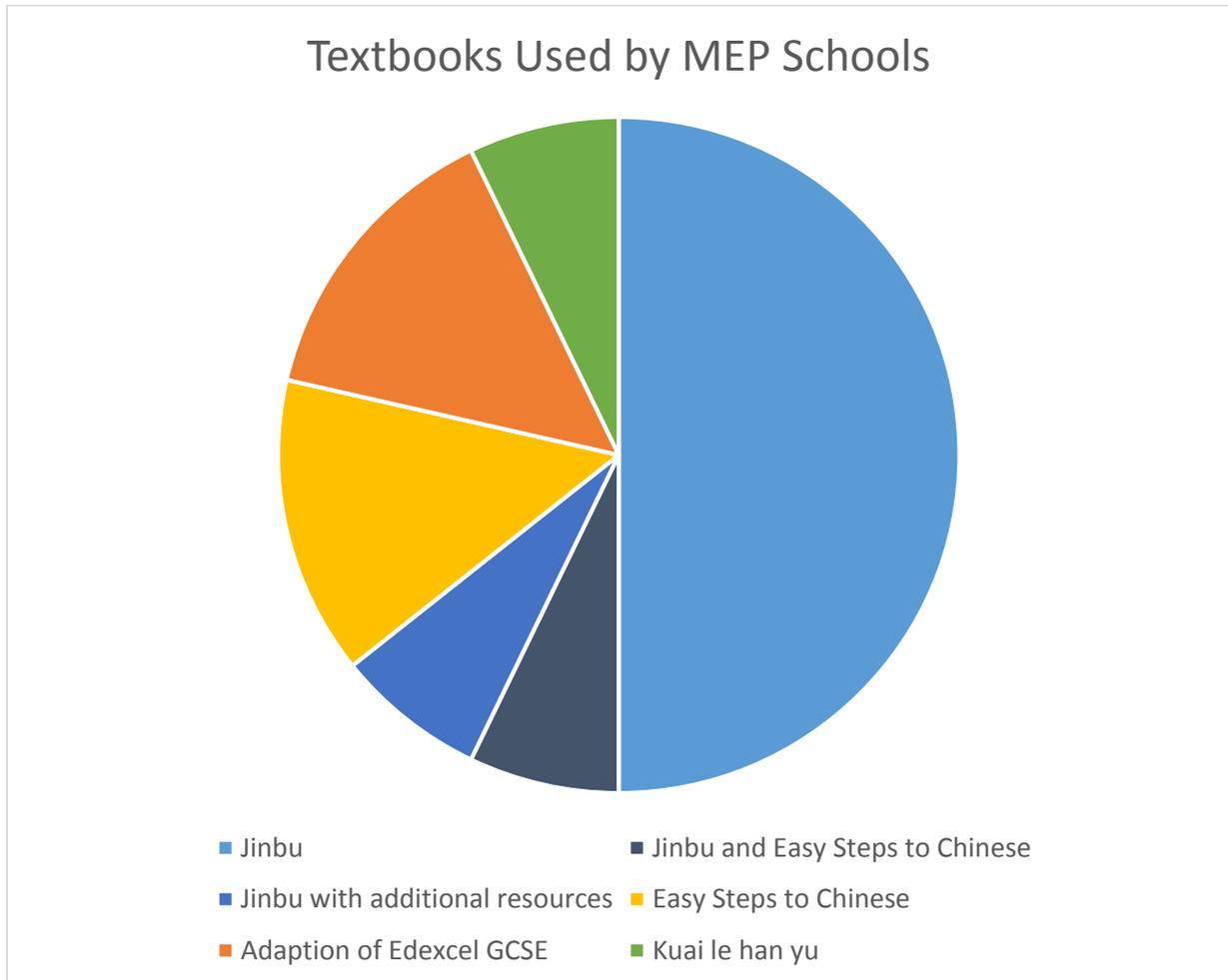
Other books, tools and apps

Teachers reported they use a variety of online tools and applications to facilitate student learning, with some of the most common being:

- Worksheets and workbooks to accompany student textbooks
- [GoChinese](#)
- Chairman’s Bao
- Memrise
- Hello Chinese
- LyricLaoshi
- Selection of films, cartoons and short documentaries
- [Quizlet](#)
- Rosetta Stone

Textbooks Used

Schools taking part in the Mandarin Excellence Programme use a variety of textbooks, often depending on the materials already owned and used in the school. However, the majority of schools use the Jinbu series, and as such the key vocabulary and topics covered in the book are used to help shape the hurdle tests that students are required to sit at the end of each academic year.



Schemes of Work

Schools delivering the Mandarin Excellence Programme have developed Schemes of Work that are based upon the textbooks used within their school – we are able to share these on request.

Teaching the different skills

The majority of schools divided the curriculum time equally between the four key skills during the taught hours and the non-taught hours. Below you will find additional information relating to approaches or materials used to support the teaching of a specific skill employed by Mandarin Excellence Programme schools.

Speaking	<p>Beths Grammar School believe that if the students are able to speak confidently, they can also listen confidently – which will in turn help with sentence structures when students write. Therefore, Beths Grammar School endeavour to imbue their lesson activities with a communicative approach, with at least 40% of the lesson time used for speaking activities.</p> <p>The Anglo European School use additional resources to help students with their speaking. The Chinese Pronunciation book (McGraw-Hill) is used to help with intensive pronunciation and tones practice, in addition to Pronunciation Games (Mark Hancock).</p>
Writing	<p>Dartford Grammar School have devoted slightly more time to teaching writing skills, in order to ensure students have a good foundation in stroke order and radicals. They then ask students to carry out writing tasks in the non-taught hours.</p> <p>The Anglo European School use character stroke practice sheets, animated characters and mini whiteboards to aid writing practice within their taught hours.</p> <p>A number of schools, such as St Mary Magdalene Academy, ask students to carry out daily writing practice and longer writing tasks are completed by students at home in non-taught hours.</p> <p>All schools also received a Mandarin Excellence Programme exercise book to aid students with their character writing.</p>
Listening	<p>Beths Grammar school use listening activities to input new knowledge as the students are listening with a task targeting on a particular grammar point or sentence structure.</p> <p>At Finham Park School, non-taught hours have been heavily focused on reading and listening, with links to videos, reading and typing tasks on Edmodo, and reading and listening exercises on Go Chinese.</p>
Reading	<p>Beths Grammar School have found that students usually find reading tasks easy, so they have adopted a fast paced, countdown approach in reading exercises. At Kingsford School, there is a greater focus on reading and writing skills in the non-taught hours.</p>

Hanban teachers

The Mandarin Excellence Programme will need to be led by a Mandarin teacher with UK qualified teacher status (QTS). However, you might consider using teaching assistants, such as Hanban teachers or Chinese Language Assistants, to support the delivery of the programme. Assistant teachers have been used by a number of schools currently participating in the Mandarin Excellence Programme:

- Supporting the main teacher during Mandarin Excellence Programme lessons
- Setting up workshops for weaker students
- Help students practise their speaking on a 1:1 basis

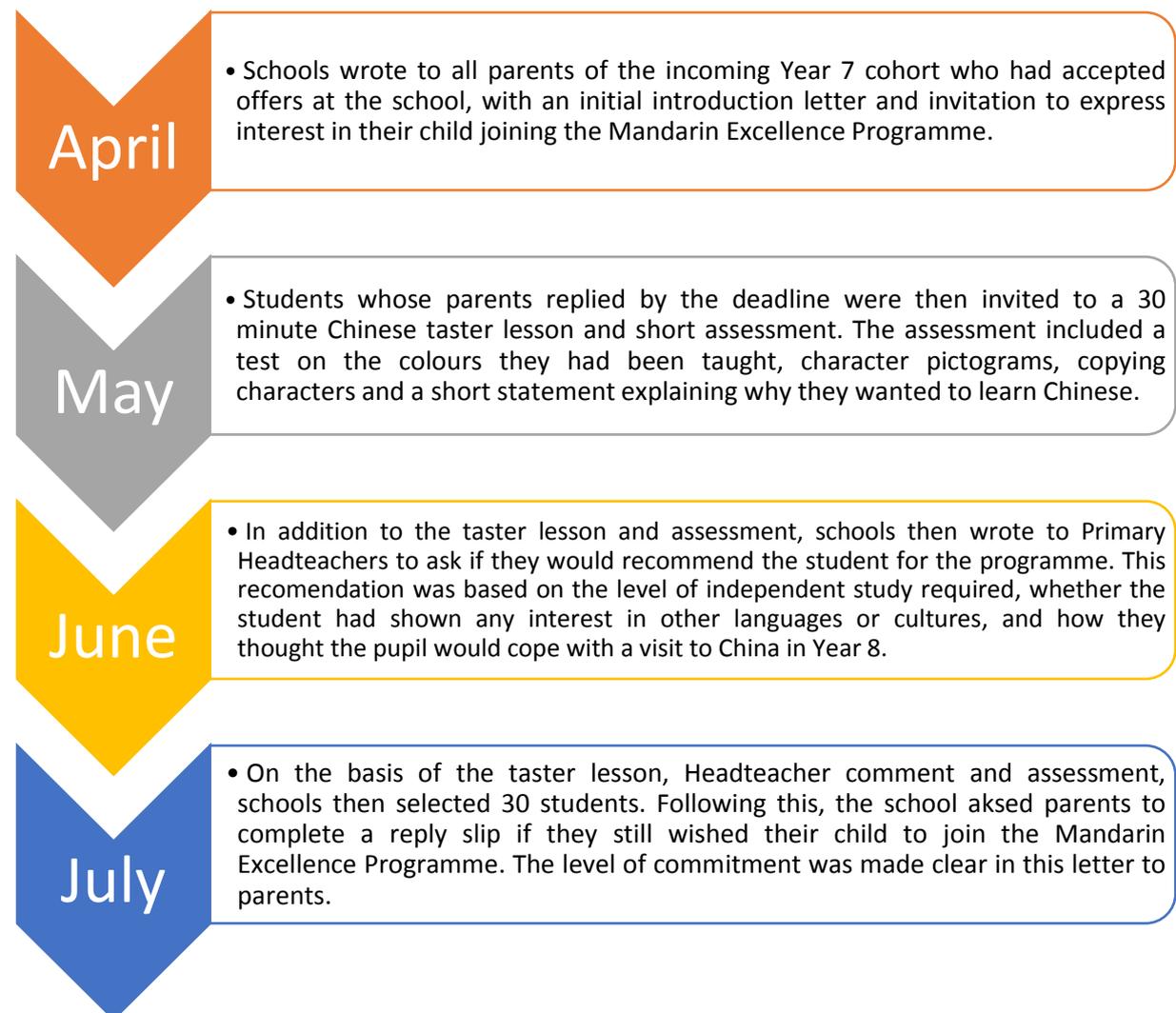
- Deliver a weekly language and culture club at lunchtime
- After school support
- Cultural activities that engage students and provide some language learning
- Extra-curricular classes

Pupil selection

Schools have adopted different approaches to select the students who will participate in the Mandarin Excellence Programme, but it's important to note that all student selection will need to be completed by the end of the first term in Year 7. In this section of the case study, a variety of approaches and methods used by schools participating in programme have been listed:

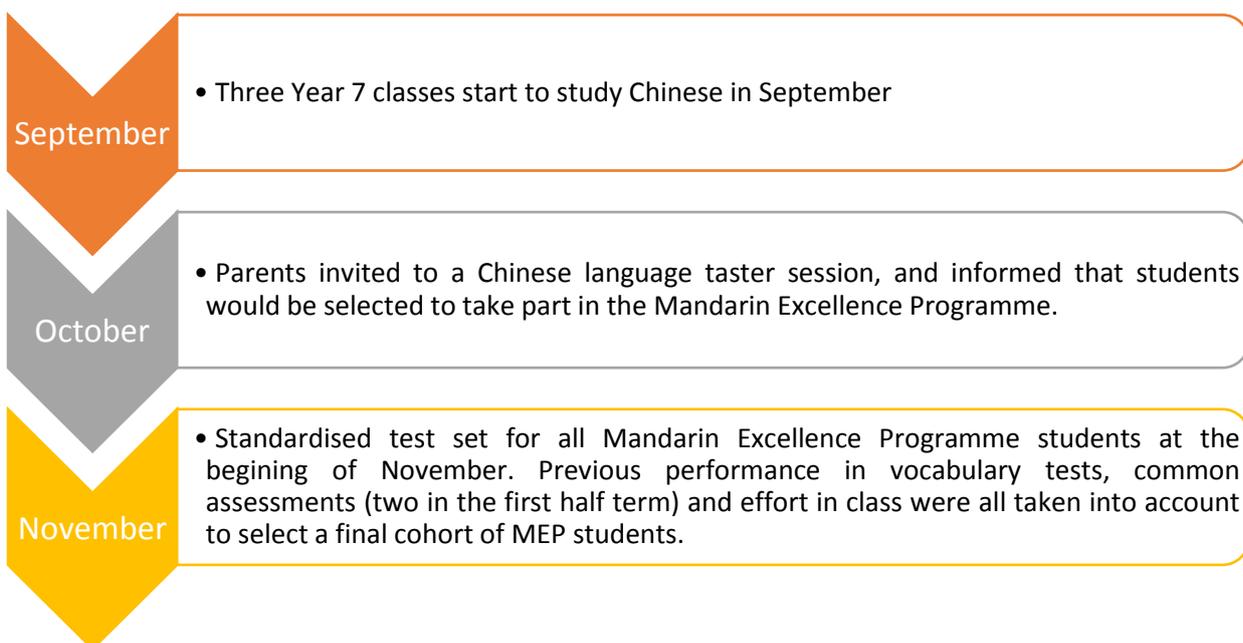
Student application and selection

Some schools, like Alexandra Park School, the Anglo European School and Beths Grammar School used a method where parents had to initially express an interest in their child participating in the programme, with a selective approach being used to select the final cohort. The dates used in the process have been based on a method developed by the Anglo European School, and are used as a guide only. Of course, the dates can be adapted to suit individual school needs.



Student experience followed by selection tests

Dartford Grammar School employed a different method which allowed students to experience studying Mandarin for around three months, before using selection tests to support in the identification of students who would take part in the Mandarin Excellence Programme.



You might want to consider adapting some of the other approaches used by current Mandarin Excellence Programme schools to support your student selection:

Parental Involvement

- Beths Grammar School, Finham Park School and others all held a face-to-face introduction meeting of the Mandarin Excellence Programme for all parents.
- This approach ensured parents had the clearest possible understanding of the expectations of the programme.
- Schools suggested it also meant parents had a sense of involvement in the programme, meaning they were more willing to support their children on the programme.

Primary Outreach

- A number of new schools joining the programme this year hope to select students through working directly with their feeder Primary schools.
- This could be through delivering taster classes, running small selection tests, or gaining input from students' current teachers.

Student Interviews

- Alexandra Park School used interviews with students as the final part of their student selection process. This followed two months of students experiencing classes, an outreach class with the parents and a series of assessments.

Some schools indicated that they would make further changes to their selection process this year. Beths Grammar school will highlight to parents that the Mandarin Excellence Programme should not be seen as an extra-curricular subject- students who choose to join the programme will need to demonstrate their continued commitment and will need to attend all classes

(including those held after school). The school also intend to ask students to sign a learning contract as a means of highlighting the expectations of the programme.

Finham Park School intend to use an aptitude test as a second level of the selection process to ensure that students that wish to join the programme have a sufficient level of English to be able to cope with the translation aspects of the course.

Alexandra Park School will recognise all students who continue with the Mandarin Excellence Programme into Year 8 by awarding a Mandarin Excellence Programme badge at the end of the academic year – thereby offering greater prominence to the programme within the school community.

Special Events and Features

In addition to the standard teaching hours, schools also delivered a number of unique events and programmes throughout their year to further enrich the programme of study students received through the Mandarin Excellence Programme.

Beth's Grammar School, hosted "The Chairman's Bao" co-founder, who gave a talk to Mandarin Excellence Programme students about living in China, learning Chinese, studying at university and starting a business.

The English rock indie band Transition were welcomed by some schools, including the Anglo European School, Finham Park School and St Mary Magdalene Academy. During the workshops the group were able to talk about exploring Chinese culture, their adventures on the music scene and how they came to be writing songs in Mandarin. Transition were able to run a song and lyric-writing workshops for students, and then performed for students.

Beths Grammar School and the Anglo European School welcomed a cohort of visiting students from China, allowing students to meet and form friendships with their Chinese peers. At Beth's Grammar School, six girls and two boys aged 11-13 were buddied up with Mandarin Excellence Programme students in Year 7 for one week. The visiting students were able to experience an authentic English education by shadowing Beth's students, and all were given the opportunity to embrace a wide range of enrichment activities.

The Yellow Earth theatre group ran a day of Shadow Puppet workshops with the students at Finham Park School, on the theme of "The Great Race". They shared the story, taught the students the names of the 12 zodiac animals and gave students hands on experience of creating and showing an articulated shadow puppet. Finham Park School intend to continue working with the Yellow Earth theatre group as a way of combining cultural activities with target language.

Queen Marys Grammar School and Finham Park School will be joining together during the summer term to deliver a 3 day weekend residential course at an outdoors centre in Wales. During the immersion course pupils will have opportunity to attend teacher lead taught lessons and cultural activity specialists lead workshops. In addition to this, Queen Marys Grammar School will also run a Mandarin Chinese Week which will be operated on the school campus, and will include a visit to local areas like the Birmingham China Town during the last week of the summer term.

A variety of extra-curricular cultural events were delivered by schools throughout the year, in addition to the eight hours of Mandarin Excellence Programme teaching. Upton Hall School visited a local Confucius Institute and University Chinese Department. Other schools ran calligraphy lessons to help students learn the basic stroke order and to practise writing numbers, whilst Anglo European School ran a week-long cross curricular celebration of Chinese New Year. These activities were run by teachers from departments across the school, with the support from Hanban teachers. Extra-curricular activities delivered by schools included:

- Making dumplings in Technology
- Doing tai chi in PE
- Creating stain glass window cuttings in Art
- Learning about traditional Chinese instruments in Music
- Acting Mulan in Drama
- Taking part in a murder mystery involving the 12 zodiac animals in Maths

- Jianzi design project with the DT Department
- Making and launching rockets in Science
- A short trip to a local Chinese supermarket
- A group lunch in a local Chinese restaurant
- Chinese New Year Assembly
- Studying Confucius and Daoism in Religious Studies.

Gumley House School plan to encourage their Mandarin Excellence Programme students to carry out outreach work at local primary schools, and will encourage students to run a one off session for Year 5 students at a local primary school.

Testimonials

“Teaching the Mandarin Excellence Programme class has been the highlight of my teaching career so far. I have been amazed by their progress and enthusiasm for learning the language. Teaching 4 hours a week has allowed me to focus much more on pronunciation, tones and character writing; as well as including lots of cultural elements, which have helped engage and motivate students. I am particularly pleased that students are starting to manipulate the language for their own purposes and are very willing to experiment with new vocabulary and structures to ask for things in lessons, or to communicate with each other on Edmodo. Students have found learning Chinese hugely rewarding and have risen to the challenge exceptionally well.”

Miriam Williams

Lead Practitioner: Mandarin,
Manager of the Essex Confucius Classroom,
The Anglo European School

“I feel confident learning Mandarin. Before I wasn't sure about Mandarin. The MEP Programme has shown me so many open doors. I really like the MEP Programme a lot!”

“I absolutely love the MEP, it's a great learning experience and it's more than just a language. It's a cultural experience.”

“I'm learning an awesome language and it's helped me a lot. It will look good on my CV and it will help me get a job.”

“I enjoy the MEP for lots of different reasons. We all started not knowing anything and have grown as Mandarin speakers. The teachers are amazing and I know I have progressed lots. The MEP gives so many opportunities and is so much fun. In Y6 I was a little hesitant, but now I know I could not have chosen a better language. The four hours may seem a lot but it's all worth it. It will benefit me so much in the future. I love it.”

“I think that it's a brilliant opportunity to learn something I wouldn't have come across otherwise.”

“I enjoy MEP because I learn new things. I hope I can speak fluently in the future. I enjoy this sooooo much...Me and my brother sometimes revise together. He wants to make sure I do well in GCSE because he knows how hard it was for himself.”

“It is fun and the teachers are good at teaching and make everything fun! I feel I have made a lot of progress. In Y6 we started to do it and I am the only one from my primary school here doing it now. I have made lots of friends in Mandarin.”

Quotes from Year 7 students taking part in the Mandarin Excellence Programme, 2016 - 2017