

Final Draft

CITY LANGUAGES STRATEGY

March 2004



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Sheffield
City Council



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2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The strategy is the outcome of a series of meetings of stakeholders from across the city who contributed their expertise and experience over a twelve month period from 2003 to 2004.

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3. FOREWORD

Sheffield is a city with a long tradition of promoting multiculturalism and multilingualism. Following the launch of the National Languages Strategy; 'Languages For All, Languages For Life' in December 2002, it was decided that this was the right time to formalise a languages strategy for the city.

A Partnership Group of stakeholders from education, business and the community worked for twelve months to produce this document. It is intended as a starting point, or a statement of intent. An accompanying document will be produced to cover the detail of the action plan that will inform the implementation and monitoring of the strategy. The action plan will reflect the responses received during the consultation phase, which tended to focus on practical issues. Thanks are due to all those who gave freely of their time, both in the Partnership Group and in the consultation exercise.

4. Executive Summary

This is a city wide strategy for a multilingual city. The composition of the Languages Partnership Group reflects the all embracing nature of a strategy which seeks to recognise the breadth and depth of language learning and use already going on in the city's schools, college, universities and communities. It also aims to move the city forward in terms of language learning.

The Sheffield Language strategy reflects and restates many of the emphases of the National Strategy, 'Languages for All, Languages for Life'. However, it seeks to identify and expand upon those areas specific to this city, which make it distinctive and give it what may be called its 'Sheffieldness'.

The issues to be addressed fall into the following categories:

1. Raising standards – in schools this refers to the primary and secondary phases, but the scope of the strategy embraces lifelong learning.
2. Early Languages Learning – building on a rich tradition within the city, to give the earliest possible opportunities for children to start to learn another language.
3. Transition – to ensure that as pupils move from one key stage to another, their prior learning is recognised and valued.
4. Language Learning In Secondary Schools – to take into account the implications of recent changes in legislation relating to the place of languages in the National Curriculum.
5. Teacher Shortage and Supply.
6. Post-16 – falling numbers at GCSE could result in a dramatic decline post-16 and into Higher Education.
7. Community Languages – how to build on the cultural and linguistic diversity present in Sheffield and afford status to all languages. This diversity would, for example, include support for British Sign Language.
8. Working in Partnership – an essential element of a successful strategy for the 21st century.
9. Maximising the Potential of ICT - at all levels from individual to institutional.
10. Economic Competitiveness – making a contribution to regeneration and the employability of our citizens.
11. Cultural awareness – to build on existing good practice and address issues of inclusivity.

Sheffield must adopt and develop a strategic approach that will:

- win hearts and minds
- challenge negative attitudes towards language learning
- improve the achievements of our learners
- spread recognition of Sheffield as a multilingual city
- give due recognition to the currency (value) of the city's community languages

The Way Forward

The strategy emphasises the central importance of languages as a contribution to the city's regeneration and inclusivity agenda. The detailed objectives stress this point (p.16).

1. Early Years Nursery and Primary School

“Every child should have the opportunity to study a language and develop their interest in the culture of other nations. They should have access to high quality teaching and learning opportunities, making use of e-learning and native speakers as appropriate. By age 11, they should have had the opportunity to reach a level of competence recognised through the national scheme.”

We are extending the entitlement beyond that of the national strategy to include all those from early years and nursery upto age 11. Such provision will be diverse in nature and include both the so-called community and other modern languages. Such a development will require support and commitment. Outside support from partners such as CILT, The National Centre for Languages, via the Regional Support Group and associated networks, will make a significant contribution. Professional Development is vital to the success of the primary initiative.

‘Every school should plan towards having a Language co-ordinator whose role will be to co-ordinate and monitor delivery and ensure good pupil motivation.’

Within the Primary Strategy ‘Excellence and Enjoyment’ there is scope to plan languages work as part of the broad and balanced curriculum, rather than just considering a weekly ‘special’ language slot on the timetable.

2. Pathfinder Project

The Key Stage 2 Languages Pathfinder Project funded by the DfES will enable us to test out delivery models, and develop expertise that can be shared across the city. It will make a vital contribution to our aim of a primary entitlement by the end of the decade.

One key aspect that it will address will be transition from the primary to secondary phase. Use will be made of both the Primary version of the

European Language Portfolio, and the National Recognition Scheme for Languages.

3. Secondary Schools

Languages remain part of the core curriculum in Key Stage 3. The impact of pupils entering the secondary sector having learnt a language or languages for several years will lead to a revision and a re-thinking of Key Stage 3 provision, designed to recognise individual strengths and prepare for the optional nature of Key Stage 4 languages in some schools. Here the aim must be to maximize the number of those pursuing language learning on one pathway or another.

The National Recognition Scheme or Languages Ladder will enable progress to be assessed against national criteria at all key stages through into Adult Education.

An important component of a successful secondary programme will include links with target language countries. Equally, schools will want to ensure best practice by addressing the objectives in the Key Stage 3 Framework for Languages.

In Key Stage 4, GCSE will be supplemented by other options including a vocational language course, linked to business and including the option of work experience in the target language country.

Specialist Languages Colleges in the city will continue to play a key role in the development of the strategy. They are centres of excellence and provide a test bed for new ideas while showcasing best practice. However, they alone cannot deliver the objectives within the strategy.

4. Post-16 and Adult Education

What happens in Key Stages 3 and 4 will have a direct impact on post-16 and Further Education. We must ensure progression routes exist for language learners, and strive to raise the profile of languages as an aid to future employability in an attempt to maintain and increase numbers of language learners. We will encourage closer links between the universities and the school sector to ensure close co-operation and understanding across the sectors. The Adult Education sector is thriving. We must learn from this success and use it to inform what happens earlier if appropriate.

5. ICT and e-learning

Schools and individuals are using ICT to bring the language to life, and to bring the target language country and its people and culture into the classroom. We are well-placed to take advantage of current developments. The South Yorkshire e-learning Project will ensure that languages feature as one of the first curriculum channels in the Virtual Learning Environment.

6. International Linking

A significant number of schools already have international links. We will build on these, seeking to extend them for example in France and Spain. The Sheffield

International Linking Committee's work will continue to provide opportunities for everyone to find out more about the benefits of linking. Schools will be encouraged to participate in multi national projects and to develop virtual as well as actual international links by making use of the ICT facilities now available funded for example by European Union initiatives. The successful WEBS Scheme which has enabled our young people to enjoy work experience abroad, will be developed further.

7. Foreign Language Assistants

We will examine closely the benefits of schemes such as the one operating in Liverpool to see if we can gain from an expansion of current provision. We will continue to make schools aware of the opportunities and advantages, linguistic and cultural, of the assistant scheme.

8. Community Languages

Although mentioned in the national strategy, community languages do not feature prominently. In Sheffield they are a distinctive feature. We wish to build on previous good practice in the city by:

- supporting the Association of Sheffield Community Language Schools
- working with the Multi Lingual City Forum on issues relating to bi-linguals and multi-linguals
- setting up a pilot project to complement the Pathfinder in primary schools and with a focus on community languages
- encouraging the use of the National Recognition Scheme for community as well as other languages
- building networking and training opportunities for community languages teachers
- prioritising partnerships with communities
- working with parents and carers through Study Support schemes and the Extended Schools Scheme
- moving towards early GCSE entry for those young people with a community language background and for whom this is appropriate
- encouraging the training and appointment of bi-lingual staff in our schools where appropriate
- aiding communication between the mainstream and voluntary education sectors
- setting up a pilot study of the use of a community language as a teaching medium

9. LEA Role

The LEA will have a lead role in implementing and monitoring the progress of the strategy. It will continue to promote and facilitate partnerships to deliver its aims and objectives.

10. Business/Employers

We will work with business partners, including the Regional Language Network, to continue to raise the profile of languages and emphasise their importance in a

global marketplace. We will develop the links between schools and businesses that have been promoted during the piloting of vocational language courses in our schools. Known as VIPS (Vocational International Project Sheffield), these have proved innovative and successful.

11. Working In Partnership

The city will continue to seek and work with partners locally, regionally and nationally. From Early Years Education to Adult Education, different partners bring different perspectives that strengthen the strategy. By working together as stakeholders, the effects of seemingly disparate activity will be maximized.

12. Implementation

Key to the implementation of the strategy will be:

- the LEA, through a responsible officer
- the Partnership Group of stakeholders acting as a reference point and steering committee
- the Multi Lingual City Forum with its established links and reputation for progressing the languages agenda within the city.

5. Language Learning: The Issues

'For too long we have failed to value language skills or recognise the contribution they make to society, to the economy and to raising standards in schools. This has led to a cycle of national underperformance in languages, a shortage of teachers, low take up of languages beyond schooling and a workforce unable to meet the demands of a globalised economy. We need to challenge these attitudes and inspire people of all ages to learn languages throughout life.'

(Languages for All, Languages for Life p.10.)

5.1 Raising school standards

The publication of 'Excellence and Enjoyment', the primary strategy launched in May 2003, signalled a change in emphasis that recognised the importance of enriching the curriculum and providing more breadth and balance to stimulate learners and reinforce their understanding of the basics. Language learning can play a key role here. There are Sheffield schools who are leading the way. We want all Sheffield primary schools to follow that lead.

In the secondary sector, the issue in KS3 is to use the opportunity afforded by the Framework objectives following the launch of Foundation subjects MFL to review current practice and address concerns about curriculum content and emphasis. A successful and stimulating diet in the important, and compulsory, years 7 to 9 will lead to more interest and a greater uptake post-14. Learners should enjoy their success and have it recognised.

In KS4 there must be more on offer than a GCSE language course. The whole purpose of pathways is to lead an individual to where they want to go. The days of one course for all are numbered, especially once progression routes into post-16 are clearly mapped out too. Initiatives such as the National Recognition Scheme for Languages or Language Ladder, and the introduction of the European Languages Portfolio will support such innovations and provide a training and development opportunity for schools and other providers. The Portfolio can be used throughout education, and in business. It can be used in any language learning context and for a range of languages, not just the European.

5.2 Early Language Learning

There is a powerful argument that the earlier children begin to learn another language, the more likely they are to succeed and to be enabled to make the most of their talent. There is also a strong case for increased intercultural awareness and tolerance. Sheffield provides some excellent examples of good practice in nursery and early years provision. Similarly, there are instances where our bi- and multilingual children's language competence is developed and valued. Already, one third of primaries teach languages to the under 11s in Sheffield. However, half do it through clubs and voluntary lunchtime or after school activities, rather than integrating it into the curriculum. We must implement the entitlement to language learning not just in Key Stage 2, but from Nursery, through Reception and Key Stage 1. We must ensure that these key issues are addressed and that local success is built on, throughout the city.

5.3 Transition

One of the reasons that previous attempts to introduce primary languages failed was the inadequacy of transition arrangements between KS2 and KS3. These still need to be improved. Prior learning must be recognised. Local clusters and pyramid language groups must work together with their secondary partner. There needs to be greater mutual understanding of the nature of the work done in each phase and of the cross curricular contribution language learning can make to the overall primary curriculum. Opportunities must be created for sharing best practice, professional development and curriculum planning. In implementing the entitlement to language learning from the early years through to secondary, there will be transition issues to address as the child moves from phase to phase, key stage to key stage. Schools must work together to resolve these if the later motivation and success of the learner is to be guaranteed. It will be a mistake to focus solely on the KS2 – 3 interface, vital though this still is. Another key point of transition is between Key Stages 4 and 5. All schools are involved in work at this point which, for languages, will become more complex if 14 – 16 provision diversifies and the objectives of the 14 – 19 agenda are to be met in terms of progression, employability and take up.

5.4 Language Learning In Secondary Schools

Paradoxically, the greatest concern for the secondary sector has been created by the national strategy itself. The removal of post-14 languages from the core, and its new status as an entitlement has sent out an unwelcome and untimely message to Heads, governors and curriculum planners. Anticipating the change, some Sheffield schools jumped early with an entirely predictable result. Option group numbers fell, staff were not replaced and morale plummeted. Questions were asked about the validity of diversification in Key Stage 3 if students could opt out at the end of year 9. The threat of the dominance of French has become an issue again.

Our young people must receive high quality, relevant and diverse language learning opportunities. The diet in Key Stage 3 is vitally important and schools will look carefully at the MFL Framework and objectives to ensure that what is offered meets their needs. We will pilot some bilingual teaching in a secondary school, along the lines of the French experience and practice. As more pupils begin learning a language at an earlier age, we will need to provide more variety in the way they receive their MFL. As in France, we will find the need for bilingual teaching, as all pupils receive MFL from the early years, nursery or primary sectors, otherwise they will get bored. At Key Stage 4, Sheffield will pilot vocational options and encourage schools to diversify their curriculum offering. A key issue is the adaptation of Schools Performance Tables to include points equivalences for NVQs. This will be one way of addressing relatively poor pupil performance in comparison with other subjects. Quality of teaching is commented on by OfSTED and we must ensure through monitoring and performance management that standards in Sheffield are very good.

As a city we must address the issues of poor motivation and under performance in languages by boys. We must challenge the insular attitudes that are often the starting point for disaffection in our young people.

We must explore alternative courses post 14, including not only vocational options, but also examining the potential for more flexible approaches to delivery, harnessing the power of ICT and e-learning. There is a feeling that the many post-16 and 14 – 16 routes into eventual employment should also include Work Based Learning (WBL) providers. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has a target to deliver high quality WBL to 28% of 16 – 18 year olds by 2004. We must look at innovative partnerships between a range of providers. We must also be aware of those young people engaged in alternative options, and who, for whatever reason, are not accessing mainstream provision. Language and all the benefits (social, emotional, confidence building) it brings as an alternative experience in other than a school setting can sometimes bring out the latent talents of often gifted but troubled young people, thus contributing to widening participation.

5.5 Teacher Shortages and Supply

In Sheffield, as elsewhere, there is a problem over recruiting and retaining high quality classroom teachers. There is a particular shortage of trained linguists and schools often experience difficulty in even finding a short term supply teacher when a linguist is off sick or on a course. Even having recruited, the schools will report difficulties in retaining staff in whom they have invested heavily.

Relatively few primary teachers have been trained to teach foreign languages although there are a number who do have some linguistic competence or are interested in improving their language skills to the point where they can, as a class teacher, include an MFL component in their teaching.

The city must make better use of other people with languages, whether they are teacher assistants, or the many native speakers in our communities. We must inform people about what is going in languages teaching so that they are aware of opportunities to make use of their language in support of classteachers and others. One key issue here will be training and continuing professional development for those who engage with the strategy as assistants or volunteers. Another will be monitoring and evaluation to ensure high quality provision. We also have two universities with languages graduates and undergraduates, and a business community whose human resources we must access. Both Sheffield universities recognize that they have a role to play in promoting language learning in the wider community and are keen to contribute to the city strategy.

5.6 Post-16

The trend of falling entries for GCSE French and German recorded in Key Stage 4 is likely to have an impact soon on AS and A level entries which will in turn feed through to HE and have implications for graduate teacher training. We must seek ways to encourage more young people to study languages post-16. Pathways through Key Stage 4 must include progression routes into post-16, in the same way that GCSE is traditionally taken as preparation for AS and A level.

College and school-based post-16 vocational courses should include language study, for example, Travel and Tourism with Spanish, or Business Studies and German.

Where work-based learning is provided, students must have the freedom to choose language units alongside these courses, eg. Engineering and German. There is an opportunity to look beyond traditional qualifications and include work based learning such as Modern Apprenticeships and more flexible routes into Higher Education, for example, foundation degrees or part time study. Key partners will work towards providing a range of different options at the different stages. We must convince all sectors of the validity of these 'new' or 'different' qualifications. For example, since 1991, Sheffield Hallam students have been offered languages alongside a range of other subject specialisms via their institution-wide language programme. There are also integrated courses where languages are taught with other specialisms and 18 months abroad are compulsory, partly studying at a partner institution and partly on an assessed industrial placement. Such programmes are a feature of many university course structures and we are also fortunate that the University of Sheffield is a national leader in language learning methodology for non-specialists. The Modern Languages Teaching Centre, individual subject faculties and the School of Education are active and valuable partners supporting this strategy.

In light of the National Strategy, the universities will need to re-think what they offer to their incoming students in terms of language learning as, for example, there will be more students at the lower levels or stages of language learning than now.

As well as recognising the value of these non-traditional degrees, the universities must be able to link in to and understand what is happening in the pre-university stages. It is equally important that those working in the pre-university stages link into and understand what happens in Higher Education and later. Such contacts are always mutually beneficial. For example, those in the secondary sector may want to know more about the kinds of degree programmes available to language students. Greater knowledge may enable them to provide more advice and inspiration to students to continue their studies and take a longer term perspective, including the wide range of employment opportunities for language graduates, for example. Part of our strategy will be to enable greater communications both ways in order to deliver a joined-up language learning experience that can cater for a range of levels.

5.7 Community Languages

Of the community languages spoken in Sheffield, relatively few are taught in mainstream schools. Young people will choose to attend supplementary languages schools, staffed by volunteers and usually located in the community. An umbrella organization, the Association of Sheffield Community Language Schools (ASCLS) exists to help, support and co-ordinate some of this activity. There are issues about funding streams, communication with mainstream schools, maintaining and raising standards and achievement.

In a 21st century city which is multicultural and multilingual it is our aim to value all of our citizens and to celebrate the rich diversity that they provide. One element that is most important is the opportunity to speak and hear one's own mother tongue. Bi- and multilingual pupils do learn another language, or languages, with greater ease than a monolingual pupil. We will investigate the performance of bilinguals and monolinguals at GCSE in French by conducting a comparative study. The achievement of pupils with community languages will be aided if these skills are

encouraged, developed and recognised as having equal status with modern European languages.

One language whose standing and status will be enhanced in this way is British Sign Language (BSL). It is important to include BSL in our consideration of the community dimension to a languages strategy. We will continue to build collaborative links between the LEA, the Health Service and the local Deaf Impact Group and the council's sensory impairment service to promote awareness and knowledge of BSL.

5.8 Working In Partnership

There are some examples in Sheffield of schools that have achieved a lot working in isolation, usually driven by an enthusiastic member of staff with the full support of the Head and governors. Equally, however, there are many advantages to working as a group of schools, sharing good practice, staff and curriculum development and even resources. Examples of this kind also exist in the city, usually where a secondary school works with its family of feeder primaries, but increasingly where secondaries support each other. The issue is how to share, collaborate, embed and disseminate best practice. Networking is an effective way to begin this, building on structures already in place.

There is, in our city, a need to build and sustain working partnerships much more widely than only in the school sector. Examples would include the LEA and its schools with the business community, with Adult Further and Higher Education institutions, with the voluntary/community sector, with national and regional languages organisations such as the National Centre for Languages (CILT) and the Association for Language Learning (ALL) as well as local, regional and national networks. The issue here is for languages to be a priority within the City Council and its many arms. A key part of the Strategy will be to develop this through, for example, a policy on multilingual signage, public recognition of multilingualism in the city, a commitment to the role of languages in the social and economic regeneration of the city. Also, looking outwards, it is essential for Sheffield to be fully involved and engaged at a regional and national level, enhancing our profile as a City of and for Languages.

5.9 Maximising the Potential of ICT

'Teachers must harness the power of ICT to develop the ability of pupils, engage learners and provide access to a wider range of language experiences' (Languages for All, Languages for Life, p.12)

Work is already under way in Sheffield schools to address this issue. The City Learning Centres, the South Yorks. E-Learning Project and the Whiteboards for Primary Schools initiative will enable our young people to benefit from the advantages of a 21st century information and communications culture. The issues are less how to move towards this aim, but more to do with quality assurance and associated staff and curriculum development. As a first step, we will involve language teachers in devising curriculum materials for the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) whose development is a key part of the SYeLP strategy.

Outside of schools, there will be a determination to use the potential that ICT has for language learning and linking at different levels, from the individual to business to whole communities.

5.10 Economic Competitiveness

Education has a value in its own right and we will continue to focus on what is the heart and soul of a language – the history, literature, music and art of its speakers. At the same time, schools have a duty to equip young people for the world of work and to focus on what business and commerce needs.

Globalisation is here to stay. We must continue to raise awareness among employers of the importance of language skills in their business. The message must be delivered: to succeed in an international market, small and medium, not just large, companies need employees who can do business in various languages. You can buy in any language but you sell only in the customer's language. There is an obvious issue about the levels and registers of language required by different employees in various roles within the company, but the principle is undeniable. A key message will be that people's employability and career prospects are improved by the acquisition of language skills. This is a win-win situation for employers and employees.

Furthermore, we must give our workforce the skills to compete with businesses and individual workers from other countries whose mastery of English may be quite advanced. The notion that, 'Everyone speaks English, so we do not need language skills ourselves' is insular and outdated. It is also harming our employment prospects and hence the economy of the city and region. It must be an employer's responsibility to give workers the skills to succeed, and this includes language skills relevant to their job. The crucial role played by Human Resource Managers and Personnel officers concerned with staff development must be highlighted here. They will promote the acquisition or enhancement of linguistic competence for career advancement. Company staff development policies could make this important point.

The establishment of a regular forum for education business contact on language learning needs, and levels of attainment needed, will be a significant step forward in the process of awareness raising. It will provide opportunities for further discussion and real development in this area. The dissemination of 'good practice' models will be one way for such a forum to start to influence local companies.

5.11 Cultural Awareness

In the 21st century the issue of citizenship and what it means to be a citizen of this city, or this country or an international citizen, has rightly assumed great prominence. Part of the answer to the question of what makes a citizen has to include competence in a language or a variety of languages (plurilingualism). We must bear in mind the fundamental importance of cultural heritage, including community languages, to the identity of bilingual speakers. In addition, communication with someone in their own language is an immediate aid to breaking down barriers. We must contribute to the building of a climate of trust by giving people the skills they need to be citizens for this century.

Established events such as Europe Week in Sheffield provide a focus for all on the importance of such wider issues. The experience, built up over the years, of young people being involved in a Youth Parliament, visiting the European Parliament or video conferencing with MEPs or their peers in Europe has been of great benefit and helps fulfil one of the objectives of the strategy.

By learning about the language and the culture of another country, we learn more about ourselves and have a better understanding of our own traditions. Sheffield is fortunate in having a wealth of expertise in its various communities. We must build on existing good practice and use these skills and experiences to cement the multiculturalism of Sheffield, thus addressing some aspects of the key issue of inclusivity.

Summary

For all the reasons stated, Sheffield must adopt and develop a strategic approach that will win hearts and minds, while challenging current attitudes to language learning, and thus improve the achievements of our language learners.

6. Language Learning: The Way Forward

'We all have an important part to play in transforming the country's capability in languages – as learners, teachers, headteachers, lecturers, further and higher education institutions, employers, training providers, local and central Government, and language speakers within our communities.'
(Languages for All, Languages for Life, p.14)

The overarching aim of the Sheffield Languages Strategy is to provide an interlinking and coherent framework from the early years and primary level up to and beyond university level throughout life. By promoting languages and languages learning, Sheffield is emphasising their central importance and the contribution that they make to the wider city agenda of regeneration and inclusivity in the 21st century.

6.1 Objectives

The Sheffield Languages Strategy has as its main objectives:

- To contribute significantly to the social, economic and cultural regeneration of Sheffield.
- To recognise the diversity and equal worth of languages spoken and taught in the city.
- To work for inclusion by challenging the idea of languages as elitist and promoting languages for all
- To halt the decline in numbers of those studying languages by promoting an entitlement to language learning for all ages.
- To raise attainment and increase engagement by improving the teaching and learning of languages.
- To contribute to the transformation of our schools in the 21st Century.
- To strengthen existing partnerships and build new working relationships between partners in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the Languages Strategy.

6.2 Early Years, Nursery and Primary School

The delivery of an entitlement to language learning for every Key Stage 2 pupil is a key component of the national strategy. Sheffield agrees strongly with the arguments in favour of Early Language Learning (ELL), supported by enthusiastic early years practitioners, teachers and management teams. We recognise that it is at this age that our competitors in other countries begin to forge ahead of us in terms of pupil motivation and attitude towards the target language country, as well as attainment aided by double the curriculum time typically provided in schools for Key Stage 3 pupils in this country. We must also accept that taught well, pupils will

move over into the secondary phase with an advantage over those who have not been given a similar opportunity, and are more likely to make a success of their languages work. It will be up to heads and teachers to decide for which pupils it will be appropriate to go for early entry at GCSE, but for all, from 2005, the National Languages Ladder or Recognition Scheme, whose levels connect to the Common European Framework, will enable all learners to be given ongoing feedback on their progress and performance. Use of this scheme will extend to community as well as European languages as the roll-out continues from 2006. We will have the opportunity to accredit the languages of bi- and multilingual pupils and those whose mother-tongue is not English.

A feature of the Sheffield strategy will be to support and recognise the community languages spoken by our pupils and their families. In Section 6.18, the approaches and initiatives to be taken in support of community languages are outlined in detail. In a 21st century multi-lingual city which is the home of many for whom English is not their mother-tongue, community language provision is an integral and essential part of our strategy.

Sheffield will not limit the language entitlement to KS2. The Sheffield entitlement to language learning includes every child from early years and nursery up to age 11, after which a language becomes part of the core curriculum in Key Stage 3. There will be no compulsion, but a strong recommendation that all providers offer each child some modern language work as part of their offering.

The Sheffield entitlement is defined thus:

“Every child should have the opportunity to study a language and develop their interest in the culture of other nations. They should have access to high quality teaching and learning opportunities, making use of e-learning and native speakers as appropriate. By age 11, they should have had the opportunity to reach a level of competence recognised through the national scheme.”

Provision in Key Stage 2 will be as laid down in the national strategy, which Sheffield supports.

Implementation will be a huge task involving curriculum planning, staff training and resourcing. It will not be achieved quickly and full implementation by 2010 will be a challenge. However, Sheffield will work towards that challenging target date, recognising that individual schools and providers will have different starting points and that the pace of change will vary from institution to institution. It is always important to start from a sound base: such a timeframe will allow for this and for any necessary development work to take place in a planned way that is right for the individual situation of the provider.

6.3 Delivery and Co-ordination

The LEA will support schools in building teaching capacity to the point where the entitlement can be fully implemented. It will be the Headteachers' responsibility to deliver the entitlement by ensuring the recruitment of suitably qualified staff, and the training of existing staff, teaching and support.

Schools will also be given curriculum guidance and advice on materials.

The national strategy outlines different delivery pathways according to the individual situation of a school. Heads will need to consider carefully which best suits their own school, and plan accordingly. The aim is for pupils to benefit from an enjoyable, high quality experience that broadens their curriculum and is highly motivating. Models of delivery that will be considered include:

- recruitment of staff (with language skills) directly by an individual school
- training of existing staff in an individual school to deliver languages either part time as part of the class teacher role, or full time
- outreach work from a partner secondary school
- deployment of foreign language assistants in a school or cluster
- use of university students (eg undergraduates or Erasmus students who are native speakers). For example, Sheffield Hallam University liaises with the LEA to place students interested in volunteering to assist in schools. Sheffield University Union operates a Student Volunteering Scheme, which places students in primary and secondary schools
- volunteers from the community and business sectors

Such activity will be able to be enhanced by the application of ICT and e-learning and/or the creation of links with schools in other countries.

Co-ordination of language teaching and learning will be essential and every school should plan towards having a Language Co-ordinator whose role will be to co-ordinate and monitor delivery and ensure good pupil motivation. They will be able to link with other Co-ordinators in their cluster and across the LEA via support meetings organised by the School Effectiveness Service (SES), who will be responsible for the steering and implementation of the strategy, including the primary entitlement. The SES will provide best practice guidance and liaise with organizations such as CILT and the National Advisory Centre on Early Language Learning (NACELL).

The SES will also co-ordinate the work of both the Regional Support Group for Early Language Learning (RSG) and the Regional Consultative Group (RCG), part funded by CILT. These groups will provide free training and networking opportunities for all of those involved in Early Language Learning. They will also provide a forum for dissemination of the latest information on courses and training, link to similar groups in other parts of the country, and contribute to the ongoing building of capacity in the sector by involving the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) institutions in their meetings. The RSG will serve the needs of South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire and provide high quality opportunities for local teachers to be involved not only in a local initiative, but as part of a national movement.

6.4 Best Practice Guidance

The LEA with its local partners will continue to find ways of maintaining Sheffield's high profile regionally and nationally in the languages field, ensuring that Sheffield teachers have access to the best support available, and drawing on the experience of other areas and previous initiatives.

We will use guidance issued by QCA on the schemes of work for KS2, and CILT's advice on Early Language Learning Curricular Models. We will also address the issue of how the KS2 languages curriculum will mesh with the KS3 Framework objectives by monitoring closely and contributing to the ongoing work of the DfES and Pathfinder LEAs such as Nottinghamshire and Barking and Dagenham who are building these links into their KS2 scheme of work.

6.5 Specialist Language Teachers

To support the development of the Primary Language initiative, Sheffield will

- continue to support and appoint Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) to lead developments in schools and act as mentors and trainers for primary class teachers requiring support in the area of the foreign language
- appoint to its Primary Pool as many as possible of the primary specialist language teachers being produced by local ITT institutions such as Sheffield Hallam University and Leeds Metropolitan University. Schools will then be able to choose from a pool of talent that includes those with a language specialism who may well become the co-ordinator for foreign languages in their school
- support another secondary school in its bid to become a Specialist Language College (SLC), Sheffield's third after King Edward VII and Meadowhead. The community remit of SLCs ensures that their feeder schools are fully supported in their work on early language learning (ELL)
- seek to increase the number of primary language specialists being trained in the city by liaising closely with partners at both universities.
- Seek to appoint an early years language specialist with an understanding of how young children learn and their specific needs.

6.6 Existing Primary Teachers

In addition to the training opportunities to be offered for both methodology and language maintenance, schools will be encouraged to look at languages as part of the whole curriculum rather than as an add-on. There are cross-curricular links to be made with most areas which will help overcome the issue of finding space in an already crowded curriculum, by integrating language learning.

It will also be important to emphasise the positive effects on literacy and numeracy that will come from foreign language work. Work at the DfES and reports from OfSTED inspectors confirm these benefits, which will also be explored further in the Pathfinder Project. Headteachers will be able to involve their language co-ordinator in team meetings where curriculum planning takes place, to ensure that such links are made and that the position of language learning is embedded into the overall curriculum provision of the school.

Headteachers will be expected to support existing staff with an interest in languages who wish to become involved in language teaching, by giving them access to the necessary training and opportunities to develop their skills.

6.7 Professional Development

The skills of existing and new staff will need to be recognized and enhanced for the initiative to succeed. The LEA will work with partners such as the University of Sheffield, the Multi Lingual City Forum (MLCF), the Association for Language Learning (ALL) and the Specialist Languages Colleges (SLCs) to offer opportunities for teachers to access high quality training at minimal cost.

In addition, all staff can access free online materials from, for example, CILT on the NACELL website.

The Regional Support Group meetings will be held five times a year and will be free. They will focus on subject competence, teaching methodology and sharing best practice.

Teachers in Sheffield are well aware of the opportunities for continuing professional development afforded by, for example, the Sheffield Guarantee. In terms of languages, staff will be encouraged to take advantage of Professional Bursaries for teachers in their 4th and 5th year of teaching, Sabbaticals for teachers with five years or more experience in schools facing challenging circumstances and Teachers International Professional Development (TIPD).

We will continue to build on our good links with the CILT Comenius Centre based at Trinity and All Saints College (TASC), Leeds, whose staff already provide local and national expertise to Sheffield teachers through courses and briefings. Sheffield will continue to make the case for the establishment of more such regional centres believing that local needs are best met by local centres networking nationally.

6.8 Pathfinder Project

The Pathfinder Project will make a significant contribution to the building of language teaching capacity in Sheffield. With its two aims of improving competence and confidence, it addresses all of the issues that figure in the ELL agenda.

Based on a strategic partnership between the LEA and its Specialist Languages Colleges, the project will spread the expertise residing there into other areas of the city than the primaries feeding the SLCs themselves.

The project primary schools are grouped according to which secondary they feed, to enable transition from KS2 to KS3 to be addressed. They are located within all but one of Sheffield's clusters of secondary schools.

The staffing of the languages departments at the SLCs has been enhanced to allow teachers to go out and work in the project primaries. Their brief, however, is not solely to provide excellent teaching and motivate pupils. Equally the emphasis is on a training model, which ensures the sustainability of languages in the project schools once the funding has ceased. The model was trialled in the Stocksbridge area by our three Advanced Skills Teachers whose expertise and experience will help the Pathfinder staff enormously. As a team led by the Associate Adviser for Languages, they will produce a Sheffield Scheme of Work for KS2 with supporting materials and recommendations for teaching approaches. Set alongside work

under way at a national level, this will help address one of the schools' major concerns.

Languages taught in the Pathfinder will be French, German and Spanish, with a predominance of French already apparent. This early lesson will be learned in Sheffield and is reflected in the strategy where the importance of diversity is stressed. Evaluation will be ongoing to build on lessons such as this, learned in future, and will include, crucially, pupil transition from KS2 to KS3.

6.9 Primary – Secondary Transition

Where mainstream schooling is concerned, primary-secondary transition is clearly a keystone of the strategy.

All schools share a responsibility for smooth transition when their pupils reach that critical stage of their educational careers, the move from primary to secondary school.

To ensure smooth and effective transition schools will need to work together, as in some other curriculum areas, looking at curriculum provision and schemes of work. Secondary language departments will no longer be able to begin with the assumption that their new pupils have no foreign language knowledge. Many will have been learning a language for several years. If learning and enthusiasm are to be sustained, due account will have to be taken of prior learning. To aid in this process primary schools will be encouraged to follow a local scheme of work to be produced out of the AST and Pathfinder activity. The scheme of work will be based on the QCA scheme supported by the KS2 Framework for Languages, but backed up by resources and guidance for teachers produced locally. Schools will also be expected to use the National Languages Ladder once it is operating from 2005. This will place each learner at a particular level, and levels can be ascribed for each skill area. These levels will be mapped onto the National Curriculum levels. In terms of progression, the secondary school will then be able to assess how each child is moving forward in each skill area.

Primary schools will also be expected to use the Primary Language Portfolio from CILT which can be downloaded from the NACELL website at no cost (www.nacell.org.uk). This will form a primary record of achievement for languages and will be a useful transition document too.

6.10 Secondary Schools

6.10.1 At Key Stage 3 all learners must continue to study at least one language. This phase is therefore crucial and it is important that the offering is rich, diverse, stimulating and provides motivation for younger people to take up the language entitlement that is a statutory requirement as part of the options process in Year 9, when courses are chosen for Key Stage 4.

Secondary schools will want to recognise language learning from the earlier key stages, including community languages. For some pupils who have experienced early language learning in their primary school, it will be appropriate to look at early entry GCSE as soon as the end of Year 9. For them this will open up various possibilities in Key Stage 4:

- further study of the same language eg. AS Level
- a switch to another language, either to GCSE in 2 years or towards a vocational qualification
- continuation with the second language from Key Stage 3, perhaps begun in Year 8.

For others, the more familiar pattern of external accreditation at the end of Year 11 will still be appropriate.

There is scope for partnership in the delivery of Level 3 (Advanced) work in schools with pupils who have fast-tracked a language, taking GCSE early, particularly in the case of 11 – 16 schools. Such an approach could also apply to community languages. The Sheffield College, for example, is expanding its offering of community language classes giving an opportunity for young people to add to their qualifications, boost their self-esteem and increase their chances of progression. Such an approach accords with the objectives of Aim Higher whose funding already permits some individual post-16 student support on a 1 – 1 basis, for example for GCSE Farsi and Chinese and AS Russian.

Another option will be the use of the National Recognition Scheme. A pupil will reach a certain level in Year 9 and “cash in” that subject, either continuing it with a different, eg. vocational, focus in Year 10 and Year 11 or alternatively, starting a new language either towards GCSE or more probably, choosing a vocational pathway.

Individual schools will need to ensure that the foundations laid in Key Stage 2 are successfully built upon. This will involve careful consideration of the KS3 curriculum and arrangements for language provision, again including community languages as and where appropriate.

In Sheffield, we will continue to encourage the many schools who have strong links abroad to strengthen those ties in the interest of their pupils’ linguistic, cultural, social and personal development, as well as their developing awareness of themselves as citizens. Links with their peers in the target language country, access to those countries in reality or virtually, have never been easier. It will be part of our strategy to try and ensure that all pupils can experience the benefits of a direct link with another country, to bring their learning to life and connect with other curriculum areas too.

The teachers of KS3 pupils will be offered training on the KS3 Foundation Subjects MFL Framework and objectives by advisers and consultants from the School Effectiveness Service. The development of more focused planning and schemes of work that reflect these objectives will strengthen and improve teaching and learning in this key stage. In Sheffield, all secondary schools will be part of the core training and all will be offered the follow up optional training using a variety of delivery models tailored to the needs of the schools.

6.10.2 At Key Stage 4 the vision is very clear. The days of GCSE as the qualification for all are numbered. Changes to the KS4 curriculum, the removal of languages from the core and the increased interest locally and nationally in 14 – 19 provision, with a vocational emphasis, all provide opportunities, not just challenges, both for modern languages departments and curriculum planners.

In Sheffield, our strategy will be to align KS4 curriculum development with existing work already begun on 14 – 19 provision. We will pilot courses in French, German and Spanish that have a Business emphasis, using the National Languages Units which are accredited at NVQ levels 1 and 2. We will find progression routes post-16 for young people with these qualifications in collaboration with partners in the Sheffield College and 6th form schools. We will root this work in the business community by working in partnership with the Regional Language Network – Yorkshire and the Humber (RLN-YH) to secure placements for these young people in companies and e-links to virtual companies to practice their skills. For some, the progression route will be into employment. Others will want to take their studies further.

For teachers, we will provide training opportunities so that within two years, a school will be self-sufficient in terms of assessors and internal verifiers for the NVQ process. Training in the very different approaches required for teaching these courses will also be offered.

In seeking to stimulate and motivate those for whom GCSE may not be appropriate, we will not ignore the needs, at KS4, of the learners who will follow that traditional path. Many of them will be the gifted and talented young people from whom will come the next generation of languages graduates and teachers. Our strategy will be to encourage them to achieve at 16, and to want to continue to study a language post 16. It will be necessary to consider, with our partners, mentoring schemes using business people, undergraduates and current A level students. We will offer KS4 students the opportunity to travel abroad for a period of work experience in a quality-assured placement using the expertise of WEBS (Work Experience Berufserkundung Stage d'observation) project and its existing links with Bochum and Amiens, and its developing Spanish link. The excellent work done by this voluntary organization has been rewarded over the years not only with awards and recognition, but, more importantly, by glowing praise from the young people to whom it has afforded otherwise unattainable opportunities.

In summary, the strategic objectives in the secondary sector are to engage and motivate pupils to achieve in KS3 so that they will want to continue with a language in KS4. At that stage there will be more than one route open to them and they will be able, with guidance, to choose the right pathway based on aptitude and ability. Whichever pathway is followed it will provide a high quality learning experience with a recognised qualification at 16, and a progression route post-16.

6.10.3 Specialist Languages Colleges (SLCs)

Part of the diversity agenda outlined in the policy paper 'Transforming Secondary Education In Sheffield' is the intention that all Sheffield's secondary schools will have a specialism by 2006. Two SLCs already exist. The first was King Edward VII School, the second and more recent was Meadowhead School. It is expected that a third school will be awarded SLC status too.

Having three SLCs in the city will be a great advantage to the furthering of the languages agenda. The remits, explained in the bids for specialist school status, contain a requirement to contribute to wider community objectives. In practice, the SLCs will all be working on the primary agenda. They will provide language tasters and outreach work. They will offer training and support to teachers within their primary network, and beyond. They will offer ab initio and 'holiday language' courses to adults. They will engage with businesses to create mutually beneficial links.

The schools themselves will continue to offer languages to all and will have stretching departmental and whole school targets. They will be regarded as centres of excellence for language teaching and learning. They will be leaders in the use and development of ICT in languages. They will develop an international dimension to their curriculum that will extend far beyond the MFL department and will be part of the ethos of the school. They will continue to diversify their language provision offering for example, Chinese, Greek, Japanese, Russian or community languages in addition to French, German and Spanish.

It is important for the success of the languages strategy that this vast wealth of experience and expertise is unlocked to the benefit of the whole city and is not only the preserve of certain localities.

Models of partnership working between the LEA and the SLCs already exist. Examples include:

- the recruitment and induction of Foreign Languages Assistants which is managed by one SLC
- Professional development for teachers and staff which is offered by both
- Joint appointments to facilitate Primary Pathfinder Project activity
- Hosting of city-wide events relating to languages and international linking

We will work together to investigate other possibilities for strategic partnerships which will enable the knowledge and expertise residing in the SLCs to benefit the whole city, in the spirit of collaborative working which headteachers have adopted. Close co-ordination will be required to ensure citywide coverage without undue overlap. Under the "Excellence in Cities" initiative, the MFL departments of both existing SLCs have been awarded lead department status. They will now be able to respond to the needs of other schools' MFL departments and spread best practice through an initiative that will be co-ordinated by the LEA using information provided by

the SLCs about their areas of strength and matched to requests for support from other schools. Effective networking of this kind among teachers and assistants is a key aspect of the strategy with its objective of raising levels of achievement.

6.11 Post-16 and Further Education

Sheffield is encountering some of the difficulties in this sector that are evidenced nationally. For 16 – 19 year olds recruitment onto French and Spanish courses is holding steady, while German appears to be in less demand. Up to 11 languages are available post-16 with access ranging from beginners to post-GCSE and including community languages such as Arabic, Urdu to AS and A2 level. Such courses are popular with adult learners with over a thousand enrolling each year. What is offered in post-16 languages in both the schools and the Sheffield College has been judged to be of very good quality and we can build on such a platform.

The issues which may undermine existing strengths include:

- the annual concern as to whether the so-called minority languages classes will run if numbers are small and the class is therefore not viable
- the relatively small percentage of post 16 candidates continuing with a language
- current numbers recruited post-16 may not continue as students will be drawn from a decreasing number of GCSE entrants when languages have become optional at KS4
- fewer students continuing to A2 examinations having completed AS level with the result that even fewer progress beyond Advanced language study to degree-level languages
- universities will be accepting students onto degree courses with lower grades than in the past, at a time when the quality of A level grades is generally rising

Many adults join language classes realizing that being able to speak or understand another language is a real advantage in life. Our aim must be that post-16 students share that understanding and do not miss out, but continue to study a language, if not as a main subject, then as a complement to their main subjects.

To maximise employability, language units should form part of vocational courses such as Travel and Tourism and Business Studies. All providers would wish to contribute to a change in attitudes towards language learning and encourage post-16 recruitment. It will be the role of schools and Connexions advisers to aid in this by raising awareness of the importance of languages as a key skill as well as for personal fulfillment. In the same way, they will want to encourage and promote progression in languages for suitably qualified students into Higher Education thereby enabling schools, colleges and universities to continue to offer a wide choice of languages at different levels.

To achieve the aims of this strategy we will work with all partners to raise the profile of languages as a life skill and as an aid to employability. We will build on the work of the existing HE/Schools group that is collaborating and putting on events to encourage pupils in KS3 to continue and progress their language studies, emphasising the long term benefits. We will continue to seek new partnerships and

co-operation between schools and other sectors. We will encourage and reinforce links to other curriculum areas and, particularly, to work-related learning. We will continue to address teaching and learning issues, seeking innovative ways to improve and enrich the language learning experience.

6.12 Higher Education

One concern in this sector is the continuing fall in the numbers of students taking a language at degree level. Nationally, MFL departments, or individual languages within them, are operating under the threat of closure or cutbacks. There is a knock on concern for ITT institutions in that the potential number of graduate trainee teachers of MFL is reduced.

What we would like to see in Sheffield would be an increase in the numbers of students entering HE and taking a language with a variety of routes leading towards degree level courses. Subsequently we would want more of those graduates training to teach.

There is a need for the universities and the schools to meet and collaborate more, along the lines of the successful initiatives taken by the HE/Schools liaison group. The aim must be to make language learning more popular with an emphasis on stressing the benefits of languages skills for future careers and employment prospects. These interventions would include visits to schools at key points of the secondary programme, to motivate students, as well as greater opportunities for school language students to visit relevant university departments. As with the recent example of Medicine at Sheffield University, it will be important to explore ways of encouraging those who traditionally have not gone on to university or to study a language, under the Aim Higher initiative.

The LEA will continue to encourage local ITT providers to include an MFL module in all their primary teacher training courses.

6.13 Adult Education

Sheffield has a long tradition in providing a wide range of Adult Education (AE) courses, of which Languages form a strong component. This will continue in the foreseeable future with the Sheffield College and the Workers' Educational Association taking principle responsibility as the main providers, together with other groups such as the U3A and Age Concern offering courses appropriate to their members.

European Languages form the base of this provision but AE, by its very nature, is able to respond to the provision of minority and community languages depending upon the perceived demand.

These courses are generally available to everyone over the age of 16 and have the advantage of not only encouraging adults to partake in language learning for the first time, but also in providing a transition path from, for example, GCSE at secondary school level to higher level study.

The path is wide, varied, interesting and encouraging to adults. Many will not only take advantage of their developed skills at the holiday level, but also in the field of work, thus developing their own employability and career opportunities.

6.14 ICT and e-learning

The ways that schools and individuals are able to use ICT for language learning are growing rapidly in number. The many advantages in terms of language acquisition include:-

- It can bring a native speaker into any classroom.
- It is contemporary and young people understand and relate to it.
- It will engage otherwise disaffected pupils, including (and especially) boys.
- It enables individualised learning.
- It provides, via the internet, a massive resource for teachers.
- It makes language learning real through internet communication: (e-mail, video conferencing).
- It stimulates innovation in teaching and learning.
- It can be interactive.
- It will motivate learners at all levels, and of all ages.
- It is a tool that can link communities and aid inclusion.
- It provides up to date information on methodology and professional development via websites such as CILT's NACELL site.
- It can keep young people in contact with their link schools or e-pals in the target language country.

In Sheffield we are well-placed to take advantage of the continuing developments in this area. It will be the aim of this strategy to connect with work already begun and to ensure that languages are represented fully in these developments. Already primary schools are being provided with interactive whiteboards, the most important teaching aid to be introduced to language teaches in the last ten years. We will ensure that teachers acquire the skills needed to make the most of this new teaching aid.

We will connect with the South Yorkshire e-Learning Project (SYeLP) and ensure that languages curriculum materials and other relevant information features prominently in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Mechanisms will be found to enable Sheffield teachers to be involved in the populating of the VLE. Once created it will provide a resource for teachers and schools, pupils and parents, individuals and communities.

We will link this work to another partnership initiative with Sheffield University, a Research Study of existing models currently used in e-learning and suggested strategies for determining a standard model for overall e-learning projects. The purpose of this research is to explore the methodological and pedagogical implications of the development of new technologies, focusing particularly on existing forms of e-learning. The aim will be to devise a framework or set of principles that make the case for e-learning to be integrated and applied locally and to service a wide range of consultants.

6.15 Sheffield Libraries, Archives and Information Role

The library service in Sheffield, as part of its core provision provides a wealth of material, both for loan and reference, to support the language strategy. In terms of material in modern European languages, the collections will be updated and, this

will be done in consultation with other key stakeholders. However, as well as supporting formal learning, a major strength of the library service is its role in supporting and encouraging informal learning, particularly for those individuals who may have found formal learning difficult.

The public library service provides written material and also audio visual material; ie. videos, DVDs and CDs to support learning and every service point provides free access to the Internet via public access PCs.

Sheffield Library Service has a long history of providing material in community languages and in responding to the multi cultural diversity of our city. The service has dedicated staff with remits to work with specific communities and specific funds are allocated for the purchase of materials in community languages (including journals, newspapers and magazines), and for training courses, promotional and cultural events and translation.

The LEA provides funding to the Library Service to deliver a Schools Library Service, which works in partnership with the schools and the Community and Lifelong Learning section of the LEA. The development of family learning is a priority for both services.

6.16 International Linking

Sheffield already has established links with several cities. It will be part of our strategy to encourage and increase the number of international links that the city has. It is important that this international dimension is given prominence as an aid to mutual understanding, global citizenship and improved economic opportunity.

In the school sector, a significant number of primary as well as secondary schools already have international links. The benefits which these links bring are wide-ranging and certainly not restricted to the area of language learning. However, the effect of such a link on the motivation of pupils, ethos of the school, interest in the subject cannot be over stated.

Accordingly it will be our intention to celebrate links already in existence, and seek to strengthen or enhance them. Where links do not yet exist we will encourage schools to look at examples from other areas of the city and adopt what is most appropriate from that good practice.

Some schools will have nearby or cluster schools with whom they can network and learn. Others may experience more difficulty. We will work with and through the Sheffield International Linking Committee (SILC) to disseminate information and put on events related to linking and language learning.

We will use SILC's existing Schools Weekend to showcase good practice locally and nationally and invite one of our Language Colleges to host the event, aimed primarily but not exclusively at teachers.

In the 21st century links can be virtual as well as actual and schools will also be encouraged to use new technology to create such links.

Sheffield is an international city with a strong and developing multi-cultural, multi-faith, multi-lingual heritage. It will be part of our strategy to use the international

nature of the city to help create links and build bridges not just to Europe, but to all parts of the world, including towns in countries of origin of ethnic minority communities, and so-called North-South linking. We will seek ways to demonstrate this commitment in the city centre and the suburbs. We will support the search for a closer link to France and a new link in Spain. We will build on the success of WEBS in enabling our young people to enjoy work experience abroad. We will investigate funding streams that might allow for further language development and training, not only for our youngsters, but also for workers in our local business which are realising the benefits of having staff able to deal with visitors, or enquiries from other countries, in their own language.

6.17 Foreign Language Assistants

It is part of the national strategy that adults with language skills – native speakers, people within the community and those in business – will be encouraged to assist teachers to deliver language learning, especially in KS2.

In Sheffield this is still a largely untapped resource and we will seek ways of involving more adults. This approach will be particularly useful where parents can become involved with their child's learning.

The Foreign Language Assistants (FLA) Scheme is now run by the British Council and, despite financial difficulties, there are still around a dozen FLAs in Sheffield schools each year, covering the most taught languages but also, Mandarin Chinese. We will seek to increase the numbers of assistants employed in our schools, and encourage sharing to reduce the costs. In the primary sector we will make Heads aware of the opportunity of employing an FLA who is a potential trainee teacher at no cost through the Comenius Programme.

In all key stages, FLAs encourage and motivate pupils into genuine communicative use of language. They also help cultural understanding, and help to raise standards in oral work.

We will examine closely the excellent practice that has been developed in Liverpool primary schools, where FLAs, under the guidance of advisory teachers, are used to deliver language lessons and help train the classteachers. There will be a cost implication but if these FLAs come at little or no cost via the Comenius Programme, there is good reason to introduce FLAs into some of our primary schools, drawing on the experience of our Pathfinder Project. The FLAs so employed will be led and managed by the Advanced Skills Teachers who have been operational since March 2003, and whose continuing contribution to the success of the primary language initiative is an essential part of our strategy.

6.18 Community Languages

Consideration of community language (CL) provision in Sheffield includes:-

- Provision within mainstream schools
- Provision within supplementary or voluntary schools
- Provision supported by the Association of Sheffield Community Language Schools (ASCLS)
- Provision within AE, FE and HE

- Provision through the Sheffield Library Service

The issues include:

- Recognition, both for the language itself and in terms of parity with European languages.
- Raising the status of community languages. It is important to work towards this, both within the communities themselves and within the wider community, if we are to prevent the adoption of a monolingual ideology.
- Accreditation and qualifications, for some languages for which there is no GCSE for example.
- The forging of links between the voluntary and the mainstream schools.
- The paucity of trained CL teachers.
- The teaching of CL as part of mainstream, timetabled curriculum provision.
- The frequent isolation of CL teachers who tend not to be part of a structure eg. A department in a mainstream school.
- How to enable the supplementary schools to play a larger part in and have a view of the overall strategy.
- How to fund supplementary schools' activities.
- How to locate supplementary schools in the most suitable premises.
- The role of the ASCLS.
- Quality assurance.
- The role for parents eg in family learning.
- Consultation procedures for parents and communities.
- The needs of bilingual learners.
- The importance of CL to the social inclusion agenda.

There are some key factors to bear in mind in considering approaches to working with the supplementary and community groups.

- Some are providing a city-wide service whereas others are area based. This will determine relationships to area plans and city strategies.
- Pupil numbers range from 50 – 150, but the number and sizes of the classes for children reduces with older young people.
- All are forced to survive on short-term external funding, often from different sources. They will each have to meet particular sets of criteria, accountabilities and the requirements of competitive bidding processes. This will influence the beneficiaries targeted, timescales and outcomes.
- The LEA is often fulfilling several distinct but overlapping roles too: working in partnership to achieve agreed goals, setting directions, identifying local needs, problems and solutions, evaluation and sharing effective practice, and often funding agent for particular delivery plans supported by robust contractual and monitoring procedures.

Sheffield has a tradition of working with speakers of other home languages than English. Sheffield pioneered excellent work which surveyed the use of different home languages. After a lapse of some years, this work has been re-established to provide an up to date snapshot of the home languages of Sheffield in the early 21st

Century. There are good links between the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) and schools, communities and other partners. The Multi-Lingual City Forum has liaised closely and worked with the LEA in identifying needs and issues related to community languages and the attainment of bilingual pupils. Significantly, there exists already an umbrella organisation in the Association of Sheffield Community Language Schools which works directly with and for the supplementary schools. In our schools there are Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) funded staff with a remit to work with and raise the attainment of pupils from black and ethnic minority backgrounds.

Work has already been done on auditing which and how many languages are spoken in Sheffield. We already know, therefore, where they are spoken and have precise information within the LEA about the location of our target pupils. Our approach will be, as part of the strategy, to use that information to set up local projects, to monitor and evaluate results and disseminate information. To enable this to happen we will need to attract pilot project funding and target our resources carefully.

The priorities that we choose will reflect the main issues above. The city will continue to fund the work of ASCLS as a contribution to raising achievement. ASCLS has a local focus enabling it to develop the Sheffield nature of this strategy, for example, by continuing its developmental work on a course and a qualification for Somali.

We will engage with the universities in an attempt to support and encourage them to accept a community language qualification as part of their entry criteria, on a par with other subjects and qualifications.

To improve the standing and status for CLs and afford them due recognition, we will seek funding for and set up a primary school teaching and learning project that will provide a complement to, and a contact with, the current Pathfinder Project. We will work with a cluster of primary schools with significant numbers of community language pupils and offer a menu of activities that will include a community language, a European language and other enrichment activities.

The recognition and accreditation issue will be addressed by the National Recognition Scheme which will include CLs within the first two years of its launch, some in the first year, more in year two. We will put on training and work with ASCLS to ensure that pupils' achievements are recognised using the same framework as is used for their European language learning in the school classroom.

It is a fundamental principle of this strategy that people work better together, in teams and via networks, than they do when they are isolated and working alone.

We will establish networking and training opportunities for those teaching or supporting community languages from whatever sector. Through these sessions we will address some of the issues around quality assurance and pupil attainment. The menu of activities will include events for the Heads of supplementary schools with follow up activities for staff. The content will be varied, from the methodology and pedagogy of mainstream schools, to issues such as Child Protection and Health and Safety and developing Schemes of Work.

The infrastructure for such work will need to be clarified, but as a minimum we will appoint a member of the School Effectiveness Service with a brief to liaise directly or via ASCLS with the supplementary schools. This will enable priorities to be established, training commissioned and high quality events to be planned. A feature of the work will be the partnership working envisaged, with the schools themselves, as well as LEA and ASCLS, helping to determine need and establish priorities. It will be a collaborative model. The contribution of all the stakeholders will be valued. However, if the city is to continue funding this sector, it is clear that there will be the same accountability and expectation of value for money and raising of standards that exists elsewhere when public funds support an activity.

Key partners in the development of their children's language and other skills, are their parents. We will draw on the work being done by the DfES and will liaise closely with them over the findings of recent studies such as "Supplementary Schools Study Support", using the findings of pilot studies in Manchester, Bristol, London and Birmingham to inform our plans in this area. Research indicates that two key ways that schools improve results for their ethnic minority pupils are through pro-active links with the community and by integrating the pupils' culture into the curriculum.

Another area for development will be the use of the CL as a teaching medium and the development of bilingual teaching materials. We will set up a pilot study to investigate the effectiveness of such an approach while being mindful of the need for pupils' skills in English to be improved not jeopardised. Recent research suggests (eg. Raymonde Sneddon, 2000, with Gujerati and Urdu-speaking Muslims in NE London) that bilingual teaching and biliteracy will indeed aid not hinder literacy in English. The role of bilingual staff is vital here. There will be a need for bilingual speakers appropriately trained in language and language teaching as the skill levels for CL teaching must be on a par with those for European languages.

It is therefore significant that the University of Sheffield will be running a PGCE course in Urdu from September 2004, as well as in Japanese and Mandarin.

It will be an important part of the work of the person appointed to lead this aspect of the strategy to improve communication between the mainstream and voluntary sectors. At the very least both sides should share information about pupils, including progress and targets for future achievement. It cannot be acceptable that neither side knows what is happening on the other. It can help when supplementary schools are offered and make use of mainstream school buildings, but it is not possible to generalise about the desirability of such arrangements because of local situations. It will be desirable, in many situations, for the supplementary schools to have access to a quality learning environment with facilities that encourage and enable good teaching and learning. Such partnerships between the mainstream and voluntary sectors will be encouraged, and the introduction of Extended Schools provision will give an opportunity for more partnerships beyond the classroom but within the remit of those schools.

6.19 LEA Role

The LEA will have an important role in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy. Schools will need support to ensure that the primary entitlement is delivered by 2010. Headteachers will need advice on the production

of School Improvement Plans which reflect this. The LEA will continue to facilitate partnership working with all stakeholders which will involve close liaison with headteachers, SLCs, other schools with a languages interest or strength, AE, FE and HEIs, business and language speakers within the community, as well as other providers.

The LEA will continue to support secondary school teachers to ensure the highest quality of teaching and learning.

Languages will be included prominently in the Educational Development Plan (EDP) and so into individual schools' development plans.

Support for language learning and the further development of the Sheffield Languages Strategy will be reflected in the school improvement priorities set out in Annex 2 of the Educational Development Plan (EDP). One noticeable outcome will be the provision of expertise to support training, professional development and networking. Work on the growing collaboration and partnership between schools and LEA will be continued as part of the Transforming Sheffield Secondary Schools agenda, and within the Primary Strategy's agenda.

The LEA will aid the recruitment of specialist languages teachers via the pool and consider how resources can be deployed to help retain such staff and support the implementation of this and other strands of the strategy.

6.20 Business/Employers

Research commissioned by the Regional Development Agency shows that 60% of companies use a foreign language in their business. 20% believe they have lost business because of a lack of business or cultural skills, yet less than 25% of firms have organized staff language training in the last three years. In Sheffield we will address such issues and ensure that those with language skills use them, and those without them are able to acquire them. It will be an opportunity for companies to link with schools in imaginative ways and to mutual benefit. The pilot project for NVQ languages (known as VIPS), will initiate many such links which must be built on.

The Regional Language Network, Yorkshire and the Humber (RLN-YH) has a key role here. It is ideally placed to make these connections and the city will see the benefits of its innovative work in the short to medium term. Its matching of business needs and language providers will produce a valuable "map" of the current situation which will make finding the right provision much quicker and easier. It will be increasingly useful and important for companies to have a language strategy as part of their business plan, for example. It will be a massive boost when businesses can not only agree in principle, but also demonstrate in fact, that they accept the benefits of foreign language competence in their professional field.

6.21 Working in Partnership

Whether local, regional, national or international, partnerships are the way to progress the aims and ideals of the strategy. Different stakeholders bring so much that is different to the table. When connected up, these ideas can be powerful drivers for change and improvement. Part of our strategy must be to look outwards.

We will not be alone in seeking to progress the languages agenda. However, we do seek to lead, to inform and to find partners elsewhere with whom we can create meaningful working partnerships. The Partnership Group, including the LEA, will redefine its role so that it continues to develop the strategy as it monitors progress made towards its aims. There will be so much activity in the languages sphere that constant monitoring will be required to keep up with the pace of events. Whether it is the Association for Language Learning or a local CILT Comenius Centre, the SLCs or FE/HE, the Regional Language Network or the ASCLS, the e-learning project or a child learning with its parents, there will be real opportunities to strengthen and support language learning. By working together as stakeholders the effects of this activity will be maximised.

6.22 Implementation

An LEA officer will be responsible for monitoring and steering the strategy. They will work closely with those leading on the Primary Strategy, the KS3 Strategy, the Sheffield Guarantee (CPD), the KS4 curriculum, and with EMAS. They will be a point of contact for the SLCs in their developing role within the city.

The Partnership Group will act as a reference point and steering committee, bringing stakeholders together formally in whole group and smaller task group activities, and receiving monitoring reports from time to time on a regular basis.

The Multi-Lingual City Forum will continue to provide support and leadership for the developing strategy, focusing particularly on training and community issues.

The roles of the ASCLS and the RLN-YH in working with the supplementary schools and business respectively are clearly defined in their terms of reference. They will have a huge opportunity to effect change and improvement.

7 Glossary

AE	Adult Education
ALL	Association for Language Learning
ASCLS	Association of Sheffield Community Language Schools
AST	Advanced Skills Teacher
BSL	British Sign Language
CILT	The National Centre for Languages (formerly Centre for Information on Language Teaching)
CL	Community Languages
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ELL	Early Language Learning
EMAG	Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant
EMAS	Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
FE	Further Education
FLA	Foreign Language Assistant
HE	Higher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
MLCF	Multi Lingual City Forum
NACELL	National Advisory Centre on Early Language Learning
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OfSTED	Office for Standards in Education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
RCG	Regional Consultative Group
RLN-YH	Regional Language Network – Yorkshire and the Humber
RSG	Regional Support Group
SES	School Effectiveness Service
SILC	Sheffield International Linking Committee
SLC	Specialist Language College
SYeLP	South Yorkshire e-Learning Project
TASC	Trinity and All Saints College
TIPD	Teachers International Professional Development
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
WBL	Work Based Learning
WEBS	Work Experience Berufserkundung Stage d'Observation
VIPS	Vocational International Project Sheffield

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