



Modern Languages
in Special Schools
and
Mainstream Units
in Scotland
2002

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A research study sponsored by SEED Educational Research Unit

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Research Report:

MODERN LANGUAGES IN SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND MAINSTREAM UNITS IN SCOTLAND, 2002.

PREFACE

This study was carried out between April and September 2002 with the aid of funding from SEED's Educational Research Unit. Data was collected from schools during June 2002, analysed in July and August and presented for publication in October 2002.

The study was carried out by myself, Hilary McColl, a former language teacher, now an independent educational consultant, with assistance from a colleague, Loy Picozzi, also an educational consultant, with a background in special educational needs. Joanna McPake, Deputy Director of the Scottish Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (Scottish CILT) provided professional research support and the opportunity to publish a research summary on the Scottish CILT website. Responsibility for the study, interpretation of data and presentation of the report, however, rests with me. The views expressed are mine and do not necessarily reflect those of the Scottish Executive Education Department or any other organisation or individual.

My interest in the matters discussed in this report arises from three main professional activities in which I have been involved: my observations in the course of employment 1994-96 by the then SOEID as National Curriculum Development Officer for the project *Europe, Language Learning and Special Educational Needs*; my involvement with the Higher Still Development Unit in the writing/editing of programmes and materials for Access in Modern Languages; and my in-service training work with the Scottish Association for Language Learning and with various local education authorities to facilitate effective collaboration between modern language and support for learning specialists.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

BSL	British Sign Language
CACDP	Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People
CD	communication difficulties or disorders, including speech and language difficulties
EAL	English as an additional language
HI	hearing impairment
ML	modern languages
MLD	mild/moderate learning difficulties
NQ	National Qualifications
PD	physical difficulties
SCOTVEC	Scottish Vocational Education Certificate (now superseded by National Vocational Qualifications)
SEB	Scottish Examinations Board (now SQA)
SEBD	social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
SED	Scottish Education Department (now SEED)
SEED	Scottish Executive Education Department
SEN	special educational needs
SfL	support for learning
SLD	severe, profound or complex learning difficulties
SOEID	Scottish Education and Industry Department (now SEED)
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
VI	visual impairment

Note on statistics

Throughout the report, for ease of reading, percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aims of the study

This study set out to discover to what extent modern languages figure in the learning programmes of pupils who attend special schools or units, or who spend a significant amount of their week in a mainstream base, unit or resourced location.

It aimed to discover:

- to what extent the policy of entitlement to foreign language learning is being implemented in the programmes offered in secondary schools to pupils with special educational needs;
- what the nature of such programmes might be;
- who is teaching the programmes;
- whether any groups of pupils are more likely than others to be excluded from language learning opportunities.

The national policy background

We considered these questions to be particularly pertinent at the present time in the light of a number of recent national developments.

- Inclusion, and the principle of presumption in favour of mainstream schooling.
- The Ministerial statement on entitlement to foreign language learning for all.
- The extension of the Disability Discrimination Act to cover education, including the right of access to the full curriculum.
- The advent of Access level programmes within the Higher Still framework for modern languages.

Method

Questionnaires returned by 150 schools were manually scrutinised to find evidence to answer these questions. Some of the data collected was numerical and could be shown in tables, but schools were also invited to comment on the programmes they described. Many of these comments offered insights which have been used to illustrate the text of the report.

Key findings

1. The pupils

- a) Of the pupils with special educational needs represented in the survey, about half are following a modern language programme. That proportion is set to grow as schools implement their plans to introduce Access level programmes.
- b) Although, overall, pupils with severe, profound and complex learning difficulties (SLD) and those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) are somewhat more likely than others not to be included in modern language programmes, pupils of all abilities and disabilities, including those with SLD and SEBD are represented in the programmes described in this survey. The decision whether or not to offer modern languages appears to relate to adult attitudes and staffing resources rather than to the ability of pupils to benefit.
- c) The majority pupils attending mainstream school bases for whom no ML provision is made are concentrated in a relatively small number of schools.

2. The programmes

- a) Although a few schools offer a Standard Grade Foundation level courses or an uncertificated language learning programme, National Certificate units at Access levels 1, 2 & 3 are increasingly being used to certificate programmes in both special and mainstream schools.
- b) The availability of programmes at a suitable level is welcomed by teachers who report improvements in pupil motivation and achievement.
- c) French predominates, but German, Spanish, Italian and British Sign Language are also represented amongst the programmes described.
- d) Some schools are operating a policy of lateral progression; that is, where pupils are not expected to be able to progress further in their first foreign language, they are offered a course in a different language at the same level. This is welcomed by pupils and seems to have the effect of improving motivation.

3. Teaching staff

- a) The situation regarding teaching staff is mixed, with no one pattern emerging. Whether a modern language programme is taught by a modern language specialist or a support for learning/SEN specialist is often dependent on the staffing available. While some modern language specialists work in special schools and bases, some modern language programmes in both special and mainstream schools are being taught by a support for learning/SEN specialist. In a few special schools the ML programme is taught by a teacher trained through the Modern Languages in Primary Schools programme.
- b) Team teaching, combining specialisms, is common practice, especially when a new Access programme is being introduced into a mainstream school.
- c) Some schools say they are unable to offer a modern language programme to pupils with special educational needs because they have no, or not enough, suitably trained staff.

ABOUT THE STUDY

This study set out to discover to what extent modern languages figure in the learning programmes of pupils aged 12+ who currently attend special schools or units, or who spend a significant amount of their week in a mainstream base, unit or resourced location.

The background to the study

Since the introduction of the policy of 'languages for all' in 1989¹, there has been increasing interest in the contribution which modern languages and 'the European dimension' can make to efforts to broaden and enrich the curriculum for pupils and students with special educational needs.

In response to questions about the appropriateness of foreign language study for pupils with special educational needs, a two-year study by McColl et al., funded by the then SOEID², provided evidence of clear benefits to pupils and of growing commitment by staff. This led to a compendium of advice to schools and to the inclusion of questions about modern language provision in the course of HM Inspections of special schools. The 1997 report asked SOEID to consider the need for clearer guidance to schools who were seeing "a conflict between the modern languages policy governing the provision of a foreign language course leading to assessment at Standard Grade, and SEN policy statements which emphasised the need to offer appropriate courses and assessment to pupils with special educational needs."³

It was clear to schools that Standard Grade Foundation Level was failing to provide adequate scope for learning experiences which were appropriate for the ever-widening range of pupils undertaking programmes of modern language study but the only option, at this stage, was Standard grade or nothing. The dilemma resulted in some pupils being offered inappropriate courses or being withdrawn from modern languages altogether. Some schools did experiment with what was then SCOTVEC Module 1, with some success, but this was not a recognised qualification for pupils in the 12-16 cohort and such courses were tolerated with some reluctance by HMI. Those pupils studying a modern language, in mainstream schools at least, were entered for Standard Grade. They either passed or failed, but there was no alternative programme.

Unpublished research by the author of this report, based on SEB statistics for the years 1993 – 97, suggested that over 10% of pupils being entered for Standard Grade either failed to achieve any award or were awarded 'course completed' – an unsatisfactory and, for pupils, an unsatisfying outcome for four years of study. A further disadvantage of Standard Grade was that it did not include recognition of outcomes indicative of growing cultural awareness, yet 'the European dimension' was being seen as making an important contribution to the curriculum being offered to pupils in special schools.

The introduction of Access level modern languages into the Higher Still Development programme provided the potential for resolving the dilemma facing schools, although it was not until the lifting of 'age and stage' restrictions that this potential could be realised in S3 and S4. The situation now, six years on, is very different. As Higher Still provision for modern languages was developed at Access 3 and above, special schools asked to be included, and provision was made for modern languages at Access 2. Later, also in response to demand from schools, Access 1 programmes were added to the Modern Languages Framework. At Access 1 and 2, cultural outcomes based on the work special schools were already doing,

¹ SED Circular 1178 as amended 2/90.

² *Europe, Languages and Special Educational Needs* Project report published 1997.

³ Ibid. Section 1/p5.

were added to the linguistic ones. With Access 1, 2 and 3 now embedded into the Modern Languages Framework a new flexibility has been introduced.

In theory, this additional flexibility could be expected to result in more pupils, representing an increasingly wide range of abilities and disabilities, being offered programmes in modern languages. However, evidence about the extent and nature of foreign language learning in special schools is largely anecdotal and no figures are available to indicate how schools are responding to the issue of entitlement to foreign language learning. HMI has been approached but is unable to provide information. Scotlang, a research programme co-ordinated by Scottish CILT and focusing on languages education in Scotland, is in the process of constructing a database of relevant information. Scotlang has been told by SEED that there are no statistics covering the incidence of modern language learning in special schools.

Recent legislation regarding the placement of pupils in mainstream schools wherever possible has meant that an increasing number of pupils who would once have been placed in special schools are now attending mainstream schools, with varying levels of support as required. This has led in some cases to the creation or extension of bases, units or resourced locations within mainstream schools, where pupils can receive the additional support they need.

The scope of the study

The study set out to discover to what extent modern languages figure in the learning programmes of pupils who currently attend special schools or units, or spend a significant amount of their week in a mainstream base, unit or resourced location. At the time the application for funding was made, the policy of 'languages for all' applied to pupils in the first four years at secondary school, and it was these pupils whose experiences were to be examined.

Some time after the application was made, the then Minister for Education, Jack McConnell, announced that entitlement to a programme of foreign language learning was to be extended to include pupils from Primary 6. Funding estimates had not included surveying all primary schools in Scotland; it is unlikely, in any case, that primary schools will be able to implement the new directives immediately. This study, therefore, has covered only special schools where provision is made for pupils over the age of 12, and those mainstream secondary schools which we were able to identify as having bases in which some pupils spent a significant portion of their week.

As provision and associated teaching skills develop, considerable numbers of pupils thought of as having special educational needs are now fully integrated into normal mainstream modern language classes. They fall outwith the scope of this study.

Also excluded from this study are:

1. those pupils in mainstream schools who, although in receipt of learning support, follow a mainstream curriculum without attending a special base; and
2. those pupils who, although enrolled in a special base,
 - are coping well with the modern language provision made for most of the pupils in their school, and likely to be successful in the courses leading to Scottish National Qualifications which are provided by the modern languages department in their school; or

- are able, with support, to achieve success in such classes; or
- have been withdrawn from modern language learning, for whatever reason; or
- have opted to discontinue.

Although this study set out to examine the experiences of pupils in the S1–S4 cohort, it was not possible, in practice, to discount those who continued their modern language studies into S5 as they are often incorporated into mixed-age groups or use their additional year in school to complete modern language programmes begun in S3 or S4.

COLLECTING THE DATA

Summary of process and time-scales

The study was carried out between April and October 2002.

April:

- Questionnaire developed, with assistance from an SEN specialist.
- Questionnaire revised in the light of feedback from a special school and a mainstream school who agreed to trial the format. (See Annex C.)
- Prepared, for chief education officers in each local authority, a letter which explained the project, asked for relevant schools in the local authority area to be identified, and requested permission to send a questionnaire to those schools. (See Annex A.)
- Prepared, for headteachers of the schools identified, a letter explaining the project (See Annex B), a copy of the questionnaire and a stamped addressed envelope.

May – June:

- As permission was received from each local authority, letters and enclosures were sent out to schools with a request that the questionnaire be returned by the end of May. Because of delays in receiving permission from some authorities, this date was later revised and questionnaires were accepted up to the end of the school session.
- The letter and enclosures also went to heads of independent special schools and grant aided special schools.
- As completed questionnaires were received they were numbered sequentially and the number a school received became the code used for identifying it anonymously.

July – August:

- After a preliminary reading completed questionnaires were divided into five groups.
 1. Special schools and units offering no ML provision.
 2. Special schools and units offering ML provision.
 3. Special units or bases in mainstream schools offering any kind of ML provision to pupils attending the unit or base.
 4. Special units or bases in mainstream schools offering no ML provision to pupils attending the unit or base.
 5. Returns made by special schools making provision only for pupils of other age groups, or by mainstream schools where there were no pupils attending a unit or base. These were deemed not applicable to the current study and were eliminated.
- Each of the four main groups was then scrutinised manually and summary details of each schools making up that group were entered into a horizontal grid. This allowed a composite view of each group to be formed. Schools offering interesting insights or comments which could be used to illustrate trends were noted.
- The findings relating to each group were written up, using headings and subheadings relating to the questionnaire and to other significant points suggested by the schools' responses. For Group 3 schools (mainstream schools making a range of provision) a 'hierarchy of inclusion' was developed to assist in describing the variety of organisational variable encountered in that setting. At the end of each of these four sections a 'comments box' has been used to draw out points of specific interest to the researchers. The main findings were then summarised and the Annexes were added.

September:

Copies of the draft report were sent out to the SEN specialist who had helped to construct the questionnaire, and to the Deputy Director of Scottish SCILT who acted as consultant to the project.

October:

Following feedback the draft was amended and submitted to the Scottish Executive Educational Research Unit, the funding body.

Target schools

Criteria used to identify target schools were as follows:

- a) They should cater for pupils in the secondary sector, between ages 12-16 (i.e. those until recently considered to be in the cohort for whom foreign language study was recommended).
- b) They should make provision for pupils who for all or a significant part of their week are taught outwith the mainstream curriculum (i.e. special schools and units, and SEN bases in mainstream schools).

Difficulties encountered in identifying target schools

It proved extraordinarily difficult to determine the individual schools and units to be targeted. There were several reasons for this.

1. Lack of a definitive list

We were unable to obtain a definitive list of special schools catering for pupils of secondary age, or of mainstream secondary schools with SEN bases. SEED was unable to assist, directing us to a website which, though initially promising, proved to be incomplete since it relied on schools inputting their own data. Not all schools have the necessary information/facilities/skills/desire to do this, and even where a school was represented, extent and quality of information varied. We did have access to a range of other lists from a variety of sources, but each of them was defective in some way. Some were out of date, others were incomplete, inaccurate, or failed to give the information we required. In particular, we were unable to find any source of reliable information about which special schools catered for pupils of secondary age. A further difficulty, of course, is the fact that patterns of provision are constantly evolving in response to national policies on inclusion.

2. Varying responses from local authorities

We attempted to solve this by asking the chief education officers, or their nominees, to provide us with a list of the schools in their area which currently met our criteria. Most did this, though some did not. Two Authorities chose to copy the sample questionnaire we had sent and to disseminate it themselves, which, although helpful in intent, made it more difficult for us to keep track of the numbers of schools who received questionnaires. Where information was not available from local authorities we relied on our partial lists. In some cases this meant that we targeted schools which did not, in fact, meet our criteria (e.g. some special schools which catered only for pupils at the primary stage.) Some of these schools let us know of our mistake; we have to assume that others simply did not respond.

3. Varying patterns of provision and terminology

It proved difficult to specify what constituted a special school, unit or base, as local authorities vary in the way they manage and refer to these. In particular, some schools included off-site SEBD bases on their lists whereas others did not; mainstream bases, however, clearly counted SEBD as part of their remit. (Advice from SEED suggested that secure units were *not* special schools and therefore fell outside our remit.) Some Authorities included hospital schools, others did not. One Authority included a whole range of units for travellers, looked after children, excluded children, children in hospital etc. (though not all the units responded to the questionnaires sent) whereas others included in their lists only those schools designated as special schools catering for pupils with a range of recognised special educational needs. Some mainstream schools had more than one unit, managed separately, who made separate returns; others included all relevant pupils in a single return. Some mainstream schools have units which, though they nominally form part of the mainstream school, effectively operate as separate or quasi-separate units.

In addition, some schools had what they called 'bases' from which support teachers and assistants worked to support pupils in mainstream classes, but which were not attended by pupils. We have considered these to be 'not applicable' and have excluded them from the survey.

Information requested

Target schools were asked to state whether or not modern language teaching or some other form of cultural study is included in the learning programmes of pupils who fall within these criteria. They were also asked to indicate the range of learning difficulties encountered by the pupils they catered for. Where modern languages or associated provision is made schools were asked to provide details of the programmes provided. Nil returns were requested, as these would help to identify any groups for whom provision is less likely. Schools were invited to account for their decision not to provide modern language programmes for some or all of the relevant pupils. The questionnaire is reproduced in Annex C.

The expression 'modern languages or associated provision' was used in order to allow schools to include information about learning programmes which relate to the European or global dimension as much as to language learning *per se*. This was felt to be in line with national advice about the modern languages curriculum in special schools⁴ and to SQA's framework of provision for modern languages which includes, for use at Access 1 and 2, the unit "Life in Another Country". In both these cases, advice is based on good practice in special schools and units and we felt it was important for schools to be able to cite their good practice in this area.

A further reason for including 'cultural' programmes arose from a consideration of the benefits of foreign language learning as set out in the report "Citizens of a Multilingual World" produced for the Scottish Executive by the Action Group on Languages in 1999. The list of benefits included, along with all the linguistic benefits, 'raised awareness and tolerance of other cultures'. It seemed to us that this benefit should not be denied to pupils for whom linguistic study is deemed inappropriate. This view is reinforced by the inclusion of 'citizenship' in the list of National Priorities for education.

⁴ Ref: *Europe, Language Learning and Special Educational Needs*, SOEID 1997.

Dissemination of the questionnaires

Dissemination was organised in two stages.

1. A letter was sent to the chief education officer in each of the Scottish Authorities seeking permission to contact schools in their area and requesting up-to-date information about relevant schools. (See Annex B.) All 32 local authorities gave permission although most insisted that it was up to the schools whether or not they chose to respond. Most supplied information about schools they thought were relevant to the study, although interpretations differed. Where local authorities provided lists, these were what we used for disseminating questionnaires. Where they did not, we made a the best judgement we could from the information we had to hand.
2. Once permission had been received, letters were sent to the headteachers of local authority schools considered to be relevant to the study and also to the headteachers of independent and grant aided special schools. (See Annex C.)

Approximately 309 questionnaires were distributed. The figure is approximate due to the fact that, in a few cases, local authorities elected to disseminate questionnaires to their own schools, with returns made directly or via the local authority. They did not always send questionnaires to schools they knew made no provision for modern languages, although we had asked for nil returns. The figure of 309 is accurate as far as we can ascertain and we have used this figure as the baseline for percentage returns.

Anonymity

Schools and local authorities were assured that they would not be identified in the report. Local authorities have been allocated the number which arose in the construction of Figure 1. Individual questionnaires were numbered in the order of their arrival and schools are referred to by that number. Local authorities wishing to know their own reference number may contact the author at the address given on page 1.

Questionnaires returned

A total of 177 questionnaires were returned (57%). Of these, 27 were 'not applicable'. Eight had been wrongly sent to schools who made no provision for pupils of secondary age. Sixteen were returned by mainstream schools who had no special unit; any pupils they had with special educational needs were fully integrated into the mainstream curriculum. One 'nil return' came from a Service for Hearing Impaired pupils and one from a Service for Visually Impaired whose Heads of Service felt they had nothing to contribute. One return came from a unit which supports pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL). Such students are not considered to have special educational needs, unless they *also* have learning difficulties. This left 150 returns considered to be relevant to the study.

Local authorities varied widely in the number of schools which were targeted. In three Authorities only three questionnaires were sent out; in three other large authorities the numbers reached 24/25. Percentage returns from local authority schools also varied widely: At one end of the scale was one authority who assured us that all pupils were fully integrated and that they had they had no pupils fitting the profile we required, and one authority who indicated two schools, neither of which responded; at the other end of the spectrum were 10 Authorities from whose schools between 75% and 100% of returns were received. Twenty independent and 7 grant-aided schools were targeted; 9 independent and 3 grant-aided responded. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1: Dissemination and return of questionnaires

Authority etc	Forms sent out	Forms returned	% return	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Forms n/a
1	25	13	52%	1	3	4	3	2
2	25	15	64%	3	7	1	3	1
3	24	20	83%	2	3	7	3	5
4	17	12	71%	1		7	3	1
5	15	5	33%	1	3			1
6	15	9	60%	5	2	1	1	
7	14	8	57%	3	2	1		2
8	13	5	39%	1	2	1		1
9	12	4	33%		2		2	
10	11	6	55%	2		1	2	1
11	11	8	73%	2	1	5		
12	10	7	70%			3	1	3
13	8	7	88%			7		
14	8	5	63%	1	1			3
15	7	4	57%		3	1		
16	6	2	33%			1		1
17	6	2	33%	1	1			
18	5	2	40%	1	1			
19	5	2	40%			1	1	
20	5	4	80%	1	2	1		
21	5	4	80%	1		2		1
22	4	2	50%	2				
23	4	3	75%	1	2			
24	4	3	75%			1		2
25	4	3	75%	1		1		1
26	4	1	25%				1	
27	3	3	100%	2	1			
28	3	3	100%	1		1	1	
29	2	1	50%					1
30	2	2	100%	1		1		
31	2	0	0%					
32	1	0	0%					
G-A	7	3	43%	1	2			
Ind.	20	9	45%	6	2			1
	total sent out: 309	total returned: 177	Av. return: 57.3%	41 schs.	40 schs.	48 schs.	21 schs.	26 schs.

NOTES ON FIGURE 1

The designations used in column 1 have been used throughout the report in order to retain the anonymity of local authorities.

G-A = Grant-aided schools; Ind = Independent Schools

Groups 1-4 indicate the number of returns which fell into each of the four groups used to report the findings:

1. Special schools making no formal provision for modern languages.
2. Special schools making formal provision for modern languages.
3. Mainstream bases making various forms of provision for modern languages.
4. Mainstream bases making no provision for modern languages.

Factors affecting the sample

A number of factors affecting this sample needed to be taken into account before any analysis of the returns could be made:

- Due to the difficulties in identifying target schools, some which should have been targeted were probably omitted, and some were targeted who should not have been.
- Some of the questionnaires we sent out were photocopied on to others.
- The number/percentage of relevant schools choosing not to respond cannot be determined.
- Some schools made incomplete responses.

Taking these factors into account, it seemed safest to treat the 150 relevant returns as a 'representative sample', and to analyse them in relation to each another rather than in relation to a cohort that could not be precisely determined. From this point onwards, therefore, percentages given will be 'percentages of schools responding', rather than percentages of questionnaires distributed, or 'percentages of the cohort'. Given these reservations, it is probably wise to treat the figures as 'evidence of trends' rather than as 'proof'.

Notes on terminology

Returns have been considered to be either from mainstream schools with support bases or resourced locations within the school, and relate to pupils who spend a significant amount of their curriculum time in those bases; and special schools and units which operate as separate institutions. For the sake of simplicity, resourced locations on separate sites have been classed with special units.

Whilst pupils with social, educational and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) may or may not be considered to have special educational needs, many schools and local authorities treat them as if they do, and we have therefore chosen to include the returns we received from such schools.

In the case of the unit making provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), these are clearly not pupils with special educational needs, though some of them may *also have* special educational needs. What is interesting, however, is that the EAL unit which replied thought that the study *was* relevant to them and their comments on the way the pupils were treated by their schools, *vis à vis* modern languages may be of interest. We have therefore included them in the study, but only as footnotes.

In order to simplify the task of determining which pupils may be less well provided for in modern languages, we have attempted to reduce the number of categories into which pupils with special educational needs tend to be grouped. The groupings we use here have been chosen to reflect differences in the opinions given by their schools about the appropriateness or otherwise of modern language learning for such pupils. Thus pupils with profound, severe and complex learning difficulties have been grouped under the term 'severe learning difficulties' (SLD), and for 'mild' or 'moderate learning difficulties' we have used MLD. We have grouped together as CD those pupils who experience difficulties in communication, whether oral or written; these are the pupils for whom modern languages are often assumed to be inappropriate or unhelpful. We included in this group pupils with dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism and speech and language impairments. Hearing impairments (HI) and visual impairments (VI) have been categorised separately. We came across only one mention of deafblind pupils, though more may well have been included amongst those described as having complex learning difficulties. Pupils with physical difficulties may or may not have

learning difficulties, but we have retained this designation (PD) in the light of comments made about specific issues.

Summary of statistical data received

The following comments are based on returns made by the 150 schools and units who returned questionnaires deemed to be relevant to the study. Of these respondents, 81 were special schools/units; 69 were bases in mainstream schools. For simplicity, resourced locations on separate sites were counted as special schools; resourced locations linked to mainstream schools were counted as mainstream bases.

One of the principal findings from this study is that one half of special schools offer modern language provision to pupils with special educational needs. Of the 81 special schools and units who responded, 40 (49%) make provision for modern languages or associated provision (hereafter referred to as ML); 41 (51%) do not.

Of the 69 mainstream schools who responded, 48 (70%) make ML provision for pupils who spend a significant part of their day in the base/unit; 21 (30%) do not.

Based on these figures it would seem that roughly half of special schools offer ML provision to pupils with significant special educational needs, whereas two thirds of mainstream schools do.

However, the situation appears more complex when *numbers of pupils involved* in special schools/units and the *degree of integration into mainstream curriculum* in mainstream bases are taken into account. See figure 2.

In order to facilitate comparisons, the responding schools have been grouped as follows:

- Group 1: Special schools making no formal provision for modern languages.
- Group 2: Special schools making formal provision for modern languages.
- Group 3: Mainstream bases making various forms of provision for modern languages.
- Group 4: Mainstream bases making no provision for modern languages.

Figure 2. Numbers of schools and pupils in each Group

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	totals
Type of school	special		mainstream		
No. of schools responding	41	40	48	21	150
No. of pupils studying ML	0	1567	445	0	2012
No. of pupils not studying ML	873	594	217	321	2005
Total No. of pupils in survey	3034		983		4017

NOTES ON FIGURE 2

Some of the figures concerning pupil numbers are approximate due to omissions and discrepancies encountered in responses provided by schools.

Pupil numbers include only those pupils attending special schools and units or those attending bases located in mainstream schools.

Overall

The overall figures shown in figure 2 suggest that, of the pupils in the survey, all of whom have special educational needs, just over half are following a modern language programme.

Groups 1 & 2

Of the 3034 pupils attending special schools and units, 1567 pupils (52%) are offered foreign language study. Of those 3034 pupils, 873 attend schools where no provision is made for modern languages. Of the 2161 pupils who attend special schools or units where modern languages does form part of the curriculum, 1567 pupils (73%) follow a foreign language programme.

Groups 3 & 4

Of the 982 pupils attending bases or units associated with mainstream schools, 445 pupils (45%) are offered foreign language study. Of the 662 pupils attending the 48 mainstream schools with bases, 445 (67%) have modern language provision made for them.

More detailed analysis of the four Groups of schools follows.

GROUP 1: SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND UNITS MAKING NO FORMAL PROVISION FOR MODERN LANGUAGES

Main findings

- Failure to provide for modern languages is not restricted to particular types of special school or unit. (See figure 3.)
- The main reasons given for not making ML provision are:
 - a) the inappropriateness of modern language learning for some pupils
 - b) the need to prioritise basic skills
 - c) the lack of ML staff
 (See figure 4.)
- Some schools aim to make provision for intercultural content in their programmes to make up for lack of ML provision.

The respondents

Forty-one schools fell into this group. Two of the schools failed to give pupil numbers; pupils in the other 39 schools totalled 873. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the schools who chose not to reply to the questionnaire may well have fallen into this group.

Schools were asked to indicate the range of needs they provided for, but not the number of pupils in each category. Figure 3, below, shows the range of needs and the number of schools who said they catered for them. Some schools cater for more than one type of disability. From the number of schools/units catering exclusively for pupils with SEBD, we know that *at least* 330 pupils are represented in this sample. Similarly for schools catering solely or primarily for pupils with SLD, we know that *at least* 364 pupils are represented in this sample.

Figure 3. Specialisms of special schools and units making no ML provision

Needs provided for	No. of schools
Profound, severe or complex learning needs	27
Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties	14
Mild or moderate learning needs	5
Physical disabilities	5
Visual impairments	4
Communication disorders including autism	4
Hearing impairments	3
Dyslexia	1

NOTE ON FIGURE 3

The figures shown add up to more than the 41 schools in this group because some schools make provision for a range of disabilities.

Reasons given for not making formal provision

Schools were asked to explain the reasons for their decision not to offer modern language provision. The main reasons offered were the inappropriateness of modern language learning for pupils with profound, severe or complex learning difficulties, the need to prioritise

work on basic skills, and the unavailability of modern language staff. Some schools gave more than one reason. (See Figure 4).

Figure 4. Reasons for not making formal ML provision in special schools and units

Reasons	No. of schools	Range of needs
<i>Question not answered</i>	7	SLD(5) SEBD(2)
'not applicable'	7	SLD(5) SEBD(2)
'ML inappropriate for / beyond the capabilities of pupils with this degree of difficulty/delay'	11	SLD (11)
'pupils have no speech or use augmentative systems'	3	SLD
'restricted curriculum; other priorities; need to focus on basics, e.g. communication, numeracy, lifeskills'	6	SLD (1) SEBD(5)
'no trained ML staff available'	6	MLD(1) SEBD(4) SLD(1)

Typical comments regarding pupils' abilities included:

Modern Languages beyond the abilities of our pupils at present, even at Access 1. (School 48, SLD).

Because of degree of learning difficulties and developmental delay, modern languages not a consideration for our pupils. Main focus on the development of communication skills by alternative augmentative means as many have no verbal communication (School 110, MLD/SLD).

75% of pupils totally non-verbal, others have language at echolalic or two-word level only (School 135, SLD).

All pupils have enormous difficulties with communication and additional language would not be a benefit (School 135, SLD).

One school, which made provision for pupils temporarily excluded from mainstream school as well as for sick children, travellers and others with interrupted schooling, explained that although they did not themselves offer a formal ML programme, they did liaise with mainstream schools where that was appropriate for individual pupils, so that pupils carried out under their guidance work provided by the mainstream school to which they were attached. However, this appeared to be a rare occurrence.

Four schools mentioned that, although they did not offer a formal ML programme, they did take opportunities offered by the rest of the curriculum to introduce 'cultural' elements from other countries.

... pupils receive a flavour of other languages through whole school themes as appropriate (School 118, SLD).

Mod. Langs. do not feature as discrete subjects ... However, pupils are made aware of different cultures through studies of festivals in RME and through discussion, when various foreign dishes are being made in HE, or in PSD (School 44, MLD/VI/II).

... we have in the past arranged visits to France for our senior children (School 50, SLD).

Three schools said they planned to introduce a formal ML programme next session, though this was often dependent on the availability of staffing and/or training. Difficulty in obtaining/retaining suitable staff was highlighted by a number of schools.

Last year Spanish was introduced into the timetable for all S1 and S2 pupils. Staff responsible left the school after Christmas ... As part of our on-going school development plan, provision will be integrated into our general study programme from next year ... Liaison with local secondary provision may enable us to share staffing resources at some point in the future. (School 112, SEBD).

We have no language specialist. This is being looked at by HT and Authority but so far no workable solution has been found (School 108, SEBD).

We would be interested in input from a modern language specialist. Our children are involved in Access 1 level units. (School 50, SLD).

... Would very much like to introduce at Access 2. However, no staff are available either to visit school or can be allocated when we visit the local academy (School 76, MLD/CD).

Some schools who do not offer modern languages to their secondary age groups told us they did offer modern languages in their primary section, using staff trained under the former Modern Languages in Primary School (MLPS) scheme. However, this was not without its problems, despite its success.

Primary French course started by seconded member of staff who had completed MLPS training. Pupils enjoyed the course and it was continued when secondee left ... We have no member of staff qualified to teach modern languages (School 157, SEBD).

Comments

1. On the subject of staffing, a number of schools in the study mentioned modern languages being taught to pupils in the primary age group by teachers who had undertaken Modern Languages in Primary School (MLPS) training but that this had not continued into their provision at secondary level, yet MLPS training would be adequate preparation for teaching at Access levels. In some schools, Access 1 and 2 are successfully taught by staff who have an interest in language though no formal qualifications. It may be that there are special schools who need to be advised of the possibility of offering some ML input despite a lack of ML trained staff. It may also be useful to consider 'top-up' training for MLPS trained staff working with pupils 14+, to prepare them to offer nationally certificated courses to their pupils.
2. While it is not surprising that one of the main groups not offered provision in modern languages should be pupils with profound, severe or complex needs, the size of the SEBD group is interesting, the more so because this group must contain pupils who span a wide spectrum of ability. The two main reasons given for not offering ML provision are a restricted curriculum and lack of suitably trained staff. It would be interesting to make a wider study of ML provision in SEBD units and secure units and to compare the situations of SEBD schools/units in Groups 1 (no ML provision) and 2 (provision available).

GROUP 2: SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND UNITS MAKING FORMAL PROVISION FOR MODERN LANGUAGES

Main findings

- Group 2 schools are providing ML programmes to groups of pupils with similar characteristics to those in Group 1 who are not provided with ML programmes. (See figures 3 and 5.)
- Reasons given for not including some pupils in ML provision were practical ones and did not relate to students' disabilities. (See figure 6.)
- Some pupils with hearing impairments are offered English and British Sign Language (BSL) rather than English and a foreign language.

The respondents

Forty schools/units fell into this group. Together they provide education for approximately 2161 pupils of whom 1567 (72%) have modern languages on their curriculum. Twenty-one of the schools provide ML teaching for *all* of their pupils and a further 8 schools make ML provision for over half of their pupils.

The schools were asked to indicate the range of needs they provided for, but not the number of pupils in each category. Of the 40 special schools making provision for modern languages, 6 cater mainly for pupils with profound, severe or complex needs, 6 for pupils with social emotional and behavioural difficulties, 2 were schools for the deaf, 2 provided facilities primarily for pupils with physical impairments. 3 schools, while catering for a range of disabilities, seemed to provide particularly well for pupils with communication disorders, including autism. One school was solely for pupils experiencing psychiatric problems. The other 20 schools saw themselves as catering for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and a wide range of other disabilities, including SLD, SEBD, VI and HI. (See figure 5.)

Figure 5. Specialisms of special schools and units making formal ML provision

Needs provided for	No. of schools
Moderate learning difficulties + other difficulties	20
Profound, severe or complex learning needs	6
Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties	6
Communication disorders including autism	3
Hearing impairment	2
Physical disabilities	2
Psychiatric problems	1

Schools were asked to explain the reasons for their decision not to offer modern language provision to some of their pupils (See Figure 6). Some schools gave more than one reason; some gave none. The developments referred to usually involved the phasing in of Access level programmes, though the speed with which this could be done was linked to the availability of suitably trained staff. It was notable that the reasons given were practical ones and did not relate to pupils' abilities or disabilities.

Figure 6. Reasons for omitting some pupils from ML provision in special schools and units where it is offered.

Reasons	No. of schools
ML is a recent development, numbers will grow.	9
Not enough staff with the appropriate training to cover all classes.	6
Some senior pupils (16+) opt out to begin work/FE experience.	5
Some pupils are on an elaborated curriculum and other needs are prioritised.	2
We now have more pupils who need to be taught one-to-one, which makes ML group teaching difficult.	1
Parental choice.	1

NOTE ON FIGURE 6

Not all schools chose to give reasons; some gave more than one.

Although, in the main, the special schools/units which fell into Group 2 tend to provide for a wider range of pupils than those in Group 1, it seemed useful to consider separately the programmes offered by schools/units who seemed to have expertise in a particular area of special needs. This is likely to be of particular interest in the case of pupils with profound, severe or complex learning difficulties and those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, as these were the groups most frequently represented in Group 1.

Programmes offered in special schools/units catering for pupils with MLD and other difficulties

The largest category was of schools catering in the main for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and a range of other difficulties. In some ways they were typical of all the schools in Group 2 and so have been dealt with in detail below. Points of particular interest concerning the other categories will be dealt with more briefly later on.

Twenty schools fall into this category. One offers Spanish throughout the school; one offers a choice of French or Spanish to S5 pupils; the rest do French. Programmes in S1 and S2 provide an introductory course, usually following the 5-14 guidelines, and usually progressing to Access 2 "Life in Another Country" in S3. Other Access 2 units are offered in S4, S5, the aim being to complete the Access 2 cluster by the time a pupil leaves school. In another school (School 24) pupils who are capable of doing so move on to the Access 3 programme, which they will complete in S5/6. In School 40, a mixed age group follows the Access 1 programme. School 40 also has links with a local mainstream school. The modern languages department there provides support for MLPS-trained teachers who work in the special school and makes modern language provision for visiting pupils from the special school.

Group size varies from 3 to 11, but most are of 6, 7 or 8 pupils, studying for 1 or 2 periods a week. In 10 of the schools French is taught by the class teacher, who may also be a modern languages teacher, or MLPS trained, though not always. In some cases class teachers work in partnership with the local mainstream school, with a visiting ML specialist. In one school it is the art teacher who is MLPS trained and who provides French lessons throughout the school (School 94). Five schools have their own qualified ML specialist. Team teaching, in all sorts of combinations, is common.

Programmes in S1/S2 tended to be basic and conversational; simple phrases and questions related to topics like: greetings, name, age, nationality, family, home, classroom language, weather, numbers, animals, likes/dislikes, sports/hobbies, Christmas and other festivals,

colours, clothes, calendar, shopping for food and toiletries, illness, the body, money, transport. Methods are practical and active, involving role-play, simple songs and games.

In some schools there was also a cultural or 'lifestyle' element intended to introduce pupils to the country concerned, location, travelling there, capital city, sights, food, people, etc. Others use the local community as a resource, finding food from France in the local supermarket, buying French bread and cheese, eating in a 'French' café, etc.

Most schools offering Access programmes assumed that the course content would be familiar, so did not elaborate on course content. Some, however, pointed out that their courses were essentially practical in approach and often had a practical aim in view.

The students (16-18 yrs) travel to France in June every session and put their knowledge into practice (School 59).

Six members of this class will be part of a school visit to France in September 2002 (School 159).

Several schools mentioned that ML interest spread to other subject areas, eg. music and singing, HE, and Art. One school had developed its own materials ...

... to provide knowledge and understanding of France and the European Community, including geography, cuisine, culture, etc. (School 59).

Programmes offered in special schools/units catering primarily for pupils with SLD

All 6 schools offered the National Certificate Unit "Life in Another Country", usually to their senior pupils (16+), but programmes sometimes began in S3 or S4, especially where groups were very small and included pupils from several year groups. "Life in Another Country" is available at Access 1 and 2. In 2 of the schools some pupils followed the programme at an experiential level only, which does not carry national certification. In one of these a local authority certificate would be issued as a way of marking progress. Where groups spanned ages and abilities, Access 1 and 2 are run concurrently, with pupils determining their own level. (*For further details of Access courses in modern languages, see Annex A.*)

Only one of the schools had a modern languages programme for S1/S2 pupils. This is a non-certificated introductory course which includes a European dimension. In this school, where all pupils follow a modern languages programme, pupils progress at 14+ to Access 2 programmes, doing "Life in Another Country" in S3 and "Transactional Language" in S4. "Personal Language" is covered in the senior classes, thus giving pupils an opportunity to complete an Access 2 Modern Languages Cluster.

"Life in Another Country" requires pupil to study 2 aspects of life and a small amount of related language. Aspects covered in such programmes include food, dress, art, culture, holidays, sports, cities, music, songs, geography, festivals, flags, and notable buildings. Language has been at single word level for some pupils, short phrases for others.

France and the French language are studied in 4 of the schools; 1 offers Spanish and Italian; 1 has covered a number of countries in the last two years, but has found Japan and Japanese the most successful.

Pupils thoroughly enjoyed both projects and have retained information...the visit to a sushi bar was great! (School 42).

Group sizes varied from 4 to 9, with most around 6. Lessons typically lasted from 1hr 20 mins to 2 hrs 30 mins a week, and were taught by the class teacher, sometimes with the help of instructors. In the school that offered a progressive programme at all levels, 1 lesson a week throughout the school year is taught by a modern languages teacher.

Programmes offered in special schools/units catering mainly for pupils with SEBD

Two of the 6 schools in this group take pupils only up to age 14. They offer non-certificated programmes of basic conversational language, taught by class teachers. One of the teachers had received MLPS training. Two other schools offered programmes based on 5-14 programme, in one case only to S1/S2 pupils who were about to be re-integrated into their mainstream schools; in the other case, to all classes regardless of age. One period a week for a year is the norm, though two schools offered three periods a week. In one school, pupils progress to Standard Grade or Access 3 in S3/S4, though staffing difficulties meant that some pupils are allowed to opt out. Another school offers Access 3 to its more able pupils.

Respondents stressed the extreme behaviour manifested by many of the pupils attending these schools, and the affect this has on the programmes which can be offered.

*There is no reason why our pupils should not be exposed to a foreign language – but we must be realistic about expectations. We use **highly** adapted materials for all subject areas ... our pupils need constant support and any failure or difficulty with their work can result in violent responses. Staff have to be highly trained in working with these pupils in order to offer achievement in a foreign language at this **most basic level** (School 56).*

French is offered in all but one of these schools, Italian being the exception. Lessons are taught in 3 cases by a modern languages teacher (two of them visiting teachers); the other three are taught by the class teacher, one of whom was MLPS trained. Classes are small; sometimes one-to-one.

Programmes offered in special schools/units catering mainly for pupils with physical difficulties

The two schools in this category offer mainstream 5-14 programmes in S1/S2. In S3/S4 pupils follow Standard Grade courses if they are able, otherwise Access programmes 1, 2 and 3 are provided, according to need. In one school pupils receive 3 or 4 periods a week of French or Spanish, with technical and human support as required, including support for external examinations. In the other, only 1 period a week is timetabled for French, so that a programme leading to a full Access 2 Cluster can take 2 or more years.

The pupils in this group are performing at Access 3, but because of time constraints would be unable to complete all the topics required; therefore it has been decided to let them achieve a Cluster at Access 2.

Classes are of 2 to 8 pupils and are taught by modern language teachers.

Programmes offered in special schools/units catering mainly for deaf pupils

The two deaf schools in the sample offer programmes in British Sign Language (BSL) to pupils at all levels, leading to qualifications awarded by the Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP), there being no Scottish National Qualification in BSL. These programmes are taught by BSL specialists, in one school by a deaf tutor. In

addition to BSL, pupils in one school gain some awareness of other sign languages; their programme includes an element of Deaf Studies, including deaf culture and history.

Programmes offered in special schools/units catering for pupils with communication difficulties, including autism

Three schools fell into this category, all of which also provided for pupils with a wide range of difficulties. Experiences vary.

One of these schools has just introduced short 8-week courses in French for S1 and S2, consisting of one 40-minute lesson per week in groups of 7 or 8. Course content is basic, covering greetings, self and family, numbers 1-30 and food and drink. The courses culminate in a practical activities such as organising a French café for the whole school. They are taught by a modern languages specialist who commented:

French has been introduced this session through the school development plan. As most S1 and S2 pupils had some primary French, we decided to start at the lower end of the school ... All pupils are making good progress including one who has speech and language difficulties in English and Cantonese. Pupils include those with moderate and severe learning difficulties and one with significant speech difficulty ... some with autistic spectrum disorders, two with severe communication disorder, one for whom English is a second language (School 54).

A second school, catering for pupils with SLD, MLD and SEBD as well as pupils with communication and language disorders, provides French tuition for all pupils in the school, 12 – 18 yrs. S1 and S2 classes are taught by a modern language specialist for an hour a week in groups of 10; S3/S4 in groups of 7 or 8; 16-18 in groups of 5. After general introductory courses in the first two years, S3 pupils take the Access 2 unit “Life in Another Country”. This is followed in S4 and in the current S5 by Access 2 “Transactional Language”. Units taken in the senior classes are likely to change as the situation develops. Course work in each class is accompanied by “plenty of associated practical work” (School 43).

Experience in a third school which caters mainly for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder is quite different.

Modern languages provision has dropped off over the last few years for a variety of reasons:

- change of pupil profile from SpLD (dyslexia) to autism
 - more and more pupils who cannot be taught in a group situation which has made the teaching of modern languages difficult
 - (lack of) appropriate staffing
- (School 109).*

The last point is reinforced by the fact that the only class receiving ML provision is one in which the class teacher is also a modern language specialist who offers a period of French during class time.

Psychiatric unit

One return came from a unit providing secondary education for pupils experiencing psychiatric problems. Pupils attending the unit span a wide range of abilities, so Access, Standard Grade and Higher programmes are available, modified according to need. French, German, Spanish and Latin are all currently offered by visiting modern language specialists

who provide two hours of classwork and one hour's homework. Of particular interest here was the fact that all pupils studying a language are in a single group.

No groups. Age 12-18 taught as a class which also includes all levels. It works; older help the younger, more able help the less able. School achieves good SQA results (School 129).

General points

Subject development and staffing Several of the schools said that they were in a developing situation, gradually introducing modern language provision throughout the school, or moving from non-certificated courses to SQA Access programmes. A number of school reported that progress is hampered by staffing problems.

I would very much like to continue to offer this provision but this will depend on obtaining suitable staff to deliver the subject (School 128).

We are currently phasing in French teaching, therefore only second year classes access this currently. This number will increase yearly as our new intakes arrive. The phasing is linked to training of staff members (School 159, MLD/SLD).

This is the first year we have done French at (this school). As I only work mornings, one class ... did not have French tuition, though hopefully all children will access French or German next session. I have introduced French at P6-7 level this year and hope to build up a programme that will carry on through the children's secondary education (School 140).

[These 30 pupils are exempt] mainly due to staffing levels. We have only one part-time modern languages teacher (School 37, SEBD).

S5/S6 don't have any (Spanish) as there is no time left on my timetable. It is hoped that S5 will have it next session as they have completed one unit of Access 3 this year and would like to continue with it (School 24).

Resources Though not specifically asked to name the resources they used, some schools chose to do so. Teachers reading this report may be interested to know of the resources which received a mention:

Print materials: OK! (NelsonThornes)
 Allez France
 HSDU Access pack
 Glasgow City Council Primary materials

TV programmes: See me, See you, See France
 Le Club

Songs: Chantons Tous

Regarding resources, two schools commented:

Finding age-appropriate materials at this beginner level is ... difficult (School 53).

Finding suitable resources has been my greatest problem (School 140)

Pupil experience Schools were not asked to comment on pupil experience, but the following remarks may be of interest:

Pupils are enjoying French even though it is a very basic level (School 77, MLD).

We find that some pupils can say numbers in French but not in English! (School 40, MLD/SLD/CD).

Three children attained the required level [out of a group of 6]. Others gained experience and enjoyed being included in the group (School 140, misc).

Our pupils are very keen and enthusiastic about learning another language (School 173, misc).

(I was) initially a bit worried about tackling Access 3 as we have many poor readers. However, the pupils coped very well with reading the menu and answering questions – many scored full marks! (School 24, MLD).

Comments

1. There were fewer schools in this group who catered solely for pupils with SLD or SEBD; most of the schools make provision for pupils with a wide range of needs. It seems that very few pupils are excluded by reason of their disability, even those with SLD, except in case of 15 pupils who were said to be following an elaborated curriculum. This seems to imply that pupils with SLD in 'specialised' schools are less likely to have some modern language experience than those being taught in 'mixed' special schools. This applies to a lesser extent also to pupils with SEBD.
2. The evidence appears to suggest that, at least as far as special schools are concerned, there is no significant difference between the abilities and disabilities of pupils who are offered modern language teaching and those who are not. The barriers would appear to be systemic.
3. Although it seems sensible to ensure that pupils who have a significant hearing impairment have opportunities to become competent users of BSL, the consequent omission of provision for foreign language learning might be seen as discriminatory. Deaf people can and do learn foreign languages and Access ML provision allows for such needs to be catered for. Schools for the Deaf might wish to consider if they are in a position to give a lead to mainstream units by showing how ML programmes can be made accessible to pupils who have significant hearing loss.

GROUP 3: MAINSTREAM BASES MAKING VARIOUS FORMS OF PROVISION FOR MODERN LANGUAGES

Main findings

- Mainstream schools are finding various ways of ensuring that appropriate modern language programmes are offered to a wide range of pupils.
- Around 70% of pupils with special educational needs who attend bases in mainstream schools are offered an ML programme, usually at Access level.
- Support for learning teachers are being used in a variety of ways, which include teaching Access ML courses.
- Lack of competence in English is no longer being seen as a barrier to progress when ML programmes are available at an appropriate level.

The respondents

This group is the largest in the sample, and the most complex. In view of national priorities for inclusion, and for modern languages, and in view of the introduction of Access levels within the national modern languages framework, it is not surprising that in 2002 mainstream schools are finding many more ways of delivering an appropriate modern languages programme to a much wider range of students than has been possible in the past. In the course of analysing responses we have been able to identify at least eight ways in which modern language departments, often with the help of their support for learning departments, have been able to come to terms with the new challenges. Not all of these fall within the remit of this study, but we felt it would be useful at this point to try to construct what we have called 'a hierarchy of inclusion' in which we can attempt to place the experience of the young people whose modern language programmes are the subject of this study.

In using the hierarchy of inclusion to describe these experiences we do not wish to imply that some experiences are better than others. What seems to us to be important is the scope now available to schools which allows them to make provision which is *appropriate to the needs of their pupils*. The hierarchy simply allows us to describe in some detail the programmes which schools have considered to be appropriate for the range of pupils for whom they make provision.

A hierarchy of inclusion for describing the ML experience of pupils who attend SEN or SfL bases/units within mainstream schools

Level 1a: Full, regular mainstream ML programme leading to National Qualifications

This study is not intended to examine the programmes of pupils who cope well with modern languages in regular mainstream classes, but those programmes do establish the 'norm' from which other arrangements differ. Some of the pupils who now attend these classes do so with the support of teachers from the SfL department. We consider them to be working at level 1a within this hierarchy of inclusion. Where a pupil who spends some of their time in a base or unit attends these classes, with or without support, we have considered them to be working at inclusion level 1a.

Level 1b: ML department runs alternative/reduced-time NQ programme for group of mainstream pupils

With the advent of Access programmes, and especially Access 3 which is the equivalent of Standard Grade Foundation Level, modern language departments have been able to set up appropriate programmes for new groupings of pupils who were previously struggling with Standard Grade Foundation, or who would previously not have been included. In some cases these programmes have a reduced time allocation (as little as 1 period a week in some cases), may run as a short course rather than over a full academic session, and may offer a different language from that offered to pupils following level 1a courses. Group numbers tend to be kept low.

We have considered these also to be mainstream classes in that they are run by the modern language department for pupils who cope well with Access level without further assistance. Where pupils who spend some of their time in a base or unit attend these classes, with or without support, we have described them as working at inclusion level 1b.

Level 2a: ML department runs NQ programme for pupils from the base

Modern language programmes described as being at inclusion level 2a are run by the modern language department especially for pupils who spend some or all of their time in an SEN or SfL base. Some pupils may receive individual support. Group numbers are usually small, time allocation is short, but pupils work successfully towards a national qualification.

Level 2b: ML department runs non-NQ programme for pupils from the base

Similar to 2a, but the programme is not certificated.

Level 3a: Collaborative (ML/SfL) delivery of NQ programme

Level 3b: Collaborative (M:/SfL) delivery of non-NQ programme

Level 3 programmes are run jointly by modern languages and support for learning departments for the benefit of pupils who attend the base. Level 3a courses are certificated within the national modern languages framework; level 3b programmes are not. In some cases, 'core' lessons will be delivered by modern languages staff, and reinforces on other occasions by support for learning staff, in other cases ML and SfL staff jointly plan and deliver the programme.

Level 4a: SfL department runs NQ programme

Level 4b: SfL department runs non-NQ programme

Level 4 programmes are similar to level 3 programmes but are planned and delivered by members of the support for learning department rather than by members of the modern language department, who may act as advisers as required. 4a programmes are certificated within the modern languages framework (which must contain some linguistic study); 4b programmes are either not certificated, or use alternative 'cultural' units which do not assess competence in a foreign language.

Level 5: No ML provision for pupils not attending mainstream classes

Strictly speaking, this is a non-level, describing the experience of pupils who receive no foreign cultural or linguistic input at all. Numbers of pupils in this category appear to be falling as Access programmes are introduced.

Collaborative working

It should be noted in passing that level 1b programmes seem often to be run by modern language departments with support and advice of staff from SfL departments. In some

schools, such programmes are run in partnership with SfL department, though this may be an interim arrangement. In School 150, for example, the unit “Life in Another Country” was initially introduced by the support for learning department and subsequently taken over by the modern languages department.

In some cases, though we did not ask a question about this, schools told us that an alternative and certificated modern language programme is being run by a member of the support for learning department, without input from an over-stretched modern languages department. Typically, these are pupils who are not expected to be successful in a Standard Grade class and who are offered an Access course instead. One principal teacher of support for learning (School 96) pointed out that this was an alternative to there being no modern language provision for the 11 pupils concerned. As most of these pupils do not attend the base we would have considered this to be a mainstream class (level 1b) but in view of lack of input from the modern languages department it could also be described as level 4a. This study does not provide the evidence for us to say how prevalent this pattern of provision might be.

A further variation is provided by those teaching modern languages who have a ‘dual qualification’, as, for example, in school 73, where 6 pupils attending an SEBD base are taught a certificated course by a modern languages teacher who also has a qualification in behaviour support.

Figure 7 shows the number of schools offering modern language programmes at each level to pupils who attend their school’s base.

Figure 7. Number of mainstream schools offering different types of provision

level	type of programme	no. of schs
1a	full regular mainstream programme leading to National Qualifications	27
1b	reduced-time NQ programme for group of mainstream pupils	
2a	ML dept runs NQ programme for pupils from the base	5
2b	ML dept runs non-NQ programme for pupils from the base	1
3a	Collaborative (ML/SfL) delivery of NQ programme	5
3b	Collaborative delivery of non-NQ programme	2
4a	SfL department runs NQ programme	12
4b	SfL department runs non-NQ programme	11
5	no provision for pupils not attending mainstream classes	10

NOTES ON FIGURE 7

Some schools offer two or more types of ML provision, hence the number of schools adds up to more than 48.

Where mainstream ML provision is well developed in terms of inclusion, there may be no need for ML provision to be made in the base.

Overview

The 48 schools in this group accounted for approximately 724 pupils. The figure is approximate because, as teachers reminded us, the roll of those considered to ‘belong’ to a base fluctuates, so that the best they could give us was ‘snapshot in time’ that applied sometime in June this year. The effect of fluctuating rolls could also be seen in the breakdown of figures that schools provided, which frequently did not ‘add up’. The following figures, therefore, should be taken as indicative of trends rather than as firm quantities. One school asked us to note that ...

... pupils are integrated into MFL according to their needs. Some pupils who are in receipt of 'enhanced provision' are coping in mainstream, others are not. The position is continually shifting in respect of the nature of the provision and the needs of the children (School 166).

All of the schools in this group made arrangements for modern language provision for some or all of the pupils on their roll.

Figure 8 indicates the approximate numbers of pupils in each of the levels outlined at the beginning of this section. We did not have sufficient information to break down level 1 into its components, so we have counted as mainstream any certificated modern language courses provided by the school for the majority of its pupils. This includes Standard Grade and programmes which fall within the new Higher framework. Where S1 and S2 classes were said to be following the 5-14 Guidelines, we have counted these as 'certificated'. Sixty-six pupils (approx. 9%) remain unaccounted for; we have therefore omitted them from the figures shown below.

Figure 8. Number of pupils in certificated and non-certificated ML programmes

	no. of pupils at each level	percentage	certificated programme	non-certificated programme
level 1 (mainstream classes)	103	16%	103	
level 2 (ML Dept.special classes)	36	5%	30	6
level 3 (team teaching, special)	138	21%	116	22
level 4 (SfL taught programmes)	168	25%	100	68
total following ML programme	445	67%	349	96
level 5 (no ML provision)	217	33%		
overall total	662			

NOTE ON FIGURE 8

These figures are approximate in view of omissions and discrepancies encountered in the responses from schools.

In these mainstream schools, therefore, approximately two thirds of pupils attending a base or unit for part of their week do have some form of modern languages provision made for them. Approximately one third do not.

Reasons for non-provision

Only ten of the schools chose to give reasons for omitting these pupils from the provision being made, though some of these gave more than one reason. The reasons they gave included:

- Pupils follow an alternative curriculum (e.g. PSE/basic skills) (4 schools)
- Pupils attend too infrequently (3 schools)
- Pupils choose other subjects after S2 (1 school)
- Behaviour problems are too great (1 school)
- Response to parental request (1 school)

One school, however, offered another reason:

The modern languages department does not provide language tuition at an appropriate level... Hopefully they will recognise the need to offer Access 2/3 [in addition to Standard Grade] as part of the modern languages provision (School 75).

Another school, for pupils with hearing impairment, felt that although one pupil with excellent English language skills was able to tackle French on the same basis as the other pupils in the mainstream class ...

for the others – most of whom have BSL as their first language – English is really their first foreign language. In addition they do deaf studies, an integral part of which is BSL. The decision about who does a modern language is based on a pupil's language skills and not on support issues (School 63).

Interestingly, only 2 mainstream schools mentioned low ability in English as a reason for not offering a modern language, and that seems to be changing. School 90, where Access 2 and 3 are offered in S3-S5, commented that:

Some pupils [in S1 and S2] are pre-Level A in English and we have not developed a suitable course in modern languages. This will be discussed over the next year or so.

A number of schools mentioned that they were already running informal programmes for pupils in the base (especially in S1 and S2) and were looking at Access programmes with a view to offering a certificated programme from S3. This would provide access to modern languages for some of the pupils for whom there is currently no appropriate programme. It seems likely, therefore, that the percentage of pupils following some sort of modern languages/cultural provision is set to rise, and that more of the programmes offered are likely to be certificated. This trend was confirmed by School 71 which commented:

Until this session children on the roll of SEN base did not receive any modern language except very exceptionally (e.g. 1 pupil took French in S1/S2 at her own request). It is now school policy to provide Access 2 "Life in Another Country: German" for all pupils who do not study a modern language in S1/S2 [for whatever reason].

Specialisms

Most of the schools in this group made special provision for a wide range of pupil need and of course this changes over time. A few schools had been set up to develop expertise in specific areas. See figure 9.

Figure 9. Mainstream bases and specialisms

miscellaneous	33
moderate learning difficulties	5
social, emotional and behavioural difficulties	2
MLD/SEBD	3
MDL/ADHD	1
HI	1
dyslexia	1
autistic spectrum disorders	2

NOTE ON FIGURE 9

Some schools make provision for more than one specialism.

Hearing impairment

Pupils in the base that specialised in provision for **deaf** pupils considered BSL and English together made up their pupils' language entitlement, although 1 pupil was also following a course in French.

*The one pupil who is in the French class has excellent English and this enables him to tackle French on the same basis as the hearing pupils. For the others – most of whom have BSL as their first language – English is really **their** modern foreign language. In addition they do Deaf Studies, an integral part of which is BSL (School 63).*

In another school, however, a pupil with severe hearing loss attending a mainstream French class 'finds the speaking content difficult'. In the same school, (School 133) a group of S5 students in the HI Unit worked with a interactive CD programme. "Lingua Surda".

... This was a special French programme which included both English and French Sign Languages.

Autism

In School 58, all but one of their pupils on the **autistic spectrum** attend mainstream classes. The Assistant Principal Teacher there commented:

It is extremely interesting that even though they have learning difficulties, some of the pupils cope extremely well with French. They are learning at the same pace as the others ...

School 16, which also has a unit for pupils on the autistic spectrum, pointed out that their pupils range from highly able to one with a *major processing challenge*. One of their pupils had recently been awarded the S4 prize for excellence in French. The same teacher also pointed out that some autistic pupils have a high IQ. In the case of two pupils in her S2 class:

... next year I will not teach Access 3 but will do Intermediate 1 or 2 with them over S3/S4. They are likely to benefit from small group input as each can become stressed under overload (i.e. too many in big mainstream classes).

A Principal Teacher of Modern Languages in a school with a **SEBD** unit expressed a desire to offer National Qualifications from S1, arguing that:

From a behavioural point of view I personally feel certification from S1 could be a real means of managing behavioural issues in the ML classroom (School 163).

Another school with an SEBD unit (School 73) solved the problem of continuity for pupils extracted from mainstream classes for behavioural reasons by using a behaviour support teacher who was also a German specialist to organise Access 3 programmes.

Exceptional cases

One or two bases were very different from the rest and could not be classified.

SEBD School 138 has a large support base for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, where pupil numbers, ages, abilities and needs fluctuate almost daily. Pupils aged 12-14 follow a programme of French based on 5-14 Modern Language Guidelines. Older pupils who have been studying a modern language in their mainstream school are provided

for through liaison with the modern language department in their school. IT resources are available in Italian, German, Spanish and French. The school comments:

A review of accreditation ... is currently taking place and it is envisaged that time allocated to modern languages will be increased. It is also envisaged that accreditation will include Access 3 and Standard Grade.

EAL One response was received from a base which makes provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils whose mother tongue is other than English are not considered to have special educational needs unless they also have a disability or a learning difficulty. We therefore excluded them from the overall figures. It is interesting to note, however, that of the 18 pupils who attend the base, only 7 attend mainstream modern language classes. For the other 11 there is no modern language provision made. Ultimately, unless they study their mother tongue outside of school, we assume English is the only language in which they will be able to develop a full range of skills.

Programmes offered at each level of the hierarchy

At level 1, mainstream classes, there is little direct information as the current study was not primarily concerned with pupils already being catered for in regular classes. We have assumed that these will be regular 5-14, Standard Grade and Higher classes. However, it was clear from the incidental information given by some schools that 'regular classes' for some of them includes providing Access programmes in S3/4/5 as an alternative to Standard Grade Foundation Level, often with input from the support for learning department. Access 3 classes, tend to run three times a week and last for one or two years. In some cases (as in School 81, for example) a relatively small 'composite' class is formed, with 17 pupils entered for Standard Grade or Access 3 according to their needs. This school also offers Standard Grade Foundation Level German to three pupils taught by a support for learning teacher.

Some schools made it clear that support for learning staff are providing modern language programmes for quite large groups of pupils in their school. In School 96, for example, the support for learning department runs Access 2 French ("Life in Another Country") in 1 period per week for one school session for 11 pupils aged between 13 and 15. A call to the school revealed that the modern language department there is over-stretched and that the pupils involved would not otherwise be studying a foreign language. As there are only 3 pupils enrolled in the base, this is the equivalent of a mainstream Access 2 class, albeit by a member of another department.

It is perhaps not surprising that schools who provide programmes of work at Access 2 and/or 3 tend to have low numbers of pupils receiving modern language provision in bases. However, there is insufficient data to suggest that this might be so in all cases. This needs to be borne in mind when interpreting the figures for schools in Group 4, where no modern language provision is made by teachers in the base; this may simply be because a good range of mainstream modern language provision is available.

At level 2a classes which maintain a full time-allocation tend to follow the common course or 5-14 programme. In S3/S4 Access 2 and Access 3 programmes predominate, with several units being covered over the two years. The units "Personal Language" and "Transactional Language" are most common, with some classes completing the cluster by the end of S4 or carrying over the final unit into S5. School 60 covers the Access 2 French cluster in 4 periods a week in S3, and the Access 2 Spanish cluster in S4. In the main these are taught by members of the modern language department, or by staff who are dually qualified for ML and SfL.

At level 2b pupils follow an informal programme for one or two periods a week, sometimes for only part of the year. With modern languages staff they cover topics like personal language, pets, the calendar, travel, school, describing people, likes and dislikes, hobbies, etc. Modern languages staff in School 116 run an informal programme for a group of six MLD pupils, one period per week.

At level 3a classes are taught by a team consisting of a modern language teacher and a member of the support for learning department, possibly also an auxiliary. Group size is usually under 10, though numbers for next session appear to be rising. At S1/S2 modified 5-14 programmes mirror mainstream programmes for content, but methods tend to be more active. Access 2 and 3 are used in S3/S4, with one school managing to reach Intermediate 1 with 4 of its pupils. Programmes usually last for two years but for only 1 or 2 periods per week.

At level 3b informal classes for mixed age-groups of 10 or 12 pupils, are taught by teams of modern languages, support for learning staff and, in one case, with additional assistance from S6 pupils.

The **programmes delivered at level 4a** provided the most surprises: it represented the largest group of schools (12); all the programmes were certificated, using Access 1, 2, and 3 and even Standard Grade Foundation and General Levels; yet all **are delivered by support for learning teachers**. School 75 explained that the modern language department did not offer any programmes suitable for pupils who attended the base.

Programmes lasted for 1 or 2 years. Number of periods varied from 1 to 4 per week, apart from the Standard Grade programme for which 5 periods a week were timetabled. Almost all the groups were small (1 – 6 pupils). One larger group (of 10) was taught by a teacher who worked in the base but who had also been a modern language teacher. Pupils in this group (School 145) could be entered for Standard Grade Foundation or General, or Access 2 or 3 according to performance.

A further surprise was School 124, who offered Access 2 and 3 to 6 pupils in S2 for 4 periods per week. However, none of the pupils opted to continue in S3, which would mean, presumably, that they could not be certificated.

Eleven schools offered an **informal course at level 4b**, to pupils attending the base. In all but two cases these were S1/S2 pupils engaging in basic conversation using topics and methods which seemed very similar to those which would be used in primary schools. One of the S3/S4 groups was studying various countries with a geography specialist. School 111 was offering a cross-curricular programme involving European awareness, language, geography, numbers (money), art and craft to a small mixed-age group. Frequency varied from 1 to 4 periods per week. Two of the schools said that they were looking into the possibility of introducing Access level in future years.

Duration and frequency

Programmes varied from 1 period per fortnight to 4 periods per week, with most schools offering one, two or three periods a week. Frequency also, of course, determined whether the programme could be covered in a single academic year or was spread over two or more years. Programmes we considered as 'mainstream' tend to run for the full 3 classes per week over 1 or 2 academic years and to have a clear progression route through a cluster of units, whereas programmes based on a reduced time allocation tended to concentrate on single units, often using "Life in Another Country" as the core provision and linking language skills to that in a formal or informal way. In fact, there was so much variation that we concluded that each school makes provision not only according to pupils' needs but also

according to what is possible within its own specific context and resources. Although this study sets out to give some indication of the numbers of pupils being provided with opportunities to study modern languages or an associated course, we have made no attempt to quantify the amount of study time each child receives.

Languages taught

As always, French predominates, with half of the schools in this group providing French programmes for the pupils in their bases. German, Spanish, Italian and BSL are represented in 20 schools, and one offers a free choice of cultural and language study to pupils following an Access 2 programme using the unit “Life in Another Country”. Figure 10 shows this in more detail. Some schools told us that they planned to offer a change of language to some pupils, as a way of maintaining or improving motivation. School 60, for example, offers Access 2 French in S3 and Access 2 Spanish in S4 to about 24 of their pupils.

Figure 10. Languages offered to pupils attending a mainstream base

Languages offered	No. of schools
French only	20
German only	4
Spanish only	4
French and German	6
French and Spanish	2
French and Italian	1
French, German and Spanish	1
French, German, Spanish and Italian	1
BSL	1
free choice (<i>for 'Life' unit</i>)	2
liaison with mainstream school	1
unknown (<i>as mainstream class</i>)	5

Access 1 programmes

Only 2 of the mainstream schools who responded are using Access 1 provision in modern languages.

School 161 is working at ‘pre-Access 1 level’ with three S1/S2 pupils, comparing and contrasting aspects of life in Spain and Scotland through the study of various cultural areas, including some basic vocabulary. They plan to use audio and video tape on a regular basis to record pupils’ progress. Next year’s course will introduce them to SQA units “Life in Another Country” and “Personal Language”.

School 116 runs a short (one term) Access 1 Spanish programme for 6 pupils aged between 11 and 16. This group is made up of pupils with severe learning difficulties. They learn about Spanish culture through different means (e.g. art, craft, music, cooking) and make comparisons between Spain and Scotland through project work on topics such as instruments, food, clothes, weather.

School 22 runs a two-year programme for 5 or 6 pupils, based on “Life in Another Country”. As this unit is available at both Access 1 and 2, pupils are assessed at either level, according to their abilities.

Access 2 programmes

School 22 also offers a mainstream class in which the unit “Life in Another Country” is linked to Home Economics. They experience aspects of life and language in Italy, Spain and France.

Considerable use is made of the unit “Life in Another Country” as an introduction not only for pupils, but also for teachers whose ability to cater for a widening range of pupils is still developing. The level of language skill required to teach the unit “Life in Another Country” is within the scope of most teachers, and this has allowed support for learning departments a way of exploring possibilities. From there, schools appear to be gaining confidence to progress to the other, more language-intensive Access 2 units.

Nevertheless, modern language departments are making good use of Access 2 language units as a way of making modern language provision for groups of pupils for whom Standard Grade Foundation Level would have been distinctly inappropriate. Curricular similarities between Access 2 and Access 3 allow for rapid progress where pupils’ abilities make that feasible.

Some schools appear to be starting working toward Access levels in S2 (e.g. School 120), though there was some indication that this might not be so successful.

Access 3

Access 3 seems to providing a useful alternative to Standard Grade for modern language departments, working on their own, with support from teachers from the base, or in team teaching situations. Reports suggest that pupils are enjoying the courses and making progress – in some cases better progress than was anticipated. For example, in School 160 a few pupils from the base have been able to progress as far as Intermediate 1, the equivalent of Standard Grade General Level. (NOTE: Figures derived from SQA statistics for 2001 and 2002, showing entries and passes at Access 1, 2 and 3 can be found in Annex F.)

We encountered a number of schools who told us that they were planning to offer a change of language to some of their pupils who had reached the limit of what they could be expected to achieve in their first foreign language or who were demotivated by lack of success.

... our S3 pupils are pleased that French is only going to last one year. They are keen to study Spanish in their 4th year (School 163).

Some schools (e.g. School 120) appear to start working towards Access 3 in S2, completing the cluster in S3. One principal teacher of modern languages said he wished he could offer National Qualifications from S1.

Informal programmes

Most informal programmes were found in S1/S2 or with mixed-age groups. Sometimes they are offered within a limited block of time. School 133, for example, extracted a small group of S1 pupils for a term for intensive ‘remedial’ work with a member of the modern languages department before re-integrating them with the mainstream class.

Programmes in S1/S2 are sometimes described as following 5-14 Guidelines, sometimes simply as ‘basic skills’ or ‘simple conversation’. Topics sometimes included cultural items such as Introducing France, Introducing Paris, greetings, classroom language, numbers,

time, food. School 120 described not only the programme they had developed but the intention behind it and the methods used:

It was felt that the way forward was to develop a more flexible approach with free-standing activities based on work in small groups where appropriate and realistic targets were set. Developed materials which can be delivered by and SEN teacher are available and are used in conjunction with games and computer programmes. It is hoped that this will lead to an SQA Access 2 being delivered in the base next year.

It may be that this sort of situation has been inherited from earlier years when less flexible certificated provision was available. Five schools in this group told us that they were actively considering transferring to a suitable Access programme in the near future.

Use of Access level to certificate ML programmes

This move towards the use of Access programmes, either to make new provision for pupils who previously had no ML provision made for them, or to provide certification for previously non-certificated programmes is borne out by the figures from SQA shown in Annex F. The figures provided by SQA represent entries and successful completion of whole clusters and numbers of pupils entered for ML clusters is clearly rising. However, SQA was unable to provide figures of entries for individual units. The entries listed who have not passed the Access clusters are not resulted as fails but are still valid open entries. Pupils working at Access levels may take two or more years to complete a cluster. Some schools/units enter students for a single unit, or for a pair of units, which they pass successfully. They may go on to complete one or two units at the next level, or in a different language. They may never complete a cluster. It seems safe to assume that many of those pupils entered but not included in the 'passes' may in fact have already achieved one or two individual units.

"Life in Another Country" (Access 2) is a case in point. We know from research carried out over the summer of 2002 that many schools/units are using one or other of the six units "Life in Another Country" as an important element in the overall programme of pupils with special educational needs. In some schools it forms the core of a thematic approach which brings together related units from different areas of the curriculum (see SQA Acc 1/2 support document No. 7115) There may be no plans for the student to be entered for any more modern language units.

There is no cluster at Access 1. When pupils are about to complete the second unit their school enters them for automatic achievement of the Access 2 unit. Pupils entered for Access 1 units are therefore not represented in SQA's figures.

Group size

In general, size of teaching groups tends to be smaller where pupils of lower ability are concerned. Even for classes we considered as 'mainstream', groups tended to be in the range 11-24. Classes with reduced time allocation tended to be considerably smaller, around 6 – 10, or fewer in some cases, particularly where pupils remaining in the base are taught as a separate group.

Mixed age groupings

One of the problems encountered by schools is the need to devise alternative modern language provision for relatively small groups of pupils for whom mainstream courses are not appropriate. Some schools have found a solution to this in mixed ability age groups. This

solution is facilitated by the flexibility of Access 2 provision, in particular, where the choice of 'aspects of life' and language topics chosen for study can be varied each year.

School 106, for example, runs two classes, each of 6 pupils; one is an introductory Spanish class for pupils in S1-S3; the other is an Access 2 class for pupils in S3 – S6, one period per week, in which pupils choose the country they wish to study. Much use is made of the internet for individual research and of practical exercises such as cooking. The unit has a simple language component which is within the capabilities of these students. The school reports that the course is very popular and runs each year.

The modern language department in School 116 runs an informal French programme one period per week for a group of 6 MLD pupils ranging in ages from 11 to 16. They learn vocabulary and phrases connected with everyday situations, with plenty of games, role-play, videos, etc.

In general pupils enjoy this programme as it takes them out into another mainstream department and adds something very different to their curriculum.

School 175 runs an informal Spanish programme for all the 12 pupils in its learning centre for all of their 4 or 5 years in school. Work is mainly oral, covering school, food and drink, colours, numbers, holidays, etc. The school comments:

The pupils at present in the unit are very, very enthusiastic. In future we are looking to tie this in with some European studies at Access level.

A similar mixed-age class in School 130 is taught for the first part of a double period by a subject specialist assisted by a support for learning teacher and an assistant. The second period is taken by the support staff who reinforce the work introduced.

Resources

The following resources were mentioned by mainstream school respondents:

Higher Still Access 3 materials (which also support Access 2)

Angus Council MLPS programme
Glasgow City MLPS materials

French: Métro
Tricolore
Escalier
Allez-y
O.K!
Salut! (Heinemann)
Le Français, c'est facile! (John Murray)
La Jolie Ronde materials (*but there are funding implications*)

German: Logo
Deutsche Heute

CD: Départ
Jeux faciles

Other: Drake Language Master unit
realia, including recipes

Some teachers commented on the problem of finding suitably straightforward materials for use with senior pupils. Most materials are aimed at younger pupils and include activities which are too childish for older age-groups.

Collaborative working

It is clear that modern language departments have relied heavily on their colleagues in support for learning and SEN departments for help in devising suitable arrangements for those pupils who not so long ago would have been exempt from modern language learning. This appears to be an on-going process, with the balance of input from the various departments changing over time. This is reflected in the 'hierarchy' we have used in this report to describe pupils' experiences. One school described the process thus:

Previously the Support for Learning Team offered an alternative to Modern Language in S3/S4 for 6-10 pupils. This developed into an SQA Unit on "Life in Another Country". Current arrangements are that this unit is now offered by the Modern Languages Department with some staff development support from SfL staff (School 150).

In some schools, as in School 120, team teaching (MIL/SfL/Auxiliary) delivered Access 3 programmes to two groups of around 18 pupils, each of which included 4 pupils from the SEN base.

Even where the modern language department takes the lead role, however, help from support for learning colleagues is valued. School 153 points out that it is ...

... necessary to have full cover from SfL/SEN to allow assessments to take place and to manage the course.

In one case, a modern language teacher working alone on an Access 3 programme with two S3 pupils from the base found that:

the pupils were unable to cope. Both failed to make any progress and consequently failed to complete (School 144).

The involvement of auxiliaries, of course, is linked to the specific support needs of individual pupils. More surprising, but of particular interest, was the incidence of assistance from S6 pupils. In School 130, for example, S6 pupils help with paired speaking and worksheets and they make up games to reinforce vocabulary.

Achievement

Specific questions about pupils' achievements were not a feature of this study, but a number of schools, invited to add any further information they wished about the groups whose programmes they were describing, chose to mention pupils' enjoyment of the work and, in some cases, achievements that they had not expected. In one school, where pupils had completed Access 3 in S3, the school had planned to offer Intermediate 1, internally assessed units only, in S4. However:

... the 4 pupils ... have achieved so well they are all sitting the final exam. One pupil, with cerebral palsy and considerable visual impairment, has overcome significant writing difficulties and can fulfil the requirements of the external writing exam (School 160).

Of the achievements of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, the following comments were made:

It is extremely interesting that even though they have language difficulties some of the pupils cope extremely well with French. They are learning at the same pace as the others (School 58).

One of these girls (of 2 taking Standard Grade French in mainstream) is being awarded the S4 prize for excellence in French (School 16).

SQA statistics for entries and passes in 2001 and 2002 are shown in Annex F, though caution needs to be exercised in interpreting the figures shown. SQA's figures represent entries and successful completion of whole clusters. The entries listed who have not passed the Access clusters are not resulted as fails but are still valid open entries. Pupils working at Access levels may take two or more years to complete a cluster.

We know from our research that some schools/units enter students for a single unit, or for a pair of units, which they pass successfully. They may go on to complete one or two units at the next level, or in a different language. They may never complete a cluster. "Life in Another Country" (Access 2) is a case in point. We know from research currently being carried out that many schools/units are using one or other of the six units "Life in Another Country" as an important element in the overall programme of pupils with special educational needs. In some schools it forms the core of a thematic approach which brings together related units from different areas of the curriculum (see SQA Acc 1/2 support document No. 7115) There may be no plans for the student to be entered for any more modern language units.

There is no cluster at Access 1. When pupils are about to complete the second unit their school enters them for automatic achievement of the Access 2 unit.

The figures shown in Annex F, therefore, while they indicate a rising trend for schools to use Access level provision, do not present an accurate picture of the flexible way in which schools are making use of the provision.

Motivation

Although not asked to comment on pupil motivation, a number of schools chose to add comments.

Pupils in the group would be unable to cope with mainstream curriculum but derive great enjoyment from the Special French class.

Where pupils' responses were noted by schools, they were almost always very positive. Only School 152 report mixed responses to an informal programme taught in the base.

Some pupils show real aptitude in terms of memory and articulation ... noted enjoyment from pupil whose communication skills are quite poor, perhaps because they are starting at the same point and can achieve as much as their peers, whereas in their own language they are at a disadvantage. Others express strong disinterest: "I speak English. Why learn French?"

Comments

1. Although no specific questions were asked about mainstream modern language courses, we gained the impression that, where schools had already introduced mainstream courses at Access levels, it was much easier for support departments to place pupils in appropriate courses without having to organise 'special' provision in modern languages themselves. The extent of collaborative working between the two departments was also a facilitating factor.
2. In this study we have counted as 'mainstream' any class consisting of a clear majority of pupils who do not attend a special base or have individual learning support. We have encountered incidences of these mainstream classes being taught by staff from the SEN or support for learning team, some of whom may not be qualified modern language teachers. The data we have collected does not allow us to say how prevalent this practice might be, but it clearly meets a need in the schools where it happens, allowing an appropriate modern language programme to be provided for pupils who might otherwise be excluded from language learning. It would have been interesting to know to what extent teachers of specialisms other than ML work in SEN bases, but this was clearly outwith the remit of our study.

We are unaware of any policy statements which refer to this situation, but it is worth noting that in special schools and units, and in mainstream bases, it is common for informal or Access ML groups to be taught by teachers who are not ML specialists. However, these groups are usually quite small. SEED may wish to provide guidance on this point.

3. The principle of 'continuity' may seem to be challenged by practice in a number of the schools in our sample. However, the schools which are implementing a change of language for some of their pupils are doing so because it seems an appropriate response to the learning needs of the pupils involved. For most pupils, continuity of language will be more appropriate. SEED may wish to clarify this point.
4. As in the special schools for pupils with hearing impairments, BSL tends to be offered as an alternative to foreign language learning. It might be interesting to gather views on this from members of the Deaf Community, particularly from those who have themselves learned a foreign language. It would also be interesting to know if opportunities to learn BSL are available to hearing pupils in those schools, both to facilitate the social inclusion of pupils with hearing impairments and because there is an acute shortage of English/BSL interpreters in Scotland.

We note that BSL skills, where certificated, are assessed by Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP) in the absence of SQA provision suitable for use in schools.

5. SQA may wish to review the format in which they publish figures for achievement in modern languages at Access levels.

GROUP 4: MAINSTREAM BASES MAKING NO PROVISION FOR MODERN LANGUAGES

Main findings

Although 43% of the mainstream schools responding to the survey make no ML provision for pupils attending the base, these account for only 30% of pupils, and of these, over half attend just 5 schools.

The respondents

21 mainstream schools fell into this group, making provision in their bases for 321 pupils. Bases varied in the numbers of pupils catered for, from 3 in school 126 to 52 pupils in school 151. None of these pupils follows a modern language or associated programme.

Schools were asked to indicate the range of needs they provided for, but not the number of pupils in each category. Figure 10, below, shows the range of needs and the number of schools in this Group who said they catered for them. Most schools, of course, cater for more than one type of disability.

Figure 10. Specialisms of mainstream bases making no provision for modern languages.

Needs provided for	Number of schools
Mild or moderate learning needs	11
Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties	7
Hearing impairments	5
Severe, profound, complex difficulties	4
Visual impairments	2
Communication disorders including autism	2
Dyslexia	2
Miscellaneous	1

NOTE ON FIGURE 10

Some of the bases make provision for a range of disabilities.

Reasons for omitting modern languages

Schools were asked to explain the reasons for their decision not to offer modern language provision to some of their pupils. Most schools in this group chose not to answer the question. Only three reasons were cited: pupil choice, the restricted curriculum being followed by certain pupils, and parental choice:

Prior to placement within the Language and Communication Support Group, parents have consented to their child not following a modern language course to create extra time for an individualised language work programme and reinforcement of classwork to take place (School 64).

Caution required

Caution is needed in interpreting these responses, since we did not ask about modern languages provision in regular mainstream classes. It may be that the mainstream schools involved in this group are ones in which there is a good range of mainstream provision, so that pupils attending the base are pupils for whom no 'special' modern languages provision may have been made even if they had attended schools where it was available.

That said, numbers of such pupils are likely to be small. Perhaps questions could reasonably be asked of schools where large numbers of pupils attend the base, for whom no modern languages provision is made. No modern languages provision is made, for example, in School 29 (where 44 pupils attend the base, MLD/HL/CD), School 32 (35 pupils, MLD), School 151 (52 pupils, MLD, SLD), school 171 (24 pupils, CD/PD). However; the principal teacher of the base in School 32 offered the following comment:

Pupils attending ... have never been timetabled for modern languages. However, with the recent National Qualifications Access 2/3 provision now available I see doors opening up.

She added:

... a number of the pupils within the group have expressed a desire to study a modern language ...

Comment

1. There may be little difference between the schools in Group 4 and the schools whose returned questionnaires were deemed to be 'not applicable'. We do not know, for example, how many pupils are excluded from mainstream ML classes or who follow an alternative curriculum which does not include modern languages. Perhaps a further survey will be carried out to determine these facts.
2. Although 70% of mainstream pupils covered by this survey do follow a modern language programme, of the pupils who constitute the remaining 30% over half (178 pupils) are concentrated in just 5 of the schools. It seems likely that this will be commented upon in the case of inspection, as has been reported by other schools who have recently improved their provision.

CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENTS

The pupils

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs whose curriculum includes a modern language was previously unknown. It is therefore of considerable interest to discover that, at least in the schools represented in this survey, around half are currently following ML programmes, and that the number is increasing. Pupils attending mainstream SEN bases are rather more likely to be included in ML programmes than their counterparts in special schools (70% of mainstream schools make ML provision for some of their pupils with special educational needs, as opposed to 49% of special schools.) This may be related, at least in part, to the availability of suitably trained staff, but it may also be due to differences in attitude and assumptions or to lack of information to special schools about the availability of suitable programmes.

We could find no difference in ability or disability between those pupils who are offered modern language programmes and those who are not. Overall, pupils with severe, profound and complex learning difficulties (SLD) and those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) are somewhat more likely than others not to be included in modern language programmes, yet pupils of all abilities and disabilities, including those with SLD and SEBD are well represented in the programmes surveyed. The decision whether or not to offer modern languages to such pupils appears to relate more to assumptions or to staffing resources than to the ability of pupils to benefit. Disability or lack of ability in English no longer seem to be valid reasons for denying access to modern language learning.

In the case of pupils with SLD we wondered whether it might be the case that, although some such pupils are educated in mainstream schools, where they follow a modern languages Access 1 programme, those with the most severe needs are perhaps more likely to be in special schools and that this might account for the decision not to offer a modern language programme, even at Access 1.

We were particularly surprised to find how few pupils with SEBD follow modern language programmes, as this group of pupils is likely to span the ability range, but we are reluctant to comment on this without further information. Not all local authorities included their SEBD bases in the list of schools they provided for us, and we have no idea how they compare with the curriculum in secure units as these are not classed as special schools and do not figure in our study. More research is needed before any conclusion can be made.

There are a few mainstream schools who have large numbers of pupils with special educational needs for whom no ML provision is available. We could find no reason why this should be so, given that pupils of similar abilities and disabilities are being taught ML in other schools.

It would be very interesting to know how our figures compare with the numbers of pupils in mainstream schools who do not have special educational needs who are not doing a foreign language. However, this question too is outwith the scope of our current study.

The programmes

An earlier project⁵ which looked at the position of modern language learning in the programmes offered to pupils with special educational needs had concluded, in 1997, that Standard Grade Foundation courses were unsuitable for between 10 and 15% of pupils. It

⁵ *Europe, Language Learning and Special Educational Needs* SOEID 1994–6.

was interesting therefore to see that very few schools are still offering this course to pupils with special educational needs, but have found the new Access level courses more suitable for the range of pupils they taught. We wondered if it was the schools who had introduced an Access 3 cluster as an alternative mainstream course who were finding it easier to accommodate pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes. However, we had not asked schools to describe their mainstream provision, so we cannot be sure about this. More research is required.

Outwith mainstream classes it is clear that schools are using Access ML provision flexibly to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils. It is common for time to be reduced and for one or two units to be used rather than the whole cluster. A few schools described non-certificated courses which had been running in their school for some time; these schools often reported that they were considering modifying their programme so that it could be certificated using Access units.

The availability of certificated programmes at a suitable level is welcomed by teachers who report improvements in pupil motivation and achievement. While we encountered one school where teachers had reservations about the ability of an Access programme to motivate all of their pupils, we encountered no school who wanted to abandon such provision. Some schools expressed surprise at the progress their pupils were making when presented with a suitable programme.

It was no surprise to find that French is the language most commonly taught, but we were surprised to find the range of other languages on offer, sometimes within the same school. German, Spanish, Italian and British Sign Language (BSL) are all represented amongst the programmes described.

In the case of BSL, we would like to have known if the language was on offer to hearing as well as to hearing impaired pupils, but we had not anticipated this response and had not asked the question. It seems to us that, for social as well as educational reasons, any language offered should be offered to all pupils equally. It would also be interesting to know if the Deaf community is happy with a policy which offers BSL but not other languages to children with a hearing impairment, but the question is outwith the scope of this study.

Considerable use is being made of the Access 1 and 2 unit "Life in Another Country" to provide a limited experience of modern language learning within the context of intercultural study. A wide range of countries and languages are represented in such programmes, including Japanese and Greek. It seems to us that such intercultural study is providing a context for language learning that pupils find interesting and motivating. We wonder if this might also prove to be true at levels above Access 2 and whether this might suggest ways in which the Modern Language Department might contribute to a school's Citizenship programme.

Some schools are operating a policy of lateral progression; that is, where pupils are not expected to be able to progress further in one language, they are offered a course in a different language at the same level. Although this runs counter to national policy, which currently favours progression in the initial language, 'diversification' is welcomed by pupils and seems to have the effect of improving motivation. We conclude that, although for the majority of pupils continuity is indeed important if a high level of competency is to be achieved, for pupils for whom such competency is unattainable, lateral progression is a valid alternative route.

Teaching staff

The question of who teaches modern languages to pupils with special educational needs remains a difficult one to answer for no one pattern has emerged from this survey. Whether a pupil is taught in a mainstream or a special school, for example, gives no clue as to whether or not he/she is more or less likely to be taught by a modern language specialist. There are modern language specialists teaching modern language programmes in special schools, and there are support for learning specialists teaching modern languages in mainstream schools. Whether a programme is taught by a modern language specialist or a support for learning/SEN specialist is often dependent on the staffing available. In a few special schools the programme is taught by a teacher trained through the Modern Languages in Primary Schools programme. Team teaching, combining specialisms, is common practice, especially when a new Access programme is being introduced into a mainstream school. In the absence of official guidance, schools seem to be solving the question of staffing in a variety of ways.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Advice

As a result of the activities undertaken in the course of this survey we suggest that the Scottish Executive Education Department consider the need for guidance to schools on the following points.

1. Explain more fully the use of alternative modern language programmes for groups of pupils for whom the format of Standard Grade Foundation courses are proving too challenging or demotivating.
2. Intercultural study:
 - a) Reformulate advice on the benefits of modern language learning to give a higher profile to the benefits of intercultural study.
 - b) Undertake an evaluation of the motivational and other benefits of intercultural study and consider how such study may be incorporated into language learning programmes at other levels.
 - c) Provide advice to schools on the need to ensure that pupils who find linguistic achievement difficult should not also be deprived of the other benefits of language learning programmes.
3. Provide advice to schools on the range of programmes and methods of delivery now available to enable them to deliver the modern language entitlement to a wider range of pupils.
4. Provide guidance on who may teach modern languages at Access levels in mainstream and special schools, including the use of teachers who have been trained to teach modern languages in primary schools.
5. Provide guidance on the acceptability of lateral progression to a second foreign language at the same level in the case of pupils not expected to acquire further competence in their first foreign language.
6. Provide guidance on the place of BSL as a first or second language, and its availability, where offered, to all pupils.

Resources

We urge Learning and Teaching Scotland to consider preparing or commissioning modern language learning materials suitable for use with pupils aged 14 – 17 working at Access levels.

Assessment and reporting

1. We urge SQA to consider the advantages of publishing figures for passes in individual units at Access levels, in addition to the figures for clusters. This would reflect more accurately the way in which schools are using the flexible provision now available to them.

2. We note that SQA currently makes no provision for certificating achievement of competence in BSL skills, other than through National Vocational Qualifications. We urge SQA to rectify this omission by creating National Units suitable for use by BSL users and BSL learners in schools, perhaps along the lines of Gaidhlig and Gaelic (learners).

Research

We suggest a need for further research into the following areas:

1. The range of ML provision now offered to mainstream pupils, especially in S3–S4, and the effect of this on the Modern Language department's ability to accommodate pupils with special educational needs.
2. The numbers of pupils who do **not** have special educational needs who are not offered a modern language course, or who have been withdrawn from such provision.
3. The place of modern languages in the curriculum offered to pupils in secure units and SEBD provision.
4. The extent of provision for mother tongue development and further foreign language learning for pupils for whom English is an additional language.