



# **The languages gap**

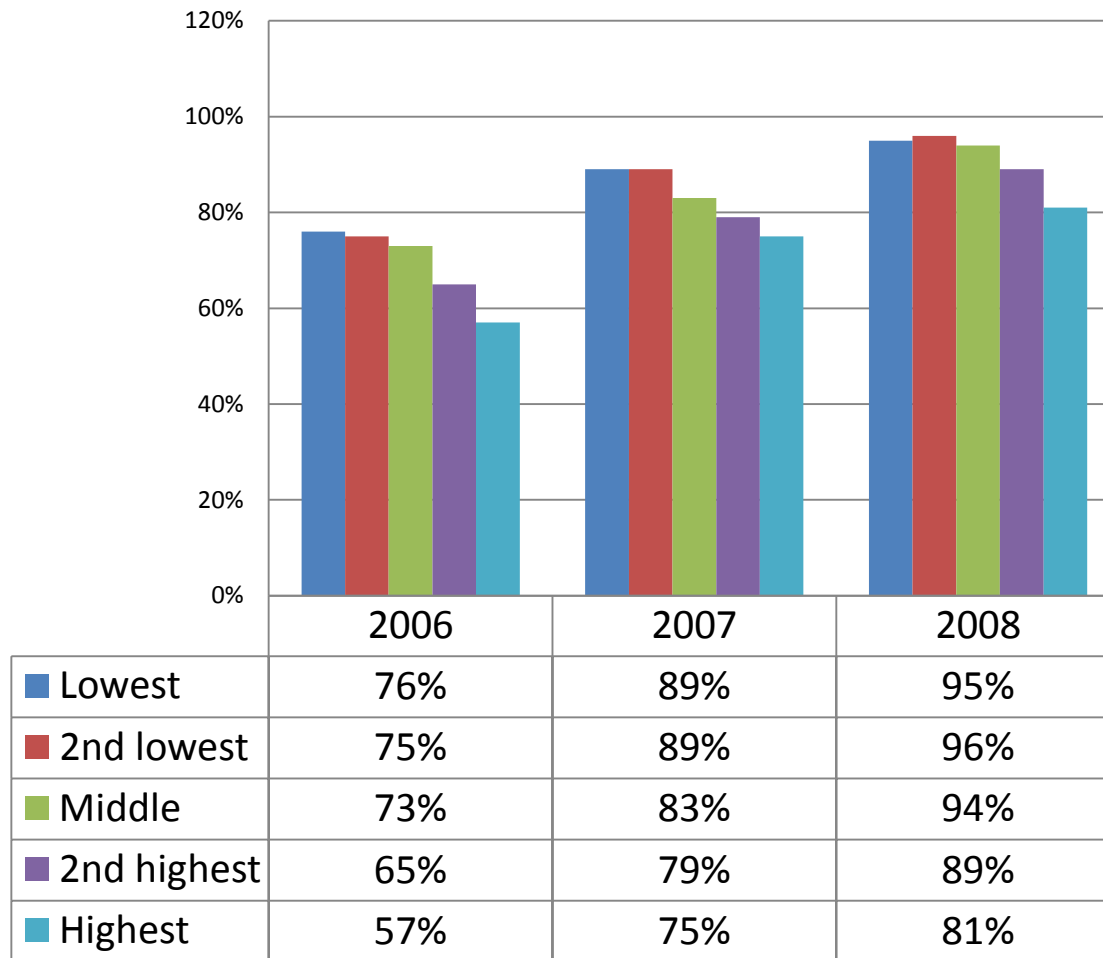
To what extent does participation in language learning in England reflect existing social advantage?

# 2010 Schools' White Paper:

- 'Education provides a route to liberation from imposed constraints'
- 'Access to educational opportunities is spread... inequitably in England. The gulf between the opportunities available to the wealthy and the chances given to the poor is one of the widest'
- 'Our schools should be engines of social mobility'



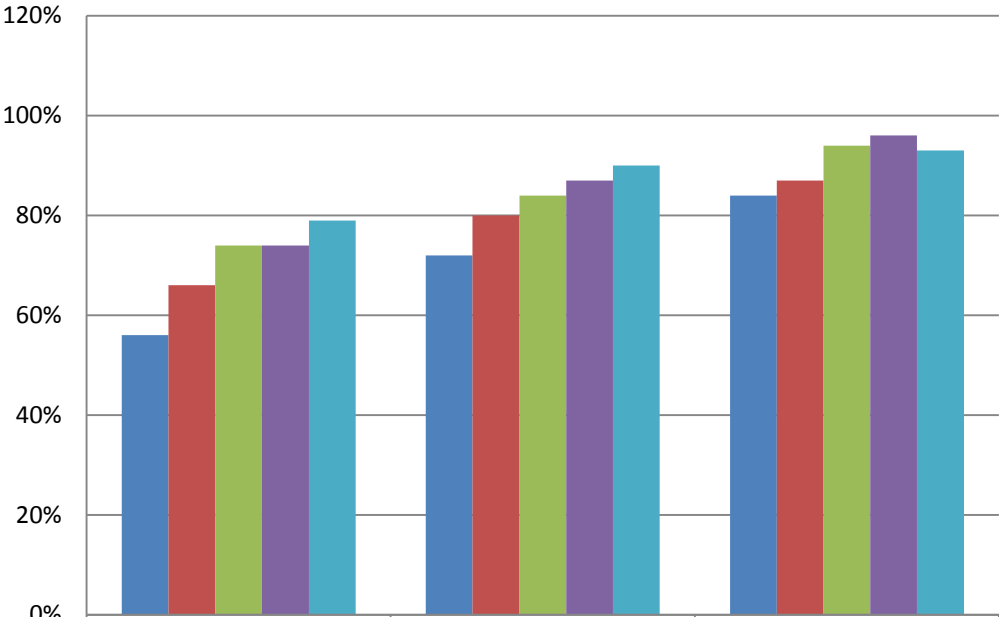
## Primary schools teaching languages by FSM band



NFER 2009

Chart created by Teresa Tinsley, March 2012

# Primary schools teaching languages by attainment band

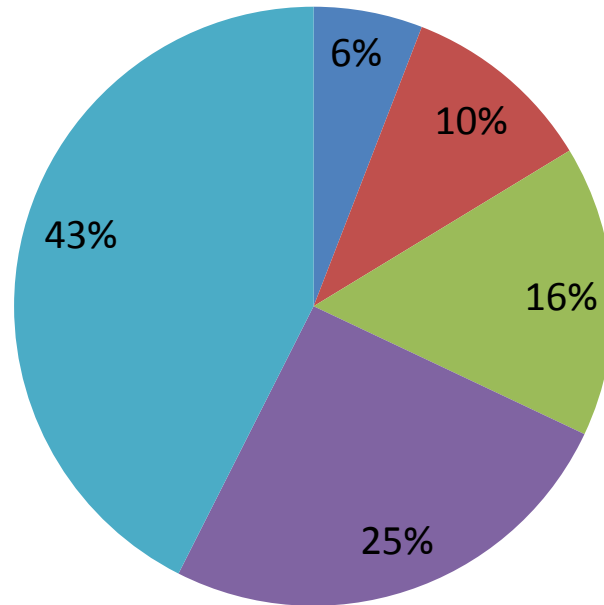


|             | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|-------------|------|------|------|
| Lowest      | 56%  | 72%  | 84%  |
| 2nd lowest  | 66%  | 80%  | 87%  |
| Middle      | 74%  | 84%  | 94%  |
| 2nd highest | 74%  | 87%  | 96%  |
| Highest     | 79%  | 90%  | 93%  |

NFER 2009

## Acceptances for HE courses in European Languages, 2011, by socio-economic group

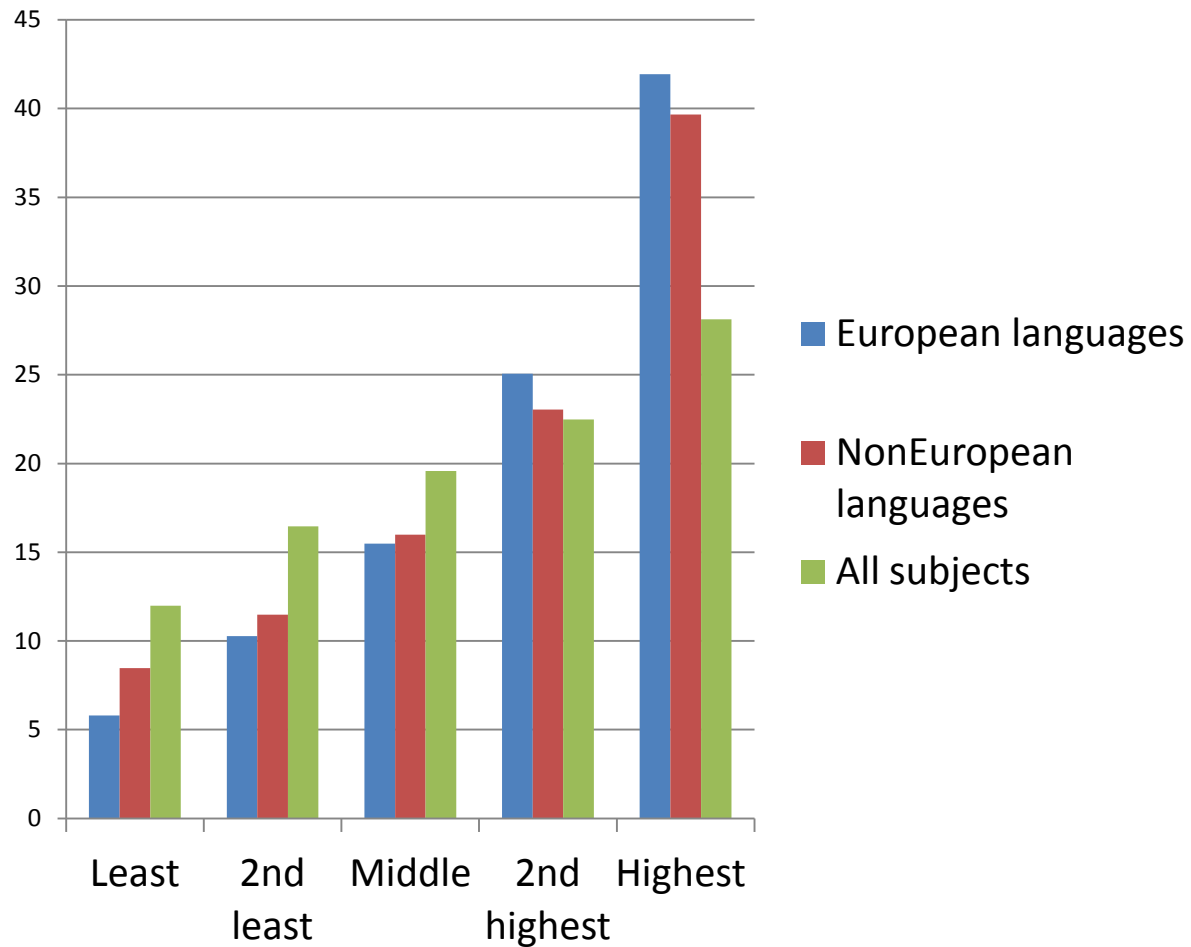
■ Least   ■ 2nd least   ■ Middle   ■ 2nd highest   ■ Highest



UCAS/ John Canning

Chart created by Teresa Tinsley, March 2012

## HE acceptances 2011, by socio-economic group

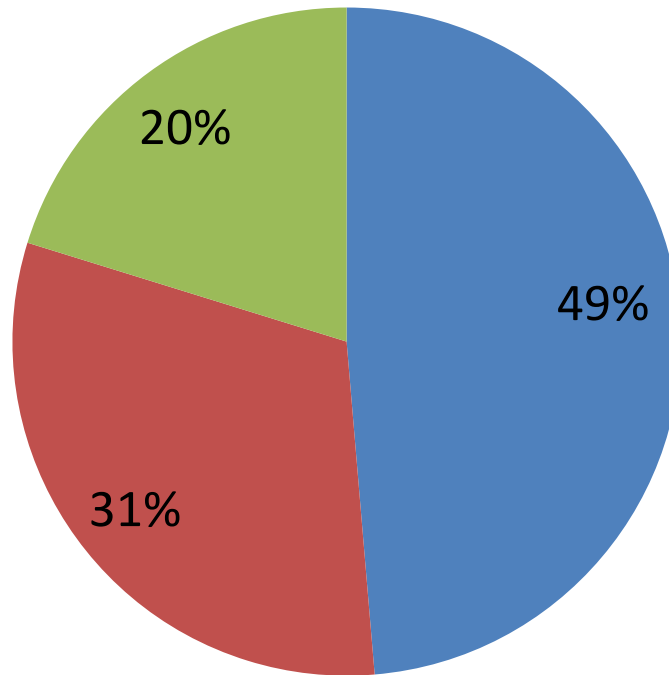


UCAS/John Canning

Figures compiled by Teresa Tinsley, March 2012

# A level entries by centre type, 2011

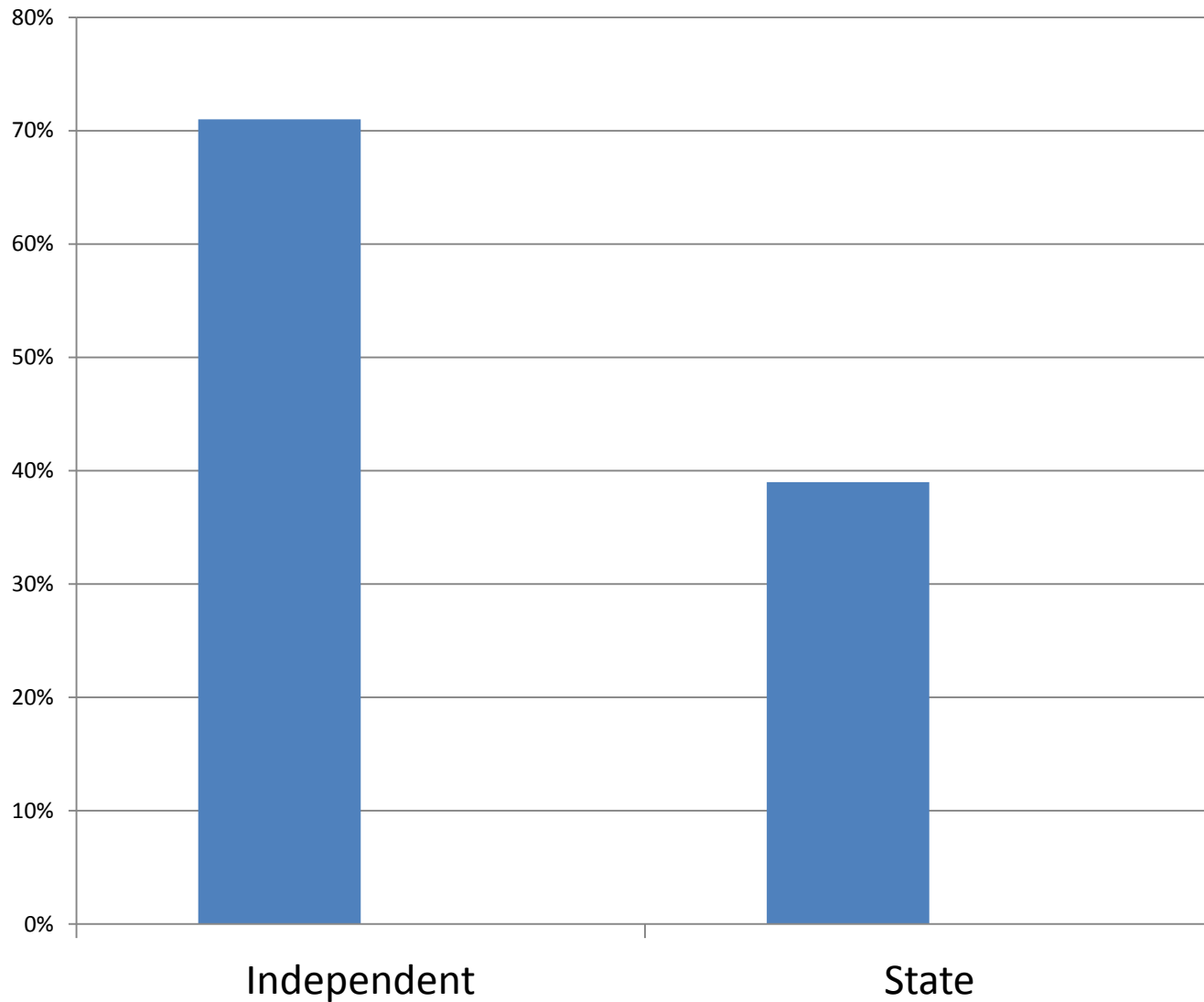
- Maintained schools
- Independent schools
- FE sector colleges



JCQ

Figures compiled by Teresa Tinsley, March 2012

## Average % of cohort sitting languages GCSE, 2011

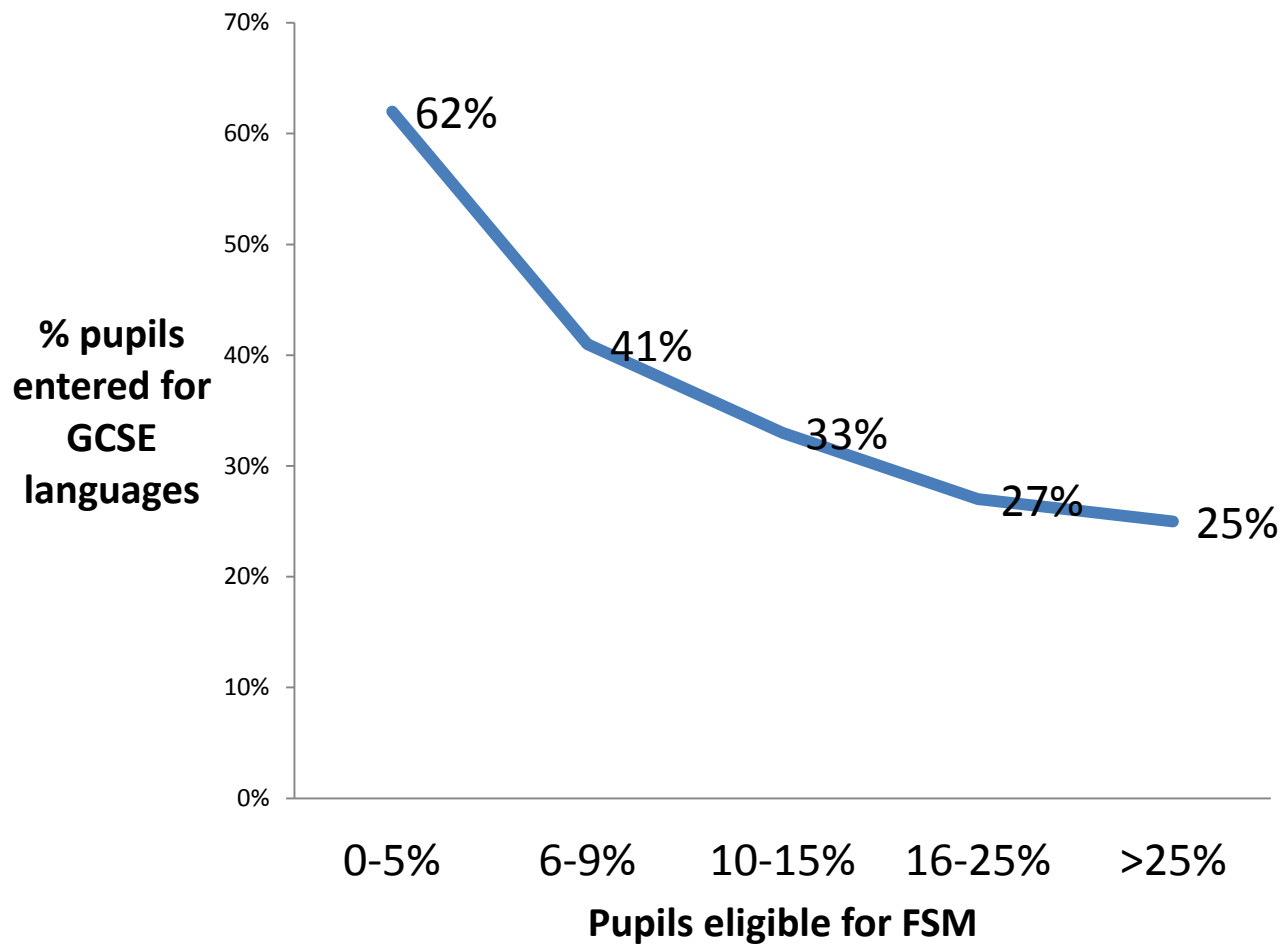


DfE Schools Performance Tables 2011

Figures compiled by Teresa Tinsley, March 2012



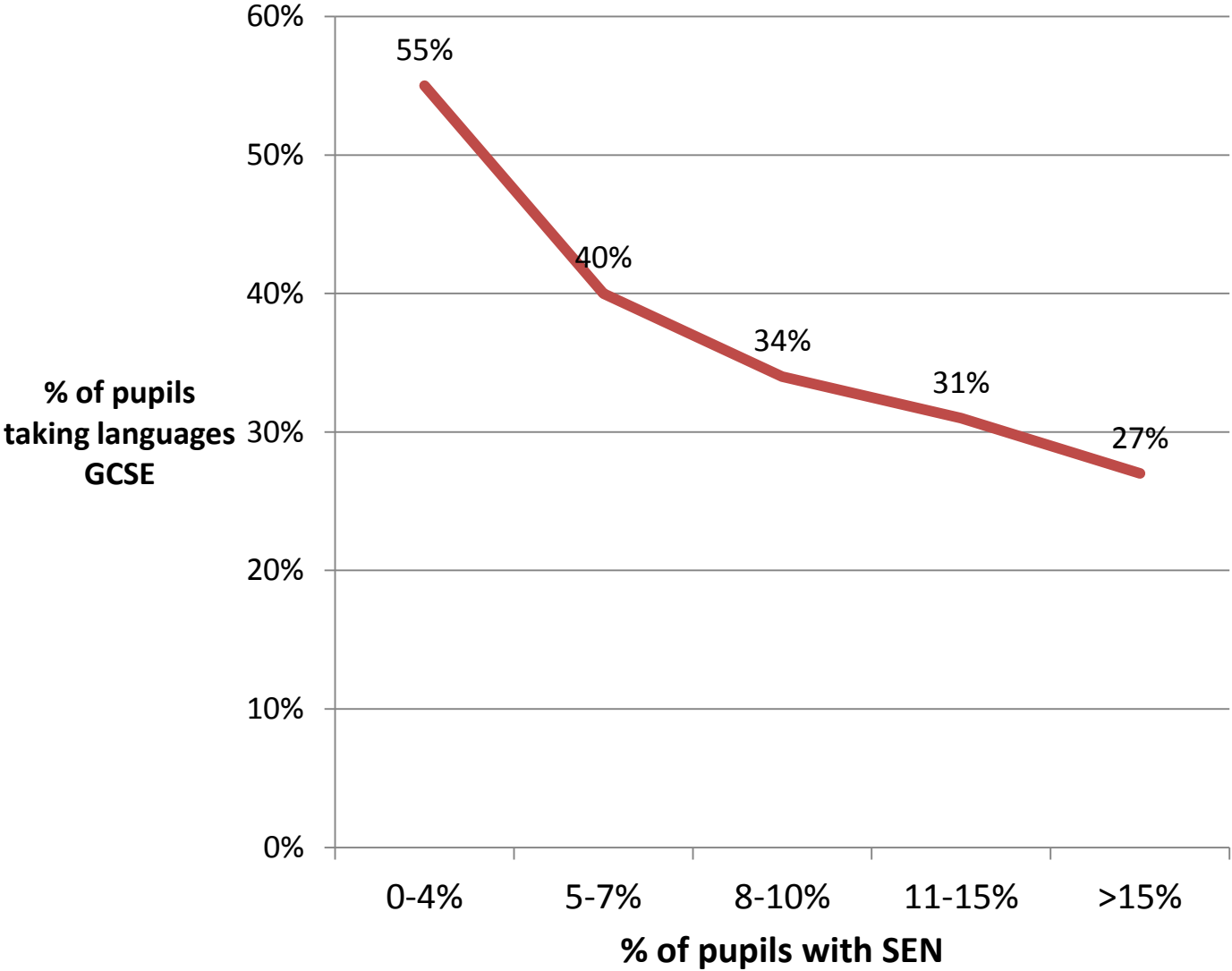
## Schools' GCSE language entries by level of social disadvantage



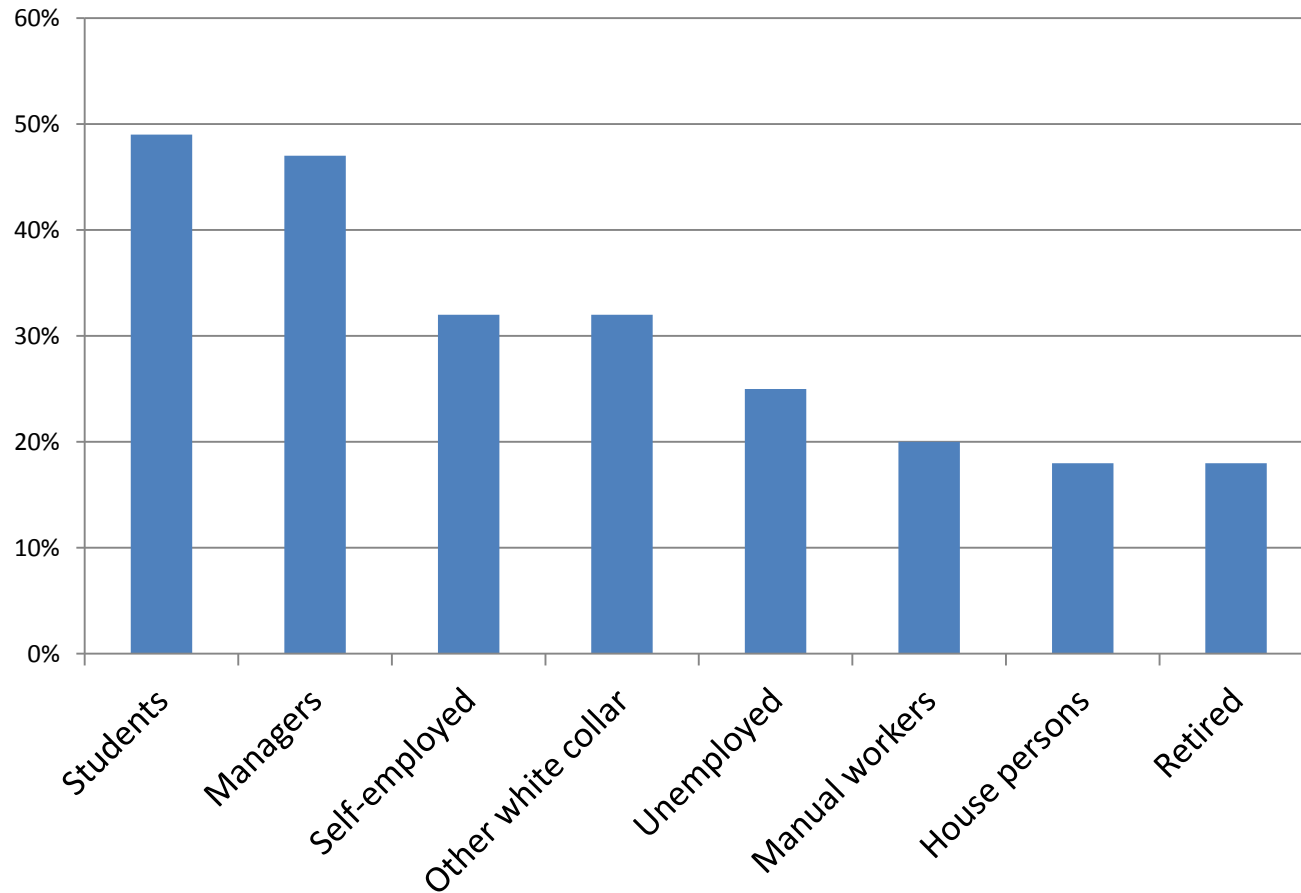
DfE Performance Tables, 2011

Figures compiled by Teresa Tinsley, March 2012

# Proportion of GCSE language entries by SEN



## Ability to speak another language by social group, Eurobarometer 2006



Eurobarometer survey, 2006

# The English Baccalaureate

‘..to ensure that all children, especially those from less privileged backgrounds have a chance to gain a base of knowledge and a set of life chances too often restricted to the wealthy.’

*Michael Gove, at the launch of the Ebac 6/9/11*

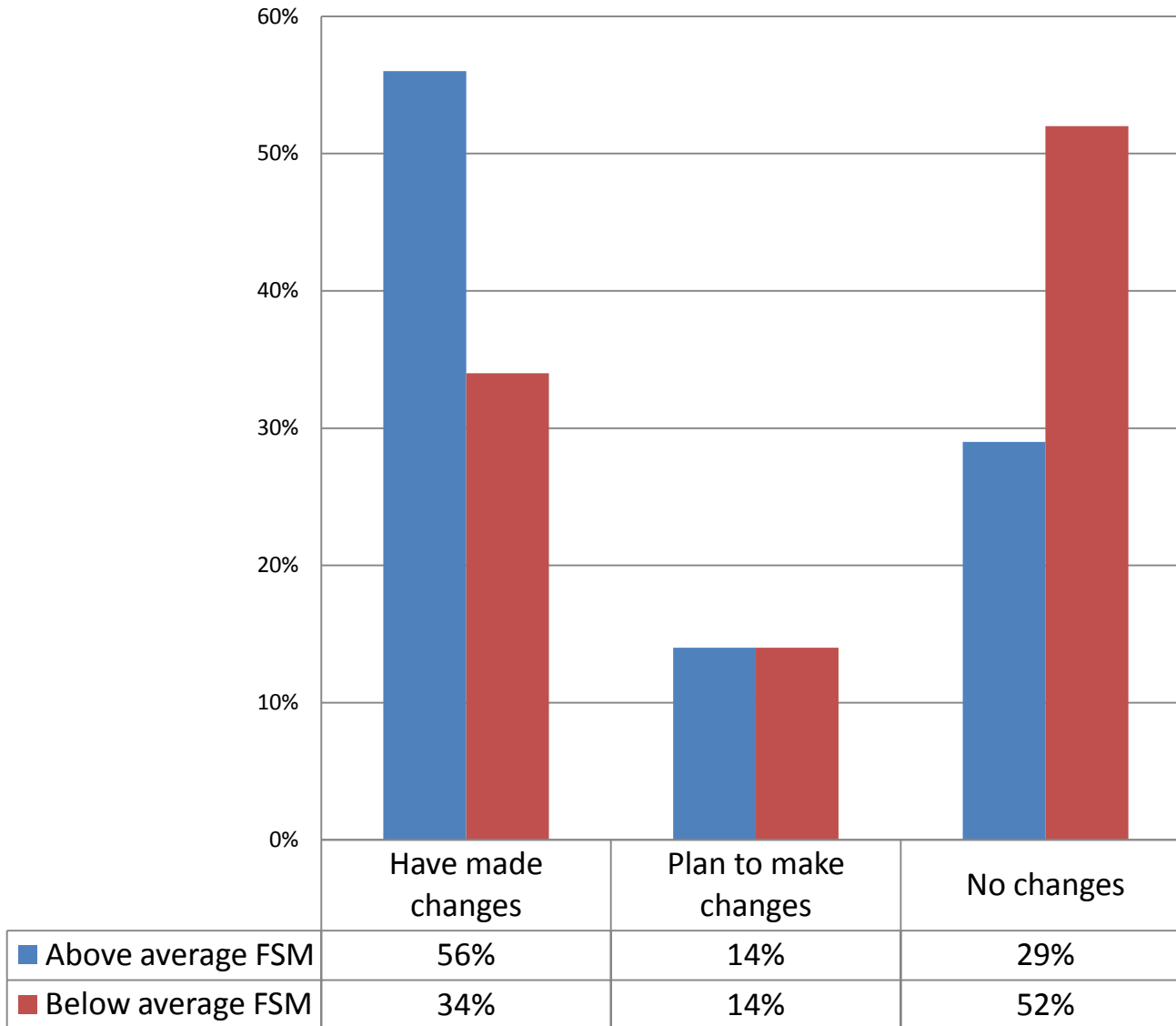


# **Education Select Committee Report on the Ebac, July 2011**

- Not supported by international evidence
- Schools will focus on wealthier students because they do better in Ebac subjects
- Counterproductive to push children into subjects they may fail
- It may increase truancy and NEETS
- ‘Academic subjects not the only path to success’



## Schools' response to EBacc



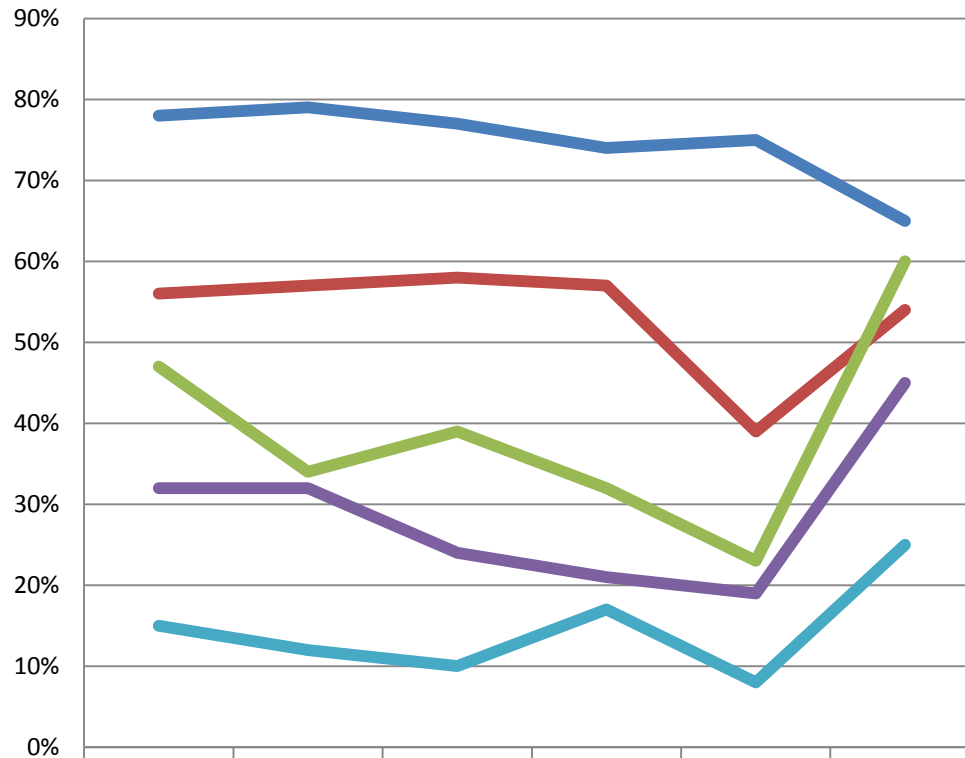
# Why some schools are not responding to Ebac:

- *The school policy is that students study the subjects at KS4 that best suit them rather than those that suit the EBac*
- *SLT don't want to force students into a difficult subject. They would like it to grow naturally and organically*
- *We are not interested in the Ebac qualification. Anyone can see from a student's GCSE results certificate the subjects they have taken so they don't need another piece of paper called an EBac. If a language is inappropriate for certain students, it's inappropriate. The EBac doesn't change that*
- *SLT are reviewing the curriculum. However, it is not felt that GCSE languages is a suitable option for our cohort and also that there is so great a lack of clarity about the new curriculum that it is unlikely the EBac will continue to exist*
- *We have a deprivation factor of -0.3 and many pupils struggle with literacy. Current drive is on increasing literacy and boosting English GCSE results*



CfBT Language Trends survey 2011

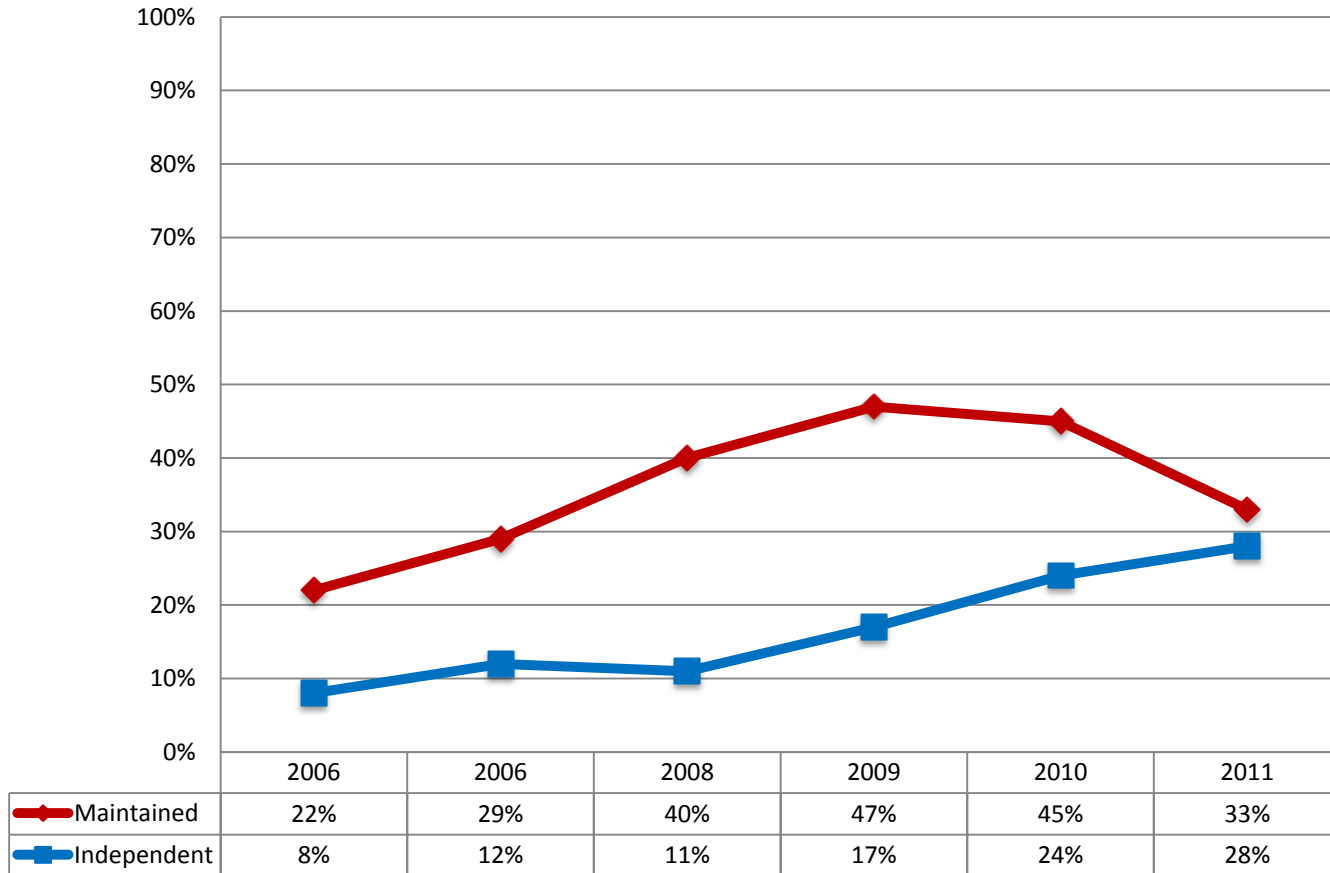
## % of schools with more than 50% of pupils studying a language in Y10 - by attainment



|  | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <span style="color: blue;">—</span> Highest Band         | 78%  | 79%  | 77%  | 74%  | 75%  | 65%  |
| <span style="color: red;">—</span> Second Highest Band   | 56%  | 57%  | 58%  | 57%  | 39%  | 54%  |
| <span style="color: green;">—</span> Middle Band         | 47%  | 34%  | 39%  | 32%  | 23%  | 60%  |
| <span style="color: purple;">—</span> Second Lowest Band | 32%  | 32%  | 24%  | 21%  | 19%  | 45%  |
| <span style="color: teal;">—</span> Lowest Band          | 15%  | 12%  | 10%  | 17%  | 8%   | 25%  |



## The rise and fall of alternative qualifications 2006-2011



CfBT Language Trends, 2011



# **Will new policies promote social mobility? - PROS**

- Some evidence already that this is happening
- Languages likely to be made compulsory in (part of?) KS2 and KS4
- 61% of public support languages counting in school league tables (YouGov, Jan 2011)
- Raise online and VA measures now include languages
- Universities are under pressure to demonstrate more social equity in new fees structure
- Decline of the vocational agenda



# **Will new policies promote social mobility? - CONS**

- EBac will impact only on the most promising students, and numbers will 'plateau'
- The qualifications which count in the system are not suitable for wide participation
- There is no 'hearts and minds' breakthrough or appetite for a return to compulsory languages
- Promising initiatives have been dropped
- Lack of funding for training/FLAs/enrichment
- Progression to AL

