

## **Call for more collaboration between sectors**

Issues raised in the article '*Examinations in a wide range of languages*' (on this page) are brought up-to-date by a recent report and a New Statesman article (links below) which highlight the threatened position of schools teaching Languages outside the mainstream system.

ALL member Fatima Khaled here describes some specific issues her school experiences, and calls for more communication between schools and individual Language teachers :

**London's Peace School** is a community organization established to teach the Arabic language and Islamic studies, with the aim of developing a better understanding of the Islamic/Arab culture, for young people between the ages of 5 to 16. It is attended by young people of both Arabic and non-Arabic backgrounds. The Peace School is committed to delivering the best for its students, a mindset that is shared by all its teaching staff, and we take advantage of every opportunity for professional development. We participate in innovative projects such as Goldsmiths Critical Connections: Multilingual Digital Storytelling project and have recently been developing cross-curricular work combining visual art with Arabic language learning.

The school is now attended by a significant number of refugees, particularly from Syria, and we help them to adjust emotionally to a new life in the UK and to integrate with the wider community and with their mainstream schools.

The quality of the work carried out at the Peace School is reflected in our examination results and in awards: we have received a British Academy award twice, a European Language Award and a Gold award from the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education. The NRCSE is a vital organization supporting our work and that of supplementary schools across the country.

We would really welcome more communication and collaboration with mainstream schools, but have found this difficult to establish and maintain. It was very disappointing that our students were unable to sit their Arabic GCSE because we could not get support from mainstream schools / exam centres; this was demoralising for both students and teachers.

A major challenge for us is the very high cost of renting premises. We receive no financial support from the local authority and all costs have to be met by parents, which limits the number of Saturdays when we can run the school.

Our work makes a significant contribution to students' education and well-being, alongside their mainstream schooling, and a unique contribution to local communities, all of which deserve proper support from national and local government, as well as from the mainstream schools sector.

## **Monolingual Britain and the crisis of the heritage language school (Mar 2021)**

<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2021/03/monolingual-britain-and-crisis-heritage-language-school>

## **Silenced Voices report - 2021**

<https://ourglobalfuture.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/global-future-silenced-voices-report.pdf>