

## Visit to Hotel La Place by students from Compton School



The fun-packed day involved around 12 students from Compton School who were studying either French, Spanish or Business Studies. The students that came were chosen by an application form completed during the visit by Hotel La Place to the school in March 2008.

The students, along with two teachers, arrived at the hotel around 2pm. It was decided in advance that the school would film the day for future activities and in order to use it as a teaching tool for new languages students in years to come.

We decided to split the students into different groups of those studying French, Spanish and Business Studies respectively, each sampling different activities. There were several activities involving front of house (reception, bar, restaurant) and back of house (recruitment, in-house training procedures, marketing). The day was rounded off with a question and answer session involving all the students and a small buffet of French and Spanish pastries, cakes and (non-alcoholic!) drinks).

### Learning the importance of customer service

The front of house language students did a role play on the front desk where they checked people in and explained about the hotel facilities. This was filmed and conducted in both French and Spanish. The languages students as well as the business studies students learned the importance of customer service – for example that first impressions are important and that the customer is always right. They also found out about professionalism in the workplace.

#### **Year group**

Year 9

#### **Group size**

12 students from Compton School in Barnet

#### **Location**

Hotel La Place, Marylebone, London

#### **Date**

12 July 2008

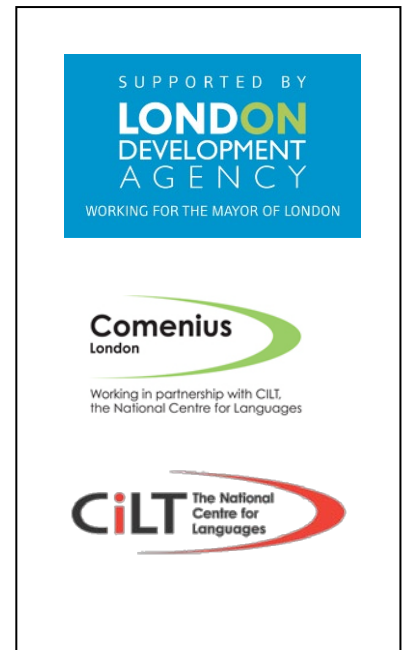
A similar scenario was conducted and filmed in the bar where the students were ordering wine. This was especially good for the French students as they could read the wine bottles in the bar and show where on the map the wines came from. Again, the customer service element came through for languages and business studies students.

The last role play scenario was based in the restaurant where the students were ordering food. Descriptions were made available in French and Spanish – and students had to translate some of each description before they could help themselves to any.

### Students playing roles saw themselves as employees

As hotel manager, I did a couple of talks on staff recruitment, training and development strategies and the future of the hotel industry. This was all done with an emphasis on the importance of languages and why they affect all aspects of the business. The day was rounded off by a question and answer session where students were allowed to ask any question they wanted. The teachers gave them index cards with questions, but I encouraged the students to think 'outside the box' and ask what they really wanted to know. This went down really well as they got to relax a bit more and feel like it was more fun.

The one thing that I noted from the day was when the students were playing roles and realised that they were employees. The students have never worked in a professional environment as they are too young. To gain an insight into welcoming customers and dealing with them made them think. It was fascinating to see how their expressions changed and how serious they became.



## Find out more

This report was kindly written by Hal Jaffer at Hotel La Place. For more information about their work, visit [www.hotellaplace.com](http://www.hotellaplace.com).

For more on the Business Language Champions programme and Hotel La Place's wider activity, visit [www.rln-london.com/champions](http://www.rln-london.com/champions).

