



Languages Review



department for
education and skills

Creating Opportunity
Releasing Potential
Achieving Excellence

Right Hon Alan Johnson, MP
Secretary of State for Education and Skills
28 February 2007

We submitted an interim report on the languages review on 14th December as a basis for consultation. It included provisional proposals and a number of issues for further consideration by your Department. We now have pleasure in offering our final report.

In making the review, you asked us to look into the following issues:

- With secondary schools to support them in making available a wider range of more flexible language courses, with accreditation, so that more young people keep up language learning even if they are not doing a full GCSE course;
- Further ways of strengthening the incentives for schools and young people themselves to continue with languages after 14;
- With representatives of FE and HE, to look at what more might be done to widen access to and increase interest in language learning among the student population;
- With employer organisations, to consider what more they can do to promote the value of language skills for business and to give stronger market signals to young people about language skills and employability; and
- What broader communication effort is needed to get across the importance of language skills to all sections of the population.

In making this final report we have revisited points made in the consultations that preceded our earlier report. We have held further consultation meetings on our provisional proposals and have received responses by letter and e mail. We are grateful to those who have helped us in this way, and to the six teacher associations, who at our request, sought to stimulate busy schools to offer comments.

In this final report we have developed and extended the proposals in our consultation report for investment in teachers in primary and secondary schools. We see these as the necessary bases for our proposal that languages should become part of the statutory curriculum for Key Stage 2. They also form a key element in our proposals for a renaissance of languages in secondary schools.

We link our proposals for investment in teaching in secondary schools, and for investment in teaching materials, with our development of the major theme of this report on the need for a range of motivating learning pathways for the whole range of pupils and their different learning objectives. We make proposals to that end.

This action in support of teaching and to provide a range of motivating learning opportunities, lies at the heart of any programme to strengthen the incentives to schools to continue with languages after 14. But we also invite you to consider supporting these in guidance to schools on the continued study of languages in Key Stage 4 and in other ways.

We confirm our earlier recommendation to increase the number of schools having languages as a specialism to 400, and in doing so we think that it will help languages in the schools community as a whole if the increase supported a more even geographical spread of specialist colleges across England.

We welcome the emphasis you placed in our terms of reference on the need for action to make the case for languages to all sections of the population and to encourage employers to promote the value of language skills for business. We received several offers of help from employers' organisations which are summarised in our consultation report. In this report we make a number of further recommendations, and urge the Government to put its weight behind the case for languages.

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The cost of our recommendations, in including our recommendation that the present support for primary schools should be continued beyond the present planned support to 2008, would bring the total needed for languages to over £50m a year. By far the biggest element is the support for teaching. In addition we recommend that the additional financial support for specialist language colleges to support key elements of the National Languages Strategy should be continued (currently some £8m a year) with appropriate increase as the number of colleges increases. We are grateful to the Department for its assistance with this assessment.

If you feel able to back the comprehensive programme of action we have outlined in support of languages in schools we believe you will be in a strong position to call upon schools, through action over the next two years, progressively to lift the numbers choosing to take languages in year ten, the first year in Key Stage 4, to the 50 per cent to 90 per cent sought by Minister Jacqui Smith. We recommend that you closely monitor the plans made by schools to achieve this, and we outline administrative measures you could take in support of such an approach. We further recommend you make clear that you are prepared, if the decline is not halted and turned around within a reasonable timeframe, to return languages to the statutory curriculum. That as you know is not our preferred course because we think the range proposed by the Minister gives schools scope to develop learning programmes for each child that best fits him/her for life, and best motivates many more of our young people to stay in learning after age sixteen. This must be a major objective of education policy.

Ron Dearing

Lid King

Chapter 1

The Problem and the Response in Outline

- 1.1 In September 2004, learning a language in maintained schools ceased to be a mandatory part of the curriculum for pupils in the last two years of their compulsory education, usually referred to as Key Stage 4. Instead it became an entitlement for all students who chose to continue after their three years of mandatory study in Key Stage 3.
- 1.2 Although up to that time learning a language in Key Stage 4 had been mandatory, in fact only 80 per cent got as far as taking the GCSE, and the take up had been drifting down since 2000. This became particularly noticeable when consultation about removing the statutory requirement began in 2002.
- 1.3 At the same time as the changes at secondary level, the Government launched a programme to provide an opportunity for all pupils at Key Stage 2 in primary schools to learn a language by 2010.

The Outcome and Prospects

- 1.4 The take up of languages in primary schools has gone very well, and a recent survey suggests that already some 70 per cent of primary schools are now offering a language or are close to doing so. The reports we have had indicate that languages are enjoyed by children across the ability range and that there is no lack of enthusiasm, interest or keenness to learn. This

has the potential to feed through into the secondary schools, improve performance, and encourage pupils as they reach Key Stage 4 to continue with languages. This is true of the traditional study of French, German, and Spanish, and there is potential amongst community languages, which over the coming two decades will become of increasing commercial importance, and a potential national asset.

- 1.5 At the secondary level by contrast, the number taking languages has fallen sharply. Last summer, the numbers continuing with a language to the GCSE at secondary level had fallen to 51 per cent. Inclusion of those taking other language qualifications increases this to only 52 per cent. A survey showed that there will be a further fall this year. The preliminary signs were that thereafter the fall was levelling off. However this is not certain, as numbers may be affected by the decision to include English and Maths in the 5 A*-C GCSEs measure in the Achievement and Attainment Tables and in the long term by the introduction of the specialised diplomas which are expected to be taken by 30 per cent of those entering KS4.
- 1.6 The fall in numbers taking languages at Key Stage 4 is closely related to social class, and to overall performance in Key Stage 3, and their later performance in the GCSE.



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- 1.7 Thus the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals gaining a language qualification in Key Stage 4 is only half that of pupils from better off homes. The proportion of pupils taking languages who obtained 5 A* to C passes is about twice that of the less successful pupils.
- 1.8 Thus while the policy of languages for all is working well across the whole range of social class and ability in primary schools; at secondary level, even before languages ceased to be compulsory, it was never fully achieved. Twenty per cent were being exempted as far back as the year 2000; a third had dropped languages by the time they became an entitlement rather than a requirement; and we have regressed further from it since then.
- 1.9 We gave the facts in some detail in our consultation report together with the reasons for the Government's decision to open up the options at Key Stage 4 and the reasons for the move out of languages that has taken place.¹

Where Next?

- 1.10 Our judgement is that there is scope for many more of our teenagers to do better than in the past in languages. For the reasons we set out in Chapter 4 of our consultation report, it is in their interest and the public interest, that more of them should do so. We think the low priority many employers give to language skills, as reflected for example in their plans for the new specialised diplomas, is mistaken. It does not however lead us to the conclusion that at this stage all pupils should be required to continue after Key Stage 3, or with the same time commitment. We have seen it as our task to set out how to enable many more pupils to succeed in different ways, within a framework in which schools make a commitment to languages being a substantial part of the Key Stage 4 curriculum, but which also recognises the need to respond

differentially to the capabilities and motivations of pupils, in the wider cause of sustaining them successfully in learning to eighteen and beyond.

- 1.11 The programme of action we propose in this report to enable many more pupils to engage successfully in the study of languages at the secondary level will take two years to complete. But if action can be taken quickly on our proposals to support language teachers in secondary schools, this together with the opportunities for new approaches to fully accredited learning now offered by the Languages Ladder, and innovative approaches to the GCSE; and with the progressive realisation of our other proposals, schools could be aiming in September 2008 to have made progress towards the 50 to 90 per cent benchmark for entrants to languages in Key Stage 4 proposed by Jacqui Smith last year, and aim to complete their progress to it for entrants to Key Stage 4 in the school year beginning in September 2009, when all our proposed changes could be fully in place.
- 1.12 Failing a response of that kind, from schools, head teachers and languages departments with corresponding support and challenge from government and its national agencies, which we discuss further in our concluding chapter, we outline a return to some form of mandatory requirement.

¹ Appendix One contains relevant statistical data.



Chapter 2

Making the Case for Languages

2.1 Three out of the five issues we were asked to consider were concerned with getting across the importance of languages to all sections of the population, and in particular to young people. In this you asked us to consider with employers what more they could do to promote the value of language skills for business, and with representatives of Higher and Further Education to consider what more might be done to increase interest in language learning among the student population.

Higher and Further Education

2.2 As an immediate measure, we asked all universities, working with local F.E. colleges, specialist language colleges and sixth form colleges, to seek opportunities in January and February this year to visit schools to speak with pupils about the value of languages.

2.3 As we have found from direct contacts, for example with the universities of Birmingham, Cambridge, Hull, Manchester, Nottingham, and more widely, many university language departments have much experience of, and expertise in, engaging with local schools to promote languages. These activities have recently been positively reviewed by the Subject Centre for Languages Linguistics and Area Studies. We think that institutions should receive specific support to develop this activity.

2.4 With particular reference to widening participation in higher education the Higher Education Funding Council for England HEFC(E) is funding four regional projects costing £2.5m over four years to encourage more young people to study languages. These projects are testing different methods of engaging with schools and colleges to raise the aspiration and demand among young people to study languages. A key feature is to provide the secondary, FE and HE sectors with the resources to work together to promote language study. The regional projects are one strand of a £4.5m programme of work to support languages.

2.5 A sensibly financed programme over four years such as that to be launched by the HEFC(E) is a well conceived response to the opportunity.

2.6 We are advised by the HEFC(E) that for an additional £3m over four years the scheme could be given national coverage. We **recommend** that this additional funding is provided for this scheme and invite the HEFC(E) to undertake it, with part being available for any strongly conceived proposals that are unsuccessful in the current bidding round, with the remainder being available for a second round of bidding in a year's time.



Employers' Organisations

2.7 As stated in Chapter 6 of our consultation report, the CBI, the Institute of Directors, the British Chambers of Commerce, the Institute of Exports, and the National Health Service Employers have all indicated specific ways, outlined in that report, in which they are willing to advance the cause of languages. We invite the Department to maintain active contact with these organisations to foster their continuing support, and to consider whether from time to time there is news or developments that might be of interest to their members. In addition to encourage companies to support languages in schools we suggest for consideration the award of a "kitemark" to organisations who do good work in this field.

Major Multinationals and Overseas Embassies

- 2.8 Our consultation has confirmed the very real and often well funded programmes of activity by major overseas embassies to promote the study of their national language, whether directly or through national institutes.
- 2.9 Some of the corporate responsibility programmes of multinational companies are extending to languages and are very impressive. Our sense is that working with embassies, where the company is not headquartered in Britain, there is scope over time for broadening the commitment by such companies to support languages, and intercultural awareness.
- 2.10 We accordingly confirm the proposal in our consultation report that Government working with the Embassies in London should encourage international companies, as part of their corporate philanthropy, to sponsor programmes to promote intercultural awareness and the value of languages in this to schools in the areas where they have businesses. In support of that, they could facilitate opportunities for

work experience overseas for 14-16 years old pupils, and school to school exchanges between pupils in this country and overseas countries where they operate. Companies might also be asked to consider providing support for pupils in their localities, who have demonstrated an early ability in languages, to engage with similarly talented pupils overseas, to work together on some project of common interest, for example, promoting intercultural awareness, a comparative study of the attitudes in their own countries to global warming, recycling or sport, and so on.

Getting across the importance of languages to all sections of the population, young and old

2.11 While in England, those who are proficient in overseas languages are admired, this is at least in part a reflection of our relatively low level of language skills, rather than from any strong awareness that such skills matter and are an important enfranchisement in a Europe where there is free movement of peoples, a key to multicultural awareness in our own country and in the world, and increasingly relevant to the prospects of our young people in a world of multinational companies where linguistic skills are valued.



- 2.12 This points to the need for an active programme by the Government to communicate the importance of languages not only to young people, but also to parents who are influential on the choices pupils make for their Key Stage 4 curriculum and beyond.
- 2.13 In our consultation report we accordingly proposed that the Department for Education and Skills should develop a continuing programme to promote languages focussing on events like the Beijing Olympics of 2008, the 2012 London Olympic Games and other major international events such as the Rugby World Cup in France in 2007 and the European Football Cup in 2008.
- 2.14 At local level, Local Authorities could be encouraged to promote interest in local schools in towns overseas with which they have twinning arrangements, and promote contact at school level through communication technology and exchange visits. This doubtless happens to some extent already, but in schools where the language is in the curriculum this might, with the support of language departments and head teachers, be promoted with especial enthusiasm. **We now confirm those recommendations.**
- In addition:**
- 2.15 We invite consideration for an annual national Ministerial reception for heads of languages departments who in the year have made a distinctive contribution to promoting interest in languages, and for innovations in the practise of pedagogy in their school, perhaps supported by a cash prize for investment in equipment or an overseas visit for professional development, for the most outstanding cases.
- 2.16 To address the low numbers of pupils achieving a very high grading at the GCSE progressing to A levels and beyond in languages, we urge that consideration is given to one day events at five or six centres, perhaps to coincide with the European Day for Languages, where pupils have an opportunity to hear from linguists about the range of work they do in this country, for example in the courts, in social services, in Government Departments, and in international organisations such as the European Commission, which we know is anxious to encourage more native English speakers to come forward for appointments as translators, and for main line appointments in its various directorates. This might be supported by the appointment of a “Languages in Careers” Director to get across the value of language skills as a means of widening opportunities in a whole range of careers.
- 2.17 We would add that major promotional campaigns to influence opinion require substantial resources if they extend to paid promotion using the full resources of the media. We understand that the Learning and Skills Council has found it necessary to allocate individual budgets of £6m a year, and more, to promote apprenticeships, train to gain and student maintenance grants.
- 2.18 Some substantial expenditure is a matter that goes beyond our competence to recommend, but we tentatively suggest a budget of £2m a year to support a sustained effort through events, articles, languages days, publications, and for material for use in schools, to raise public awareness of the importance of languages.
- 2.19 Finally we suggest that the potential of senior politicians in promoting the value of languages should be evaluated, and opportunities taken by them to illustrate from their own experiences how some facility in a language has been valuable to them, for example, in building relationships. **In particular we urge that the Government should put its weight behind the case for languages.**

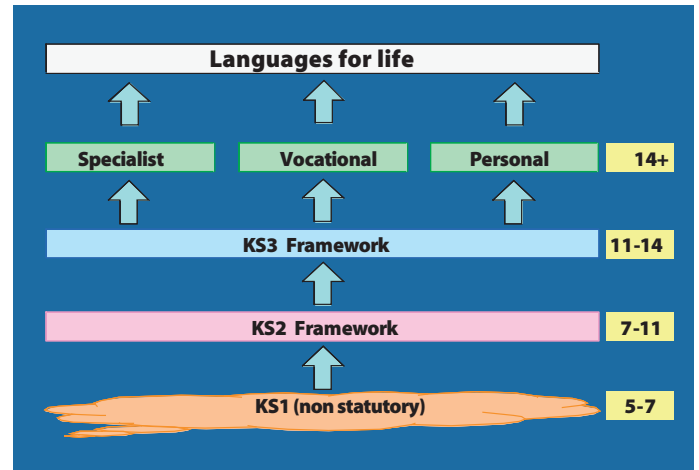
Chapter 3

What Needs to be Done – motivating learners and supporting teachers

3.1 Our terms of reference invited us to:

- support secondary schools in making available a wider range of more flexible language courses, with accreditation, so that more young people keep up language learning even if they are not doing a full GCSE course;
- (consider) further ways of strengthening the incentives for schools and young people themselves to continue with languages after 14.

3.2 It became clear very early in our review that the problems of Key Stage 4 languages could not be solved in isolation from earlier and later stages of learning. This was confirmed during the course of the consultation. What was needed was a coherent place for languages in the school curriculum, and beyond. Much progress has been made since the launch of the National Languages Strategy in 2002, but if we are to address the challenges of the unwanted fall-off in languages post 14, we need a significant reshaping of the languages offer – what has been described as the New Paradigm for languages.



3.3 This also prompts our first important conclusion, which is that **a one menu suits all approach to secondary languages is not working for many of our children**, and that we must encourage a more varied languages offer which suits a range of requirements for young people. The need is for a coherent languages programme leading to a range of appropriate options if those who are abandoning languages are to be motivated to continue.

3.4 In our consultation report we set out what amounts to a package of reform, intended to strengthen the existing National Languages Strategy and proposing both short and longer term measures aiming to embed languages in the curriculum for primary schools; and at secondary level to improve the experience of learning a language for pupils, to increase the motivation to learn, and to enhance pedagogy. In the consultation these proposals have received a large measure of support. Combined with a stronger framework and manifest support from Government, we believe they provide the basis for a renaissance of languages in schools and in the longer term an improvement in our national capability in languages.

Languages in Primary Schools

3.5 The programme for the progressive introduction of languages into primary schools is going well. Schools are well on the way to the target of a

languages entitlement for all pupils in Key Stage 2 by 2010. Some 70 per cent of schools are already teaching languages or have made plans to do so, and all the signs are that this percentage will increase this year, perhaps to over three quarters. We continually hear the comment that children enjoy their language learning in primary schools. A specifically primary experience of languages is being developed, linking language learning to learning across the curriculum and making good use of a range of resources, of speakers of the language and of excellent programmes of ICT based learning. There has also been the necessary financial support.

3.6 A framework for languages study in Key Stage 2 has been available to schools since 2005 and schemes of work for German, French and Spanish are now being published. A robust programme of Initial Teacher Training is also in place and set to continue. Local and regional training opportunities have also been made available. All of this means that the ground work for a statutory languages curriculum is already largely in place.

3.7 **Against this background we recommend that languages become part of the statutory curriculum for Key Stage 2 in primary schools, when it is next reviewed.** This should be as soon as practicable and if possible in time for languages to become part of the statutory primary curriculum by September 2010. In making this recommendation we have taken into account the statutory requirement that it should be introduced progressively by year group. In the interim we urge that the experience gained over the last few years and in the period immediately ahead should be used to inform our understanding of what is best learnt in the early years and the most successful approaches to learning. But while the purposes and outcomes of the learning should be prescribed through the curriculum, we would advise against any one tightly prescribed

approach to teaching, as has sometimes happened in the past. Key to the future success of this significant primary initiative will be continuing support for teachers through opportunities for professional development and access to support networks and a range of resources, so that all primary schools have the necessary capability to teach languages.



3.8 **We recommend that the provision for teacher support in primary schools should be continued, and where necessary, extended** to take schools through the first two years of a statutory curriculum for languages and to help them widen the range of languages offered, as proposed below.

3.9 French has been the main language offered in primary schools, but as in our consultation report, we think it important to widen the range of languages that can be offered, and we **recommend** that attention is given to how that can best be achieved and that this should involve continuing consultation with embassies. We envisage that these will prominently be French, German and Spanish. But looking further ahead there will be increasing interest in other world languages, particularly Eastern languages. We should also value community languages, in which, in many localities, children will have a high level of speaking and listening skills. Decisions on such matters go beyond the scope

of this review and need to be preceded by careful analysis and consultation, including the need to be satisfied that the capability exists in the school to teach the chosen languages. It will also be important in this respect to ensure that advice and guidance continue to be made available to primary schools on the specific languages which are taught, on the range of curricular models and on the challenges of progression and transition.

3.10 Indeed the full benefits of teaching languages in primary schools will not be realised unless there are good arrangements for transition to secondary schools. **To this end we make two recommendations:**

- a) There should be informal classroom assessment of every child's learning near the end of Key Stage 2 by reference to the Languages Ladder², so that the Key Stage 3 teacher is well informed about the pupil's learning standard and needs. We recommend use of the ladder because it provides the teacher with assessment at the level appropriate to the child in each of the four strands of learning: speaking, listening, reading and writing, and because it is to a common national standard. Its purpose is different from the SATs, which in the past have been essentially a summative means of assessing a school's performance with all pupils taking the same test. The assessment we recommend is formative in purpose, fit for the individual child, not aggregated, and should not be the basis for any league tables.

- b) Wherever possible, with appropriate leadership from Local Authorities, clusters of primary and secondary schools in a local authority area should link up to seek to achieve agreement on the languages to be taught in primary schools and arrangements for progression to the secondary schools, and to foster close contact between the primary teacher and the specialist language teacher in the secondary school. The more the last year of primary and the first year in the secondary school become a continuum the better. In this respect we fully support the proposal of the Training and Development Agency to develop a 9-14 Languages teacher training course.

3.11 The success of languages in Key Stage 2 raises the question of whether it should extend to Key Stage 1. On the mainland of Europe the age at which language learning begins has been coming down year by year, and in the Netherlands, for example, it now begins at age five. In general, however, a starting age of seven or eight reflects current European practice and the priority over the next few years should be the success of Key Stage 2. Where this is succeeding, it may gradually extend to Key Stage 1, and there is wisdom in leaving this to schools to decide for themselves, while ensuring that advice is available for those who wish to make an earlier start.

² Following an open competition, the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate was awarded a 5 year contract, which ends in 2008, to produce and pilot a specification and assessment materials for the stages of a new qualification to be accredited by the regulatory authorities. The contract specifies the stages of development and the languages to be included in the scheme. The qualifications, following accreditation, are known as Asset Languages qualifications and accredit competence at all levels for learners of all ages and are based on the Languages Ladder – the Government's national recognition scheme.



Languages in Secondary Schools – The Challenge of Motivation

- 3.12 Motivating learners is a key challenge for language teachers in secondary schools, and not only in England. In other countries the role of English as a world language, and the way it permeates the culture of young people, provides an incentive to learn it and facilitates learning. This tends to overlay the fact that many overseas learners of languages find it a challenging task. It is therefore not surprising that the major source of the abandonment of languages is by students who are amongst the less successful in learning generally.
- 3.13 Despite this, many teachers are successful with all learners. It has been put to us that 99 per cent of learners who really want to learn a language (i.e. who are really motivated) will be able to master a reasonable knowledge of it as a minimum, regardless of their aptitude or background. It is not our task in this review to provide the recipe for motivational success. We can however propose what needs to be done to create the conditions in which it will be possible to motivate all or most learners.³ These include:
- A more varied languages offer with a range of appropriate outcomes (assessment)
 - The possibility to recognise and celebrate achievement in small steps
 - Engaging curricular content (including links with the real world in which the language is spoken)
 - Opportunities for teachers to reflect and learn from each other and from leading practitioners.
- 3.14 These are the issues which we will now consider in more detail.

Recognising Achievement The Handicap of ‘One Size Fits All’

- 3.15 If we are to motivate learners, the shortcomings of the “one size fits all” approach, in particular for those pupils, who in general terms are faring least well in Key Stage 3 and the GCSE, but also for those higher achievers who find languages lacking in cognitive challenge, leads us to a number of conclusions. What we are proposing reflects what has already been recognised for science at Key Stage 4 where there are alternatives which suit the different requirements of young people depending on their aspirations and aptitude for science.
- 3.16 Recognising that in practice much of the content and organisation of the secondary curriculum is determined by the possible outcomes of the assessment system, we address this matter first. This means reshaping the current GCSE, supporting a range of alternative options and paying particular attention to the new Specialised Diploma programme.

Reforming GCSE

- 3.17 The GCSE is the examination which drives the curriculum at Key Stage 4 and casts its mantle over the final year of Key Stage 3. It is particularly in these years that the context of the learning needs to be stimulating to pupils and to engage them in discussion, debates and writing about subjects that are of concern and interest to teenagers. Although outstanding teachers can overcome most barriers to learning, as commonly interpreted the present GCSE does not facilitate this. As we said in our consultation report, it has been suggested to us that to facilitate teaching in such contexts, a range of options might be available from which pupils might select a specified number. A strong case has also been put for an alternative, more flexible GCSE in languages perhaps with an international or business orientation and involving the development of a more limited range of skills

³ See also Appendix 2.

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in several languages.⁴ Such an approach may reflect the interests of a proportion of pupils who would seek such more limited skills in a range of say three languages as more relevant, useful to them, and more appealing than continuing with the study of a single language.

3.18 From our discussions with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) we know that they are planning a review of the GCSE and that they are seized of the importance of an examination that will promote a more lively framework within which to learn a language. In our opinion a renaissance of language needs such a review as a matter of urgency.

3.19 We **recommend** that the review proceeds as a priority in consultation with the Awarding Bodies, and language teachers. We also invite consideration of a more flexible “languages in use” GCSE.

3.20 We now return to the widely held view, as recorded in our consultation report, that the demands of languages in the GCSE are greater than for the great majority of subjects, and the statistical analysis that appeared to give some support for that view in terms of the level of demand for the award of a grade. We recognised that to some extent the conclusions are qualified by recognition that factors like student interest and motivation affect achievement. In our further consultation we have found strong confirmation of the view that the award of grades is more demanding than for most other subjects. This needs to be resolved one way or the other by a definitive study, followed by publication of the

conclusions, because the present widely held perception in schools, whether right or wrong, is adversely affecting the continued study of languages through to the GCSE.

3.21 We do not propose any reduction in the demands of the Curriculum but we confirm the proposal that the issue should be resolved as soon as possible and we so **recommend**.

3.22 We also proposed a new approach to the assessment of speaking and listening, which rightly account for half the marks in the GCSE, on the grounds that the present method is too stressful and too short to be a reliable way of assessing what the candidates can do. It is interesting that when people spoke about the oral test, that however long ago it may have been, it is often remembered as a stressful experience. We therefore proposed that these parts of the examination should be over a period through moderated teacher assessment.

3.23 We recognise that any change has to be made in a way that does not weaken the validity of the assessment, and concerns have been expressed to us about that. But that has to be balanced against the risk that a test that is often highly stressful and over a short period, whilst accurate in its awards against performance on the day, is not a reliable test of the candidates’ capability. We note that assessment of speaking for awards for the Languages Ladder (Asset Languages) is through accredited teacher assessment. We have been advised by one of the examining boards that it is piloting a new approach to assessment, based partly on an ICT programme over half an hour for listening skills, and by teacher assessment over a period for speaking. These are matters for further consideration by the QCA and the examining boards, but we remain of the opinion that the present forms of assessment are not the best test of the candidates’ abilities and contribute to the loss of students to languages.

⁴ The Institute of Directors put to us the case for a GCSE covering several languages, set in a business context, to help people in business to get through to the people they want to contact, and to help establish a personal relationship with them. Another proposal has been for an “international” GCSE also containing a languages component.

The Short Course GCSE

3.24 The short course GCSE is not proving popular with learners. It is not distinctively different in approach from the full GCSE. We invite consideration of a programme that is sharper in focus, aimed at those whose interest is in basic functionality in a language in a range of meaningfully relevant contexts to the learner.

Alternatives to GCSE and the Languages Ladder

3.25 There is also a need for a wider range of programmes and assessment options if more pupils are to be motivated to continue beyond Key Stage 3. There is already a range of interesting and successful practice in courses leading to qualifications other than the traditional GCSE. There are, for example, the NVQ language units, the Certificate in Business Language Competence, and an Applied French GCSE is being piloted. The Languages Ladder offers a major opportunity for schools to offer different curricula, and to have achievement recognised at whatever level is appropriate to the pupil, in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

3.26 All of these qualifications attract points in the Achievement and Attainment tables. Schools need to be better informed about these alternative routes to learning languages, and we **recommend** that the Department finds means of addressing this need, particularly in relation to the Languages Ladder.

3.27 In the interests of broadening the basis of learning to the GCSE we also **invite early consideration** of achievement through the Languages Ladder (as currently awarded by Asset Languages) leading to the award of a GCSE. We are advised that at the relevant points, the levels in the ladder are aligned with GCSE levels, and so, subject to satisfying the QCA that any additional requirements for a GCSE have been satisfied, a GCSE award could be made.

3.28 We have already put forward our recommendation that the ladder is used for formative assessment at the end of Key Stage 2. We also propose that some assessment of pupils' progress should be available at the end of Key Stage 3. This will be motivating for pupils who will thus be able to judge the progress being made towards a level 2 qualification. It may well encourage a greater staying-on rate, or at least (in the case of those who are determined to give up languages at 14) it will provide a recognisable outcome, which can contribute to the overall profile of the learner and the school.

3.29 **We therefore recommend that a qualification associated with the Languages Ladder (currently Asset Languages) is made available for all pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 at a subsidised cost for schools, and that consideration is given to achievement through the Languages Ladder being recognised through the award of GCSE.**

The Specialised Diplomas

3.30 The fourteen specialised diplomas which will be introduced into Key Stage 4 over the next few years, beginning in 2008, raise the need for some new thinking. There will be provision for Additional and Specialised Learning at level 2 for 180 hours of guided learning time over the two years of Key Stage 4, which is available for pupils to make their own choices of learning. A language is one of their options.

3.31 In discussions with a number of lead bodies for the Diplomas, where languages seem particularly relevant, we have invited consideration of languages being required, notably for example as part of the Additional and Specialised Learning. One partnership is ready to do this, but the need as they see it, is not for a GCSE level of competence in one language, but a basic competence in the spoken and listening elements of several

languages, and some cultural understanding. Such learning needs to lead to certification, and we have drawn this to the attention of the QCA.

- 3.32 Other groups we have seen are not so minded, at least at this point (one has the matter under consideration). But there will be the option for the pupil to choose a language at least as part of the Additional and Specialised Learning. It is important that a language option that makes sense to the individual diploma partnerships and to the pupils taking their awards will be available.
- 3.33 We invite the Department to continue discussions we have had with a number of the partnerships to ensure that where a pupil does decide to choose a language in his Additional and Specialised Learning there are suitable contextually relevant courses qualifying for awards. We turn later to equipping teachers to respond to the language requirements of the diplomas.

Reshaping the Languages Curriculum

- 3.34 We now turn to the structure of the curriculum itself. Even within the constraints of the current system, it is possible to make more appropriate use of both the courses and time available. With the introduction of a more flexible Key Stage 3 curriculum, it will become more rather than less important for secondary languages

to be organised in a different way. In our consultation report we commented on a number of such initiatives and here we return to those which seem to us to be of particular value for languages.

Flexible Approaches

- 3.35 Many schools are successfully fast-tracking to a GCSE at the end of Key Stage 3, providing for more advanced study at Key Stage 4, or for learning a second language. This is likely to become more desirable as the primary reform takes hold and pupils with significant competence in transactional language begin to arrive in Year 7. Allowing pupils to make accelerated progress does not appear to lower standards. On the contrary. An opportunity to move to another language may also be attractive to learners, who wish to learn another language at a basic or intermediate level, rather than seek further progress in their first foreign language. In the comments we have had from students there has on occasion been an indication that they would have chosen to continue with languages if there had been an opportunity to do this.
- 3.36 While the most successful learners will rightly choose to take the GCSE before moving on to more advanced studies or another language, other students moving on to a second language can have their achievements certificated through the Languages Ladder, and recognised in the Achievement and Attainment tables.

We **recommend** that the Department working in partnership with its key partners provides more systematic guidance to schools about these possibilities.

Languages across the curriculum

- 3.37 Languages may also be combined or linked to other parts of the curriculum. This will be a common feature of teaching in primary schools. We also see merit in developing this more



consistently and systematically in secondary schools, providing a basis for further study and use of languages. In its most developed form such initiatives may be fully integrated “bilingual” teaching and learning (or CLIL⁵). There are also many possibilities for less ambitious embedding of languages in cooperation with subjects such as Sport, Performing Arts, and Enterprise.

We **recommend** that the Department increases its support for initiatives in this area and ensures that existing experience is disseminated more widely.

The Curriculum and meanings that matter

3.38 In addition to widening the range of study options and curricular models, as we argued in our earlier report there is a general issue of the content of curriculum in particular in the final year of Key Stage 3 and in Key Stage 4. It is widely held, and we believe rightly, that this is not often at a cognitive level that is stimulating to teenagers. We have identified many examples of exciting and relevant language teaching and engaged learning, and these are again described in Appendix 2 to this final report. The challenge is making such experience general rather than restricted. We now turn to that issue.

New Curriculum Content

3.39 The new languages curriculum for Key Stage 3 that has been presented for consultation by QCA provides the scope for teachers to teach in contexts that engage the interest of teenagers. It gives teachers the opportunity to motivate learning. We would also expect that the changes recommended in this report to GCSE and the recommendations concerning

alternative accreditation, will facilitate the introduction of more stimulating and relevant content to the languages syllabus. But that opportunity needs to be realised by concrete schemes of work and above all by teaching approaches that translate it into practice.

3.40 The kind of content that will motivate learners – those “meanings that matter” – are illustrated in the appendix to this report, and it is not the role of this review to prescribe. Characteristic of them all, however, is that they are “real” content, whether related to other parts of the curriculum, to more creative approaches to learning or to the understanding of language itself.

3.41 **We recommend that the DfES in collaboration with key partners develop clear guidelines and support for a more appropriate and varied content to the secondary languages curriculum. Crucially this should be promoted through a range of opportunities for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (see below 3.50).**

A wider range of languages

3.42 In our consultation report we proposed that a broader range of languages should be encouraged in schools, both to engage learners and to provide a more relevant pool of national expertise. We particularly highlighted the potential role of world languages including Eastern languages.

3.43 The Secretary of State has already acted on these proposals and in February the new secondary curriculum went out to national consultation proposing that the statutory requirement to offer a working language of the European Union in Key Stage 3 is removed. This would be replaced by guidance promoting major languages, which may include French, German, Spanish, Italian, Mandarin, Urdu and other major spoken world languages depending on local needs and circumstances.

⁵ Content and Language Integrated Learning. Typically (as at Tile Hill Wood – see Appendix) this might involve the teaching of Geography through a foreign language.

3.44 In our earlier report we also raised the issue of **community languages** and the ability of schools to respond to the potential of pupils with an existing (perhaps mainly spoken) capability. These are a national asset, to which more thought needs to be given in terms of national policy. Funding appears to be difficult to access and local provision is very variable. We were pleased to note that the Department recently announced the establishment of a new National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education which will support the development of more and better supplementary schools, through, in particular, the extended schools and specialist schools programme. Supplementary schools are run by almost every ethnic community group in England including African Caribbean, Afghan, Somali, Greek, Jewish, Turkish, Russian and Iranian. They offer children support in national curriculum subjects, as well as the opportunity to learn their community's mother tongues and to understand more about their ethnic or national culture and heritage.

3.45 **We recommend a review of present practices to identify what seem most suitable for development at local level and the funding and support structures that may be appropriate, perhaps most especially in the extended school day.**

Supporting Teachers and Pupils

3.46 If we are to realise the ambitious programme of reform outlined in our recommendations, action will be needed to support implementation by teachers in the classroom. This was a view expressed in our initial report and it was strongly endorsed in the consultation process. To that end we need to ensure that appropriate professional development is available and also that the means exist for teachers to access it.

Training and professional development

3.47 In the consultation report we said that "investment in teachers is a key to the future

of languages". This view has been confirmed by the responses to the report. We need to build on the many examples of rich and rewarding practice in our schools, providing opportunities for language teachers to observe and practice new approaches and to reflect on the learning process. Although we do not propose a unique method, we do believe that successful language teaching has a number of common characteristics, and these are set out in the second Appendix – the original Chapter 5 of our consultation report on teaching, slightly edited in response to consultation.

3.48 The central importance of such teacher education is immediately obvious in primary schools and we have discussed that in paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 above. But there is no less a need in secondary schools if they are to achieve the adoption of successful strategies for language teaching and the motivation of pupils across the ability range. Our approach means that the teacher has not only to be successful with the more successful learners, but with the whole range of aptitudes, and interests, and they have to be able to teach to a range of qualifications. They need to be highly skilled in the use of information technology, and in integrating its use in their lessons. They need time to work with primary schools to integrate the teaching in the first year at the secondary school with the last year of primary learning, across the main feeder schools. They need opportunities to think through how language learning can be integrated into parts of other learning (CLIL), for example citizenship, or geography, so that the language can be used in motivating contexts without detriment to learning in the target discipline. There is a particular need to help teachers at Key Stage 4 to develop their teaching plans to cover a wider range of options. A generation of teachers have become accustomed to work to predetermined topics in the GCSE as a means of structuring

their teaching. The topic-free Languages Ladder will represent a pedagogical challenge. Finally, and uniquely, language teachers need regular opportunities for refreshment at the source of their language and culture – the target language country or countries.

3.49 Of particular importance, as we stressed in our consultation report, will be the need to retain existing secondary teachers in the system as the reforms outlined here take hold. To that end the DfES should work with schools, SIPs, Local Authorities and others to ensure that a range of opportunities are made available to schools in more challenging circumstances. **In particular we recommend the provision of retraining modules for secondary teachers wishing either to support Primary developments or to develop skills as Leading Teachers. These modules should be at no cost to schools and we further recommend that they attract a bursary for teachers recommended by their schools.**

3.50 For professional development teachers need the opportunity to work with colleagues, to observe, to practise and to have access to expertise. The retention of teachers, as proposed above, will facilitate the release of class teachers to do that. The responsibility for providing such opportunities lies in part with the schools themselves and their use of existing resources for continuing professional development. This in itself however is not enough to embed the changes being proposed, and in addition therefore we **recommend**

- 1 **The launch of a National Teacher Research Scholarship (NTRS) scheme for languages, enabling teachers to work together and with universities, advisers and other national agencies to develop their pedagogy and find solutions to the challenges of secondary language learning. This could be a development of the current National**

Secondary training programme for languages which involves face to face meetings, distance learning and coaching and is based on local networks of teachers.

- 2 **The targeting of Heads of Department who are key to in school change through regional training programmes coordinated by Comenius Centres and SLCs. This would be further reinforced by the NTRS.**
- 3 **More systematic provision of on-line distance training resources for secondary teachers, perhaps linked to the proposed Open School for Languages.**
- 4 **Provision of model teaching programmes for the range of qualifications outlined in this chapter.**

Information and Communications Technology

3.51 We have made earlier references to the value of ICT in teaching and learning languages. Young people's familiarity with ICT offers a great opportunity to language teachers. It seems to us that a determined commitment to use this world, which is so familiar to young people, is a key to increasing the engagement of young people of all ages with languages. New technologies can facilitate real contacts with schools and young people in other countries. They can also provide stimulus for creative and interactive work. A number of respondents



have for example commented on the power of the Interactive Whiteboard (with appropriate training) to transform approaches to Language Teaching.

- 3.52 Developments in ICT move so fast that there will be a continuing need for information, updating and training. To facilitate this process we **recommend** that the Department continues its provision of information on languages and ICT – for example through CILT and BECTA – and finds ways to support and disseminate innovations in this area.

Technology and the Open School for Languages

3.53 We also recommend a major initiative in this field – the Open School for Languages. As well as supporting teachers and teaching, the new technologies have a role to play in supporting learners directly. Although we do not think that in schools technology can replace face to face teaching of languages and interaction between learners and between learner and teacher, we are struck by the potential it offers for pupils to access language in their own time and without the pressure of peer observation. Technology can also provide access to a wider range of language than some schools can currently offer.

3.54 We therefore see a strong case for developing a more concerted national framework for open language learning in schools, similar to the Further Maths Centres. This Web-based resource would make available a range of material in different languages and with content designed to engage learners and support new developments in the secondary languages curriculum. It should support face to face learning opportunities, including intensive courses and provide some facility for training teachers in the best use of appropriate methods and materials.

- 3.55 **We recommend that the DfES should now scope a detailed project with a view to inviting tenders from suitable institutions or**

consortia to establish an “Open School for Languages” over the next three years.

Immersion Courses

3.56 Languages do not need to be taught in lock-step, weekly doses. We see value also in the provision of more intensive immersion courses for four purposes in particular:

1. To help level up the language knowledge of children coming from primary schools to secondary schools, perhaps at the end of the summer term or just before the new school year. This is to help a successful transition, which we have identified as a key need if the primary policy is to be a success.
2. To assist pupils in the final year of Key Stage 3 who have fallen behind, and need an opportunity to catch up.
3. For pupils who at the end of Key Stage 3 want to start a new language.
4. To provide a more engaging and appropriate experience for Key Stage 4 pupils, including those taking combined courses or the specialised diplomas. In some cases these could be linked to work or other experience abroad.

3.57 **We recommend support for the expansion of such provision on a local and regional basis. Such activity should be underpinned by our proposals for an Open School For Languages (see above 3.52-3.54).**

International and Intercultural Experience

3.58 We have been confirmed in our view that international links, including visits, exchanges and work experience are of major benefit in themselves and are greatly to be encouraged if children are to see the “point” of language learning and to relate it to the realities of the 21st century. We suggest a higher priority for opportunities for overseas work experience or visits, with some financial assistance where there are problems of finance for families.

3.59 Much is already being done to encourage such experience and this should be continued. **We also recommend additional action to make such experiences more widespread and easier to organise.** This will involve:

- Advice to LAs on supporting such visits by looked after children and for schools that have a high proportion of pupils on free school meals;
- Promotion of existing national and European opportunities to schools in challenging circumstances;
- Financial support for the organisation of work experience, in collaboration with the main Embassies;
- Support and guidance on overcoming administrative and legal issues associated with visits.

Support Networks for Teachers

3.60 For the kind of changes that are proposed in the Report to be effective, there will be a need for coordination and support at a national and regional level. This will be of particular importance in relation to the continuing professional development of teachers. Fortunately language teachers are relatively well served, by Specialist Language Colleges, and by a range of national and regional organisations. Less happily these structures often overlap and compete and national coverage is not guaranteed. We do not therefore need to invent new structures but rather to strengthen them, to increase their impact and where necessary to simplify and rationalise them. We invite consideration of such simplification.

The Specialist Language Colleges

3.61 There are nearly 300 schools that are first or second specialism Language Colleges and have an established role in supporting other secondary and primary schools. Since 2004, SLCs have received extra funding (on average

£30,000 per year) to support Primary or Key Stage 4 languages in other schools. In our consultation report we stated that further attention needed to be given to the roles that the Specialist Schools are playing in support of Key Stage 4 and we proposed concerted efforts be made to increase the number of schools with languages as a second specialism with a view to achieving the target of 400 Colleges and thereby improve their geographical coverage.

3.62 **We now recommend that the impact of this additional funding is reviewed, and that on this basis the funding is continued in the most effective way. Consideration should also be given to whether such funding could be extended beyond the Language Colleges to other good schools with successful languages departments.**

3.63 **We further recommend that concerted efforts are made to increase the numbers of second specialisms in languages. We also recommend offering a further or annual opportunity to specialist schools to take up languages as a second specialism ‘out of cycle’ with special attention being given to improving geographical spread.**

National and Regional Support Organisations

3.64 In the consultation report we mentioned the role of the British Council in supporting the international dimension, the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) and its networks supporting specialist schools, and in particular CILT, The National Centre for Languages, which offers a comprehensive range of support services for language teachers. There is also an active subject association – ALL.

3.65 **We recommend that public support for these bodies is maintained and where possible refocused to address specific concerns relating to languages post 14.**

- 3.66 At a regional and local level there is need for professional leadership of teachers to oversee the arrangements for professional development to which we give particular emphasis in this Report, and to organise the use of secondary language teachers, who may become surplus to requirements in the short term. Such support can be offered to schools by the national organisations referred to above, Local Authorities, especially when they have maintained a post of Languages Adviser, by the Specialist Language Colleges and by the CILT network of Comenius Centres. In some cases Higher Education Institutions are also in a position to give regional support.
- 3.67 But many Local Authorities have either withdrawn or much reduced the support they once gave to language teachers through Language Advisers. There is therefore no single route through which such strategic support can be directed in the secondary sector. Instead there are a number of support organisations with complex and overlapping roles. In its evidence to the Review, CILT itself commented on this complexity and suggested the need for some rationalisation.
- 3.68 We therefore propose time limited action to ensure that there is effective local support in all areas proposed in this Report through a 3 year programme for supporting local and regional consortia of LAs, SLCs, and Comenius Centres, for example – who take responsibility for coordinating and promoting lasting change in schools, and in particular coordinate appropriate support for schools where the take up of languages has fallen to low levels in Key Stage 4, and where the school is prepared to commit to a recovery programme. It has been beyond the scope of the Review to find a solution to this complexity.
- 3.69 **We therefore recommend that as a matter of some urgency the Department reviews the**

range of support available and develops a more coherent model for supporting change which it funds for an initial three year period. Priority for such regional change agents, working closely with SIPs, will be support for schools seeking to raise take-up of languages in Key Stage 4 from a low level.

Beyond Sixteen

- 3.70 It was part of our brief to consider the possible influence of post-schools sectors (FE and HE) and also of business. In large part the relevant issues are dealt with in Chapter 2, on promoting languages. There are two areas, however, in which decisions taken outside the statutory years of education have a direct backwash effect on languages in schools.

The role of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC)

- 3.71 We referred in our consultation report to the importance the LSC placed on language skills for employment. Increasingly decisions in the post-16 field are driven by skills priorities identified by regional and sector bodies. This direction of travel has been confirmed in the Further Education and Training Bill and the Leitch Review of Skills, both published in 2006. There are grounds for concern in this respect that there will not be a strong voice for languages in setting the funding priorities for the nation. **We therefore confirm our**



recommendation that the Secretary of State should identify languages as one of his priorities in his annual grant letter to the LSC.

The influence of Higher Education

3.72 Although beyond the remit and competence of the review, the recent decision by one major University (UCL) to include languages as a criterion for selection of undergraduates has already attracted comment. Several Head Teachers have observed that if such a view was more widespread it would have a significant impact on the take-up of languages post 14. We therefore **urge** universities to consider whether, and in what ways, they can show that they value languages, albeit in ways that do not impact adversely on the widening participation agenda. We are aware, for example, of a recent proposal that where a candidate for entry does not have a language at GCSE level they might be required to continue their studies at university, or show evidence of studying a language, or a proven interest in languages.

3.73 We have referred in Chapter 2 to the HEFC(E) programme for promoting languages in schools as part of its widening access agenda, and how that could be expanded to give national coverage.

Coherence and Commitment

3.74 Work is continually taking place on the curriculum, learning programmes and Key Stage Frameworks. It is clear that there should be closer coordination of the timetable for revision of the framework and curriculum and that these should always be considered together. The Department should see that this is so.

3.75 We therefore advise that the Department accepts a responsibility for ensuring that the work is closely coordinated. We urge in particular that the programme for languages in primary schools, Key Stages 3 and 4 are

developed as a coherent whole. Piecemeal changes are not the best way of doing the job. **Above all, the Department and its Ministers must make a long-term commitment to the success of this Strategy, and this must be reflected in its priorities and commitments for the next funding period.**

3.76 The success of a programme such as we have outlined, as finally determined by Ministers, will depend crucially on a long-term commitment to it by the Government, extending beyond the Department for Education and Skills, which is reflected in its priorities and commitments for the next funding round.

Chapter 4

Supporting Action and Conclusion

Action needed

- 4.1 Our appointment reflects the Government's concern to remedy the scale of movement out of languages at the end of Key Stage 3. Our proposals in the preceding Chapters addressed the five areas for action identified in our terms of reference, and in making proposals we have not hesitated to range more widely in the interests of the coherent development of a policy of "Languages for All." Our proposals for including languages as part of the statutory curriculum for primary schools at Key Stage 2 reflect that.
- 4.2 Turning specifically to secondary schools, we see our proposals in Chapters 2 and 3 as the basis for a renaissance of languages in Key Stages 3 and 4. They will have a progressive impact and should be fully in place by September 2009.
- 4.3 But if they are to realise their potential, they will need to be supported by a strong programme of communication to schools.
- 4.4 A year ago the Minister of State, Jacqui Smith asked schools to set a benchmark of between 50 and 90 per cent of pupils taking a language in Key Stage 4. But this was not supported by any new policies. It was communicated in a low key way and it appears to have been little noticed.
- 4.5 Nevertheless, we think that in the interests of a curriculum that responds to the abilities, aspirations and needs of every child, her approach, which leaves more choice in the hands of parents, pupils and teachers than is possible with any mandatory requirement, has much to commend it. We believe, on the basis of the measures proposed in this Report, and with the concern of all the associations representing teachers and head teachers to see a recovery of languages, that a new approach to schools by the Secretary of State, stating the importance he attaches to languages, and setting a 50 to 90 per cent benchmark, backed by a strong programme of communication, has the potential for producing the required response.
- 4.6 We think that including data about languages in the Tables will focus schools' attention on languages both in terms of the choices that pupils make and how well they succeed. After appropriate piloting we **recommend** two performance indicators: one measuring attainment at GCSE level and one measuring participation and attainment at more modest levels so that this is captured and valued as well. But we see this as information for parents, not as a basis for comparison between schools, and to supplement the information for parents in the School Profile.



- 4.7 Ofsted school inspections are only at intervals of 3 years and are 'light touch'. The inspector is concerned with the overall performance of the school, not specifically with languages. However, we understand the HMCI, Christine Gilbert, has already committed to adding a judgement to inspection reports on the extent to which schools are setting challenging targets from this September. We would expect that in the context of a letter to schools from the Secretary of State and the changes that are being made to the self evaluation form to prompt schools about their languages provision, this will encourage healthy dialogue between the influential inspectors and head teachers.
- 4.8 In addition to general school inspections, Ofsted also carry out three yearly subject surveys which look in depth at the quality of teaching and learning in specific subjects and other related issues. Given the fragile state of languages take up at the moment, we **recommend** that the languages subject survey is expanded to cover more schools and that an interim report is made available to the Secretary of State mid cycle to monitor the impact of the measures that we are proposing.
- 4.9 School Improvement Partners have a key role. One of the urgent measures that we took following our consultation report was to speak to School Improvement Partner (SIP) managers to encourage SIPs to raise the issue of languages with head teachers. We appreciated being given such a generous hearing. We think this needs to be a continuing function of the SIPs. Therefore we **recommend** that the take up of languages at Key Stage 4 is added to the list of specific issues that they must discuss with schools. To target effort the Department should provide details of schools where language take up appears relatively low or in rapid decline. In these circumstances, schools and their School Improvement Partners will need support to decide how best to get back on track and we would encourage the Department to give urgent attention to setting out options and guidance for School Improvement Partners to use. The role we envisage for the School Improvement Partners is thus one of identifying problems, and identifying means to progress as well as one of challenge.
- 4.10 In recommending that schools are set benchmarks of between 50 and 90 per cent for the continuing study of languages, we recognise that the scale of the recession is such that the achievement of these figures for many schools will take time, and that the changes we have recommended for the opportunities for learning a language, and changes in the GCSE examination, with appropriate new curricula, will not be fully in place until September 2009. We think it realistic to recognise that schools would be committing themselves to a programme of progressive action which may not be fully realised until **September 2010**. We believe that in very many cases, schools will be able to make quicker headway, but it is realistic to recognise that for some schools where languages have fallen to a very low level, it will take such time to provide the kind of learning experience that pupils need.
- 4.11 In the communication to schools which we propose, it would be helpful in recognition of our emphasis on offering a range of learning opportunities, to make clear that the continued study of languages in Key Stage 4 may lead to an acceptable range of outcomes recognised by the GCSE, the Languages Ladder and other languages qualifications.
- 4.12 We have considered whether the Secretary of State's call on schools to set these benchmarks, should be supported by a statutory direction. We have verified from consultation with the Department that this course of action is open to the Secretary of State. But there was such strong opposition from the two head teachers

associations to a directive that we think that in the interest of having the goodwill of head teachers, it is probably better on balance to proceed as above. The first opportunity to assess whether there has been a positive response will be in September 2008. At that time, the curriculum choices made by pupils early in 2008, will become apparent. But our reforms will take time to work through and it would be unrealistic to expect any substantial change in decisions being taken as early as February next year. A better means of judging the response of schools to the proposed benchmarking could be obtained from a report by the Chief Inspector in the Autumn of 2008 since this would take into account the plans and measures schools were taking to achieve their benchmark.

A Return to a Mandatory Requirement

- 4.13 A return to a mandatory requirement at this stage was only supported by one of the six teacher and head teachers associations, but if a recovery of languages cannot be achieved by the approach we propose, we would see a return to a modified mandatory curriculum as being the necessary consequence.
- 4.14 In our consultation report we outline the substance of such a requirement. It would not apply to pupils who were only at level four in English and mathematics (the level expected of an average 11 year old) although they would maintain an entitlement to languages study. Nor, recognising the crucial importance of motivating many more of our young people to succeed in their learning to age sixteen and beyond, would we think it right at Key Stage 4 to require more than the equivalent of the curriculum time needed for a short course GCSE. This would imply a much slimmer statutory programme of study than that which existed prior to 2004. This is directly relevant to the potential success of the new specialised diplomas, where the time for Additional and

Specialised Learning at level 2 is only 180 guided learning hours.

- 4.15 While the mandatory requirement would be limited as outlined above, we would expect a substantial majority of pupils to be following a full programme of language study leading to a full GCSE or the equivalent and the Government to make that clear in its guidance to schools.

In conclusion

- 4.16 When the Government decided in 2003 that Languages and Design & Technology should no longer be compulsory in Key Stage 4, it fully expected a reduction in take up. But this decision was balanced by the introduction of languages into primary schools, when it is widely agreed that children take readily to them. While the introduction of languages into primary schools has gone very well, and we have been encouraged by that to recommend they become a mandatory part of the Key Stage 2 curriculum, the fall in the study of languages at Key Stage 4 has gone further than the Government might have expected or wished.



- 4.17 Even when full weight is given to the Government's concern in 2003 to motivate many more of our young people, and especially those who come from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds, to succeed in education, to their

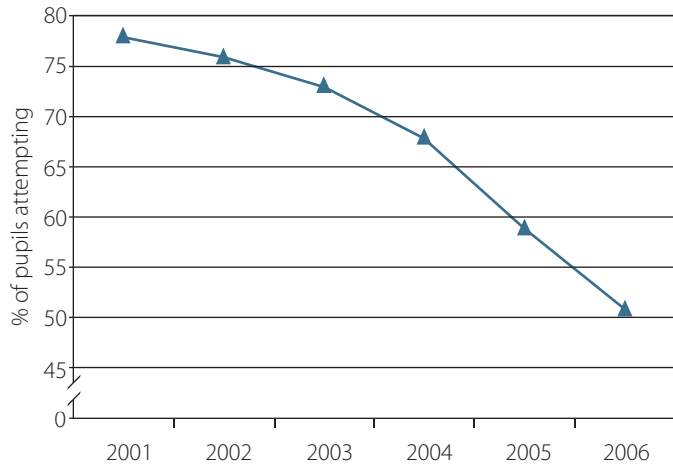
own and the national good, it is clear that action is required to recover the situation.

- 4.18 An effective response lies in a revitalised learning experience, which through providing different routes to learning, will be more meaningful and motivating than at present to the whole range of young people. As part of a successful policy, language teachers need better support. Inevitably the experience of the last five years has been very disappointing to them and has severely affected their careers. Our proposals therefore include investment in teachers and teaching, and recognition of their achievement.
- 4.19 This action in schools needs to be supported by a continuing programme to get across to the whole country – parents, employers and pupils – that languages matter.
- 4.20 We have consulted extensively over the last 4 months. One of the points that has repeatedly been made to us, is that a quick fix is not the answer: a simple return to a mandatory requirement will not motivate those who currently find languages both difficult and lacking cognitive interest, and schools committed to finding ways of motivating all their pupils to be successful learners, would not respond with commitment to a simple statutory enforcement.
- 4.21 Nevertheless, with the many pressures on head teachers, a supporting framework will be needed for the recovery we seek. Accordingly we make proposals to address that issue above, in which we seek to balance the need for such action with the need to maintain the goodwill and commitment of head teachers, who feel themselves needing to respond continually to the developing needs of society and adapting to them.
- 4.22 We believe that this Report offers a balanced way forward with the prospect that from 2010 all our young people will have 7 years of required

study of languages, the majority of whom, in the light of that experience, and the range of learning experiences in languages offered in Key Stage 4, will be continuing to age 16 with increasing numbers doing so beyond this. We underline the word beyond, because we need more of our young people to be continuing languages through to level 3 and on to University. With the changes we have proposed, we believe that this is a realistic aspiration.

Appendix 1

Chart 1: Percent of cohort entered for at least 1 MFL



Note: From 2005 onwards, figures refer to pupils at the end of KS4 rather than at age 15

Chart 2: Percent of cohort taking a language

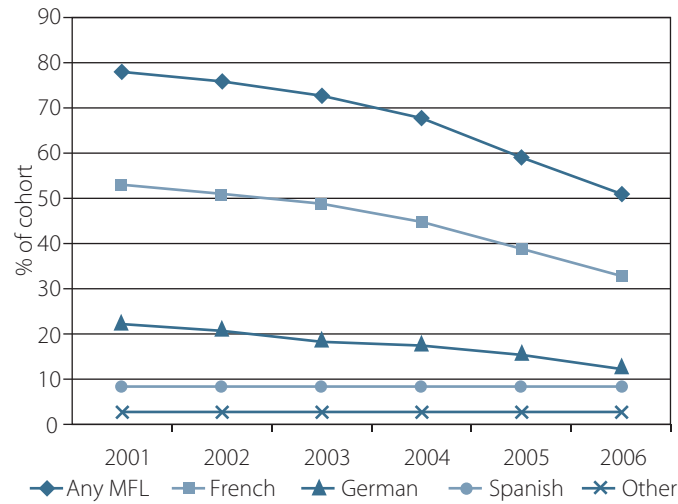
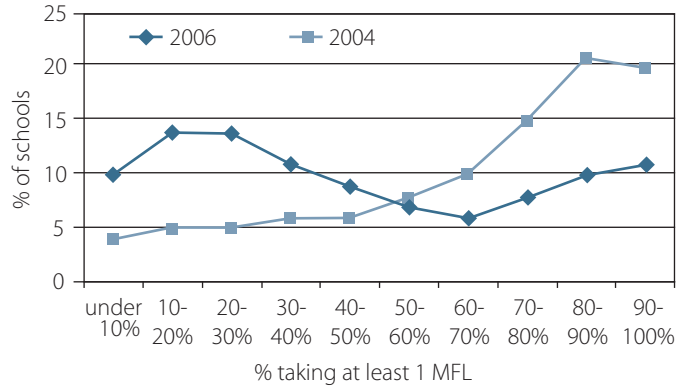
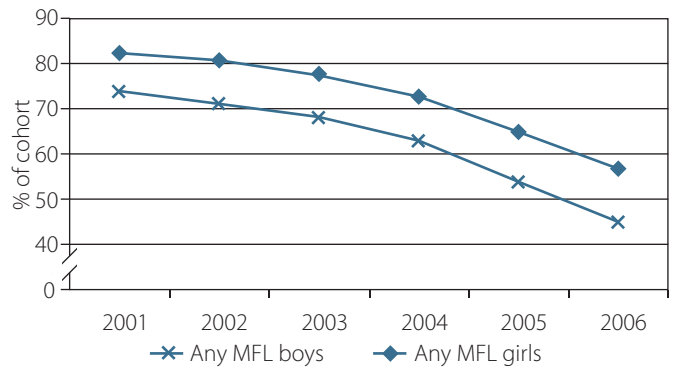


Chart 3: Language entries in maintained mainstream schools



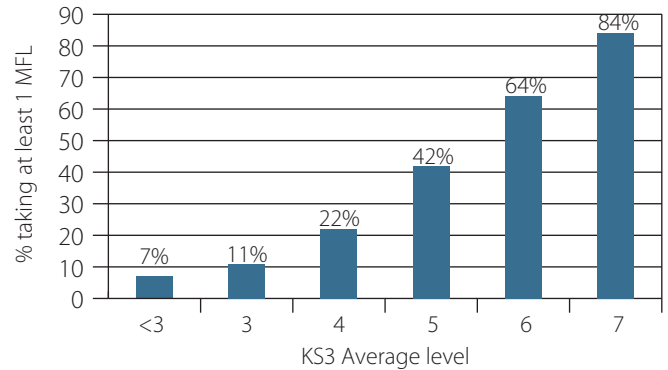
Note: MFL includes only French, German and Spanish

Chart 4: Percent taking languages (boys v girls)



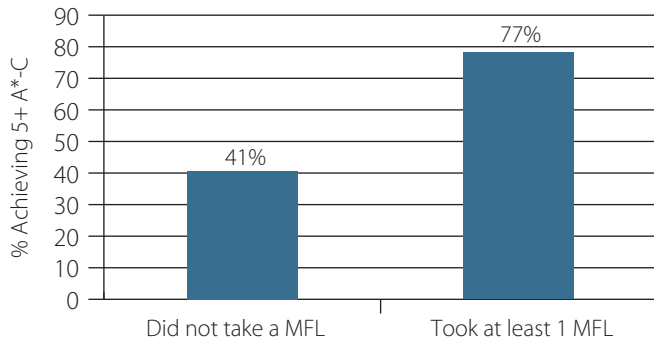
Figs for 2005 and 2006 are end KS4
Figures for earlier years are for 15 year olds

Chart 5: Relationship between KS3 attainment and language take up at GCSE



Note: MFL includes only French, German and Spanish

Chart 6: Language take up linked to GCSE



Note: MFL includes only French, German and Spanish

Chart 9: Percent of cohort taking at least 1 language in French, German or Spanish

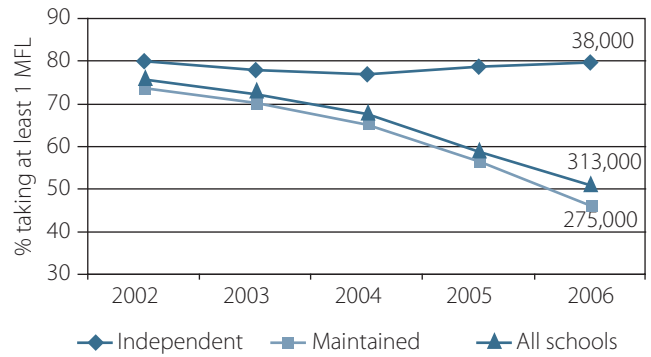
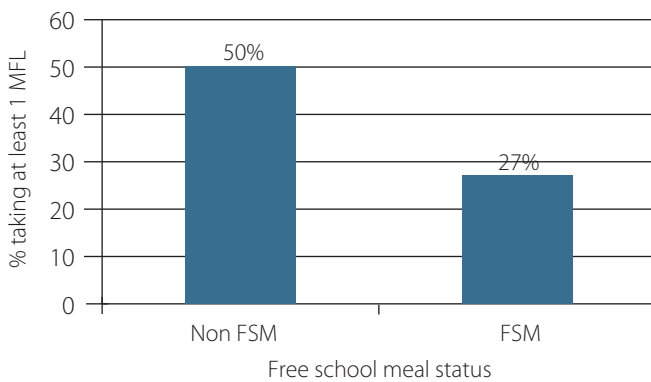
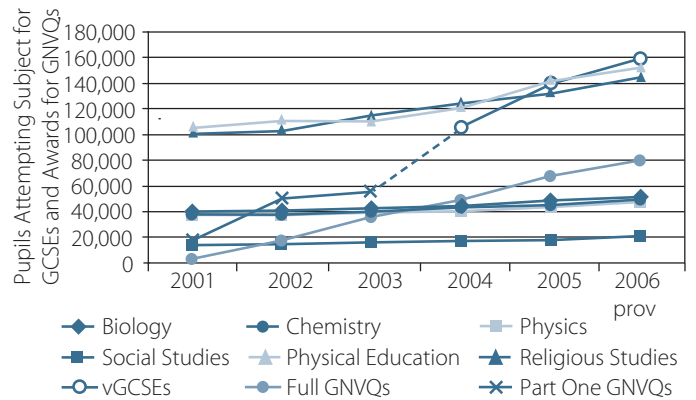


Chart 7: Language take up and free school meal status



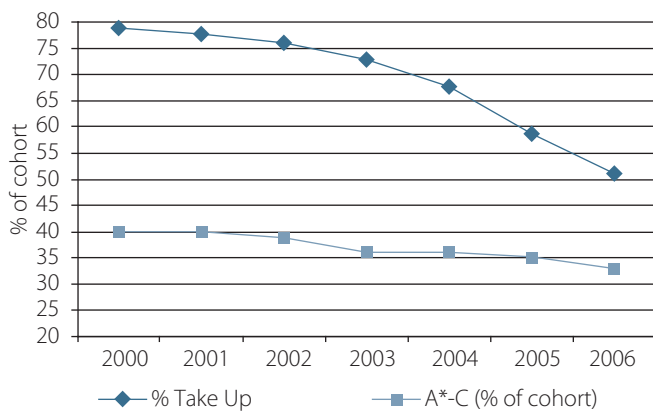
Note: MFL includes only French, German and Spanish

Chart 10: Subjects showing increased take up



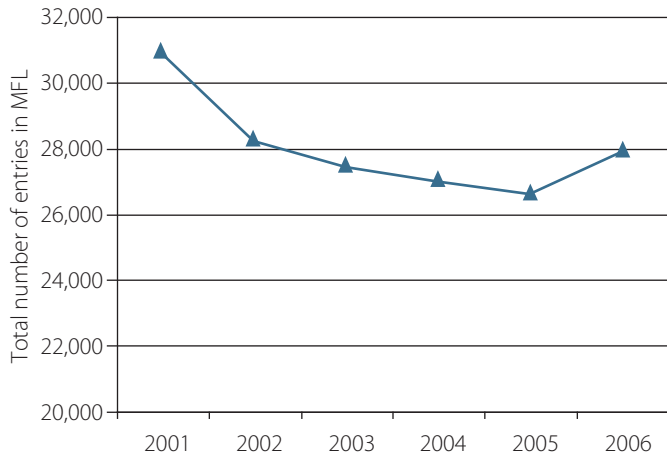
Figs for 2005 and 2006 are for pupils at the end of KS4
vGCSEs were designed to replace part 1 GNVQs

Chart 8: MFL take up and percentage of cohort achieving A*-C in MFL



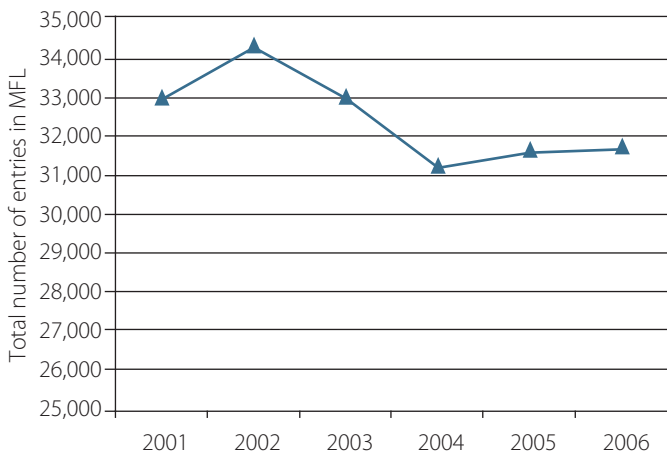
Note: From 2005 onwards, figures relate to pupils at the end of KS4 rather than at age 15

Chart 11: A level entries



Figures are for 16-18 year olds

Chart 12: AS level entries



Figures are for 16-18 year olds

Appendix 2

Solutions in the Schools

- 1 It became increasingly clear during the course of the review that a major objective of teaching in Key Stage 4 must be to engage pupils with “the meanings that matter” to them. It also became evident that much good practice already exists in our schools and that what needs to be done therefore is not so much to invent new approaches to language learning and teaching but to provide opportunities for teachers to share good practice, to learn from what works, to adapt it and make it their own.
- 2 This view was confirmed by our discussions around the Interim Report, by the further contributions of practitioners and in particular by the arguments of a number of experts in the field of languages pedagogy to whom we are very grateful. In this Appendix we set out some of the issues which we believe will need to be addressed if our aspirations for a more widespread and successful pedagogy are to be realised.

Is there a “right way” of teaching?

- 3 The best way of teaching a language has been debated for decades and the debate continues. Teaching has become more demanding in terms of the need to win the engagement of the pupil than in previous generations, when greater reliance could be placed on a pupil’s duty to listen and learn. This poses a particular challenge to teachers whose subject requires hard learning, and languages is one of these. As Professor Eric Hawkins once

famously said teaching a language is like gardening in a gale...

4. While the debate will doubtless continue, there is widely held consensus about language teaching, with which we concur, which claims that successful language learning takes place when –
 - a Learners are exposed to **rich** input of the target language
 - b They have many opportunities to **interact** through the language
 - c They are **motivated** to learn.

In addition we agree with the view that was put to us that learners need to **understand** both what and how they are learning if they are to have long-term success. We need to “capitalise on language learners’ relative cognitive maturity”⁶ which means that they are able to understand and talk about how language works and to benefit from feedback on their performance.

- 5 According to a number of commentators, one of the problems that has bedevilled language teaching methodology has been the perennial pendulum swing between creativity, rote learning and understanding. In fact successful language learning is likely to include all three as part of the process of exposure to and interaction with the new language. These principles and understandings can be incorporated into a wide range of practical applications depending on the interests, aspirations and learning styles of individual pupils, as well as the experience, personality and goals of particular teachers.
- 6 We have also understood that there are particular challenges facing the language teacher in her or his task. Learning a second

⁶ Professor Ros Mitchell of Southampton University.

language is concerned with forms as much as with meanings. Much of the meaning, in particular for beginners, is already known and this affects both the process of learning and pupils' motivations. In addition oracy skills are far more important for language learning than for other areas of the curriculum. Listening and speaking have equal weight with written skills in assessment schemes and the aural/oral mode is most common in classroom interaction. Teachers also face a particular challenge because of the perception that the model of performance should be the native speaker, whose mastery of the language no non-native teacher (let alone learner) is likely to equal.

- 7 Finally the rest of the curriculum is not neutral to the acquisition of foreign language competence. It is known that the internalisation of a second language takes time and in a school (or any institutional) framework, that learning is surrounded by a "gale" of English. This is why the issue of learner motivation is so important for successful learning.
- 8 As a contribution to thinking in schools on teaching languages we now give some examples of existing practice of schools that have been notably successful. In referring to them we recognise that there will be others that are equally good, and we do make a key recommendation in the Report on the need

for language teachers to have increased opportunities for professional development in which looking at successful practice will be a valuable element. It is our hope that this very short incursion into matters of pedagogy and these examples of existing good practice will provide a basis for further development and reflection on successful language teaching and learning.

The curriculum and "meanings that matter"

- 9 A central element in our understanding of the reasons for the fall-off in languages take-up post 14 has been the issue of engagement (or pupil motivation). In UK conditions we can not rely solely or perhaps even primarily on the instrumental motivation which says that a foreign language is economically and culturally indispensable (as is the case with English in other countries). Although we should, and do, make the case for more vocationally orientated courses, if all or most pupils are to continue with the often-demanding task of learning a language, the subject matter must really engage them here and now. The examination syllabuses have been criticised because the topics chosen do not engage the interests of teenagers. We have responded to that elsewhere, but the form of teaching adopted can make a difference, and we have found excellent examples of that. We have not found only one way of achieving this end. In some cases it appears to be a matter of making better use of the immediate surroundings of the classroom. The conventional suspension of disbelief involving an unreal journey to "MFL Land" is dispensed with and replaced with the game, the intrinsic enjoyment of competition (in particular with the teacher), and an approach to language which enables pupils to say what they want to say. This can also be developed to offer access – even at a fairly basic level – to real meanings, and real cultural experiences.



Creative use of the target language – Cheam High School

Languages staff at Cheam High School in Sutton are committed to ensuring that all pupils enjoy a stimulating and rewarding language learning experience throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. There is a huge emphasis on consistent use of the target language by both teachers and pupils. Schemes of work and lesson plans are carefully constructed in order to address the whole range of learning styles and to allow pupils to achieve at the highest level possible. Visual and kinaesthetic activities provide excellent support for all learners but teachers expect the very highest standards of their pupils in all four skills. Drama, music and authentic materials are prevalent in lessons. And yet the department does not see any of this as being incompatible with high achievement at GCSE and preparing pupils to use their languages at home and abroad, now and in the future. Pupils are encouraged to say what they want to say in the target language, to use the language for real purposes and to express feelings and emotions in the target language. The department produces schemes of work that will allow learners to engage emotionally and conceptually with the vocabulary and structures of the language that they are learning. A year 9 module of work for example is based on the film “Au revoir les enfants” and pupils are able to talk with confidence and passion about the experiences of young people living under the fear of Nazism during the second world war in France.

- 10 In a number of schools we have also seen pupils engaging with language itself – showing interest in decoding meaning – almost for its own sake. Some elements of the primary literacy framework (and increasingly the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages) will encourage such approaches, as can the Key Stage 3 Framework and Strategy. Some schools have found very successful ways of encouraging such engagement almost entirely in the target language. In other cases, for example in a Blackburn Grammar School, a deliberate attempt is made to use cognates and to operate bilingually in the classroom with considerable success and motivated learners.
- 11 Another characteristic of such engagement can be the links which are made to “real life” whether the immediate world of the teenager (making friends with others) or the more adult world of future work. One such example is the video-based, ICT resource entitled “Spanish Flirt”, a learning soap opera about English and South American teenagers. Others involve more “vocational” approaches.



Vocational International Project (VIPs) – Sheffield

The Vocational International Project was developed by Sheffield Local Authority following a fall in the number of students studying languages in Key Stage 4 and a belief that a business language course or course with a vocational content would motivate students and benefit them in their future careers. VIPs provides as an alternative qualification pathway, based on the NVQ model, along which students continue their study of languages in Key Stage 4. VIPs promotes a vocational approach to European languages, teaching them in a business context.

Students engage in active learning activities, with a strong focus on the spoken word and independent learning with ICT. There are also opportunities to visit local companies to meet employees using languages in their jobs, illustrating that a little language can make a big difference.

Students appreciate the usefulness of the course for their future employment opportunities, both in terms of content and skills learnt. Over 1,000 Key Stage 4 students have been involved over three years, meaning greater numbers opting to continue language learning post-14. Students achieve NVQ level 1 and/or 2.

- 12 Many schools and networks have developed languages courses linked to the demands of employability. As well as the “VIPs” project, the Black Country 14-19 pathfinder has majored on such “vocational” approaches. This is also a theme being developed in the South West through a series of seminars bringing together teachers and local businesses and entitled “Making Languages our Business”.

- 13 We have also seen inspiring examples of language being used as a vehicle to access real meaning across the curriculum and beyond. This might involve using language to organise an international football tournament as part of a school’s aim to establish the importance of the international dimension and respect for other languages and cultures both in the school and within the local community. (Ashlyns SLC in Hertfordshire). In other schools links have been made between languages and the performing arts, often involving pupil mentoring of younger pupils including those in local primary schools.

Languages and Drama at Notre Dame SLC Norwich

This lively project, which integrates language and drama, brings German to life through pantomime and provides creative preparation for AS level German while encouraging others to learn the language.

The performance of *Aschenputtel* (‘Cinderella’) requires the students to do more than learn their lines. They write and learn the script, organise costumes and props, sound and lighting; moreover, all rehearsals take place in German. In keeping with tradition, the panto, which has been performed for over 500 learners of all ages, allows the audience to interact with the characters on the stage.

Students from Notre Dame and neighbouring schools are more motivated to learn German as a result of the project, which has attracted attention from the University of East Anglia’s international visitors. The resources are available to other schools interested in adopting the project via the website.

- 14 Such cross-curricular work is further developed by those schools that are able to link subjects in the curriculum through “Content and Language Integrated Learning” (CLIL).

CLIL at Tile Hill Wood School

Tile Hill Wood is an 11-18 all girls comprehensive school in Coventry, West Midlands with over 1,300 students on roll.

This CLIL (content and language integrated learning) project sees Year 7 pupils learning Geography, RE and PSHE through the medium of French with lessons delivered jointly by language and subject teachers. Pupil attainment in French has risen significantly with achievement in the other subject at least as good as the non-bilingual groups.

The immersion method is hugely popular – 93 per cent of pupils have opted to continue with such learning in Year 8.

- 15 Many of these innovative and engaging approaches to language learning are effective with all children. Although not exclusive to Specialist Language Colleges, it is noteworthy that many such approaches do come from specialist schools. This is to be expected, but it also raises a challenge in relation to dissemination, resourcing and teacher training.

New approaches to assessment

- 16 Notwithstanding the criticisms of the current specification for the GCSE, these examples show that successful teaching is taking place at Key Stage 4. Credit must also be given to the Examination Boards for their contribution to the increase in language competence that has taken place of the last 15 years. An increasing number of schools are also using GCSE to fast track pupils as a basis for more advanced study or perhaps a new language in Year 10 or 11.

GCSE in Year 9 at Dereham Neatherd

Dereham Neatherd School is well known for its excellent fast-track GCSE results in Languages but as a Specialist Language College its aim is to raise achievement across the whole ability range for all its pupils – and at the same time meet its Language College targets. In order to do this the Head of Department broke the department’s work down into five key areas – communal and classroom displays, pupil organisation, teacher organisation, teaching methodology and regular assessments in all four skills. Examples of this shared approach include:

- all staff working from medium-term plans which have been written by the department with pupil achievement in mind and staff planning a unit of work, in advance of it being taught, from these plans;
- common mark grids that allow for comprehensive tracking of pupil achievement;
- departmental inset to ensure that teachers working in the same department have the same set of high expectations of pupils and are able to deliver effective language lessons;
- getting pupils to think for themselves, mind-map their ideas and work out rules and patterns with a partner. This forms a huge part of the teaching methodology;
- Fair and enjoyable assessments that encourage pupils to reflect upon their achievements in each skill area.

GCSE results have reached 70 per cent A*–C and the department is happy to be able to make a difference to their children’s GCSE grades and also to their enjoyment of language learning and their perception of how learning a language can help them in many other ways.

- 17 We nevertheless think teaching will benefit from changes in the current specifications, so that teaching can take place within a framework that engages the interests of teenagers. It is also right to recognise that the GCSE is not appropriate for all learners. For some pupils more applied approaches or the portfolio approach of NVQ may be a better solution. Others may be better served by the Languages Ladder. Since 2005 increasing number of schools have also been registering to use the Language Ladder tests through Asset Languages. The range of applications has been wide, demonstrating the flexibility of this new system which can be used to assess progress at the end of Key Stage 3, on transition to Secondary from primary for partial competences in a new language in Key Stage 4, or following an intensive experience of language learning.

Getting away from lockstep approaches

- 18 We should not assume that language learning works best when offered in small doses over a long period, and only in a class of 30 with a teacher. The flexible curriculum of the future will need a range of approaches, and some of these may actually be conducive to better language learning, in particular when time is at a premium. Indeed many experts believe that more intensive approaches are more effective, and this is certainly a feature of adult learning of languages.

Intensive and flexible – Junior CULP (Cambridge University Language Programme)

In July 2004, the Cambridge University Language Centre ran a one week intensive language course for 11 Year 9 students from Impington Village College, which incorporated face-to-face tuition and on-line work. As a result of the success of the pilot the Junior CULP project was established which provides a 120 hour, year long intensive language course for students from six local schools: Impington Village College and St Ivo, St Peter's School and Hinchinbrooke School in Huntingdon and Netherhall School and Comberton Village College in Cambridge. Students receive 70 per cent of their language tuition at the University Language Centre, in blocks of intensive language study. They participate in Saturday sessions as well as three week long sessions of tuition spread at intervals throughout the academic year.

The impact on students is very positive with many participants continuing their language studies into Key Stage 4.

Initially set up to enable reluctant learners to have the chance to learn a language in an innovative way combining excellent classroom teaching in groups of about 20 with cutting edge specially written e-learning materials and methods which incorporate independent learning based upon the learner's preferred styles of learning, the project soon attracted many other groups of learners in Key Stage 3, including the gifted and talented, the highly motivated and the average learner who is committed. Schools typically report that the euphoria of involvement washes off into language classes back at school.

Using new technology

19 Another key feature of CULP is the use of technology to support both flexibility and greater learner autonomy. Such access to learning through technology is now becoming far more widespread in language learning from primary through to advanced studies. Many language colleges, for example Monkseaton and Shireland are playing a leading role in the use of technology to support and monitor the curriculum, often in cooperation with the Open University or other HEIs.

Engaging pupils through ICT, Rotherham

With the aim of engaging pupils more deeply in the learning process, Year 10 pupils at **Brinsworth Comprehensive School** were asked to create interactive exercises (games) for their peers using authoring software. Each group was free to research and develop their own ideas on a sub-topic of the theme of healthy living, while still working within a clear set of agreed objectives. A resource booklet containing essential vocabulary and grammar models and examples was issued to each pupil. The pupils used the Internet to identify suitable text and used their mobile phones to create video clips, along with other material, to incorporate into the activities. Pupils demonstrated their final products, which were peer-evaluated using criteria based on the linguistic, technical and pedagogic merits of the materials. All pupils then completed the carousel of activities, consolidating their knowledge of the topic.

20 As the example from Rotherham shows not only do such approaches increase independence they also directly affect pupil motivation as the project rather than the language becomes “the point”.

21 As schools develop more and more links with schools abroad, the use of ICT also becomes a major support for communication between pupils (e-mail links), for joint curricular work (on line and video conferencing) and for the exchange of data. Much exciting joint curricular work has been going on, for example in Devon where St Peters School has used technology to underpin real exchanges between pupils. Such links and exchanges are supported by the British Council-administered Global Gateway website – www.globalgateway.org – or other portals such as E-Languages – www.elanguages.org or E-Twinning – www.etwinning.net. An example of this from East London is reported below.

Languages beyond the classroom

- 22 It is also important that pupils see that languages exist beyond the classroom. This begins with the cultural and cross curricular work described above, but there are other examples of the outside world impacting on classroom learning.
- 23 Increasingly, universities are linking with and supporting schools. There are many examples of mentoring and support from Universities and their students. The Subject Centre for Languages Linguistics and Area Studies based at Southampton has published a report on such initiatives.



Aston University: Languages for Life

Higher Education Outreach Programme for Schools

Aston University's Languages for Life project was set up in 2001, initially to research attitudes to European language learning amongst young Asian women, and to identify why these potential students were under-represented on language courses. As a result of the findings from the research, Aston University used funds from its "Widening Participation" budget to establish a programme of outreach visits to local schools. Undergraduates from the Schools of Languages and Social Sciences are recruited as ambassadors, and talk to pupils from Years 9 to 12 about their passion for languages and their reasons for making languages part of their university degree.

Community languages at Woodbridge High (a non selective mixed comprehensive)

Since 2000 the school has considerably expanded the provision of Community Languages classes in the school. 9 languages are taught including Urdu, Bengali, Panjabi, Turkish, Chinese, Arabic, Greek as well as Spanish and French. Community Languages teachers are recruited through the local press. As part of the school's promotion of internationalism the TAFAL (Teach a Friend a Language) project was set up aiming to raise the profile of home languages spoken by students. It was run as a competition in which native speakers teamed up with a friend who had no prior knowledge of the language and together they produced a short conversation which was presented to a judge. The project encouraged the young people involved to consider the importance of each other's home language.

- 24 As well as universities, businesses can enrich the school curriculum through Education Business partnerships of various kinds. CILT has been coordinating a "Business Language Champions" programme on behalf of the department and Goethe Institut has developed a Project Engage to bring the world of business into schools.
- 25 For many schools and communities languages are not "foreign". They are part of everyday experience. In addition to the increased facility for obtaining recognition for community languages, offered for example by the Languages Ladder/Asset, community languages can become part of a whole school experience which underlines the value of languages and the importance of intercultural understanding.
- 26 Languages are also intrinsic to the international dimension in schools, and the significant growth of links with schools abroad, supported by the British Council also offers a new dimension and purpose for language learning. By 2010 every school should have such a link. There can be little doubt of the benefits that such international collaboration can bring to our children and their learning. Indeed many have argued that this intercultural dimension is one of the main motivational drivers for language learning as well as a major rationale for languages in our schools.

A joint curricular project in, Hackney

Year 11 GCSE French pupils from Our Lady's Convent High School, in the London Borough of Hackney, joined with their French partner school, Lycée Jean Macé in the eastern suburbs of Paris, to take part in a year-long Joint Curriculum Project entitled "Man and Nature in a Rural and Urban Environment". In a bid to extend cross-curriculum opportunities at Our Lady's, as well as increase the number of pupils opting for French at KS5, a working group of teachers from the Languages, Science, ICT and Geography departments came together to plan and oversee the various project activities.

Having introduced themselves to each other by e-mail and via video-conferencing in the target language, the pupils from both schools came together to take part in a joint field trip to the Jura mountains in France. The pupils worked in mixed teams to study at first hand some of the geographical features of the region, to explore aspects of local industry and how it had changed, and to consider environmental questions such as water resources, waste treatment and pollution in a rural setting.

In preparation for the return visit of the French group to London, both sets of pupils continued to correspond, particularly in order to design the itinerary for the visit. The focus was to be the regeneration of east London, the Thames barrier, and the changing role of the River Thames, themes which required a certain amount of self-reflection on the part of the UK pupils on the urban environment within which they live.

Building on what exists

- 27 Our investigations tell us that solutions to the challenges of motivation and engagement already exist in our schools (and beyond!). The challenge is to make them more widely available. This will require both dissemination and support for teachers. We are in this respect fortunate since many of the organisations and mechanisms which will enable us make relatively rapid progress already exist.
- 28 The Department's International Strategy calls for action to equip our children, young people and adults for life in a global society and work in a global economy. A key goal is that by 2010 every school in England is in partnership with a school/college elsewhere. The **British Council** provides support for schools to develop international partnerships and enables pupils and staff alike to engage positively with other cultures and languages. This includes support for **Joint Curriculum Projects** (grants are available to schools to work for 2-3 terms on a collaborative project with a partner school in one of the following countries: China, France, Germany, Japan, Portugal, Russia, Spain). **Teachers' Professional Development** (staff can apply to spend 1-2 weeks in a school in France, Germany, Portugal, Russia or Spain to explore a topic of personal and professional interest to them). **Immersion Courses** (groups of students can embark on 1-2 week intensive language courses in French, Spanish, German, Russian, Japanese, Arabic and Chinese). **Student Fellowships** (students aged 16-18 can carry out an individual research project at a school in France, Spain or Germany. Students are assigned a mentor teacher in the school and are hosted by a family for two weeks.)

29 The **Specialist Schools and Academies Trust** (SSAT) has built up a support network for languages based on lead practitioners in the regions. They are described as “innovative and outstanding teachers”, who share their good practice with colleagues in other schools and contribute to Trust conferences and events. Their work includes building regional networks, authoring case studies, publications and resources, leading professional development workshops and supporting and mentoring. The Specialist Language Colleges themselves have been asked to support the National Languages Strategy and have received additional funding for this purpose. Although many of them are choosing to support local primary developments a number are addressing the issue of Key Stage 4.

SLCs supporting Key Stage 4 Provision: 3 examples

Hockerill Anglo European College has started masterclasses in French and German for local secondary schools and has heavily subsidised long-weekend study visits to France and Germany for participating students.

Aylesbury High School has helped to fund trips to the Europa centre for Y9 students in partner schools to help encourage languages take-up in Key Stage 4. The school has employed a teacher to deliver twilight Italian lessons for pupils in own and partner schools.

Desborough School employ a Spanish Foreign Language Assistant to share with partner secondary schools. They are offering training to MFL staff on the use of languages in a vocational context and the introduction of alternative accreditation.

If more Language Colleges were able to offer such support this would begin to make a real difference.

30 Finally **CILT – the National Centre for Languages** and its national network of Comenius Centres not only provides a unique support services for language professionals, it has also in the last year established a series of **14-19 Learning Networks** across the country. With each one concentrating on a particular strand of curriculum innovation, the networks aim to work together to provide appropriate and relevant language study for all in the more flexible, responsive 14-19 curriculum. All types of establishment are involved – specialist language colleges, schools with other specialisms, sixth form colleges, FE colleges, HEIs, local authorities and business partners – with different sectors taking on the role of lead institution. Networks are designed to have local, regional and national impact, providing a coherent structure for future development of language provision.

31 **In sum** it is clear that for the development of a more coherent, relevant and engaging Key Stage 4 languages offer, many elements are already in place both in the practice of schools and universities and in the appropriate support organisations. The task then is one of building on what is good, focusing on effective implementation and providing the framework which will encourage positive progress.

Appendix 3

Language Learning in Anglophone Countries

Australia

- 1 Approximately 50 per cent of students take a language in Australian Schools. Regional Asian languages as well as French and German are the most popular.
- 2 Language learning is compulsory in 4 of 8 states in Australia. The age to which this applies varies from state to state. There is no entitlement in the other states.
- 3 The *National Statement for Languages in Education in Australian Schools* recently set out a plan to promote languages and emphasized their role in intercultural understanding.

New Zealand

- 4 Language learning is not compulsory in New Zealand at any level. Languages have been designated as a “key learning area” in a new curriculum that is currently under consultation. Schools may be required to offer a language, but it is not expected that it will become compulsory for students to take a language. In years 7-8 (roughly KS3) approximately 57 per cent of students take a language.

USA

- 5 There is a wide variety of language provision across the various states of the USA. MFL is not compulsory in any these and take-up ranges from 2-60 per cent. Some states require MFL for an honors diploma, but not for a standard diploma.
- 6 In 1997 31 per cent of primary schools offered a language and 86 per cent of secondary schools. In 2000 33.9% of students were enrolled in a language in US public secondary schools. Spanish is the dominant language by a considerable margin.

Ireland

- 7 MFL is not compulsory in Ireland, although Irish students learn English and Irish throughout the period of compulsory education. The majority of Irish students take at least one European language to Leaving Certificate level, partially because the National University of Ireland still requires Irish, English and a foreign language for matriculation.
- 8 Languages are a requirement for accreditation in both the Leaving Certificate Applied and Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.

Scotland

- 9 There is no statutory requirement to include modern foreign languages (MFL) in the curriculum in Scotland. (The only aspect of the curriculum for which there is a statutory requirement is religious observance.) However, students are “entitled” to 500 hours of MFL teaching between P6 and S4 (ages 10-16). How this is delivered is determined by education authorities in collaboration with their schools who are encouraged to develop their own innovative ways of meeting the entitlement. Almost all primary and all secondary schools offer at least one MFL as part of their curriculum.

- 10 The entitlement applies to all learners at all levels. Approximately 80 per cent of Scottish students at S4 (age 16) took an MFL in session 2005/6. In the same session, over 90 per cent of pupils in the last two years of primary school (ages 10-11) were learning a foreign language. A number of primary schools introduce an earlier start to language learning, including in the nursery class in some cases.
- 11 Earlier this year, the Scottish Executive issued its *Strategy for Scotland's Languages* for consultation.

Wales

- 12 Wales is a bilingual country, with 21 per cent of the population able to speak Welsh as well as English. The study of at least one modern foreign language is a mandatory element of the National Curriculum for all 11-14 year olds. Pupils are also taught English and Welsh throughout their compulsory education. There are opportunities for young people to continue with language learning beyond the age of 14 and currently 31 per cent of 14-16 year olds are following a course of study that includes a qualification in a modern foreign language.
- 13 The Welsh Assembly Government is currently supporting development work in primary schools with the aim of providing opportunities for schools to offer a modern foreign language for pupils in Key Stage 2 (pupils aged 7-11 years) on a non statutory basis.
- 14 The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification, which is to be rolled out at Advanced and Intermediate levels from September 2007 and is being piloted at Foundation and Intermediate levels in 14-19 learning, includes a compulsory language module.

Northern Ireland

- 15 Modern Languages are part of the secondary curriculum and 11-14 year olds (Key Stage 3) have to study at least one European language. As with all other subjects (with the exception of developing skills, Learning for Life and Work, PE and RE) and in order to provide greater choice and flexibility, languages are not compulsory for pupils aged 14 and over (Key Stage 4 and post-16). However, schools have to provide access to language courses and as a minimum, have to offer at least one of the official languages of the European Union.
- 16 Although languages are not part of the statutory primary curriculum, there is some ad hoc provision in primary schools and some piloting of modern languages is underway.

Acknowledgements

We are extremely grateful to all of you who contributed to the consultation. We list the wide range of organisations that sent in their views below. In addition, many hundreds of individuals gave their time to attend meetings, to respond to the on-line consultation and in many cases to present detailed arguments in writing. You are sadly too numerous to mention individually, but all of your ideas have been considered and many of them are reflected in the conclusions of our review. Thank you.

Organisations

Airbus UK
 Arsenal Football Club
 Assessment & Qualifications Alliance (AQA)
 Association for Language Learning (ALL)
 Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR)
 Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
 Association of Teachers & Lecturers (ATL)
 Association of University Language Centres
 Association of University Professors and Heads of French
 Bath and NE Somerset Local Authority
 Bayer
 Birmingham Local Authority
 BMW
 Bolton Local Authority
 The British Academy
 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)
 The British Council
 British Exporters Association (BEA)
 Cambridge Assessment
 Cambridge University Language Centre
 Canterbury Christ Church University
 Centre for Applied Language Research
 Chartered Institute of Linguists
 The National Centre for Languages (CILT)
 Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
 Degussa Ltd.
 Department for Trade and Industry (DTI)
 Deutsche Bahn
 Durham Local Authority
 Edexcel
 Engineering Council UK
 E-Skills
 Eurostar
 Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages, Cambridge
 FEdS Consultancy
 Financial Services Skills Council (FSSC)
 Footstep Productions
 Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)
 French Embassy
 Fujitsu Services
 GCHQ
 General Teaching Council
 German Academic Exchange Service
 The German Embassy
 The Goethe Institut
 GoSkills
 Government Skills
 Harcourt Education
 Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT)
 Hertfordshire County Council
 Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE)
 Hodder Education
 Hodder Murray
 Home Office
 HSBC
 Hull Local Authority
 Independent Schools Council
 Independent Schools Modern Languages Association (ISMLA)
 Institute of Directors (IOD)
 The Institute of Export (IOE)

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Invest in France Agency
The Italian Institute
Japan Airlines (JAL)
Lambeth Local Authority
Learning & Skills Council (LSC)
Leicestershire & Leicester City Learning Partnership
Local Government Association (LGA)
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
London Stock Exchange
Luton Borough Council
Ministry of Defence (MoD)
National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
National Association of Language Advisors (NALA)
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of
Women Teachers (NASUWT)
National Foundation for Education Research (NFER)
National Union of Teachers (NUT)
Nelson Thornes
Newham Local Authority
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NIACE
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People 1st
The Philological Society
Professional Association of Teachers (PAT)
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)
Quality Improvement Agency (QIA)
Reuters
SAP UK
Scottish CILT
Secondary National Strategy
Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA)
SEMTA
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