



A GUIDE FOR GOVERNORS

Modern and International Languages

ROUTES INTO LANGUAGES CYMRU

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A GUIDE FOR GOVERNORS

Routes into Languages Cymru in partnership with
Governors Cymru and Cardiff University



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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

We are all aware of the difficulties and barriers that face modern language delivery in our schools and of the decline in the number of pupils who study languages.

“In a context where schools are increasingly being treated as autonomous, senior school leaders have the power to overcome some of [these] barriers [to language uptake] through timetabling, time-allocation, design of option columns – even, perhaps, compulsion for some pupils – and by establishing an internationalist and language-friendly school ethos.”

British Council Wales 2018

However, we are also aware of the most pressing reasons for enabling our pupils to continue to study a language – now more so than ever before.

"Post-Brexit: Studying language and culture is even more urgent than ever"
– *Cambridge University*.

"Brexit will mean more speakers of Spanish, Mandarin, French, Arabic and German are needed"

– *TES report*.



The input of governors

The input of governors in partnership with the senior leadership teams is crucial when planning the curriculum and shaping the opportunities given to pupils.

It also plays a vital role in holding the school to account for pupil achievement and for the quality of teaching and learning. The effectiveness with which the governing body performs this role is evaluated as part of Estyn's inspections. They will look at the ability of the governing body to evaluate school strengths and weaknesses and use their findings to promote achievement.

Routes into Languages Cymru has designed an audit tool and suggested support for governors to meet the growing challenges and demands that they face in the delivery of Modern Languages.

How to use the Modern Languages Audit Tool

The bringing together of governors, school staff, university academics and businesses to work in partnership will enable you to consider current and future practices and promote and encourage the study of languages in the school.

The templates, information and guidance have been designed to offer support which you can use and adapt as appropriate to suit your own needs.



The purpose of this audit tool is to assist governing bodies:

- to craft a narrative about languages in the preparation for Estyn Inspections.
- to gather key types of data and information which will enable you to examine the 'health' of modern languages in your school.
- to determine the needs of your pupils.
- to increase the number of pupils who study modern languages – building capacity.
- to support the school by asking key questions about preparations for the new curriculum.

Guidance - suggested steps

1. Identify a key member of the governing body to take overall responsibility for the audit and to be the Link Governor for the Department.
2. Obtain key data concerning uptake and standards achieved in Modern Languages from the senior manager responsible for the curriculum and student standards (Annex 1 of Audit).
3. In the first instance, carry out the audit with the governing body either remotely (collation of responses will need to be made) or at a governing body meeting. It is suggested that this is done without senior management input at this stage.
4. A collated response of the audit (including key data) can be tabled at the next governing body meeting. Examples and case studies of good practice can also be tabled to assist the discussion.
5. After discussion with the governing body and senior managers an action plan can be agreed and monitored at subsequent governing body meetings.
6. Support for development can also be identified at this stage e.g. business links, liaison with Routes into Languages Cymru etc.

Governor Support

Routes into Languages Cymru will be able to assist you by:

- Supporting you to develop terms of reference for your Modern Languages link Governor.
- Assisting you in developing links with other organisations.
- Providing a half-day meeting for your Modern Languages Link Governor to discuss the audit and subsequently to facilitate discussions regarding issues and possible solutions to these issues.
- Offering ongoing support, activities and initiatives to help shape language provision and guidance.

Contact details

Routes into Languages Cymru: info@routesintolanguagescymru.co.uk

Governors Cymru: <http://www.governors.cymru/>

MODERN LANGUAGES AUDIT TOOL TO SUPPORT GOVERNING BODIES

Evaluation of the 'health' of Modern Languages in the school and preparation for Estyn Inspections and the New Curriculum

Governors and senior managers' responsibility

QUESTION	WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN YOUR SCHOOL?	WHAT DO YOU WANT IT TO LOOK LIKE?
<p>1. Are your governors and the senior management team aware of the importance of modern languages for the economy of Wales and the UK?</p> <p>If not, should this be a consideration for the school?</p> <p>Should the governing body appoint a named Modern Languages link governor?</p> <p><i>Support for this governor is available from Routes into Languages Cymru and also from the National Network of Language Governors.</i></p>		
<p>2. Does your school consider languages as a key subject and have your senior managers articulated the importance of languages to staff, pupils and parents?</p> <p>If not, why not?</p>		
<p>3. Do you know the trend of numbers of pupils taking Modern Languages subjects over the last 4 years?</p> <p><i>Annex 1 outlines the data you should access to become familiar with these trends.</i></p>		
<p>4. Do you know how pupils taking Modern Languages subjects have performed over the last 4 years including KS3?</p> <p><i>Annex 1 outlines the data you should access to become familiar with the standards.</i></p>		

MODERN LANGUAGES AUDIT TOOL TO SUPPORT GOVERNING BODIES

QUESTION	WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN YOUR SCHOOL?	WHAT DO YOU WANT IT TO LOOK LIKE?
<p>5. Are you aware of the impact of 'option blocking' on the uptake of languages?</p> <p>Do the option blocks prevent, restrict, or discourage pupils from studying languages?</p> <p>How are you ensuring the breadth and possibility of provision for able linguists?</p>		
<p>6. Do you know how much time is dedicated to Modern Languages teaching in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4?</p> <p>Is adequate time given to prepare pupils to begin a GCSE course and whilst taking a GCSE course?</p> <p><i>Best practice suggests 2 hours per week per language at Key Stage 3.</i></p>		
<p>7. Has the senior management team undertaken a review of why these trends are taking place and what are the outcomes?</p>		
<p>8. Do you know what pupils say about taking languages? Has a survey been undertaken and the findings used to shape school strategy?</p> <p><i>Annex Two example pupil questions.</i></p>		
<p>9. What have senior managers done to reverse any decline if one is apparent?</p> <p><i>Annex Three examples of strategies.</i></p>		
<p>10. What impact have any strategies had on uptake?</p> <p>Are these strategies articulated in the 'School Improvement Plan' and do you monitor them?</p>		
<p>11. If the trend is one of increase in uptake, what have senior managers done to effect this change?</p> <p>How can you profile this in the SER for Estyn – good practice?</p>		

MODERN LANGUAGES AUDIT TOOL TO SUPPORT GOVERNING BODIES

QUESTION	WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN YOUR SCHOOL?	WHAT DO YOU WANT IT TO LOOK LIKE?
<p>12. Are you aware of the current staffing of Modern Languages and how are senior managers ensuring excellent teaching and learning in the classroom?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is subject specific CPD being arranged? • Does it form part of the performance management review dialogue? 		
<p>13. Are you aware of the preparations being undertaken by the Senior Management team and in the Modern Languages Department for the New Curriculum?</p> <p>Are you sure that languages will not be lost from the curriculum?</p> <p>Are appropriate methodologies being developed for the delivery of the new curriculum?</p> <p>How do teachers in the Languages, Literacy and Communication area of learning and experience share their expertise and do they work collaboratively?</p>		

Template for making recommendations to school leaders

Date of Review:

1. Key areas for development/ improvement

2. Key Actions for senior leaders

ACTION	AGREED BY SLT (OWNER)	AGREED BY GOVERNING BODY	TARGET COMPLETION DATE

3. Key Actions identified for the school

ACTION	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS/INCLUDING EXTERNAL SUPPORT	OWNER/BY WHOM	TARGET COMPLETION DATE

4. Review dates for Action Plans

-
-
-

Signed - Chair of Governors:

Date:

Signed - Headteacher:

Date:

USEFUL TABLE FOR DATA COLLECTION

This page can be used with question 3 of the Audit Tool and will help you find out the trends in the numbers of pupils choosing to study Modern Languages over the past four years.

Question Three - Trends in number of pupils taking MFL subjects					
Language.....					
GCSE – numbers	2016	2017	2018	2019	Trend over last 4 years
GCSE-% of pupils					
AS Level – numbers					
AS Level - % of pupils					
Advanced Level –numbers					
Advanced Level - % of pupils					

Question Four - Standards achieved by pupils taking MFL subjects					
Language.....					
GCSE	2016	2017	2018	2019	Trend over last 4 years
% A – E					
% A-C					
AS					
%A-E					
%A-C					
%A					
AL					
%A*-E					
%A*-C					
%A* - A					
KS3					



ATTITUDES TO MODERN LANGUAGES QUESTIONNAIRE KS3

YEAR:

SET/GROUP:

1. What Modern Language (s) are you studying at the moment? How do you feel about your lessons, in general?

Please write the language on the left and then place an X in the box that best represents your opinion.

Language 1	←→					
	I have fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I get bored
	I learn a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't learn much
	I am interested	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am not interested
	It's easy for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It's hard for me
	It's easy for my classmates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It's hard for my classmates

Language 2	←→					
	I have fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I get bored
	I learn a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't learn much
	I am interested	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am not interested
	It's easy for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It's hard for me
	It's easy for my classmates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It's hard for my classmates

2. Are you planning to choose to study a modern language in Year 10?

Please tick Yes or No and tell us why.

YES

Which language (s)?

Why?

NO

Why?

3. If you had a choice, what modern language(s) would you like to study? Why?

(If you wouldn't like to study any, please write 'none' and the reason why)

First choice:

Because...

Second choice:

Because...

4. Can you think of any situation (s) in the future when knowing a modern language might be useful for you?

5. In your opinion, how important is it to learn modern languages?

Please tick one box and tell us why you think so.

Not at all important a bit important quite important very important

For you:

☐☐☐☐

Why?

Not at all important a bit important quite important very important

For other people:

☐☐☐☐

Why?

6. What kind of job would you like to have in the future?

How much do you think you'll need modern languages in that job?

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Very little



Very much

7. In your opinion, how true are the following sentences, about language learning in general? For each of them, please tick ONE answer that best represents your opinion.

Very untrue ←————→ Very true

Only people who want to be language teachers/ translators need to learn modern languages.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

People who speak modern languages have more opportunities in life than people who don't.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Learning a modern language can be a rewarding experience in itself.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

You only need to learn another language if you are planning to live in another country.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Being able to use a modern language is important for my future.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Learning other languages is a waste of time.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

It is important to learn a modern language even when many people speak your own language.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Knowing a modern language helps people feel better about themselves.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

It is worth learning a modern language even when you think you may never use it.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

People who only speak English only need to learn modern languages.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

When travelling to another country, it is necessary to know the language spoken there.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Learning languages is boring.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Everybody should be able to use at least one modern language.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

8. Has your school given you information about any of the following?

You can tick more than one box:

- ☐ Why languages are important
- ☐ Why languages are important in many types of job
- ☐ The kinds of degree you can study with languages
- ☐ The kinds of career and job you can have if you study languages
- ☐ How studying languages can increase your salary when you get a job
- ☐ How languages can help you with your other subjects
- ☐ Why it has become more important to study languages now

9. Has your teacher organised any of the following?

You can tick more than one box:

- ☐ • Visiting speakers to tell you about the importance of languages
- ☐ • Visiting speakers from industry to tell you why studying languages is important for business
- ☐ • Language ambassadors from the local university to work with you in class
- ☐ • Language careers talks
- ☐ • Language ambassadors who are pupils in your school and who will work with you and talk to you about studying languages
- ☐ • Language and culture days in the school
- ☐ • Language clubs – at lunchtime or after school
- ☐ • Visits outside school to help you learn about languages e.g. trips abroad, visit to the university
- ☐ • Information for you and your parents about the importance of languages when you make your option choices

Do you identify as:
(Please tick one box.)

a boy ☐

a girl ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

If you would like to participate in a short interview on this topic together with a friend from your class, please tick ☒ this box: ☐

Thank you very much for your help!



Acknowledgements to York University for sharing this survey.

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT MODERN LANGUAGES

Annex 3:

This page corresponds with question 9 of the Modern Languages Audit Tool to Support Governing Bodies and shows examples of strategies that have been used to reverse the decline in the numbers choosing to study Modern Languages in schools.

What have senior managers done to reverse any decline if one is apparent?

Example activities.

DESIGN OF THE CURRICULUM

- Redesigned the curriculum to 'encourage' able pupils to take a language (MAT pupils?).
- Ensured that option blocks do not prevent pupils from studying languages.
- Ensured the appropriate number of hours for language teaching at KS3 and KS4.
- Identified a member of the governing body to be the Link Governor for MFL.

PROMOTION OF LANGUAGES

- Promoted the importance of foreign languages, e.g. language summer schools/days, stimulating, enriching and broadening horizons, language/cultural themed days, visiting speakers from businesses, language related work experience.
- Made use of student and pupil language ambassadors to promote and support language learning.
- Made use of past pupils to promote languages.
- Developed promotional information for parents at option evenings, information etc.
- Given informative careers advice and guidance promoting languages.

LIAISON WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

- Made use of, and liaised with 'Regional Consortia'.
- Liaised with regional centres of excellence e.g. Routes into Languages Cymru. <http://routesintolanguagescymru.co.uk/>
- Made use of student language ambassadors from Routes into Languages Cymru to promote and support language learning.
- Developed relationships and transition with primary schools to encourage modern languages.
- Liaised with the local universities or language institutes.
- Liaised with businesses – visiting speakers.

JOB DESCRIPTION OF A LINK GOVERNOR FOR MODERN LANGUAGES

JOB DESCRIPTION OF A LINK GOVERNOR FOR MODERN LANGUAGES

The purpose of this job description is to aid governing bodies in defining the role and remit of link governors. This example can be adapted to meet the individual needs of your school.

What is a Link Governor?

A link governor is a governor appointed by the governing body to act as the link between the governing body and a specific subject/department or aspect of a school.

The key aspect of the role is to provide a support to the department and also to provide information for the governing body on a regular basis and in preparation for Estyn visits.

The development of a good working relationship based on mutual trust with all staff is essential if the link governor is to be effective in this role. Whilst visiting the department, it is important that the governor is not intrusive. However, it is also important to get an accurate picture of what is taking place. Care should be taken not to place any additional unnecessary workload on staff.

Introduction

A link governor should be clear about the role that they are expected to perform and the protocols of carrying it out.

Reporting back following a link meeting

Governors should be able to report to the governing body about:

- a) the major issues facing Modern Languages at the school
- b) the uptake of languages in the school and the standards achieved by the pupils
- c) what barriers there are to improvement
- d) what support the subject/department requires from the governing body and the senior management.

This information should be shared with the whole governing body or relevant committee, enabling governors to fulfil their strategic role. Normally, a written report should be submitted prior to the meeting using the agreed proforma.

Link Governor for Modern Languages Role:

To provide a link between the governing body, the Curriculum Committee (where appropriate) and staff of the Modern Languages department.

Remit:

General:

- a) to provide Estyn with evidence about the involvement of the governors in the school.
- b) to meet with the Headteacher in the first instance and agree the overall programme of work to be undertaken during the year
- c) to meet and establish regular contact with the Modern Languages Lead (a minimum of twice a year).
- d) to provide support and encouragement and a listening ear to the department.
- e) to discuss and support the promotion of languages in the school and to parents.
- f) to advocate to the governing body on behalf of the subject/curriculum area.
- g) to make visits to the school with a clear focus which has been agreed with the headteacher and departmental leader in accordance with Governor School Visits Policy. Visits can include:
 - viewing lessons/carrying out learning walks (as a monitoring exercise not an inspection)
 - learning about other aspects of the Modern Languages department
 - enabling informal attendance or participation in departmental activities
- h) whenever possible, to attend appropriate staff training sessions or activities devoted to the Modern Languages department.
- i) to have an improved understanding of the Modern Languages department.
- j) to become familiar with the relevant areas within the School Development/Improvement Plan.
- k) to contribute to and inform the school's self-evaluation process.
- l) to constructively feedback to governors, following a visit, making any recommendations as appropriate either via committees or full governing body meetings.

Specific:

m) to meet and discuss curriculum matters with the Modern Languages leader:

- to consider performance and progress issues; including uptake of the subject(s) at GCSE, AS and AL and standards achieved by the pupils.
- to be aware of how effectively the subject caters for all learners
- to discuss curriculum developments and in particular the development of the New Curriculum and the new GCSE and AS/AL specifications.
- to discuss teaching and learning strategies and availability of resources.
- to discuss how languages are promoted to the pupils
- to consider the enrichment and support activities that are organised for the pupils and if possible, assist in identifying how governors may support these.
- to gather information about curriculum timetable arrangements including constraints on the timetable for languages.
- to obtain information about staffing levels and training needs.
- to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum area and to discuss any improvement issues.

n) to talk to pupils about their experience and opinions with regard to Modern Languages - pupil engagement.

o) to consider how information about the subject is communicated to parents, in particular on the school website and how parents are involved in their children's learning.

p) to assist the department in the self-evaluation process.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

Before you arrive ask yourself these questions:

- What is the purpose of the visit – agree a focus?
- What are my expectations and the expectations of the Modern Languages department?
- How shall I carry it out?
- What questions should I ask and to whom?
- What evidence is there to support the agreed School Development Plan?
- What areas of strength and areas for improvement can I identify?
- Is there any follow up?
- How will I record my experiences?
- Have I prepared a short report for the next governors' meeting including action points for the governing body and senior managers?
- How can I build on this the next time I visit?

Useful questions to ask when meeting with a subject/departmental leader:

- How is the subject taught in different year groups?
- Are there any broad trends of take-up of languages and pupil attainment compared to similar schools and national rates?
- Do children of different ability do the same work, or do they work in groups?
- Is it clear that pupils are learning? How are the children performing?
- How are children with ALN taught?
- How is the work assessed?
- Do the pupils have any out-of-school visits, visiting speakers etc.?
- How are other external organisations used to promote languages and support the teaching and learning?
- How is the New Curriculum being planned in the department to ensure that all children have access to at least one language?
- Are the resources for teaching the subject adequate?
- What are the teachers' views and aspirations for this subject area?
- Could you offer any practical help? (e.g. liaise with a person/agency in the community to arrange an appropriate event or school visit).
- What criteria do Estyn use for evaluating the subject provision?
- How is the Modern Languages department linked to the School Development Plan and school self-evaluation?

The link governor should not expect to discuss all of the issues listed above in one meeting, different activities take place during the school year and therefore the focus of each meeting should differ accordingly. The focus of each meeting should be agreed prior to the meeting.

Further information about the role of link governors and their work is available on www.governors.cymru

AUDIT TOOL PRESENTATION

PREVIEW



Modern Languages Audit Tool to support Governing Bodies

Evaluation of the 'health' of Modern Languages in the school and preparation for Estyn Inspections and the New Curriculum

Why are languages important today?

Past Brexit:
"Dividing language and culture is even more urgent than ever."
— Cambridge University

"Learning a language increases confidence, expands knowledge of different cultures and gives young people a broader outlook on what personal and professional choices are available to them. At a time when the uptake of language qualifications is worryingly low, it is vital that universities and schools work together to reverse this trend."
Professor Claire Gozzani, Professor of French Studies, Cardiff University

Jenny Scott, Director British Council Wales, says:
"Any future lack of linguists will have serious consequences for Welsh business, tourism and overseas engagement, at a time when building international links and trade are more important than ever. We need to change the standing of MFL, ensuring it is valued and protected in our education system."

"Brexit will mean more speakers of Spanish, Mandarin, French, Arabic and German are needed."
— TES

Do you know what is happening in your school?

- How important is MFL in your school?
- Do you know how many pupils are taking MFL subjects?
- Do you know whether this number is decreasing or increasing?
- Do you know what pupils say about taking languages?
- Are you aware of any barriers or challenges to the uptake of languages – option blocks, staffing, reduced number of hours?
- Are you sure that languages will feature in the delivery of the New Curriculum – will all have the opportunity to study a language?



Why should we carry out an audit?

- to help us prepare for Estyn Inspections.
- to ask key questions about preparations for the New Curriculum.
- to have an agreed vision for languages in the school.
- to gather data and information to examine the 'health' of ML.
- to determine the needs of our pupils.
- to consider any challenges and discuss possible solutions.
- to increase the number of pupils who study modern languages – building capacity.

Some language facts to consider

Educational benefits for pupils

Language boost:

- overall literacy
- cognitive flexibility
- multitasking and creativity
- confidence and communication

Skills learnt in language lessons transfer to other curriculum subjects and can improve overall academic performance – e.g. memory training.

Languages give our pupils the edge in the job market, in applications for university/college and higher earnings.

Language skills will prove vital to post-Brexit Britain – trade and economy.



Useful contact details for support for Modern Languages in your area

GwE:

www.gwegogledd.cymru/amdanom-ni/

Stephanie Ellis Williams: stephanieelliswilliams@gwegogledd.cymru

EAS:

sewaleseas.org.uk/

Sioned Harold: Sioned.Harold@sewaleseas.org.uk

CSC:

www.cscjes.org.uk/

Amy Walters-Bresner: awaltersbresner@outlook.com

ERW:

www.erw.wales/



<http://routesintolanguagescymru.co.uk/>

Email: info@routesintolanguagescymru.co.uk





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