

Submission from West Lothian Council

1. *Is there enough funding for the Scottish Government's proposal (including use of EU money)?*

No there is not sufficient funding for this Scottish Government proposal.

- The Scottish Government would need to commit substantial funding to deliver this proposal. Significant funding will be required for Modern Language Primary School training in West Lothian to introduce and sustain the Scottish Government's proposal, both to develop training courses and to deliver training. Opportunities should be sought to work in partnership with other authorities on course development and training to reduce costs.
 - If the strategy is to be implemented by 2020, long term planning needs to be considered regarding the level and extent of teacher training. Many MLPS trained teachers, who benefitted from MLPS funding in the mid-1990s, will have retired by then. Those staff who are still in post will require to be up skilled and new MLPS training schemes put into place for existing staff who have limited Modern Language skills.
 - There is a need at a strategic level in West Lothian to devote an increased staffing resource to deliver a 1 + 2 Modern Languages Strategy.
-
2. *Do existing teachers have the skills and teaching resources available for language tuition? Are existing teachers and teaching assistants equipped to teach languages? Should there be more training and support for new and existing teachers for language teaching?*
- To reflect the requirement of the Curriculum for Excellence refresher courses would be required for previously trained MLPS teachers to upgrade their languages skills.
 - MLPS training is needed for staff who do not have Modern Language skills. In successfully teaching Modern Languages, staff need to be confident in their own language skills as well as the methodology of language teaching.
 - Modern Language teaching resources vary from school to school.
 - A Modern Language Higher or equivalent should be a requirement for entry to teacher training and Modern Language training should be part of initial teacher training.
 - Support staff apart from a very few who have a particular interest in Modern languages are not sufficiently equipped to support pupils' learning in languages.
 - Teachers in accepting ongoing opportunities to develop and maintain their own language skills could benefit from EU funded ML immersion courses.
 - The numbers of teachers required would depend on West Lothian Council's Strategy for Modern Languages whether it would involve delivery by class teacher, language specialist, secondary specialist or by embedding in curriculum.

3. *What is the capacity within the curriculum to accommodate greater language study? Can language learning be embedded in existing teaching?*

- There are opportunities for embedding language teaching into the curriculum e.g. global citizenship, health, annual events such as health week and links to literacy teaching. We can see great potential to do this within primary interdisciplinary learning. In the secondary sector there are more challenges regarding Modern Languages being used in interdisciplinary projects because staff are not confident in their language skills.
- To embed successfully language learning into existing teaching there is a need to develop cluster and school language guidelines which would seek to ensure a consistency in learning.
- In Modern Language, the level of pace and challenge in the pupils' learning experience would have to be continuously monitored to ensure pupil progression.

4. *The choice of languages for teaching – which languages should children be learning and why?*

- French is practical as it is the main language taught by primary teachers.
- Spanish and German should also be considered because there are teachers already trained.
- Mandarin gives economic opportunities but there are very few teachers of Mandarin.
- If languages are going to be useful for the Scottish economy and for pupil skills for work, learning and life they have to be relevant.

5. *The role of languages in economic development – what languages should children be learning to benefit their future careers, and to help Scotland flourish economically?*

- All language learning will benefit children's future careers as it increases employability and will assist Scotland to flourish economically.
- Language learning will benefit our pupils' literacy and cognitive skills therefore benefitting their future careers.