

LANGUAGES 1+2 POLICY

STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

Introduction

The Scottish Government have set an ambitious and challenging agenda for future language learning and teaching in Scotland's schools.

Following a manifesto commitment in September 2011, the Government set up a Languages Working Group to consider how to deliver a '1+2' languages model, whereby children are able to learn two additional languages in addition to their mother tongue by 2020. Since the group's report, *Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach*, was published on 17 May 2012, Scottish Ministers responded to the report in November 2012, accepting in full or in part all the recommendations of the report.

The Working group recommended that a Strategic Implementation Group (SIG) be established to develop an engagement strategy and oversee delivery of the 1+2 commitment.

Remit

The role of the SIG will be to provide the strategic leadership and oversee the implementation of the recommendations. In doing this, the SIG will be expected :

General oversight

- To maintain a sense of momentum and awareness of the policy and progress towards its delivery;
- To assess risk as part of the project management process
- To consider other relevant issues which arise in the course of discussions and through the experience of partner organisations;
- To provide an interim report to Ministers by June 2014 on progress made and likely prospects going forward.
- To work with and engage partner organisations taking forward specific actions.
- To plan realistic delivery of the recommendations over a period of time, in stages and taking account different approaches and capacities of local authorities.

Establish means to support Education Authorities and Schools

- To engage the profession to lead and coordinate the practical steps required to deliver the recommendations;
- To ensure schools and local authorities have both responsibility and autonomy to implement the policy, work with those and other partner organisations to provide support, guidance.
- To give guidance and ideas to local authorities about possible ways of delivering the entitlement including milestones.
- To challenge the education system to consider what they need in the way of support from SIG suggesting possible models for delivery, enabling sharing of best practice and considering frameworks to do this.

How to win the hearts and minds

- To raise awareness and provide information across all strata of society (parents, teachers, private and public sector) of the Scottish Government's ambition to promote language learning and ensure children have the opportunity to learn two additional languages by 2020.
- To promote the benefits of language learning; making the case for a change in societal attitude to languages and enhanced language provision against the background of robust evidence.

Longevity of the group

We expect this group to exist for a period of 18-24 months and that a steering group will continue beyond this date, given the long term nature of the challenges around implementing the policy.

Organisations who are members of SIG

- SCILT – Scotland's National Centre for Languages – advice, support, resources, professional development, promoting languages
- COSLA – representing all local authorities
- GTCS – promoting and regulating the teaching profession
- Education Scotland – advice, support, resources, challenge, professional development
- ADES – ensuring Scotland's local authorities are at the heart of thinking and practical steps to deliver change in schools
- Scottish Government – owners of the policy and source of funding
- National Parent Forum
- Unions – represented by SSTA

Meetings

The group will meet at least three times a year: May, October and February. Meetings are likely to take place in central location.

Chair and secretariat

The group will be co-chaired by Scottish Government and ADES, given the need for central and local government to work in partnership to deliver the recommendations. Secretariat will be provided by the Scottish Government.

Main reasons to support language learning

What are the benefits of early language learning?

- There are clear cognitive benefits – we know that children develop better skills in talking and listening in their first language when they study others.
- When young, children are natural communicators and not limited by inhibitions.
- Strong angle on citizenship and social responsibility – benefits of being open to other languages and the cultures and ideas associated with them.

Economic benefits

- Research suggests that lack of linguistic skills currently loses the Scottish economy as much as £500m per year .

- CBI survey on education and skills has for a number of years recorded concern by employers at lack of language skills, which dissuades businesses from entering new global markets.
- If young people are not given opportunities to learn languages, they may well miss out on career chances which go to youngsters able to speak more than one language, either abroad or in Scotland.
- Not the case that additional languages are needed only for working abroad – increasingly valued within businesses based in Scotland.
- Need to prepare today's young learners for life and work in a diverse and multilingual nation where there are clear employment advantages for those able to communicate in more than one language.

Quotes to use to support language learning

- 'We welcome what the Government is trying to achieve as we feel in order to compete on the international stage in the future it is vital to have language skills.' Lauren Paterson, CBI Scotland policy executive, The Herald 18 May 2012
- 'We need to be bold and embrace this golden opportunity to redress the current situation in which Scotland's young people are losing out.' Sarah Breslin, Director, Scotland's National Centre for Languages – 14th May 2012
- We recognise that languages are important in developing a range of skills, including personal confidence and a sense of connectedness with the rest of the world. 'Ian Ellis, Chair of National Parent Forum of Scotland, 14 May 2012
- 'Scotland needs globalised citizens who can go out confidently on the world stage and win business to grow Scotland's exports. Language learning is a vital part of creating that outward looking mind-set.' Lloyd Anderson, Director of British Council Scotland BBC News website 17th May 2012 and the Herald 18th May 2012