

Myth Busting!

Don't let common misconceptions prevent your child from taking full advantage of their entitlement to learn languages. Do any of these myths about language learning sound familiar? Let's bust them!

MYTH: Some languages are easier to learn than others.

REALITY: Almost all people have the skills needed to learn any new language given time and effort. How a learner perceives any individual language will depend on their own personal preference. Throughout their language learning your child will acquire a variety of strategies which will positively impact on their success, no matter what language it is they learn.

MYTH: I know English, so I don't need to learn languages.

REALITY: This myth is very easily busted! Firstly, despite the common belief that "everyone speaks English", 75% of the world's population do not speak any English at all! Secondly, acquiring a new language is just one side of language learning. Through languages, learners also have a unique opportunity to make meaningful connections with different people, gain insights into other cultures and consider new ways of thinking about the world.

MYTH: Languages only matter to people who want to do careers involving languages.

REALITY: That is not the case - learning languages involves doing activities that help develop knowledge and skills that are useful in all walks of life, learning and work. Therefore, learning another language can enhance most young people's lives, regardless of their career choices and provides a great opportunity to find out more about different cultures, as well as their own.

MYTH: The younger you are, the easier it is to learn another language.

REALITY: While early learning may have its advantages, it's safe to say that it's never too late to learn a new language. Younger learners may have some advantages over older children but the opposite is also true! For example, younger learners may pick up pronunciation more easily, but older learners have a wider knowledge of their own language, which helps them learn new languages.

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Making languages
count for my child:

A guide for parents on
language learning
entitlement in Scotland

Making languages count for my child

In Scotland, **all learners** are entitled to opportunities and support so that they can learn languages from P1 until the end of S3 as a minimum.

This guide for parents aims to:

- give you information about your child's entitlement to language learning
- answer common questions you might have about language learning
- provide advice on how you can help your child understand the benefits of language learning



Why is learning languages important for all children and young people?

An entitlement to learn languages from P1 until the end of S3 aims to give every child and young person in Scotland an equal opportunity to develop life-enhancing skills.

When children and young people learn a different language, they take part in activities that help them develop their communication skills, improve their literacy and understand other cultures. Learning other languages has cognitive benefits for learners of all ages. It can also provide opportunities to travel, work and study.

But, aren't languages just too difficult for some children?

Attitude rather than aptitude is key to successful language learning. As with all subjects, learning something new will take time and effort and some young people will take longer than others to learn a language. However, with encouragement, support and appropriate materials, almost all children will be capable of learning a different language and enjoying the experience.

I am not sure that my child will ever use the language that they are learning.

The experience of communicating in another language is exciting and can help develop your child's confidence. Further key benefits of language learning include understanding other cultures and developing vital skills for future employment such as team working and adaptability. Discovering how to learn a language develops all sorts of important life skills that will serve your child well regardless of their future career choice.

I wasn't very good at languages in school. What can I do to help my child?

Language learning has been transformed in recent years. Amongst other activities your child is likely to be using new technologies to make language learning relevant and exciting. Of course you can play a supportive role in ways that do not require knowledge of other languages.

This can be achieved by:

- Encouraging and reassuring your child about learning another language
- Advising your child to ask their teacher for help whenever they need it
- Maintaining a positive attitude towards learning languages. Sometimes people can get ideas fixed in their mind about learning a new language. Please read through the Myth Busting section (below) with your child

Find out more:

To find out more about the research used to produce this leaflet and for further links relating to the language learning entitlement for all learners, please visit our website

<http://bit.ly/langentitlement>