



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?

Post-Brexit:

"Studying 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 Gorrara, Professor of French Studies, Cardiff University**

Jenny Scott, Director British Council Wales, says:

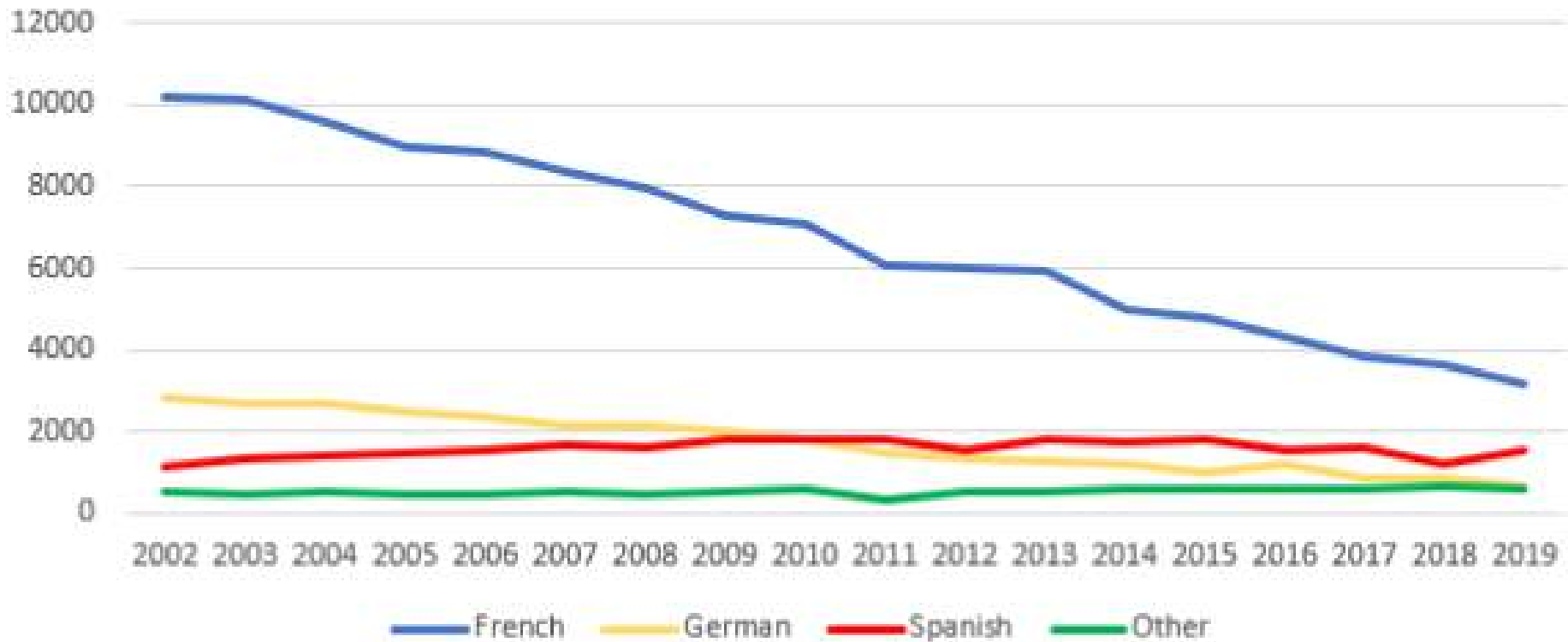
"Any future lack of linguists will have serious consequences for Welsh business, tourism and overseas engagement, at a time when building international links and trade are more important than ever. We need to change the standing of MFL, ensuring it is valued and protected in our education system."

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

– **TES**

What is happening in Welsh schools today?

The decline in GCSE MFL entries in Wales 2002-2019



Do you know what is happening in your school?

- How important are modern languages in your school?
- Do you know how many pupils are taking modern languages 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 modern languages.
- ✦ 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.

How shall we carry out the audit?

We need to:

- 1 Identify a governor to be responsible for the audit and to be the Modern Languages Link Governor.
- 2 Obtain key data concerning uptake and standards achieved in modern languages.
- 3 Carry out the audit with the governing body either remotely or at a governing body meeting – this might include a pupil survey.
- 4 Support the Link Governor to provide a collated response (including key data) to be tabled at a governing body meeting.
- 5 Discuss the report with senior managers and agree an action plan where necessary.
- 6 Identify support for development e.g. business links, liaison with Routes into Languages Cymru, review of option blocks and hours dedicated to languages, etc.



What next?

- Agree how the action plan will be monitored.
- Seek support from external organisations if required.
- Routes into Languages Cymru will be able to assist us:
 - to develop terms of reference for the Modern Languages Link Governor.
 - to develop links with other organisations.
 - By providing a half-day meeting for our Modern Languages Link Governor to discuss the audit and share good practice.
 - By offering ongoing support and by signposting to additional exciting activities and initiatives to help shape language provision.

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

- Governors Cymru will be able to provide further information about the role of link governors www.governors.Cymru

Some language facts to consider

Educational benefits for pupils

Languages boost:

- overall literacy.
- multitasking and creativity.
- cognitive flexibility.
- 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.



Additional documents

- British Council (2019) *Language Trends Wales 2019*.
https://wales.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language_trends_report_final.pdf
- British Council (2017) *Languages for the Future*.
https://wales.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/languages_for_the_future_report_1.pdf
- Daniel Roberts (2018) *Mind your language: A short report into Wales, Brexit and the study of Modern Foreign Languages*. <https://www.gorwel.wales/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2806-GORWEL-MYL-Report-04.pdf>
- Estyn (2016) *Modern Foreign Languages*. <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2020-07/Modern%2520foreign%2520languages.pdf>
- Welsh Government (2015) *Global futures: a plan to improve and promote modern foreign languages*.
<https://gov.wales/global-futures-modern-foreign-languages-plan>