

Consultation Questions

Section 1

1. Do you agree with the reasons given for promoting and learning languages on pages 4 and 5, and that these are the main reasons for supporting current language initiatives in Scotland? If not, why not?

All agree with the reasons given for promoting and learning languages. We also agree that these are the main reasons for supporting language initiatives in Scotland.

All agree that the language initiatives described are the key areas for language promotion in

<p>2. Do you agree that the language initiatives described on pages 6 – 12 and elsewhere are the key areas for language promotion in Scotland? If not, why not?</p>	<p>Scotland. We would further emphasise the importance to the Scottish economy, and to Scottish society generally, of language learning to a high (ie genuinely useful / usable) standard. To be competitive and to ensure that our young people are highly employable, we need to actively address the fact that –in the UK 62% of people admit to not knowing any language other than their first language.–</p>
<p>3. Do you agree that the key principles listed on pages 14 and 15 should shape language activity in Scotland? If not, why not?</p>	<p>All agree that the key principles as listed in the draft strategy should shape language activity in Scotland.</p>
	<p>We would like to offer the following comments on the draft strategy in relation to the promotion of languages in Scotland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All those who responded welcome the document. • English Language • All recognise the importance of acquiring English language skills. • English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) • The SQA framework for ESOL was welcomed. Respondents would like to see interlinking between the SQA framework for ESOL and the ESOL Strategy, when the latter is launched. • English as an Additional Language (EAL) • The draft document is inadequate with regard to EAL and community languages as it does not reflect the current scenario. • Steps need to be taken to ensure adequate English tuition is provided for families of new arrivals to Scotland. • Speakers of minority languages have been coming to Aberdeen since 1972 but the amount of EAL funding has not increased. Resources can be accessed through Additional Support for Learning funding but there is a need to increase the number of EAL co-ordinators. • Gaelic (See separate submission from the Gaelic Advisory Group – Aberdeen City) • Scots • All respondents are pleased to see mention of the Scots language as –an important part of Scotland’s cultural heritage.– Scots language, including Doric, is promoted in Primary and Secondary schools in Aberdeen City. • British Sign Language • The Hearing Support Service is particularly pleased to see that British Sign Language (BSL) is given recognition as a –real, full and living language.– • In connection with the above the Hearing Support Service stresses that deaf pupils can only acquire English Language skills through using their first language which is BSL. Also, these pupils can often only access the rest of the curriculum and

4. Are there any other comments you would like to offer on this strategy in relation to the promotion of languages in Scotland?

many teaching and learning activities via BSL. Therefore, it is vital that the teachers employed to deliver the curriculum are highly skilled in BSL. This is, indeed, one of the competencies required to achieve the standard for the mandatory qualification to teach deaf pupils. (The requirements for Teachers (Scotland) Regulations 2005.) There should be a focus on increasing the BSL skills of teachers as well as increasing the number of BSL / English interpreters. The deaf pupils who receive their education through BSL, have a right to a curriculum which will develop their own language skills. This should be included in any action plan to develop BSL. As it has been recognised as one of Scotland's languages, opportunities for gaining recognised SQA qualification in BSL, should be further developed. Other Minority / Community Languages The strategy needs to connect with the numerous complex issues around language learning, such as tackling xenophobia and racism; working towards community cohesion; adapting / promoting language learning and teaching opportunities in line with migration patterns. Language Learning Modern Languages teachers welcome the continuation of the Languages Fund for session 2007-08. Over the last few years this funding has enabled the following:

- Several cohorts of Primary teachers have been trained to deliver Modern Languages in the Primary School (French + German).
- All pupils from P6 at the latest, are able to access the learning of a Modern Language through suitably trained peripatetic Modern Languages in the Primary School (MLPS) teachers.
- In those Primary Schools where there are no MLPS trained teachers, MLPS is delivered by peripatetic Modern Languages specialists.
- Additional teaching resources have been purchased.
- Innovative Modern Languages activities have taken place.
- Foreign Language Assistants (French / German / Spanish) drawn from the local community, have been employed on temporary contracts, allowing pupils to access native speakers of the Modern Languages which they are studying.
- Collaborative working between Primary and Secondary Modern Languages teachers has facilitated P7 to S1 transition in Modern Languages.
- School links with other countries have been established.
- Primary and Secondary Modern Languages teachers

have participated in Immersion Courses abroad.

• A Curriculum Support Teacher for Modern Languages 5-18 has been seconded to coordinate all of the above. Continuation and development of the above are dependent on the continued provision of the Languages Fund from the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED).

• It was disappointing to learn that the review of Initial Teacher Education (Primary) (June 2005) did not include Modern Languages as a core subject. For the strategy to be a success, this needs to be addressed.

• Spanish is becoming recognised as a European language which is spoken world wide. The Education system at the moment perpetuates the learning and teaching of French, to the detriment of other languages, eg. Spanish. This situation needs to be addressed.

• "Citizens of a Multilingual World" encourages continuity in the one / same language from P6 into the Secondary Stages. This is helpful in that prior learning in P6 and P7 is recognised and built on as pupils move to the Secondary Stages of schooling. However, in practice, this has discouraged rather than encouraged, diversification.

• The word "entitlement" and "Circular 3/2001" on curriculum flexibility, have resulted in lower numbers of pupils opting to learn a Modern Language in Secondary schools.

• Plans could allow state schools to show an interest in emerging languages such as Mandarin and Arabic.

• Learning a Modern Language should be a requisite, or advisable extra qualification, for courses such as Travel and Tourism / Hospitality.

• Modern Language learning "clearly contributes" to developing the 4 capacities of A Curriculum for Excellence (ACE). Language learning, therefore should be given more prominence in the curriculum.

• Reference could be made in the strategy, to the "Common European Framework", as it provides a useful way to recognise achievement in foreign language learning and other community languages learning.

The following are some initiatives which are currently contributing to the success of the Languages Strategy:

• Seconded Development Officers / Curriculum Support Teachers are in place eg. for English Language, Mathematics, Multicultural Anti-racist Education, Modern Languages, Gaelic and International Education.

5. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, how do you think you may be able to contribute to the success of the strategy?

i, An Inter Authority (North East of Scotland) ACfE Project Officer for English Language is seconded to post. i, All of the above secondees work towards driving forward HMIe and SEED recommendations within their particular curriculum / subject area in our schools and communities. i, Our EAL Service also links with the secondees as listed above. i, We have a Nursery / Primary and a Secondary Gaelic Unit. i, The Early Primary Partial Immersion (French) Project at Walker Road is currently being extended in to Torry Academy. i, There are links with the Lybian School, the Chinese School, the International School, the French School (Total) and the Arabic School, all based in Aberdeen City. i, The Hearing Support Service, which is part of the Sensory Support provision within the City also currently contributes to the success of the Languages Strategy. i, Community Planning and Regeneration (International) and International Education also link with the above, where appropriate. Furthermore, contribution to the success of the Languages Strategy can come through: i, Providing language learners and their teachers with creative and innovative opportunities to use, practise and develop their skills. i, One initiative which could be further developed, is the use of existing international links such as twin city partnerships, global schools partnerships. i, With regard to community languages, there are plans to provide Continuing Professional Development Courses for class teachers who are keen to build up resources and expertise, aiming to further assist those pupils who are the families of new arrivals to Scotland. i, All of the above are dependent on the provision of adequate resources, both human and financial.