



ALL Briefing No. 13

Date : September 2019

Theme: **What Primary Language coordinators need to know** (especially new ones)
(1 of 4)

Background:

1) The statutory requirements

In essence, the requirement is that all children at KS2 in England must be able to study a foreign language in school throughout the key stage.

The key document is the Programme of Study (PoS) (See References)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239042/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_Languages.pdf

Key messages :

What does Key Stage 2 (KS2) languages entitlement actually mean?

‘Teaching may be of any modern or ancient foreign language and should focus on enabling pupils to make substantial progress in one language. The teaching should provide an appropriate balance of spoken and written language and should lay the foundations for further foreign language teaching at key stage 3. It should enable pupils to understand and communicate ideas, facts and feelings in speech and writing, focused on familiar and routine matters, using their knowledge of phonology, grammatical structures and vocabulary. The focus of study in modern languages will be on practical communication. If an ancient language is chosen the focus will be to provide a linguistic foundation for reading comprehension and an appreciation of classical civilisation. Pupils studying ancient languages may take part in simple oral exchanges, while discussion of what they read will be conducted in English. A linguistic foundation in ancient languages may support the study of modern languages at key stage 3.’
(PoS).

The new OFSTED Handbook (2019) reinforces the importance of regular planned and progressive language learning time.

Quotation (under grade descriptors category Good): *Pupils study the full curriculum; it is not narrowed. In primary schools, a broad range of subjects (exemplified by the national*

curriculum) is taught in key stage 2 throughout each and all of Years 3 to 6.

2) Which language should we teach?

Which language you teach is up to your school community.

However, there are one or two considerations when making your choices.

For example, it might be appropriate to consider the experience and confidence of your staff, and/or languages spoken within the local community.

You may wish to plan in consultation with local advisory colleagues, or secondary schools who receive your pupils.

You also want to contact other primary schools in your local cluster to see which languages they are teaching.

The three most popular languages taught are currently French, German and Spanish but there is also interest in Latin and in non-European languages.

3) How do we go about teaching a language?

As a teaching professional, you will already have a sound understanding of what constitutes good practice in primary teaching.

Although some class teachers may feel less confident in their own linguistic ability, they can be reassured that through their professional experience of working with primary children, they do in fact know a great deal about how children learn.

Planning is likely to include focus on vocabulary, phonics of the new language, grammar and cultural learning; speaking and listening may well be prioritised in earlier years over reading and writing. Approaches will be age-appropriate and may include a different points: songs, games, physical activities, using pictures, performance, stories, rhymes and poems in order to keep motivation high. (Guidance in the Briefing 14 - in the Handbook.)

4) What does a good primary language lesson look like?

In a sense, the aspects of a 'good' lesson in any subject also apply to primary languages: the content and teacher's language is well planned and appropriately Differentiated; delivery is at a good pace but not rushed; children are given time to explore concepts independently or in groups or pairs; questioning is solid and well thought through and assessment for learning is used to establish progress and next steps.

The British Council starter pack (in References) provides some good illustrations.

5) How do languages fit within the wider primary curriculum?

Primary language learning gives the opportunity to see 'language' and literacy in a new light. There are many advantages in exploiting links between English and the chosen language(s), and any other languages that children may know.

Schools have found that revisiting concepts from other subject areas in language lessons can be very beneficial. Language teaching and learning can also play a key role in children's personal development, creating opportunities to explore concepts such as empathy and self-reflection.

OFSTED Handbook quotations:

This EIF seeks to put a single, joined-up educational conversation at the heart of inspection. It is built around the connectedness of curriculum, teaching, assessment and standards within the 'quality of education' judgement ...

Leaders adopt or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and including pupils with SEND, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. This is either the national curriculum or a curriculum of comparable breadth and ambition.

6) Online support:

See the ALL Primary Supplement to Languages Today published September 2019. This is mirrored on the ALL website at : <https://www.all-languages.org.uk/primary-2/>

The Primary area of the ALL website also offers links to further guidance : <https://www.all-languages.org.uk/primary-2/guidance/>

7) Networking opportunities:

There are ALL Primary Hubs across England, providing information, training and opportunities to meet and talk with other practitioners in your area. To find your nearest group, visit <https://www.all-languages.org.uk/about/community/local/>

Points for reflection / action:

Review they key documents.

Reflect with your colleagues on how Languages can fit into the ambitions you have for the development of your pupils.

Consider exchanging views with your Secondary school contacts.

Consider joining ALL (if you are not a member) to be kept in touch and to be supported by your peers.

Consider being involved with (or setting up) a local ALL Primary Hub to exchange experiences.

Looking ahead

In Briefing 14 : What Primary Language coordinators need to know - Part 2 you will find an introduction to the **ALL Primary Language Co-ordinator's Handbook**.

In Briefing 15 : What Primary Language coordinators need to know - Part 3 you will find an introduction to the **ALL Transition Toolkit**.

In Briefing 16 : What Primary Language coordinators need to know - Part 4 you will find further guidance/suggestions for : **Assessment, Progression, Sustainability** with specific reference to the new OFSTED Framework.

References:

National Curriculum Programme of Study

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239042/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_Languages.pdf

RIPL: Primary Languages Policy in England - The Way Forward (March 2019)

<http://www.ripl.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/RIPL-White-Paper-Primary-Languages-Policy-in-England.pdf>

This report sets out a number of recommendations towards the full implementation of current government policy for primary languages in England.

OFSTED Handbooks (2019)

An ALL Briefing on these publications is available here :

<https://www.all-languages.org.uk/news/ofsted-education-inspection-framework/>

Maintained schools:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif>

Independent schools:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/801118/Independent_schools_handbook.pdf

British Council starter pack

https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/primary_languages_starter_pack.pdf

This Briefing has been prepared by volunteers from the ALL Primary Steering Group and is for the benefit of ALL members and others.

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