

Working Together for Inclusion in Modern Languages

An in-school project to improve access
to the Modern Languages curriculum

This project provides consultative support for cross-disciplinary teams (ML/SfL) working together in school to improve access to the modern languages curriculum for identified groups of pupils who are struggling to succeed. The project can be adopted by a single school or by a group of schools. It requires the approval and active support of School Management.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR INCLUSION IN MODERN LANGUAGES

Your questions answered

Who is the project for?

For Teachers of Modern Languages and Support for Learning who are concerned about underachieving pupils and who wish to develop their collaborative practice in order to make modern language learning more accessible to a wider range of learners. The project can be undertaken by a 'team' of two teachers (ML & SFL), by a whole ML department with SFL involvement, or by a group of schools. Gaelic teachers can also be included .

How long does it last?

The project takes place over the course of a school year. During that time ML and SFL colleagues will need time to plan the project, to plan and prepare developments, to try out ideas in class and to evaluate their effectiveness. Teams will also be expected to pass on to their departments what they learn in the process.

Will the project count towards teachers' CPD requirement?

This project is described on the *GTCS/CPD* website but whether and how it can count towards CPD has to be negotiated with Senior Management. Some schools who have already taken part have viewed it as part of their CPD programme.

Will it fit in with the school's improvement plans?

Yes. This project is about improving inclusive practice (National Priority 3) and improving attainment (NP 1). It is also concordant with advice in *How Good is Our School?: Part 2* which schools are using to evaluate their provision for pupils with Additional Support Needs. It is likely to enhance responses to QI 1.1 (entitlement to a broad curriculum); QI 3.2 (the deployment of SFL staff and the quality of support for learning in mainstream classes); and QI 6.6 (staff review and development related to ASN provision). Each school identifies its own priorities and the project is customised to suit current improvement plans.

Where and when?

The project involves collaborative work in school throughout the session, plus 4 Consultant-led Workshops. Workshops can be held in school time, as twilight sessions or on Saturdays, either at school, or at a central location if several schools are taking part. Details to be agreed with participating schools.

What will it cost?

This will depend on how many schools take part in the project, how many consultants are required, etc. We are looking into the possibility of securing funding which would reduce the price to schools but negotiations are on-going and details are not available at this stage. Schools will not need to make a final decision until after the initial meeting (probably in June) when detailed costs can be established. All that is required from schools at this stage is an expression of interest.

We're interested - what do we do next?

Assuming that you have at least one ML teacher and one SFL teacher who are interested in developing a working partnership and the interest and support of your Modern Languages department, the Support for Learning team and the School Management team, contact the Consultants to express an interest. An initial meeting will be held to work out the details. See the back page for how to contact the Consultants.

Who are the consultants?

Hilary McColl taught French for many years and has worked nationally and internationally in various capacities to support access to modern language learning for pupils of all abilities. She is now a freelance CPD provider, approved by GTC Scotland. This project arises from the success of previous projects Hilary has conducted in various schools in Scotland.

Catriona Oates works at Scottish CILT as one of the Professional Services Team, having previously taught French in a Stirlingshire secondary school and subsequently worked as staff tutor on the MLPS training course for Stirling, Clackmannan and Falkirk. Any project which results from this initial introduction will form part of a small-scale study which she will undertake as part of her role as Professional Services Officer. This will not require any additional input from teachers involved.

OUTLINE SCHEDULE

Preliminary meeting *(before the end of this session)*

To allow interested schools to find out more about the project, to agree procedures and to determine costs.

Stage 1 *(early next session)*

Joint ML/SfL in-service looking at barriers to learning in Modern Languages. Identifying the target group/class. Introduction to the procedures and support mechanisms involved in the project. Forward planning.

Each stage is followed by collaborative work in school with on-going support as required.

Stage 2 *(towards the end of the year)*

Reviewing progress to date, discussing issues which have arisen, planning further work. Input is determined by the needs of the schools taking part.

Stage 3 *(around March)*

Reviewing progress, planning further work. Input, determined by the needs of the schools taking part. Interim evaluation and plans for the remainder of the session.

Stage 4 *(May/June)*

Forward planning. Discussion how successful new approaches can be embedded into normal classroom practice. Evaluation of the project in each school.

MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT

AIMS

The aims of the Working Together project are twofold, and the two aims are linked:

1. to improve access to Modern Language study for learners who are causing concern, because of learning difficulties or because of lack of motivation
2. to help teachers to gain a better understanding of the factors which hinder learning in Modern Languages and to develop approaches which make it seem easier and more enjoyable

METHODS

In this project, ML and SFL teachers will work together as a team:

- focusing on a particular learner or group of learners
- sharing perspectives on what it is which is making learning difficult for those learners
- sharing ideas about how to reduce the barriers and how to engage/re-engage those pupils in their learning
- collaborating in implementing those ideas with the target group
- systematically planning, recording and evaluating the developments
- disseminating good practice within their departments, and within the school

The project provides support for the collaborative *process* while leaving the choice of *focus* to individual schools.

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

School Management provides the conditions under which progress towards these aims can be made. Without Management's active support, progress will be minimal and short term. The active support of School Management involves:

- agreeing to support the project and the teachers involved
- nominating a Mentor for the project who will be responsible for facilitating arrangements for collaboration, for monitoring progress, and for consolidating and disseminating good practice which emerges
- ring-fencing the time teachers need for working together outside the classroom
- arranging the timetable so that the teachers can work together with a given class, for the duration of the project
- supporting applications for additional resources which may be required

NOTES on how the ICP project can tie in with national policy and whole-school improvement agendas

National policy on languages

In line with recent pronouncements from HMIE and SEED (see below), the project aims to support schools' efforts to improve access to Modern Languages for all learners and particularly for those who have been finding ML study very challenging and perhaps unrewarding.

Moves towards curriculum flexibility notwithstanding, current policy is still that all learners, regardless of ability or disability, are entitled to a progressive language learning experience from P6 to S4.

HMIE Jane Renton, in her address to teachers attending the SEED Good Practice in Modern Languages series of Conferences in 2003, reminded delegates that *pupils with specific learning difficulties or special educational needs can benefit greatly from studying a modern foreign language. There should be no assumption that such pupils will be excluded from learning a second language.*¹

An earlier speaker, from SEED, quoted inspection policy:

*Inspections have begun to show that there is some evidence of groups of pupils dropping their study of a modern language at the end of S2 in order to follow courses in social skills, life skills or vocational skills. While this may be appropriate, there is an expectation that all schools will offer all pupils their entitlement to study a modern language. If during inspection HMIE finds that there are groups of pupils not studying a modern language, or indeed any other key area of the curriculum, the matter will be explored with the school.*²

The National Priorities for Education

The CP project is in line with all of the National Priorities, and in particular:

- NP 1: Improving attainment.
- NP 2: Supporting and developing the skills of teachers.
- NP 3: Facilitating inclusion.

The curricular developments envisaged may also contribute to:

- NP 4: ML's contribution to the school's citizenship programme.
- NP5: Developing pupils' learning skills.

¹ From *SEED National Conferences on Good Practice in Modern Language Teaching Autumn 2003: Proceedings* (Scottish CILT, 2004), page 6.

² *ibid*, page 3.

How Good is Your School: Part 2

Evaluating education for pupils with additional support needs in mainstream schools

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The project should assist schools developing their response to this document, in respect of Modern Languages, and to the following aspects in particular:

- QI 1.1 *Pupils with additional support needs have the same entitlements to education as their peers...have access to the broad range of areas of the curriculum, suitably adapted or elaborated.*

- QI 2.1 *... progress is being made across the curriculum and not just in a narrow range of curriculum areas or subjects.*

- QI 3.2 *Effective arrangements are in place to ensure that specialist staff are able to contribute purposefully to the teaching process.*

- QI 6.6 *Senior staff... ensure that staff develop the necessary attitudes and skills to promote the achievement of pupils with additional support needs.*

³ HMIE 2004

CONTACT DETAILS

For further information or to express an interest, contact either of the Consultants:

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