Encouraging modern languages to flourish in the senior phase

COALA

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A national overview

- Profile of modern languages in the curriculum has declined
- Since 2001 removed from the core in many schools
- Since advent of CfE languages uptake slumped post BGE
- Modern languages now has a high political profile with the 1+2 strategy.
“The world is changing rapidly and radically and the Government has a duty to ensure that Scottish schools prepare young people so they can flourish and succeed in the globalised, multi-lingual world we now live in.

“One indisputable aspect of modern life is that more people travel widely for jobs and leisure and we must respond accordingly; we will not be as successful as a country and economy if we remain essentially a mono-lingual society.”
The statistics

- **Numbers of pupils sitting S Grade or Intermediate French in 2013**: 27,505
- **Number of N4 & N5 French candidates presented in 2014**: 14,512
- **Number of Intermediate French pupils in 2014**: 2,826

Total: 17,338

Drop of 37%
The statistics

**German**

- Numbers of pupils sitting S Grade or Intermediate German in 2013: 5,571
- Number of N4 & N5 German candidates presented in 2014: 3,205
- Number of Intermediate German pupils in 2014: 397

Total: 3,602

Drop of 35%
The statistics

Spanish

• Numbers of pupils sitting S Grade or Intermediate Spanish in 2013: 6,876

• Number of N4 & N5 Spanish candidates presented in 2014 – 4,463

• Number of Intermediate Spanish pupils in 2014: 1,280

Total 5,743

Drop of 16 %
What the practitioners said....

• Conversation day in June 2014
• 40 schools invited, 10 schools took part.
• Sharing good practice on key features of departments.
• Case studies of 4 schools
Key questions asked...

• Courses
• Assessment
• Experiences outwith the classroom
• Pupil voice
• Other features...
Leadership and Ethos

No surprises but we still need to emphasise basic good practice such as.....

• **Strong leadership** and a shared vision with staff.
• **consistent use** of the target language in classrooms for day to day working
• ensuring consistent **high quality learning experiences**, where all learners needs are met
• creating an **ethos of achievement** in language learning
Courses ..

- linking language learning to **other areas of the curriculum**

- creating **relevant and motivational** activities allowing learners to work on **real life contexts**

- involving **native speakers** in the department – MLAs and others

- having **solid transition arrangements** with cluster primary schools to allow immediate progression in S1 – from P7 language learning experience - no fresh start.
Courses..

- setting up video links to partner schools in the local authority bringing contexts for learning to life.
- making creative use of ICT to engage learners, such as recording and giving peer feedback on talking activities
- using digital recorders and tablets to record group work and give feedback; using mobile phones to record and prepare for talking assessments.
- offering more choice by learning 2 languages throughout the BGE with built-in depth and progression pathways.(L3?)
Courses ..

- offering **master-classes in other languages** to broaden the language learning experience in the BGE.. L3?
- using **language ambassadors from university** (including former pupils) to talk about learning languages.
- involving **senior pupils as peer tutors** in junior classes.
Approaches to assessment..

- offering **Languages for Work Purposes** award to motivate learners and assuring an award in the modern language by the end of the BGE.
- using Higher & Advanced Higher pupils to **video record listening assessments** for younger pupils.
- offering a **flexible approach to NQs** with most able progressing to Higher and bypassing N5.
- offering **stand-alone unit awards** as short courses.
Pupil voice..

- responding to informal feedback from pupils on their learning experiences in the modern language classroom to shape courses and teaching strategies. (post-it feedback; focus groups)

- Using pupil feedback to influence curricular choice e.g. offering a second language in senior phase because of pupil demand.

- using more formal methods of seeking pupil opinion through “surveymonkey” to evaluate particular aspects of courses.

- planning popular unit of work at options time to encourage pupils to continue with language learning beyond the BGE.
Outwith the classroom ...

• offering trips and visits in S4/5/6 as language learning and **cultural visits** and where possible linking with colleagues in other departments to give an IDL angle for pupils.

• offering a **week-end or all day immersion event** in collaboration with other schools to develop confidence in talking in the target language.

• taking part in **competitions and debates**.
Outwith the classroom..

- setting up **exchanges** can give a high profile to language learning across the school through actual **visits** or **video links**.
- **involving staff** across the school with language ability to take part in **spontaneous conversations** with pupils to prepare for talking assessments.
- using **foreign film** to stimulate learners through after school clubs or cinema visits.
Other ideas...

• creating a **modern languages blog** on your school website to give information, support materials and feedback to pupils and parents.

• using your **modern languages website** to give links to homework and assessment preparation.

• making **partnerships** with other bodies such as the *Goethe Institut, Alliance Française; Institut Français, Consejería de España* and SCILT and trying initiatives such as the, “Business Language Champions,” project.

• Creating links using the **British Council** to consider Comenius projects and “Connecting classrooms”, initiatives.
Other ideas...

• holding a **languages event** to raise the profile of language learning in your school e.g European day of Languages

• using the **parent council** to find parents using languages in their day to day work to be guest speakers or to blog on your web-site.

• offering **specialist input** to upper primary courses, or stand alone units of work (dictionary skills; approaches to reading, grammar)
Our role...to support schools and modern languages departments by...

- **providing advice** to departments on promoting languages in the senior phase
- hosting a **Saturday morning event** in Spring 2015 with SCILT to include presentations from schools
Planned support 2015

• Guidance for L3, the second modern language including case studies from the primary and secondary sector
• Es &Os for first level modern languages - March 2015
• Glow meets with a skills focus (3 over the year) Wed 25th Feb & Wed 29th April
• SCILT/ES Saturday morning event- spring 2015 Focus - senior phase.
• Conference for LA development officers- 14th May 2015
• AH and N2 support materials on GLOW
Planned support 2015-6

• T.T.T. July 2015
• Review of K.A.L. and Progress and Achievement docs
• Exemplification of P & A in modern languages.

• ES modern languages professional learning community

BabelOn
Questions?
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