

Languages Network Group Scotland – LANGS

Minutes of Meeting

The Ramshorn, Ingram Street, Glasgow

Friday, 01/11/2019

Salvete:

- Karen Faulds (SCILT) Primary PDO, joining Sheena Bell (Secondary PDO). One other PDO in course of appointment. (Update: Lisa Hanna has now joined SCILT as Secondary PDO).
- Javier Ramos Linares – Education Adviser, Consejería de Educación (unable to be here today)
- Ross Cumming, Scottish Government, replacing Susan Waugh
- Lisamarie Purdie, EO, West Lothian Council
- Rona Grant, taking over from Lorna Murdoch, Clackmannanshire Council
- Jackie Funnell, Fife Council, taking over from Tamsin Frost
- Chris French, representing Stirling Council

Valete:

- Angela de Britos and Clare Mouat from SCILT have taken up jobs with Strathclyde University as teaching fellows.
- Madeleine McGirk from SEET has now moved on to another job
- Phyllis Green, West Lothian – returned to school
- Robert Dalzell, retiring after many years' faithful service in North Lanarkshire. (Further tributes later on today.)

Changes in LANGS personnel

- Sylvia Georgin (Aberdeenshire) will be taking over as Chair; she will co-chair, with Bethan, in March.
- Chris French will take over as Vice Chair. Angela Noble, current Vice Chair, stepping down: she said this had been a great experience and she'd particularly enjoyed bringing North Ayrshire pupils to meetings.

Minutes/Matters Arising: Passed, as circulated.

Updates from Bethan:

- *Question from SCILT Advisory Board.* What is the best way of getting SCILT, and 'general MFL' messages across to Head Teachers? Traditionally, it was via Local Authority reps...but is this the best way, and are there any GDPR implications for mailing lists etc? What about using a school office distribution list instead, for example? Particularly for Primary Schools (and where there are non-linguist PTs in Secondary). (Update: SCILT is compiling a school office distribution list).

SCILT update: Fhiona Mackay:

- It's great to welcome you to SCILT's new home, The Ramshorn; much better, bigger and more versatile space available to us, to external partners and to stakeholders.

- QFI: The Qatar Foundation International: looking to develop L3 Arabic for upper primary, S1/S2; in partnership with E-Sgoil; they are also developing a Senior School Arabic enrichment course. Looking for 10 schools to pilot; Argyll & Bute, City of Glasgow have already expressed interest. Arabic is a world language, lingua franca; an important tool in fighting islamophobia etc. *Tony Calderbank*: e-Sgoil was primarily set up to teach Gaelic in Western Isles; Eòghan Stewart (previous Gaelic PDO with SCILT) has worked a lot with it.
- SCILT is planning to have a GTCS registered Mandarin teacher to support authorities. Lessons will be recorded and made available via the website.
- Employability Award being launched today.
- SCILT website: Sarah Macfarlane and information team have done a huge amount of work on website; really pleased with the result; it is now much easier to navigate etc. Sarah happy to help with any queries.
- Pupils from Glasgow schools have produced a Digital Trail round the grade A listed building. The digital trail provides information about the history of the building, the university and facts about the surrounding area and is available in 9 different languages. This offers a potential prize (to come and do the trail) for school competitions etc. For more information, contact Alice Lister in the SCILT office – alice.lister@strath.ac.uk

Education Scotland: Louise Glen: 1+2 Survey: Findings:

- *Providing full L2 entitlement:*
 - Primary: from P1 onwards: 91%
 - Secondary: 62% (sic).
 - BTC3 advice was that MFL entitlement continue to end S3. Some schools still haven't adopted that in their planning. HTs still asking *who* is entitled...is it pupils who started in P1, P3, P5? Still improving.
- *L3 entitlement:*
 - Primary: 47%. Pretty heartening, given message was 'get L2 right first'.
 - Secondary: 83%. Perhaps less surprising than it might appear, since secondaries usually have dual linguists and L3 is more flexible.
- NB: all stats have a health warning!
- *Reasons for not providing L2/L3:*
 - Both P&S: Competing priorities
 - P: Insufficient training
 - S: Timetabling
 - P: Teacher confidence
 - S: Staff availability
 - P: Teacher movement
- So – how do you explain to HTs (particularly primary) that 1+2 is not a 'competing priority', any more than Maths is? *Shoulder discussion:*
 - None of our educational priorities should be class-based; it's precisely 'PEF pupils' who need the input that more affluent children might get at home.

- There have always been ‘competing priorities’, though some priorities seem to be more competitive than others
- Leadership needed from Mr Swinney downwards.
- They are priorities, not *competing* priorities; you wouldn’t not be doing Maths because of other things.
- Aberdeenshire Council had provided exemplar SIPs, showing how MFL impacted on literacy etc.

Difficulties you have encountered in ensuring all have access to training:

- Difficulty travelling to and from events
- Not all primary HTs view PLL as a priority
- Finding a training resource that is suitable in time, content, location and sustainability has proved a challenge
- Lack of motivation
- Language learning takes a significant amount of time; teachers feel deskilled and lacking in confidence

What will you be doing to continue training being available?

- Planned, proportionate programme of twilight sessions throughout the year, in accordance with SWTAs
- Resources are available on an ‘anytime, anywhere’ basis and are flexible to staff needs.
- Targeting key forum groups e.g. cluster meetings, PTs, MFL Networks...
- Use of e-Sgoil to deliver additional language learning for teachers.

Reminder: *sufficient time allocation to the L2...definition.* So secondaries need to look at their curriculum planning ...4 periods of MFL should not be unusual!

Shona Hugh: Curricular Support: “Delivering Scotland’s Languages Policy.”

- All available via the National MFL Hub - <https://glowscotland.sharepoint.com/sites/PLC/modernlanguages/SitePages/Home.aspx>
- (Note: requests from pupils still coming in to access this for themselves.)
 - Progression 1st → 4th Level
 - Support & Guidance for Teachers
 - Low Tech
 - Variety of pupil activities for pairs/groups
 - Using a range of texts
 - In French, but can be adapted for any language
 - Astérix chez les Pictes
 - *Les Histoires d’Angus*
 - *Le Zoo de Vincennes*
 - *Le Grand Voyage*
 - *A l’école*
 - *J’ai faim*
 - 1st → 2nd: ‘All About Me’
 - Teacher Guide
 - Linked pupil activities across the 4 skills

- Generic progression framework
- KaL Grammar Grid 1st → 4th level
- Presentations for teachers, focussing on each skill
- 2nd → 3rd : *'Ma Vie au Collège'*
 - Teacher Guide
 - Linked pupil activities across the 4 skills
 - Generic progression framework 2nd → 3rd and 3rd → 4th
 - Presentation for teachers on developing each skill
 - Grammar exemplar – present tense
- 3rd → 4th: *'L'environnement'*
- Guidance for teachers
- Set of materials built around a context
- CLPL presentation on skill development
- Linked pupil activities synthesising the four skills
- Suggestions for delivering grammar in context.

Jenny Carr, Scotland Russia forum:

Building a course for the British Council Schools Online website, modelled on existing Arabic one. If anyone would like to trial it, or help build it, they'd be welcome.

Collaborative Conversations:

A: Liz Neil, Gerry McIntosh, British Council: How international activity can support language learning and teaching:

- International Teaching & Learning
- Involves...
 - All Scotland's universities and HEIs
 - All college regions
 - About a third of Scotland's schools
- CPD
- International Linking
- Language Learning
- Classroom resources
- Particular projects:
- Erasmus+
 - 25-30% of all UK applications were Scottish and 90+% of those language related.
 - KA1: Highland - €309k for language training. Consortium bids (North Ayrshire, Dumfries & Galloway, amongst others, have done this, on behalf of a number of schools)
 - 2019: applicants in Scotland were allocated €1.8m
 - €1.1m awarded to 9 LA bids, with a further 53 individual school bids
 - St Mark's PS were awarded €143,250 for the *Different Together – Building Approaches to Bilingualism, Pluriliteracies and Cultural Diversity to promote inclusion, HWB and Raising Attainment through School Partnerships*. The

project aims to build capacity in supporting inclusion and HWB in schools through sharing of practice across a range of EU countries.

- KA2: Neilston PS: great case study – Scottish Education Awards 2019 winner.
- Business as usual, until such time as we are not in the EU.
- David Kerr reported he was recently back from supporting D&G Primary Teachers in a week's work shadowing in their partner authority in Nancy-Metz. Whole experience had been excellent, with tremendous benefits to schools staff and pupils on both sides. There has been historically quite a bit of traffic France → Scotland, but little return traffic from D&G, where non-linguist staff can lack confidence that they will be able to cope when plunged into a completely foreign language environment. This Erasmus application had been premised on encouraging work shadowing trips by D&G staff to France in an environment where they would feel supported. Very successful trip, staff had confirmed they felt supported and had, of course, not only coped well, but produced very fine work in the schools they visited, engaging fully with pupils, teachers etc; and made foundations for lasting partnerships between their respective schools. All made possible by the Erasmus funding. The completion of the application had been somewhat challenging, but there had been much help from Angela Noble (who had done it before) and from the British Council themselves. Some challenges, also, in getting LA Finance Depts to understand, and adapt to, the precise situation, but a highly recommended, and worthwhile enterprise...hoping that, however Brexit turns out, this kind of project will continue to be possible in future years.

- Connecting Classrooms
- E-twinning: nice & easy to set up; small scale possible. 'Culture in a box' project kit.
- Modern Language Assistants: again, a highly worthwhile project.
- Connecting Classrooms – focussing on global goals
- There is a "tangible difference between schools who have taken part in international activity and those who haven't."

B: BSL in schools: Frankie McLean, BSL Policy officer.

- Update on current SG thinking etc.
- Momentum is building; number of schools offering BSL has doubled, maybe more than that.
- SCILT also looking at strategy. The Country Needs You!
- Where are we now? – boost L3 offer; work towards robust L2 offer.
- Identify good practice – Dingwall Academy, Broughton HS, Dundee developing things as well.
- Queen Margaret University are offering a course; 120 students involved so far. Basic, but a good start; builds confidence and interest. Very positive feedback, backed by strong attendance.
- Consistent approach important; sharing learning.
- Demand is known to be there. This is not just about hearing children; the policy also benefits deaf children, deaf parents etc in community; helping them get involved in schools, be included.
- Remember this is the L1 of deaf children.

- Makaton used by a number of people, but it's a communication system (as are sign-along etc), not a language.
- We need to ask what, particularly for BSL, but also others, will continue, post-1+2, when the funding goes?
- Need for resources; SG have made a small amount of money available to create hub and resources.
- Problems: who teaches the tutors? Short term: BSL tutors alongside teachers (SG have funded a bit); longer term: BSL teachers, whether hearing or L1 deaf people. Need to ensure posts are there.
- Involving deaf people: some can feel proprietorial...but it's a language for everyone; collaboration, creating opportunities are key.
- So...next steps, barriers etc?
- There are 13k approx. BSL users in Scotland; but it is not known how many are actually deaf. Besides, these are 2011 figures, so a new, and more nuanced, survey needed.
- Gaelic speakers would have to learn BSL, there's no Gaelic sign language as such. But BSL does adapt to local dialects...you can to some extent tell from their use of BSL where someone is from.
- Ann Robertson: It would be great if Scotland became a BSL literate country. There must also be cognitive benefits since it's a physical, rather than spoken, language.
- Frankie spoke at the Danish parliament last weekend; Danes really impressed by engagement of SG and Scotland in general.
- Sylvia Warnecke: How does it work communicating with school?
- Frankie: I *don't* use my daughter as an interpreter. 90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents. Communicating with teachers: I do it by text, which is brilliant...obviously teachers knowing BSL would be better.
- Thanks to Jill, the interpreter.

Gillian Campbell-Thow paid tribute to Robert Dalzell, mentioning his huge influence on COALA, and now LANGS. Gillian's advice from her departing predecessor: 'always attend COALA, always listen to Robert!' Gillian referred to Robert's wisdom and his service to German, to Gaelic learning and much else. 'He is highly organised and hard-working but has also demonstrated a good work life balance. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to have worked with him; there will be a number of 'Robert-shaped holes' about the place, in North Lanarkshire and far beyond, after his departure,' she added. Members gladly joined in the tribute to this much loved, and respected, figure. We will miss you, Robert.

Scottish Languages Employability Award Launch:

Eòghan Stewart presented the new Languages Employability Award:

- Schools and businesses across Scotland can now receive recognition for successful partnership working in promoting languages as a key skill for employment.
- The Scottish Languages Employability Award, developed by SCILT, in partnership with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, encourages innovation and creativity in the promotion of language skills through meaningful engagement between employers and schools.
- Available at 3 levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold. There is also a Platinum Level, awarded permanently, following two successive Gold Awards.

- A toolkit has been developed to support schools in achieving the Award, available in Gaelic and English through support from the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund.
- A verification timetable will be in place from January, 2020.
- There are two deadlines every year for applications for an Award. The next deadlines for submissions are: Friday 17 January 2020 and Friday 15 May 2020.
- The [toolkit for applying for the Scottish Languages Employability Award](#) is available to download from the SCILT website together with Case Studies from the successful pilot schools.

Three Awards were presented to schools whose links with employers have demonstrated to learners how languages can be used in the world of work:

St Mary’s Bannockburn: Silver

St Mary’s Primary in Bannockburn linked with local historic attraction Bannockburn House in a project that saw pupils work with staff from Bannockburn House to create a range of resources in French for tour guides to use with French-speaking visitors.

- Judges noted:
 - A project with Bannockburn House
 - P4-5 and P7 Language Ambassadors
 - Materials produced using ICT
 - Information for Visitors
 - Enthusiasm
 - A culture of valuing language learning

Bishopbriggs Academy: Gold

Bishopbriggs Academy submitted a wide range of projects from across the school: language-promotional events, Gaelic film projects and German science projects. Using the toolkit to capture the school’s innovation allowed Bishopbriggs to become the first secondary in Scotland to gain a Gold Award.

- Judges noted:
 - An S3 Languages Day
 - An S6 Migration and Welcome project
 - A German film project
 - An S1 Gaelic Film project
 - A 10 year Goethe Institut celebration
 - An S3 German IDL Science project

Stirling Learning Community: Gold

The “Chinese Tuesdays” project, centred at Braehead Primary in Stirling, saw seven primaries in the Stirling Learning Community come together in a multi-disciplinary project involving media, cookery, art and drama.

- Judges noted:
 - “Chinese Tuesdays”
 - The involvement of 7 Primary Schools
 - The Braehead Confucius Hub
 - Foreign language medium classes and various activities

The awards were handed to pupils representing each school or community by Jim Whannel, Director of Education for Bòrd na Gàidhlig, who reminded us, amongst other things, that it is good to learn language, but even better to learn *through* language. And that, with languages, you need never retire!

Afternoon Session:

- Languages Week Scotland: will be 3-7 Feb 2020
- Suggest Short Life Working Groups at Authority level.
- SG wholeheartedly support it.
- SCILT supportive, but many of the staff are new and can't do anything more this year, other than host the launch event.
- Jane Renton has said that SG should put an equal amount of resources into this as Maths Week and will do what she can to get them to do that.
- DFM Mr John Swinney has confirmed he will attend Languages Week Scotland launch.
- RIC support...RICs have quite substantial budgets (though not specifically for MFL)
- 'Game changer will be when it moves beyond education' – possibility of involving chambers of commerce etc?
- Languages Landscape Maps: mapping what languages are used where in your area. Interview with people – 'what brought you here?' etc. See North Ayrshire's 'Family Fusion': to celebrate mother tongues: Scots, Poles, Syrians...involved food; readings of the Gruffalo in Scots; numbers 1-10 in various languages. Children ended up doing the teaching. Community cohesion.
- Gather resources for all of this and put on SCILT website.
- Could we theme it as well...'community' or something?
- Communal platform or similar that everyone could use would be good...such as Duolingo, but, even though it is freely available, it might be problematic appearing to endorse a specific product. Maybe a common Google drive?
- Video staff/pupils saying 'my favourite word in [French] is ["vlan!"]'.
- Use LANGS Twitter: would it be possible to involve Mr Swinney, Ms Sturgeon?