

ESRC Festival of Social Science: *Primary Language Policy in England – A call to action*

10.00 – 16.00 Saturday 9th November, Institute of Education, University College London

DRAFT PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Learning a modern or ancient language became a part of the statutory curriculum for England from September 2014. Five years into the new policy, there are still significant challenges in meeting national curriculum requirements, leading to inequity from school to school and region to region.

This event will address key issues affecting the success of primary languages and put 10 recommendations from the recently published RIPL White Paper to the test. Come and join leading practitioners and policy makers in an interactive day where your views will directly feed into a **draft implementation strategy** to inform **the way forward** for primary languages in England.

The session will take inspiration from the World Café process, combining short inputs, followed by small round table discussion of key questions, captured by graphic recording/posters, leading to plenary feedback at the end of the session, connecting main findings and agreeing points for action.

10.00 - 10.05 Welcome and introduction to the day **Bernardette Holmes and Florence Myles**

10.05 - 10.15 The National Picture

10.15 - 10.30 The Way Forward

This session will review the 10 recommendations from the RIPL White Paper (Holmes and Myles, 2019) (with reference, as relevant, to other recently published policy recommendations from the APPG for Modern Languages, MEITS and the British Academy)

10.30 – 11.00 **Question 1: WHAT? - CURRICULUM CONTENT**

What should primary children know and be able to do in the language by the end of Key Stage 2?

Supplementary questions:

- ◆ Do you agree with **White Paper Recommendation 3** that there should be non-statutory guidance on minimum core content in relation to pronunciation, phonics, grammatical structures and vocabulary? How should such guidance be best communicated?
- ◆ How can research about how primary age children learn inform curriculum development and pedagogy?
- ◆ What other areas should be included in the primary languages curriculum e.g. knowledge about language, intercultural understanding, links to literacy?

11.00 – 11.30 **Question 2: WHO? - TEACHER SUPPLY AND TRAINING**

How do we make sure that we have sufficient teachers with the subject and pedagogic knowledge required to teach primary languages effectively across the country?

Supplementary questions:

- ◆ Do you agree with **White Paper Recommendation 2** that there should be funded opportunities for professional development in primary languages?
- ◆ What are the priorities for professional development for primary languages teachers (language proficiency/primary languages pedagogy/curriculum planning)?
- ◆ How can we meet teachers' needs across the country?
 - Models of provision (distance, by cluster, regional networks)
 - What is the role of private providers in CPD?
- ◆ Do we need specialist teachers to provide language lessons? Are there advantages to peripatetic specialist provision?

11.30 – 11.45 Break

11.45 – 12. 15 **Question 3: WHEN? - TIME AND CURRICULUM PLANNING**

How do we provide and safeguard sufficient time in the primary curriculum to teach the full requirements of the national curriculum and reach national expectations?

Supplementary questions:

- ◆ Do we agree with **White Paper Recommendation 1** that there should be clear non-statutory guidance on the minimum amount of time available for primary languages of one hour per week?
- ◆ How can schools provide the recommended one hour in the face of a crowded curriculum?
- ◆ Is there a need for guidance on the distribution of time and examples of effective curriculum models?
- ◆ What kind of guidance would be most useful for teachers and head teachers?

12.15 – 12.45 **Harvest of Ideas**

12.45 – 13.30 Lunch

13.30– 14.00 **Question 4: PROGRESS, ASSESSMENT AND TRANSITION**

How can we assess and record progress across the key stage, maintain learners' motivation and support smooth transition from primary to secondary schools?

Supplementary questions:

- ◆ Do we agree with **White Paper Recommendations 4 and 5** that each child should enter secondary school with a clear statement of learning outcomes against an agreed benchmark?
- ◆ How do we develop a common understanding of what constitutes progress? How do we agree and develop a common understanding among primary and secondary practitioners of the level of achievement to be reached by the end of key stage 2?
- ◆ What are effective and manageable assessment formats that give learners a sense of progress and help teachers in primary and secondary schools plan for progression?

- ◆ What format should the record of achievement take at the point of transfer e.g. a paper-based statement; an ICT assisted record such as The Language Magician; an e-portfolio aligned to the expected outcomes of the programme of study?

14.00 – 14.30 **Question 5: TECHNOLOGY**

To what extent can technology provide solutions to some of the challenges facing schools in delivering primary languages? (Strengthening teachers' subject knowledge and language skills; connecting teacher networks; and enriching the learning experience of children in key stage 2)

Supplementary questions:

- ◆ Do we agree with **White Paper Recommendation 6** that schools should develop more frequent and effective use of technology in language teaching?
- ◆ What is currently preventing schools from using technology?
- ◆ How can we train and support teachers to get the best out of technology in the primary language classroom?

14.30 – 14.45 **Break**

14.45 – 15.15 **Question 6: QUALITY AND LEADERSHIP**

How do we evaluate the quality of our own language teaching and how are our schools evaluating the quality of the languages curriculum across the key stage? How do we ensure equity of provision across the country?

Supplementary questions:

- ◆ Do we agree with **White Paper Recommendation 7** calling for a focus on primary languages in routine Ofsted inspections? How can the inspection process strengthen and inform the quality of teaching?
- ◆ How can we demonstrate intent, implementation and impact in language learning?
- ◆ Do we agree with **White Paper Recommendation 8** that school leaders and governors should strengthen school accountability, supported by other professional bodies? What support do they need?
- ◆ Are accountability measures essential to ensure equity of provision across the country?
- ◆ Is there a role for research-informed professional development for school leaders and classroom practitioners? How would a partnership between schools and researchers work in practice?

15.15 – 15.50 **Harvest of Ideas (Plenary)**

Points for action

An Implementation Strategy - Bernardette Holmes and Florence Myles

15.50 – 16.00 Opportunities for informal networking and a chance to view graphic recording/posters from the day

16.00 End of conference