

1+2 Languages Policy:

Findings From the 2021 Survey of Local Authorities

April 2022



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1. Introduction

It is more crucial than ever for Scotland's prosperity, and the prospects of its young people, that they are attracted to learning about other cultures and their languages. Becoming confident and competent in communicating with people from around the world will enable them to become global citizens, well-equipped with the skills to thrive in the 21st century.

In 2012 a report prepared for the Scottish Government on modern language education policy for schools found that:

“In the primary sector, despite innovative practice in some schools in beginning language learning early, children are not expected to experience modern language learning until P6. Some primary children do not experience language learning at all, due to staffing or other difficulties. There can be issues at the point of transition from primary to secondary school in terms of continuity of language learning. Some schools still offer learners subject choices in the early part of the secondary school, with the option to give up language learning before the end of their broad general education.”¹

In 2013 the Scottish Government followed the report's recommendations by introducing the 1+2 languages policy in order to improve this situation and achieve the vision outlined above. This policy aims to create the conditions to provide all children and young people with an entitlement to learn two additional languages throughout the Broad General Education (BGE).

A first additional language, or L2, should be taught continuously from P1 through to the end of S3. While there is no hierarchy of languages within the 1+2 policy, an L2 must be a language that can be taught to the level of a National Qualification. It can therefore currently only be one of the following: French, Spanish, German, Italian, Gaelic (Learners), Urdu, Mandarin, or Cantonese.

A second additional language, or L3, should be taught in primary school from P5 at the latest, and in secondary school at some point during the BGE. An L3 can be any language, including British Sign Language (BSL), Latin, Scots and community languages. Pupils may not learn the same language continuously as an L3, and instead may be taught about various languages and cultures.

In order to gauge progress with implementation of the 1+2 policy, it was agreed by the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES), COSLA, Education Scotland and the Scottish Government that local authorities would provide regular information on language learning in their schools through an annual survey.

This report summarises the findings of the survey covering the 2020-21 academic year. This was the first survey since the 2018-19 one; a survey was planned to cover 2019-20 but had to be cancelled following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

¹ Language learning in Scotland: a 1 + 2 approach (May 2012)
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/language-learning-scotland-12-approach/>

2. Methodology

Survey returns were received from 30 out of 32 local authorities. This provided information collated from questionnaires completed by 1,722 primary, 315 secondary, and 40 special schools. This represents approx. 86% of primary, 88% of secondary, and 35% of special schools in Scotland.

The questionnaires for schools asked a number of quantitative and qualitative questions in order to measure their progress to implement the 1+2 policy. Local authorities were also asked a number of supplementary questions regarding professional learning, collaborative working, and successes in implementation in their localities.

The questionnaires for the 2020-21 survey also differed in a few respects from the preceding 2018-19 survey, in particular:

- Schools questionnaires were shortened in recognition of the pressures they have experienced in handling the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- In order to gain a more accurate picture of L2 implementation, schools questionnaires asked whether a full, partial or no entitlement was being provided (previous surveys did not ask about a partial provision).
- Special schools were asked a distinct set of questions, in recognition that the need of their learners may differ from those in mainstream schools. Findings from these schools are therefore presented separately in this report.

Unless indicated otherwise, percentages provided in this report are based on the number of schools or local authorities that responded to the survey, and not the total number of schools or local authorities in Scotland.

It should also be noted that the format of the survey has been developed continually to capture more detailed information on the state of 1+2 implementation. As a result, we do not have a statistical baseline that can be used to put these figures in context from the inception of the policy. Therefore any comparisons in this report are made only against the previous 2018-19 survey.

3. Language learning in primary schools

3.1 L2 provision

We asked local authorities how many of their primary schools were providing an L2 entitlement. We defined this as follows:

- By full we mean an L2 is taught continuously from P1 to P7.
- By partial we mean an L2 is not taught continuously from P1 to P7.
- By none we mean an L2 is not taught at all from P1 to P7.

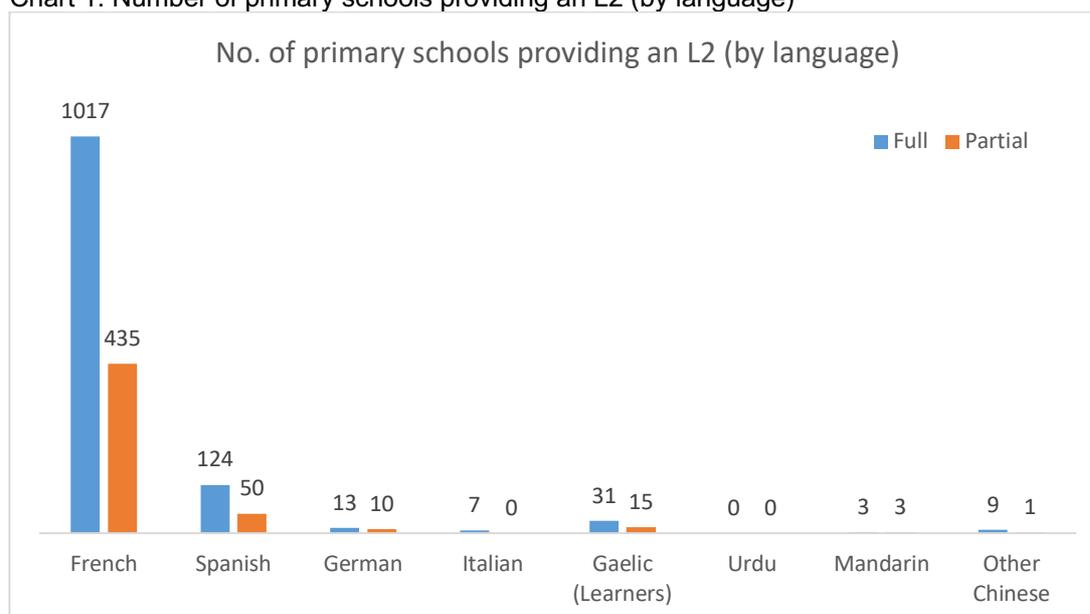
The responses received show that approx. 98% of primary schools were providing either a full or partial L2 entitlement during 2020-21. This breaks down as follows:

L2 entitlement	%
Full	69%
Partial	29%
None	2%

By comparison, the 2018-19 survey showed that approx. 88% of primary schools were providing a full entitlement. Given that the preceding survey did not ask if they provided a partial entitlement, the change in methodology means it is not easy to draw any conclusions about the trend in provision. While it appears that delivery of a full L2 entitlement has fallen from 88% to 69%, it is possible that some of those reporting a full entitlement in 2018-19 would have responded differently if the option of choosing a partial entitlement had been available.

The most taught L2 language continued to be French, being provided by approx. 86% of primary schools that provided an entitlement (88% in 2018-19).

Chart 1: Number of primary schools providing an L2 (by language)



N.b. This data contains multiple counting of some schools, e.g. a school may offer both French and Spanish as L2 languages. Out of 1,722 schools.

Spanish and Gaelic (Learners) remained the second and third most taught languages, being provided by 10% and 3% of schools respectively (10% and 3% in 2018-19). German was taught by 1.4% of schools (2% in 2018-19), while the other languages were each taught by less than 1% of schools respectively.

3.2 L3 provision

We asked local authorities how many of their primary schools were providing an L3 entitlement. We defined this as follows:

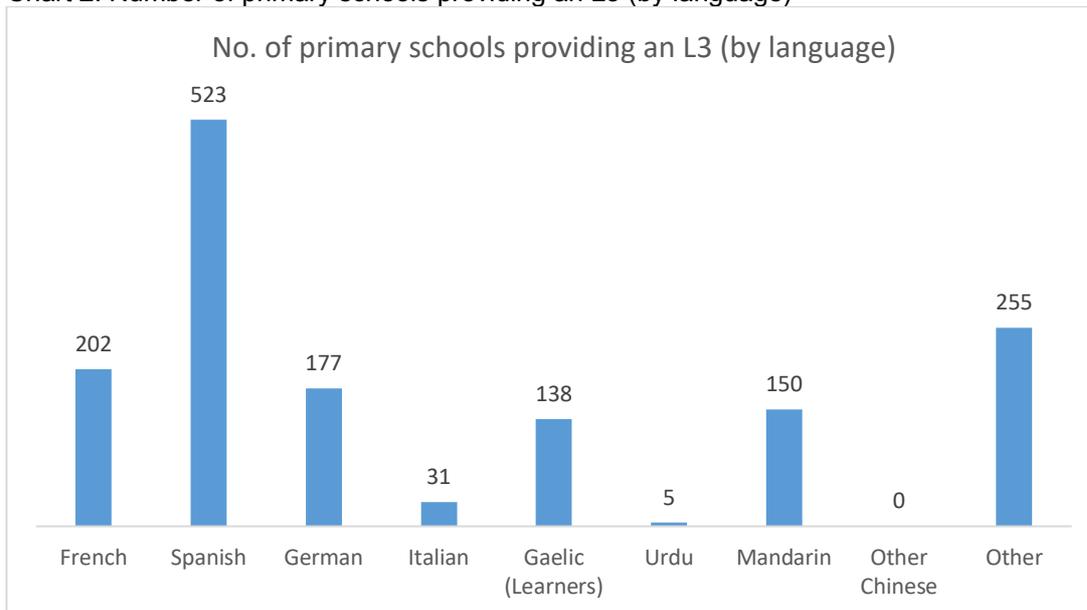
- That, in addition to the L2, one or more languages are taught as a planned part of the curriculum in P5, in P6 and in P7.

The responses received show that approx. 64% of primary schools were providing an L3 entitlement during 2020-21 (48% in 2018-19).

L3 entitlement	%
Yes	64%
No	36%

The most taught L3 language continued to be Spanish, being taught by 48% of primary schools that provided an entitlement.

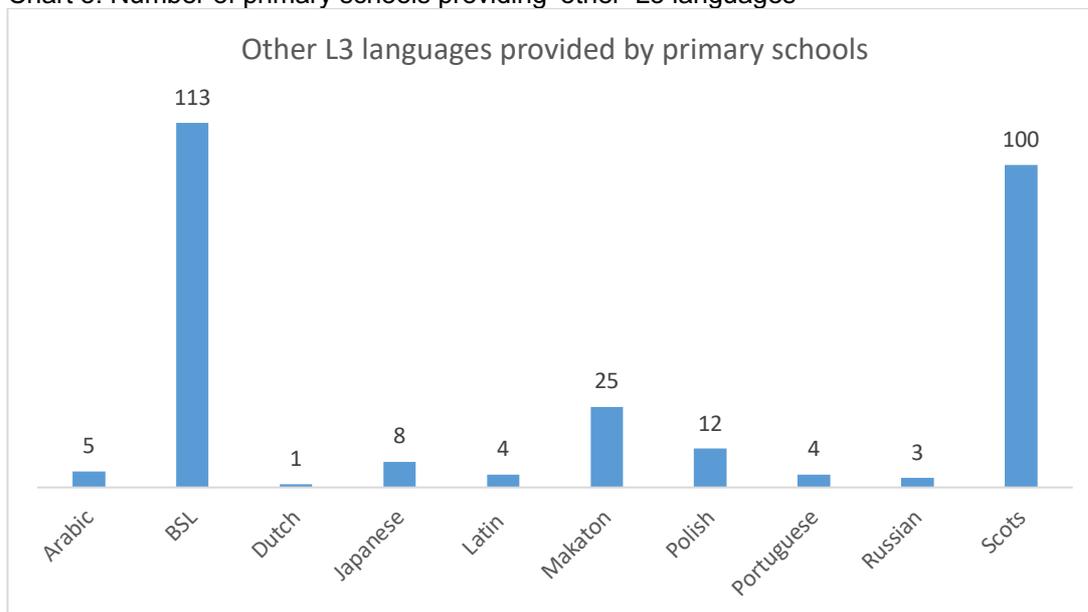
Chart 2: Number of primary schools providing an L3 (by language)



N.b. This data may contain multiple counting of some schools, e.g. a school may offer both French and Spanish as L3 languages for different year groups. Out of 1,722 schools

The uptake in 'Other' languages being taught as an L3 has increased, with this being driven by growth in both BSL and Scots (32 and 59 schools respectively in 2018-19).

Chart 3: Number of primary schools providing 'other' L3 languages



N.b. Out of 255 schools

4. Language learning in secondary schools

4.1 L2 provision

We asked local authorities how many of their secondary schools were providing an L2 entitlement. We defined this as:

- By **full** we mean an L2 is taught continuously from S1 to S3.
- By **partial** we mean an L2 is not taught continuously from S1 to S3.
- By **none** we mean an L2 is not taught at all from S1 to S3.

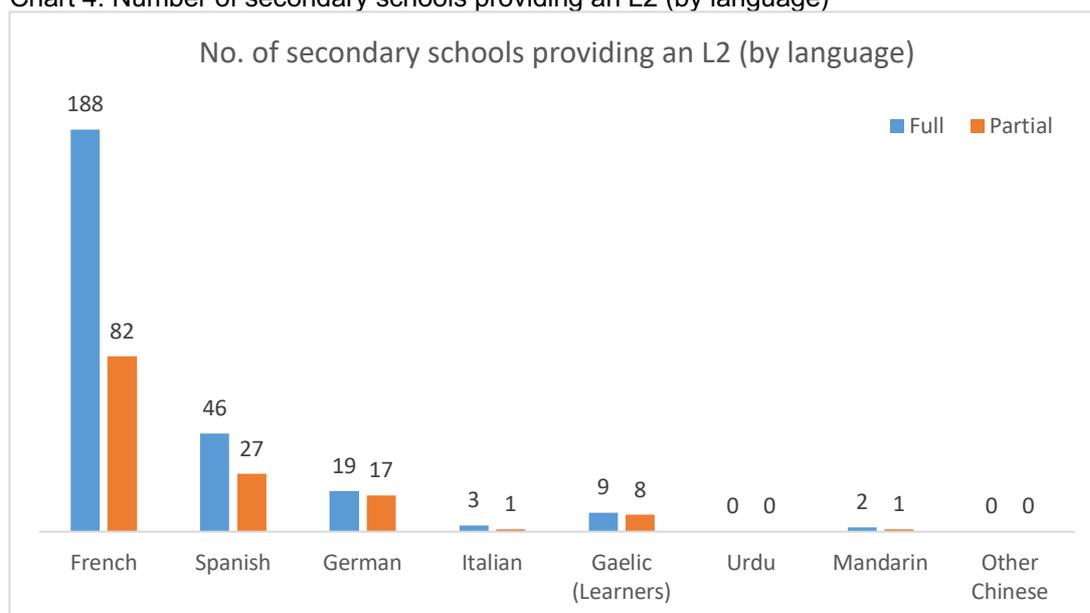
The responses received show that approx. 100% of secondary schools were providing either a full or partial L2 entitlement during 2020-21. This breaks down as follows:

L2 entitlement	%
Full	70%
Partial	30%
None	0%

By comparison, the 2018-19 survey also showed that approx. 70% of secondary schools were providing a full entitlement. However, as the preceding survey did not ask if they provided a partial entitlement, the change in methodology means we cannot make a direct comparison. It may be that some of those reporting a full or no entitlement in 2018-19 would have responded differently if the option of choosing a partial entitlement had been available. The most conservative interpretation is that L2 provision has remained static since 2018-19.

The most taught L2 language continued to be French, being taught by approx. 86% of secondary schools that provided an entitlement (89% in 2018-19).

Chart 4: Number of secondary schools providing an L2 (by language)



N.b. This data may contain multiple counting of some schools, e.g. a school may offer both French and Spanish as L2 languages. Out of 315 schools.

Spanish and German remained the second and third most taught languages, being taught by 23% and 11% of schools respectively (19% and 11% in 2018-19). Gaelic (Learners) was taught by 5% of schools (6% in 2018-19), with the other L2 languages each being taught by less than 1% of schools respectively.

4.2 L3 provision

We asked local authorities how many of their secondary schools were providing an L3 entitlement. We defined this as follows:

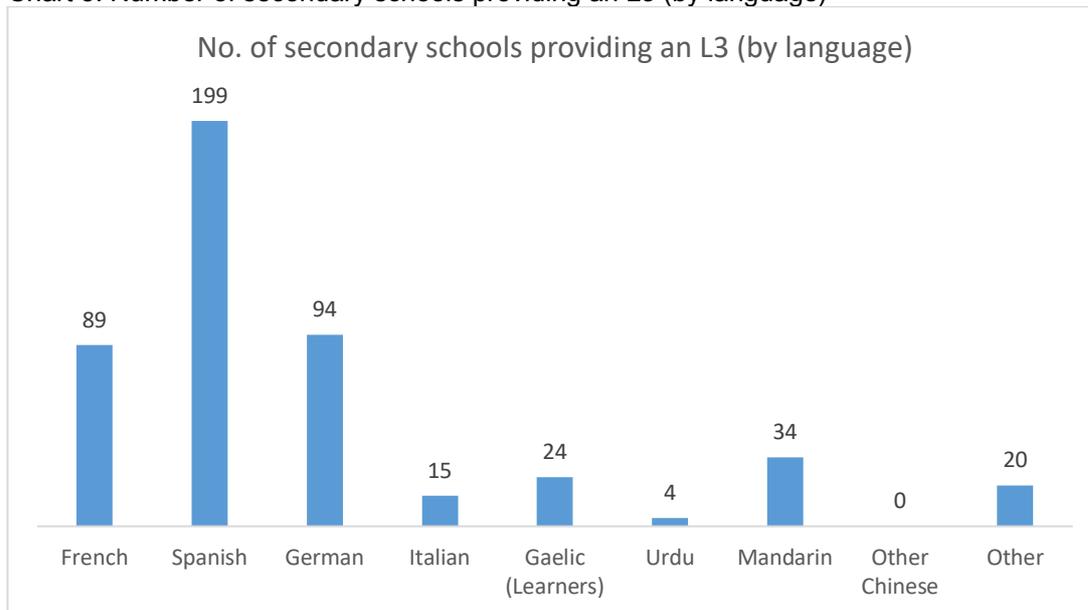
- That, in addition to the L2, one or more languages are taught as a planned part of the curriculum at some point during the broad general education.

The responses received show that approx. 87.5% secondary schools were providing an L3 entitlement in 2020-21 (83% in 2018-19).

L3 entitlement	%
Yes	87.5%
No	12.5%

The most taught L3 language continued to be Spanish, being taught by 71% of secondary schools that provided an entitlement.

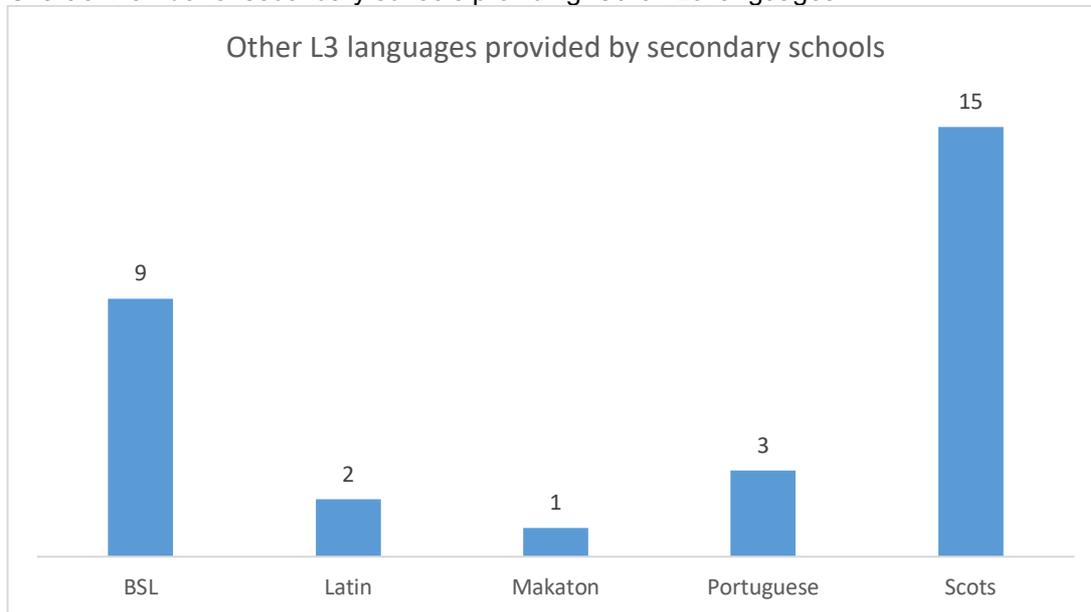
Chart 5: Number of secondary schools providing an L3 (by language)



N.b. This data may contain multiple counting of some schools, e.g. a school may offer both French and Spanish as L3 languages for different year groups. Out of 315 schools.

The uptake in 'Other' languages being taught as an L3 has increased, albeit not as markedly as in primary schools. Similarly though, both BSL and Scots were the languages driving the increase (3 and 2 schools respectively in 2018-19).

Chart 6: Number of secondary schools providing 'Other' L3 languages



N.b. Out of 20 schools

5. Language learning in special schools

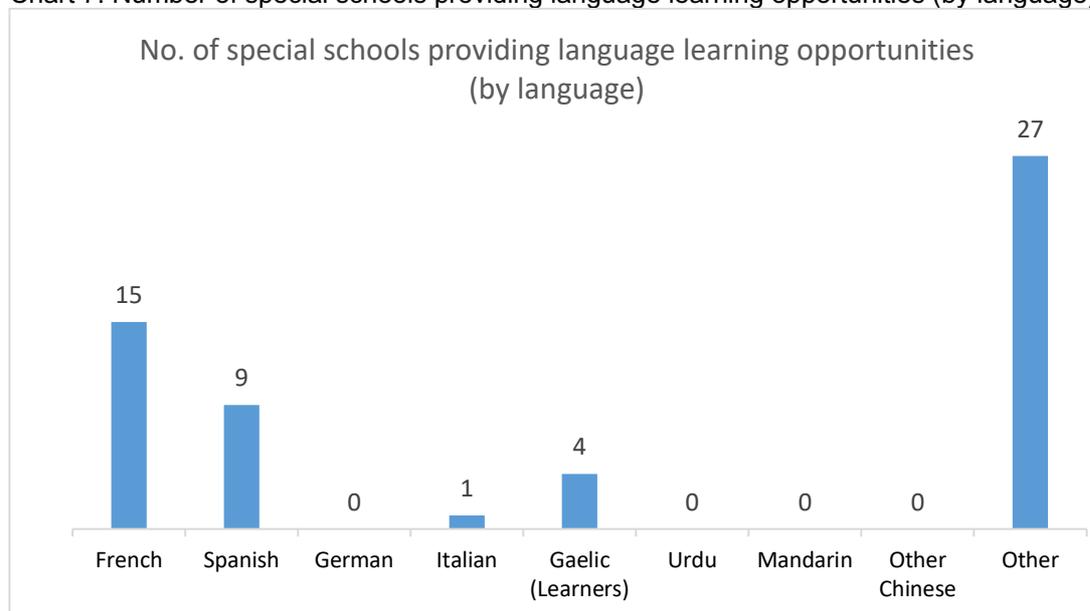
5.1 Language provision

Recognising that satisfying the criteria of the 1+2 policy may not be fully applicable / appropriate for special schools, we instead asked local authorities the broader questions of how many of their special schools were providing opportunities for language learning.

The responses received show that approx. 91% of special schools were providing such opportunities 2020-21, with the remainder (9%) not doing so.

The most taught language was French, being taught by 38% of special schools that provided opportunities for language learning. However the provision of 'Other' languages is more common, with a range of alternative languages / communications systems being provided, including: BSL, Makaton, PECS, and Signalong.

Chart 7: Number of special schools providing language learning opportunities (by language)



N.b. This data may contain multiple counting of some schools, e.g. a school may offer both French and Spanish for different year groups. Out of 40 schools.

5.2 Models used to deliver language learning

Where it is appropriate for learners to do so, special schools offer learning in one or more additional languages. Some introduce languages as part of interdisciplinary learning, delivering a number of languages throughout the school experience.

A number of special schools reported the use of immersive experiences to explore the culture of the countries where the target languages are spoken. Provision is made in some schools for secondary stage learners to undertake SQA awards and national qualifications in languages.

6. Barriers to implementation

We asked local authorities to elaborate on the main reasons for why their primary and secondary schools were not providing a full L2 entitlement or an L3 entitlement. Many of the reasons given were in line with those previously reported by the 2018-19 survey.

6.1 Primary schools

Approx. 31% of primary schools (533) reported not providing a full L2 entitlement (29% partial and 2% no entitlement). The main reason given was 'competing priorities', with the principal cause being what was considered to be an already overcrowded curriculum. Schools remarked this meant there was a lack of time available to develop and deliver the requisite progressive language learning experience from P1 to P7.

Other common reasons reported by these schools included:

- A lack of teacher confidence to deliver routine classroom language learning, as well as discrete language lessons.
- Newly-qualified teachers entering the system not being sufficiently trained during pre-service to deliver a language as part of their classroom practice.
- Inconsistencies in L2 provision in schools where there are long term vacant posts, and in rural / single-staffed schools where the class teacher has not undergone language training.

Approx. 36% of primary schools (623) reported not providing an L3 entitlement. Responses pointed out that there remained a need for supplementary training / upskilling for teaching staff. Similar to the L2, competing priorities and lack of curricular space were also reported as reasons that providing an L3 was not a current focus.

All local authorities also reported that the curriculum focus on recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic – which was primarily based on literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing – had led to a reduced emphasis on maintaining language learning at both L2 and L3 levels.

6.2 Secondary schools

Approx. 30% of secondary schools (95) reported not providing a full L2 entitlement (albeit all providing it partially). The main reason a number of these schools cited was that they operated a curriculum structure that allows learners to withdraw from language learning after S2, instead of continuing to the end of S3 in line with the 1+2 policy.

Other reasons reported by these schools included:

- A minority of schools allowing learners to choose their L2 from the start of S1, instead of continuing the L2 taught in primary school and recognising the level of proficiency achieved so far.
- A minority of schools being unable to provide adequate period allocations for language learning.
- Some schools employing a model where pupils learn a new language in S3, instead of continuing the one taught in S1-S2. These schools advised that this approach allows them to maintain language diversity, with the new language being offered in the belief that it will boost uptake in the senior phase.
- Some head teachers having differing interpretations of 'learner entitlement' in terms of the 1+2 policy, leading to discrepancies in provision within and across local authorities.

Approx. 12.5% (40) of secondary schools reported not providing an L3 entitlement. Some schools reported that their curriculum design and timetabling in their languages departments were structured in such a way that there was no extra time available in which to deliver an L3 without removing teaching time from the L2. Smaller schools also reported facing challenges in providing an L3 where the staff complement does not allow for the provision of more than one language.

7. Resources required for implementation

We asked local authorities what resources the schools in their locality that were not providing a full L2 entitlement or an L3 entitlement required in order to do so.

- For primary schools, it was reported that further and on-going career-long professional learning (CLPL) for practitioners in both language and pedagogy would continue to be necessary until the workforce is sufficiently trained and confident to deliver language teaching.
- For secondary schools, it was reported that the recruitment of more languages teachers would ease the current pressures in secondary languages departments, and allow them to provide the requisite period allocation for achievement of the fourth curriculum level by the end of S3.

We also asked what resources special schools required to deliver their language learning offer. The majority advised they would welcome further support for staff training in language teaching, as well as resources and specialist equipment, in order to ensure that languages are a fully-embedded part of their curriculum offer. It was also suggested that national advice and guidance on the provision of languages for learners with additional support needs should be published.

8. Examples of success in implementation

8.1 Collaborative working

We asked local authorities which organisations / institutions they have engaged with to support languages in schools, as we believe collaborative working is an important tool to support both classroom teaching and professional learning.

Types of collaborative working	No.	%
Working with Regional Improvement Collaboratives	27	90%
Working with Scottish universities	16	53%
Working with European and international universities	11	37%
Working with SCILT / CISS	28	93%
Working with cultural institutes	17	57%
Working with the British Council	18	60%
Working with Education Scotland	28	93%
Have not engaged in any collaborative working	0	0%
Other	12	40%

All local authorities reported engaging in a variety of collaborative activities, maintaining a trend reported by the 2018-19 survey, with partnership working continuing to be considered a key element for supporting implementation.

Almost all local authorities reported that they received support from Education Scotland, Scotland's National Centre for Languages (SCILT) and the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools (CISS) on training and upskilling courses for teachers. They also saw their Regional Improvement Collaborative as playing an important role in supporting the exchange of best practice and ideas for teacher training and upskilling.

Just over half of local authorities reported having links with, and receiving support from, university languages departments and cultural institutes, such as the Institut Français, Goethe-Institut, and Spanish Embassy Education Office. A few also reported that they had made use of international and business links to support language learning in their schools.

8.2 Improved perception of languages

Just over half of local authorities reported on the positive benefits that online platforms had made for language learning in supporting engagement with learners, parents / carers, and staff. The use of online platforms was accelerated in response to the school closures during the Covid-19 pandemic, and almost all local authorities stated they would continue to use them going forward.

In terms of the perception of languages by parents / carers, these same local authorities found that the adoption of engaging and motivating online strategies during the period of remote learning had resulted in greater access for family learning opportunities, which had been positively received.

In the secondary sector, some local authorities reported seeing signs of the positive impact of the 1+2 policy in an improved uptake of learners choosing a languages subject in the Senior Phase.

8.3 Transition between primary and secondary schools

A majority of local authorities reported that schools had adapted their traditional transition models into a fully online or hybrid model to ensure successful progression in language learning for their learners, as well as using online platforms to deliver virtual transition lessons, host parents' evenings, and facilitating staff transition meetings within clusters.

Just under half of local authorities reported a pause in primary to secondary transitions, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and pressure on secondary schools to complete alternative certification models.

A small number of local authorities also reported success in using joint planning, through sharing of plans and levels of expectations, for pupils entering secondary school.

9. **Teacher training and upskilling / CLPL opportunities**

We asked local authorities what opportunities for language training they provided, either directly or through their regional improvement collaborative, as we are interested to know more about the CLPL being offered to teaching staff to support the implementation of language learning.

Types of language training opportunities	No.	%
Cluster training events	22	73%
Consortium training sessions	15	50%
Twilight classes	28	93%
SCILT / OU distance learning course	23	77%
Partnership with other FE / HE provider	10	33%
Other	15	50%

Responses showed that local authorities have moved to offering a wide range of training for both newly-qualified and experienced teachers. They have also adapted their CLPL offers to offer a blended or fully online format, which is helping to maximise reach and improve ease of access for teaching staff.

The most widespread training models used by local authorities involve a blend of in-house training and online upskilling, e.g. secondary languages teachers delivering language and pedagogy training as part of standalone 'anytime access' units or in live lessons at twilight sessions. Some local authorities also offer bespoke training across their Regional Improvement Collaborative, which is felt to be improving the consistency of approach to language teaching across primary schools.

Other training models included those being provided by commercial companies, the British Council, Higher and Further Education partners and the cultural institutes, and the annual national Languages Leadership Programme provided by Education Scotland and SCILT. The Open University / SCILT distance learning 'Teachers Learning to Teach Languages' programme was also popular.

10. Conclusion

The resumption of the annual survey of local authorities, following the hiatus as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, has presented a refreshed national picture on progress to implement the 1+2 languages policy in schools.

The key finding of the survey is that nearly all primary and secondary schools now deliver language learning from P1 through to the end of the BGE. This lies in sharp contrast to the provision of languages prior to the 2013 introduction of the 1+2 policy, particularly in primary schools, and confirms the progress towards this becoming the norm in schools.

In terms of individual languages, French and Spanish continue to be the most widely taught L2 and L3 respectively in both the primary and secondary sectors. A marked increase in the teaching of BSL and Scots as an L3 in primary schools suggest an increasing appetite for less traditionally taught languages.

Despite the restrictions imposed throughout the pandemic, teacher training and partnership working continued, as local authorities and schools successfully migrated to online modes of delivery. This reinforces the findings of earlier surveys that had highlighted the importance of these approaches toward the delivery of the 1+2 policy.

Overall it is clear that this survey reaffirms the findings and trends established by the preceding 2018-19 survey. Accordingly, we do not intend to continue the current cycle of annual surveys going forward. However, we will still seek to canvass views on specific matters relating to language learning from time to time, and to monitor the delivery of the 1+2 policy on a longer timescale. Appropriate levels of monitoring will be agreed with ADES, COSLA and Education Scotland.

Next Steps

The ambition was for the 1+2 policy to be fully implemented by 2021. However, there has been an understandable loss of momentum due to the impact of the pandemic on schools' priorities. This is particularly as a result of the periods of home learning, and the recovery curriculum's focus on literacy, numeracy, and health & wellbeing.

We recognize the important contribution that financial support for the 1+2 policy has made towards driving forward this momentum over the course of previous years.

Accordingly, we are providing a further £1.2 million in funding for language learning to local authorities for 2022-23.

Despite the challenges of the past two years, it is clear that there has been a substantial culture shift in how schools approach language learning since the 1+2 policy was first introduced. Languages are now a normal part of school education throughout the BGE, and children starting school can now look forward to more opportunities to learn languages, and the advantages that brings, than their counterparts of only ten years ago.

The 1+2 policy was never intended to be a short term initiative, but rather a change programme that would deliver a permanent transformation in the way languages are taught in schools. The success of the policy will be dependent on ensuring that the progress made to date is consolidated, and that any outstanding barriers to the policy are fully addressed.

It is also to be expected that there will be variation in methods and standards of how the entitlement to language learning is being delivered. As we move towards a consolidation phase, it may be appropriate to consider these variations and whether establishing broad standards would be appropriate. These would ensure that schools provide equality of opportunity for their pupils, while also respecting local authorities' autonomy and the flexibility of Curriculum for Excellence.

We will provide more details on the next phase of our approach to language learning within the 2022-23 financial year, and will continue to engage and work with key stakeholders and delivery partners to ensure that the aims of the 1+2 policy are fully realised.

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