

Introduction

Authority:	West Lothian
Case Study Focus:	Implementation of the 1+2 Approach
Establishments:	The James Young High School and associated primary schools
Learners' stage/s:	P1-S6

About the educational establishment and the learners

The James Young High School (JYHS) is a six year, non-denominational, co-educational, comprehensive school with four associated primary schools.

The current school roll is approximately 1140 and there is provision for young people with autistic spectrum disorders. Successful performance in SQA exams has led to a high number of school placing requests (26%). The school has a diverse catchment; 32% of their learners are from SIMD 1-3 and 53.4% from SIMD 8-10.

Background

In the JYHS cluster, all learners study French as L2 throughout the broad general education until the end of S3. In the secondary school, French is allocated three periods a week. The department believes this provision is essential for pupils to acquire the breadth and depth in L2 to which they are entitled.

A strong commitment to improvement through self-evaluation, together with a culture of professional dialogue and reflective practice in the department helps to ensure that learners receive consistently high-quality learning experiences; these then impact positively on uptake and attainment in the senior phase. The department also attributes successful performances in SQA exams to their use of effective and regular monitoring and tracking throughout the broad general education into the senior phase.

Partnership working with the Confucius Hub for West Lothian, SCILT and Education Scotland have helped to raise awareness of the importance of language learning in the school.

Progressing towards the 1+ 2 Approach

In order to identify a means of implementing the 1+2 Approach which would work for the JYHS learning community, the department was proactive in contacting other schools who were starting to move forward with the approach. This helped them to consider how to best implement L3 into their curriculum plans without taking time away from L2.

The natural choice for L3, based on the language skills in the secondary department, was German. Meetings at cluster level with primary heads, the head teacher of JYHS and the secondary modern languages department then led to the decision that German should also be delivered on a continuum model from P5 into secondary. By following Education

Scotland's recommended approach to the delivery of 1+2, the cluster hope to ensure progression in both languages until the end of the broad general education and increase the number of dual linguists in the senior phase.

Implementation

Planning

In 2012-13, the appointment of a new head teacher; national changes to the curriculum and new government policy on the delivery of language were catalysts for change in the school. In 2014 the school timetable was restructured from a 29 period week to a 32 period week to provide more breadth across the curriculum and allow a focus on the 1+2 Approach. To support progression in French and German, one of these additional periods was given to languages, therefore, as learners move from primary into secondary they are entitled to four periods of language each week from S1 through to S3. This gives recognition to the work of the associate primary schools, who in partnership with the secondary, agreed to deliver the L3 on a continuum model.

Implementation

Since changes were made in 2014, learners in S1 and S2 study French three times a week and have one additional period a week dedicated to German. In S3 pupils are allocated two periods of French and two periods of German. This gives learners the opportunity to be approaching or to achieve fourth level by the end of the broad general education in both languages.

To support the implementation of the 1+2 Approach, the school organised three transition events with the aim of promoting languages, enhancing transition from primary to secondary and developing closer links between primary and secondary colleagues in the context of the broad general education; over 200 pupils from P7 to S6 were involved in these events. One of these transition events included a learner-led language initiative whereby secondary pupils from S1, S2 and S4 were involved in teaching a range of activities and vocabulary in relation to Easter in French, German and Spanish to primary pupils. This was a positive experience for all learners involved and raised the profile of language learning in the cluster.

"The language transition days really helped me as I was introduced to my teachers and it allowed me to make friends more quickly." (Primary pupil)

Collegiate working between primary and secondary colleagues has been key to the ongoing successful implementation of the 1+2 Approach. To allow for effective communication between primary and secondary in implementing the approach, the cluster have appointed lead learners (primary) and link teachers (secondary) who have regular meetings to discuss progress and organise transition events. Following the success of learner-led activities as part of transition events the cluster introduced a Language Ambassadors Scheme for senior

pupils. As part of this scheme pupils receive training, provided by secondary staff, on the 'Literacy and Modern Languages benchmarks' and 'Train the teacher' training in German. This training allows them to lead language lessons in associate primaries with the class teacher in a co-operative role. In October 2017, these ambassadors also had the opportunity to lead a workshop on the importance of languages, as part of a promotional event for languages in the world of work, to younger learners in the secondary; feedback following this event was extremely positive. Such opportunities have allowed these senior pupils to not only develop their language skills but develop valuable skills for life and work.

[Listen to seniors talk about their experiences of languages at JYHS](#)

To ensure diversity of languages in the secondary and to allow for personalisation and choice, Spanish is also offered as an elective in S3, young people who opt for this additional language experience receive 6 periods of language per week. Learners can also gain qualifications at National 3, 4 and 5 in Mandarin in S5/6.

Partnership Working

Over the last two years, secondary modern languages teachers have organised a German Language Adventure with the Goethe-Institut, grouping P7s with S1s to promote the progression and enjoyment of L3.

The department have also invited SCILT into the school to support business language events for S3 pupils and a P7 open evening, where parents and pupils had the opportunity find out about the impact learning more than one language can have on literacy and employability.

Impact

Partnership working between primary and secondary colleagues in the delivery of languages has enhanced transition. As a result of collaborative planning, effective use of West Lothian progression frameworks, assessing at key stages, moderation and regular meetings to discuss progression and best practice, as a cluster they are now more able to build on prior learning from primary school and ensure effective progression is made. The true impact of this will be seen as this year's P7s move to S1, having all followed the same timeline and having been assessed in all four key skills.

The Language and Literacy Faculty at JYHS has the capacity to deliver a range of qualifications and awards at National 3, 4, 5, Higher and Advanced Higher in French, Spanish and German. Positive language experiences and depth of learning in the broad general education, from primary through to secondary, encourages and motivates learners to continue with one or more languages into the senior phase. This is evident in the uptake for session 2017/18 where there are nine senior classes across the three languages.

The leadership team recognise that the learning experiences gained and the partnerships developed wholly contribute to high uptake and raised attainment in the senior phase.

“Our young people get a sector leading experience in modern languages from the minute they walk into the school to the minute they leave; the department’s pupil-centred approach is vital to this, underpinned by a culture and experience of high expectations and high aspirations for all of our young people, no matter what background or ability. This is reflected in the number of young people who flock back to the department at various stages throughout the senior phase.” (Patricia Gallagher, DHT, James Young High School)

“Encouraging cluster work, business links etc, the absolute key is having great staff... If young people are having a positive experience and feel confident in modern languages, that helps hugely. Languages should be accessible to everyone.” (Head Teacher, James Young High School, 2015)

As a result of this approach to the implementation of 1+2 policy, the culture of language learning in the cluster is changing and the department has noticed a change in the backgrounds of the learners who continue to study languages into the senior phase. Business links and business language event days have helped to change pupil perceptions of the benefits of learning a language which has led, in particular, to an increase in the number of boys who choose languages in S4 through to S6. The department also believe that earlier and increased exposure to languages have helped to build pupil confidence in their ability to learn a modern language and thereby they are starting to attract learners from a range of backgrounds to continue with their languages.

Next Steps

The faculty identified the following steps as key to the continued successful implementation of the 1+2 Approach:

- Collegiate working between primary and secondary staff, through the link teacher/lead learner initiative, to support learners in achieving second level in French (L2) by the end of P7. This will include the moderation of courses and assessments using West Lothian frameworks.
- Organisation of further transition events to promote both French (L2) and German (L3).
- Implementation of German (L3) through continued use of language ambassadors and twilight training for primary colleagues by secondary colleagues.
- Support for effective transitions (P4-P5 and P7-S1) through greater discussion and tracking of progression at key transition stages, with support of secondary link teacher.
- Continued commitment to the inclusion of the 1+2 Approach in school improvement plans in all primaries, with a short-term, intense focus on L2.
- Curricular review using pupil focus groups, with learners from a range of SIMD backgrounds, to investigate the success of changes to the curriculum.