

The Highland Council

Education, Children and Adult Services Committee – 28 August 2014

Agenda Item	21
Report No	ECAS 38/14

1 + 2 Languages Strategy Plan

Report by Director of Care and Learning

Summary

This report gives an update on the progress made to date and an overview of the implementation strategy for Highland

1. Background

- 1.1 The Scottish Government manifesto commitment of 2011 aimed to create a new model for language acquisition in Scotland based on the European Union 1 + 2 model. This means that conditions will be created so that every child will learn two languages in addition to their own mother tongue.
- 1.2 There have been regular reports to committee on the progress of this initiative and this report seeks to give current progress to date and the strategic implementation plan for the future.

2. Context

- 2.1 There is strong Authority support for this initiative which builds upon the strong practice already in place in Highland with the Modern Languages in the Primary School (MLPS) course and strong commitment to Gaelic Learners.
- 2.2 Interviews for a full time development officer post produced strong candidates, but maternity leave and the inability to backfill permanent posts has meant that the Authority will not be able to put a full time development officer into post until August 2014. Whilst this has been disappointing, the commitment and enthusiasm of working group members has meant the project has kept momentum.
- 2.3 The rural nature of Highland means that we have to come up with solutions to delivering training that suit our context. This means that we have to be measured and equitable in the role out of this initiative, taking into account geography and the differing sizes and needs of our schools.

3. Progress to date

- 3.1 The strategy group have met regularly and members of the group have been actively networking with other authorities. Members of the group also attended the two day inter-authority briefing with SCILT, Scotland's National Centre for Languages.
- 3.2 Baseline surveys have been undertaken for primary and secondary schools to identify the gaps and training needs across the authority.
- 3.3 Close engagement has taken place with the Gaelic Language in Primary Schools Forum who have undertaken a survey of current Gaelic skills and training needs.

The strategy group has taken into account the document “The role of Gaelic education 3-18 in ‘Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach”

3.4 Primary Head teachers received an initial briefing about the initiative and the development is now on the Authority three year improvement plan.

4. Priorities for 2014/15

4.1 The full time development officer will be in post from August. This post will very much look at developing training and resource materials. It is proposed to advertise for a more strategic development officer to take the initiative forward.

4.2 The initiative will be discussed with primary and secondary practitioners at conferences, along with expectations of ASGs and timescales.

4.3 There is a need to explore the use of ICT for creating, buying and sharing of resources.

4.4 The strategy group will continue to link in to Education Scotland’s national 1+2 Approach. It will also continue and extend planning for Gaelic as Language 1 (L1), (L2) and (L3), thus contributing to an aim of the Statutory National Gaelic Language Plan and to secure a sustainable future for the language.

4.5 The concept of an ASG foreign language assistant will be piloted in one ASG this year with a view to extending this further.

4.6 Education Scotland released their framework for language learning in July 2014. This will be used as a basis to create resources and progressions for schools.

4.7 The Authority has committed to continue and develop the work currently being undertaken for primary language learning. It should be noted that as pupils who start to learn a language in P1 progress through their primary education, there continues to be a need to develop language learning further up the school.

5. Priorities for 2015/16

5.1 Schools at this point should identify the languages that will be language 2. It is very important for schools to work on an ASG basis as the expectation is that language 2 will be continued until the end of S3. ASGs will be asked to appoint a co-ordinator to act as a point of communication and to look at an action plan.

5.2 There will be an engagement strategy with all stakeholders, including head teachers, pupils and parents. It is important that all involved understand the rationale behind 1+2 and remain engaged as the process is rolled out. There will be on-going liaison with Education Scotland, SCILT and other Authorities.

5.3 There is a need to redevelop the current language programmes at first and second level to make sure that the programme delivered is coherent. The detailed training strategy for teachers will be identified by this stage.

5.4 Alongside the communication strategies currently in place an event or series of events will be planned to involve stakeholders more fully and to begin to prepare for the launch of the strategy.

6. Implications

- 6.1 **Resources and Equalities:** There is a need to ensure that the implementation of this strategy is available to all and that resources created and supported can be differentiated for all levels of learning. Advice will also be sought from the English as an Additional Language team.
- 6.2 **Rural:** The rural nature of Highland means that the training strategy for schools needs to be delivered in the locality of the schools as much as possible.
- 6.3 **Gaelic:** The implementation of the 1+2 strategy takes full cognisance of guidance about Gaelic Education but there is a need to ensure that the provision of Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learner education is not adversely affected by the strategy.
- 6.4 There are no legal, risk or climate change/carbon clever implications arising from this report.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 Members are asked to note progress in this area.

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

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