



Introduction to Le Poyenal French Language School

There can be many reasons to improve your French.

Maybe you want to be able to understand the language and customs more during those holiday trips, or need to strengthen your business French. Perhaps you are considering a move to France, or buying a second home here. Whatever the reason, a short residential course at Le Poyenal can provide the perfect solution.

With emphasis on all 4 skills - speaking, listening, reading and writing - our **Intensive Language Courses** cater for all levels of ability from beginner to advanced. Students are taught both in small groups and individually, and all those on residential courses can have one-to-one teaching every day.

Our friendly and supportive teaching methods are designed to help students gain a greater awareness not only of the French language itself, but also of the country's customs and culture. All this takes place within the relaxing atmosphere of our own home.

We live in an area of beautiful countryside, an ideal setting in which to improve your French.

We hope that you will find this brochure to be both interesting and helpful - please contact us if we can answer any queries or offer further assistance.



Linda and François Collet



We welcome students from around the world



We are happy to accept payments by VISA or MASTERCARD, either by telephone or via our secure website.

Contents	
Page	
1	Introduction to Le Poyenal
2	Language Courses
5	Courses combined with other topics
6	Accommodation
8	Our Teaching Experience
9	Comments from former students
10	Course fees and prices
12	The house and garden
14	Places of Interest in the area
16	Frequently Asked Questions
18	Travel to Le Poyenal
19	Terms and conditions

66 Rue Georges Clémenceau
85390 Bazoges-en-Pareds
Vendée
France

email: enquiries@lepoyenal.com

Tel: 02 51 51 26 85
Intl. Tel: +33 (0)2 51 51 26 85
From UK 0033 2 51 51 26 85

Fax: 02 51 51 35 94
Intl. Fax: +33 (0)2 51 51 35 94
From UK 0033 2 51 51 35 94



Language Courses

A short residential French language course here at Le Poyenal will improve your French (no matter what your current standard) helping you gain confidence as you learn and practice in a friendly and supportive environment.

Our approach to learning is both friendly and stimulating to help you gain confidence. The emphasis is on communication, both spoken and written, through active student participation - as well as on culture and current affairs.

You will be encouraged to read daily newspapers and to watch the news and weather forecasts on TV, and also to meet local residents in the village.

Courses are adapted to meet the needs of individual students and one-to-one tuition is available every day for all students. During these sessions conversation, grammar, cultural, business and professional aspects of French can be covered.

Accommodation is provided with us, not with families or at hotels. Each student has their own comfortable room, all with en-suite, TV and tea/coffee making facilities.

Meals are taken with us, with the exception of 'rest days' when students are able to please themselves - either to go out or to stay *chez nous* and relax in the gardens of the house.

Our methods are based upon immersion teaching, covering all aspects of the language with regular sessions on a one-to-one basis.

We are well equipped with all the facilities necessary to make your stay both successful and comfortable.



Emphasis on participation



Time for private study!



The library is well stocked with useful books and information



Key aspects of courses at Le Poyenval

- > Courses for all levels, from beginner to fluent.
- > Emphasis on communication, both spoken and written.
- > Active student participation in all aspects.
- > One-to-one tuition available every day for all students.
- > Tuition covers conversation, grammar, business and professional aspects of French.
- > Increased understanding of French culture and current affairs.
- > Courses are for 1 week, 2 weeks or by arrangement.
- > Maximum of 5 students per intensive course.

Thinking of moving to France?

To get the most out of a move to France it is essential to involve yourself with your new neighbours, and take part in the local community.

Whether you are just beginning to learn the language, or wish to build upon your existing ability and increase your fluency, we can help. Our Residential Tuition can be tailored to meet your needs and current standard and will increase your confidence in, and understanding of, the French way of life and customs.

Special arrangements for families

If you are moving to France with children, we may be able to arrange French Language Courses on a family basis. As always, our aim would be to adapt tuition to meet your needs and abilities.

Accommodation in one of our *gîtes* would enable the family to stay together. Please contact us for details.

When looking for help with my French I found Le Poyenval, and how glad I am that I did. Francois Collet combines all that is best in teaching, a love for his subject with the ability to impart it to his students.

With a group size of 4 maximum coupled with one-to-one sessions there is every opportunity to learn at ones own pace and Linda, his wife, produces wonderful food. The whole package comes in a delightful house, garden and proper French village. What more could one ask for??

Roger Hill, Berkhamstead.



Content of a typical day

Language courses at Le Poyenal are designed to match each pupil's needs and ability, with small groups of similar levels.

With emphasis on participation, the courses will help you to gain confidence in all aspects of communication whilst improving your understanding of the French way of life.

Tuition and practice will generally include some or all of the following:

- > Breakfast, lunch and dinner *en famille*
- > Classes in small groups, maximum 5 students, plus larger groups on some afternoons
- > Tuition *un à un* is available
- > Listening comprehension using radio, TV and classroom exercises
- > Visit to a nearby town or village, time and weather permitting
- > Involvement in aspects of village life
- > Self study time in our *bibliothèque*
- > Opportunities to watch French TV or films in free time, as well as reading French books and newspapers



Meal times

Breakfast at 8:30 am

Lunch from 13:00 to 14:00 pm

Dinner at 19:00 pm

Coffee and tea are provided during the short morning break.

Wine is provided with the evening meal.



Language courses combined with other topics

During 2012 we shall continue to offer our popular language tuition courses combined with another leisure-related course.

Courses are residential, and last for one week. Numbers will be limited to a maximum of 8 students per course. Courses available will include:

Parler and Paint - French tuition in the mornings, and practical art tuition (in our Art Gallery on-site) during the afternoons. Courses are led by a local French artist.

French and Photography - French tuition in the mornings, and practical photography tuition (in our Art Gallery on-site) during the afternoons. Courses are led by local photographer Jo Wilds.

Fees

Fees will be all inclusive, to cover courses, meals and accommodation here at Le Poyenval.

Equipment required

For the language tuition courses, we supply all materials and no other equipment is required. For the art study and photography part of the courses it will be necessary for students to bring their own basic materials. We shall be happy to advise if requested.

Levels of ability

We aim to be able to include students at all levels from beginner upwards, but we do not mix abilities.

Availability

Course numbers are limited, and offered on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Further details

Please contact us for further details.



The art course content will include painting (all mediums - oil, acrylic, watercolour, pastels etc.), sketching, or collage.



Accommodation

All students on residential French language Courses at le Poyenval stay with us, in our home, rather than in nearby hotel or guest house accommodation.



This helps students gain an increased understanding of French customs, way of life, and food.

Each student has their own comfortable room, including:

- > En suite facilities
- > French television
- > Tea/coffee making facilities

Meals are taken with us, except on rest days when students are able to please themselves - either to go out or stay chez nous.



Bedrooms are all en-suite, and come with French television and tea/coffee making facilities - everything necessary for a comfortable stay, with the added bonus (in most cases) of spectacular views over the village



Lounge and dining areas are spacious and comfortable, evocative of the style and atmosphere of the house and its history and an ideal place to enjoy a French meal en famille





The day starts with us and a typical petit déjeuner - croissants, cereal, yoghurts, fresh fruit, tea, coffee etc.



In the evening we serve a gourmet 4-course, typically French meal. Where possible, we include fruit and vegetables from our own kitchen garden in season.



Our large gardens are an ideal place to take a stroll, relax in peace and quiet - or perhaps enjoy a pique-nique.



During the summer students can relax by the outdoor swimming pool, or enjoy a game on the Piste de Boules



Great welcome, super food, delightful setting, excellent teaching - each on its own would make the trip worthwhile! The course gave me an understanding of a facet of life in France which is usually hidden from foreigners.

R J Hayes, West Sussex



François and Linda at Le Poyenval

To start at the beginning:

François Collet was born in Paris in 1948. His father was French and although his mother was born in Paris her parents were English, so she was not only bilingual but also had an inbred love of England. This she passed on to François.



After his education at the Science Université in Paris, English Literature (1st) at the Sorbonne, and the completion of his military service he decided to move to England permanently.

In 1998 François and Linda created a 'French Club', held once a month on a Saturday morning - hence the name: 'Samedi Matin'. After just a few months there were around 200 members, many of whom were already François' students. Excursions were planned to France for week-ends etc. and intensive french courses held at Linda and François' home, but always the question was asked: 'Why don't you start your own school in France?'

Eventually consideration had to be given to how 'Maman' (François' mother) would be cared for in the future. This, plus Linda's love of France, the language and the culture, and François' desire to return to his 'roots', led them to look for the 'perfect house' in early 2001. They found 'Le Poyenval'* at Easter and eventually moved in September. 'Maman' moved in to join them in November 2001.

Although the school was opened in October 2001 there was a lot of work to be carried out to the house and grounds. Bathrooms were added to all the bedrooms and three of the out buildings were converted to *gîtes*. A fourth outbuilding, a huge barn, was renovated to house the art gallery, studio and library. In 2003 François and Linda decided that a swimming pool was a must and this was installed for the summer of 2004, together with a 'boules piste'. The huge greenhouse, which was in a state of disrepair, has now been renovated and makes a lovely outdoor eating area.

Although François and Linda have almost finished the renovations they will continue to improve and decorate the house. Maman passed away at Easter 2007 having spent a tranquil 6 years at Le Poyenval, meeting hundreds of students and guests, and this kept her lively and active to the end.

*Linda explains:

(Le Poyenval did not have a name when we bought it. Our little cottage in the north of France is in an area called 'Le Petit Poyenval'. When the Maire of that village came to stay with us in England he presented us with a large sign (in typical french blue and white style) of 'Le Poyenval' and said that when we found a property big enough we should put the sign outside - hence the name.)





Comments from former students

I think my pre-nerves were clear to see when I turned up on their doorstep but as soon as I arrived I was made to feel very much at home. François is a fantastic teacher. He exudes an energy that is infectious and he really makes you want to learn. He teaches the language extremely clearly and I always felt comfortable to say 'je ne comprend pas!'

Linda runs the ship perfectly and always with a smile. She is a great cook and every day, without fail, the meals were delicious!

My stay went beyond my expectations, not only did I learn loads but the whole experience was so much fun and that was all down to Linda and Francois. I cant wait to come back for my next visit. So Merci beaucoup!

Laura Godbold (28) London, feb 2009

Thank you for sharing your home, the French Language, charming Bazoges and the French culture with us.

J., Waco (Texas)

There surely can be no better or more enjoyable way to improve your French than to take a course at Le Poyenval. I have now had two great weeks of tuition at Le Poyenval, enjoying the beautiful setting of the house, the countryside around Bazoges and Linda's wonderful cooking. I love the 'family environment' which Linda and François create. This is especially good for anyone on their own who, like myself, does not want to have to stay in a hotel on their own or with a French family of strangers (with often dubious bathrooms!).

With all your creature comforts taken care of, as students you are able fully to take advantage of the serious business of improving your French language. François teaches French grammar using one of the most clear and structured methods I have ever encountered and this soon helps you get to grips with the complexities of the language. This, combined with the gentle encouragement to speak at every opportunity, means that you make considerable progress in just one week. I have loved both of my weeks at Le Poyenval and I can't wait to go back for another course when funds and time allow.

Sheila Wright February 2009

I've so enjoyed my visit to your home, village, and to France. What a lovely way to learn your language. I hope to visit again. I leave with a warm feeling for France and feel I've made some new friends. Merci beaucoup!

Janean, Redding (California)

Here you can have your French as intensive as you want it. You can restrict it to the thought-provoking formal lessons, continue at table while enjoying the ample and varied meals, or speak it all the time. Whichever it is, you can relax into the family atmosphere and space provided by Le Poyenval, surrounded by the pleasant countryside of the Vendée.

D. Elkin, West Chiltington, England



Fees and Prices - from January 2012

Prices and Payment

Fees for our Language Courses are shown on the following pages, in Euros. We are able to accept payment by the following methods:

Deposit or other prepayments

Deposits for Language Courses can be paid by euro cheque, by sterling cheque, or by US dollar cheque. Alternatively, these payments can be made by Visa or Mastercard, by telephone or by using our secure website at: <https://secureuk.co.uk/lepoyenal/payment.htm>



Balance of fees

Balances for courses should be paid on arrival, in euros, by cheque or in cash, or by VISA/Mastercard.

Intensive (Residential) Tuition Courses

- Courses start on Monday and are available all year round from mid-January to mid-December
- Rest days are Saturday and Sunday; students should arrive on Sunday and depart on Saturday - if travel arrangements make this difficult students can book an extra night on a B&B basis
- Courses are for 1 week, 2 weeks, or by arrangement
- Maximum number of students per intensive course: 5
- One to one tuition if required is included in the course fees
- All course fees are fully inclusive. Fees quoted cover all tuition plus:
 - All teaching materials
 - Accommodation and meals (breakfast, lunch and 3 or 4 course evening meal with wine and coffee) in our home, plus a mid-week local cultural excursion, time and weather permitting
 - Tea / coffee making facilities in all rooms
 - All linen and towels
- Discounts may be available for couples on the same course - please ask for further details.

Non-residential Tuition Courses

Some non-residential courses are available - on a daily basis, or by the hour, or in Conversation Groups. Please ask for further details.



Special Combined Courses

On occasions during the year we offer language tuition courses combined with another, French-related course. Courses are residential, will be for a maximum of 8 students, and last for 1 week. Those available during 2012 include:

Parler & Paint - French Language Tuition in the mornings and Painting Tuition (in our Art Gallery on-site) during the afternoons. Field trips may be made, weather and time permitting.

French and Photography - French Language Tuition in the mornings and Photography Tuition (in our Art Gallery on-site) during the afternoons, with field trips.

Further details on request.

Fees (All prices in euros)

Residential Courses

For one week, including 3 hours daily of group tuition, plus five sessions of one to one tuition (45 minutes each session, one session per day), including meals and accommodation as above	€1195
For two consecutive weeks, details as for one week	€2195

Non-residential courses

Day courses, per day, including lunch	€130
Special rate when booking 5 days, taken together or separately, including lunches but not accommodation	€550
Individual tuition available by the hour, per hour	€50
Conversation groups - price per student, 1½ hours per session	€10

Special combined courses

Parler & Paint (maximum 8 students per course)	€1395
French and Photography (maximum 8 students per course)	€1395

Please note that places on combined courses are limited and so early booking is advised.



The House and Gardens

Le Poyenval stands on a corner in the village of Bazoges-en-Pareds in the Vendée, in the Western Loire. Over 100 years old, it has long played a prominent part in the life of the village and is known locally as 'Le Petit Chateau'.

The house

In typical French style the house is large and imposing, full of interesting shapes with balconies, tall shuttered windows, and several outbuildings. All rooms are large with imposing high ceilings, many with spectacular views over the village or surrounding countryside.



Lounge and dining areas are ideal to enjoy a French meal en famille. Bedrooms (all en-suite) are reached via differently-shaped hallways and staircases.



Lessons are held in a purpose designed, comfortable salle de classe, with a bibliothèque for reading or quiet study.



The gardens



Surrounding the house is a large garden and private park.

Dotted amongst the lawns, low stone walls (the remains of earlier buildings) mingle with many different types of tree. Shaped hedging borders some of the numerous paths, and vines thread their way in and out of a large greenhouse close to the house.

During summer months there is plenty of space to enjoy a picnic, relax by the swimming pool, play boules or make use of the barbecue and indoor or outdoor eating areas. Fruit and walnut trees grow in abundance, with an established *potager* providing daily fresh vegetables and soft fruit.

The village of Bazoges-en-Pareds

Le Poyenval lies close to the centre of Bazoges-en-Pareds, a small and delightful village in one of the most attractive regions of France.

It is still a 'living' village, with shops that include a *boulangerie*, *pharmacie*, *bar*, *restaurant* and so on surrounded mostly by active farm land.



Pride of place in the village centre, alongside the church, goes to Le Donjon - a 14th Century castle keep, restored and open to visitors every day in Summer and Sundays in Winter, and floodlit at night.





Places of interest in the area

Our village - Bazoges-en-Pareds - has much to offer visitors to Le Poyenal, but there are many other places of interest within easy driving distance. Just a few are shown here.

Excursions

Arrangements can be made for a tour of the local area at additional cost, if required



Ancient bridges and The Tower of Melusine at Vouvant, said by many to be one of the most attractive villages in France



The neighbouring village of Mouilleron-en-Pareds has a pretty square alongside the church, and is overlooked by the remains of a group of windmills





Towers guarding the Old Harbour at La Rochelle, once a major naval port and now a popular place to visit with waterfront restaurants alongside narrow streets brimming with shops



Boating in the green canals and rivers of the Marais Poitevin. There are many beautiful sights and picturesque villages along the waterways



The beach at Les Sables d'Olonne



Mussel farm at Charron, on the Atlantic coastline



Frequently Asked Questions

Courses and accommodation

Is there a minimum or maximum standard for students starting a course at Le Poyenval?

No. We cater for students from Beginners through to Advanced, enrolling them on a course with fellow students of a similar standard. Classes are in a small group, with each student receiving up to one hour's individual tuition each day.

What do course fees cover?

Everything that you need from arrival at Le Poyenval until departure - all meals, accommodation, and course materials as well as tuition.

How many students are on a course?

A maximum of five.

Are there any age limits on your courses?

We have no upper age limit. Attendance by those under 18 years is by arrangement.

Must I start my course on a particular day?

All courses start on a Monday. Students should arrive at Le Poyenval the day before so that they can meet fellow students, we can introduce ourselves and begin courses promptly on Monday morning.

What is the duration of a course?

This depends upon your own requirements - typically courses last for one or two weeks, sometimes more. The average stay on a course is 2 weeks.

Is there homework?

Some homework is required - amounts are variable. Time is set aside for periods of self-study.

Will I learn about the French people and French way of life as well as the language during a course?

Yes. We encourage students to study French newspapers, radio and television as a part of the course, and to experience the various facilities of our village, Bazoges-en-Pareds. When possible we take students on a short 'cultural' excursion to a local town, and students are included in activities in the village.

Will I have to eat French food, like snails?

We try to ensure that students experience many aspects of the French way of life whilst attending our courses, and the food that we serve is typically French. If you prefer not to try particular dishes, or have special dietary requirements, please let us know in advance.



Travel

What is the best way to travel to Le Poyenal?

We are easy to reach by road, rail or air. For those using rail or air we can usually arrange for an English-speaking driver to meet you at one of the local towns, at a small additional cost. More information is available on our website - or contact us direct.

Do I need a visa?

Citizens of countries within the European Union, and some other countries including parts of the USA, do not need a visa for a stay of a few weeks. More information can be obtained from the French Embassy in London or in the country of origin.

Should I rent a car?

Most students do not find it necessary to rent a car unless they wish to travel out of the area at weekends. We can arrange for transport from or to local airports and train stations if required. Cars can be rented at, for example, airports - we can arrange car rental locally at competitive rates, but 3 weeks notice is required usually.

Do I need to take out insurance?

We believe that it is always advisable to take out travel insurance, as for any trip overseas. This can be arranged in advance of your trip, perhaps through an insurance or travel agent. *Note: it is usually more economical to arrange insurance for a whole year rather than for an individual trip, especially if you travel often.*

General

Should I bring Euros with me?

Because our course fees are inclusive and cover all costs, you are unlikely to need much cash except for your own personal requirements. Automated cash machines are commonplace within France, allowing local currency to be withdrawn from bank accounts or credit cards.

Can I pay by credit card?

Yes, you can pay both deposit and balance by Visa or Mastercard.

Can I use Travellers Cheques?

Yes - but be aware that Travellers Cheques have become increasingly difficult to cash in France, and this can be done only at certain banks. However, we are able to take them in payment.

Is there access to the internet?

Limited free internet access is available in the village of Bazoges-en-Pareds and if you bring your own laptop computer there is a wi-fi connection at Le Poyenal.



Travel to Le Poyenal

Travel to Le Poyenal is easy - whether by car, rail or air. Bazoges-en-Pareds is situated in the Vendée, just south of the Loire Valley, with good access to the French Autoroute system, and to both the SNCF rail network and airports at Nantes & La Rochelle. Travel arrangements are the responsibility of the person making the booking, whether as a student or for holiday accommodation. However, we are happy to offer advice.

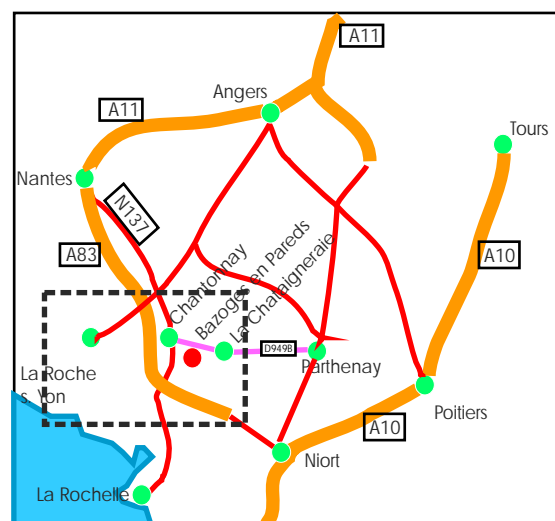


Suggested routes

By car:

We are about 3 hours from St Malo and 4 hours from Caen by road.

Bazoges-en-Pareds lies just to the south of the road between Chantonmay and La Châtaigneraie (the D949bis) - this can be reached from the Autoroute system using either A83 (Junctions 5 or 6) or A10 (Junction 29).



By rail:

Eurostar - from London or Ashford to Lille then by TGV to Nantes and on to La Roche sur Yon.

By air:

It is possible to fly from many airports to either Nantes or La Rochelle.

Please note:

We can usually arrange for our guests to be met by a driver at local train stations or airports, at additional cost - ask for details.

Climate

We are in the Vendée area of France, just South of the Loire Valley.

The climate here is temperate, with mild winters and summers that are not-too-hot. The area usually has around the same number of hours of sunshine as the South of France (average 2500 annually).



Terms and Conditions

Booking deposit

For all courses and accommodation, a deposit of 50% of the total booking value is required at the time of acceptance of booking.

Deposits for language courses or holiday accommodation can be paid by euro cheque, by sterling cheque, or by US dollar cheque. Alternatively, these payments can be made by credit card (Visa or Mastercard).

Tuition courses

In the case of tuition courses, there will be a cancellation fee of half the initial deposit for all cancellations made in writing less than 60 days before the agreed commencement date of the course. We reserve the right to cancel a course if we are unable to establish a group of 3 or more, in which case we will endeavour to find an alternative course or reimburse any deposit paid in full.

The balance is payable in full on arrival at Le Poyenval in Euros, by cheque, cash or credit card (Visa or Mastercard).

Chambre d'hôte accommodation

For Chambre d'hôte (B&B) accommodation, deposits will be refunded in full for cancellations made in writing more than 60 days before the scheduled arrival date. Between 30 and 60 days prior to arrival date a deduction equivalent to 10% of the total booking fee will be made from the deposit paid if no alternative accommodation is available or required. For cancellations made less than 30 days prior to arrival date any deposit paid is non-refundable.

The balance is payable in full on arrival at Le Poyenval in Euros, by cheque, cash or credit card (Visa or Mastercard). Evening meals, where required, are payable on a daily basis..

Gîte accommodation

For Gîte accommodation, booking deposits are non-refundable. The balance of the total booking value is payable 4 weeks before the scheduled arrival date, payment method as for the deposit.

A further security deposit amounting to 20% of the booking value will be required on arrival and will be returned, subject to satisfactory inspection of the accommodation and any equipment fitted or made available by us, on departure. Retention of this deposit, in part or in full, shall be at our sole discretion and shall not prevent us from seeking additional compensation if appropriate.

Electricity in excess of 10 units per week is charged at cost, payable at the end of the stay.

General

Our ability to provide language courses and accommodation is subject to availability. The content of our brochures or website is for information purposes only, and does not form the basis of any contract or offer.

