



Chinese families willing to forego traditional New Year celebrations so that children can learn English

News release

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Interest in juniors' English courses is so great in China that English UK members had to arrange unscheduled extra appointments with agents to meet demand on promotional tour.

The sixth annual English UK and British Council China Road Show attracted the highest-ever number of agents this autumn.

Sarah Wang, English UK's International Manager who runs the event, said: "It was a great success. Not only did we increase the number of meeting slots to 50 but educators met even more agents than they had scheduled. One said they had seen 100 during the week.

"Our seminar rooms were packed and the programme was really well-received.

"The popularity of the event is a good indication of the appetite for overseas programmes in China. The growing wealth of middle class families and steady economy will continue supporting the market growth.

"Educators said they are received a lot more enquiries about winter programmes than in previous years. It seems more Chinese families are willing to travel during the Chinese New Year, breaking the tradition of staying at home during this time. This is an emerging trend for coming years."

The Roadshow took 25 English UK member centres to three cities in China, Beijing, Shenzhen, and Chengdu, where new direct flights are creating an emerging market. The event attracted 400 agents in total, up from 370 last year and 150 the year before. Feedback showed that 90 per cent of the agents said the event met their expectations, and 94 per cent thought it was a high-quality experience.

Educator Lucy Greaves of Ardmore said: "The road show was an excellent opportunity to meet a wide selection of potential new partner agents in China. The event was very well organised and attended. We have already developed some new partnerships in the weeks following the trip and therefore feel very positive about our decision to participate."

The seminar programme included an introduction from English UK Chief Executive Eddie Byers, a market briefing from the British Council, a panel discussion of agents who took part in English UK's summer programme inward mission this year, and a training session from Nigel Heritage on best

practice in child safety. In addition, UK Visas and Immigration ran a session on visa applications, highlighting common mistakes. The party also enjoyed traditional Chinese dinners in each city, and managed to do some sightseeing, including Beijing's Forbidden City and Chengdu's panda park.

In addition, Sarah Wang and Eddie Byers took part in high-level meetings with Carma Elliot, Director of British Council China, Michael Yu, Chairman of New Oriental Education & Technology Group and Xiangdong Chen, CEO of Baijiahulian to discuss ways of expanding UK English Language provision in the Chinese market.

Notes to Editors

1. English UK is the world's leading language teaching association, with more than 470 accredited centres in membership. It covers university and further education college language departments, international study centres in independent schools, educational trusts and charities, and private sector colleges. English UK is a UK registered charity (www.englishuk.com).
2. For more information, contact Sarah Wang on 0207 608 7960 / sarah@englishuk.com