

**Languages Network Group Scotland (LANGS)**  
**Minutes of meeting (held on Teams) on 16/03/2023**

**1. Welcome from Chair:**

Sylvia Georgin, chairing, welcomed everyone.

- Sylvia extended a particular welcome to new local authority reps joining for the first time today.
- Outlined purpose of LANGS for newcomers: more than just a group of local authority reps; a supportive environment for languages practitioners at any level.
- Many former LA reps are now returning to their original school posts but are still welcome and it is hoped they will continue to attend as their experience and contributions are greatly valued.
- Materials available on the [LANGS webpage](#).

**2. Keynote: John Paul Cassidy, HMI**

***Looking Inwards, Outwards and Forwards***

- [Slides available online](#).
- JPC shared a number of positives from recent inspections he's been involved in. Some outstanding examples of good practice, and all based on the old principles of reflect/evaluate/feedback/improve.
- There will be a new independent Inspectorate of Education. It will be separated off from Education Scotland, as will the SQA (2024). JPC will be IoE lead person for languages, focussing on:
  - learning, teaching and assessment
  - attainment and achievement
- The scope of inspections may widen to include Initial Teacher Education.
- There will be 'short' and 'full' models of inspection.
- As ever, they will be looking for evidence of planning, moderation (extent, and involving whom) across clusters.
- "Recipes for success" were shared, some examples included:
  - Shared expectations across the cluster.
  - No option to 'buy out of ML' during BGE.
  - Core choices involve 'deep learning' in at least the L2 to the end of the BGE.
  - Robust self-evaluation, including the quality of the teaching.
  - Narrowed, clear focus.
  - Teachers as genuine agents and leaders.
  - Systemic feedback.
  - Clear, robust grasp of moderation (what it is, and what it isn't); more than just summative assessment exemplars.
  - Embedding routines (progressively) in the target language in primaries.
  - Use of target language in both primary and secondary
  - The best BGE courses articulate with Senior Phase.
  - BGE is the 'last chance saloon' for topics. Senior Phase is more about application and complexity.
  - Consider use of CLIL.
  - Ensure sufficient allocated time to allow a balance of language learning **and** cultural appreciation
  - Capitalise on available digital technology.
  - Clear rationale for language learning:

- what they learn
- how they learn it
- making connections
- skills development
- Every teacher reflecting on their practice – PRDs, CLPL hooking in naturally with the SIP.
- Involve pupil voice, and make sure they know they're being heard.
- Opportunities for all to experience memorable, enjoyable & relevant cultural aspects.
- Collaboration between younger and older pupils.
- Teachers regularly looking *outwards* for good practice from elsewhere (other schools etc).
- See presentation slides for more detail: [Slides available online](#)
- **Executive Summary:**
  - **Look inwards:** *robust, regular, focussed self-evaluation.*
  - **Look outwards:** *a good grip of national standards and expectations.*
  - **Look forwards:** *use professional networks (such as LANGS) and community links. That way, everyone is mentored and supported: makes it systemic (appears to happen by magic) and sustainable.*

## 2a. Jamboard

- View the [Jamboard](#) contributed to by attendees.

## 2b. Post breakout discussions/questions:

- *Q: Are you seeing more embedding than 'topics'?*  
JPC: Yes and no. In best practice, there's a good balance. The most common 'improvement' messages we leave are to revisit/revise the curriculum: include more societal material, not just *l'argent de poche* again.
- *Q: What do you think about CLIL?*  
JPC: Great, when it's done well. Be brave and take risks.

## 3. Scottish Government update, Owen Griffiths:

- The annual survey of 1+2 implementation is out for completion; please return asap.
- The financial position is still tighter than things were in 2010; funding will continue but not directly to local authorities.
- Figures still to be finalised. There *are likely to be* reductions across the board. No reduction in funding should be seen as deprioritisation.
- The past 10+ years have **normalised** language learning, and that is a big achievement. We haven't quite reached 100%, but the saturation level is nonetheless pretty good.

## 4. Education Scotland update, Louise Glen:

- A special welcome to new members: good to have increased opportunities to hear practitioners' voice.
- Since last time, ES has been supporting local authorities and clusters; also working with Edinburgh and Strathclyde universities.
- *Fachtagdeutsch* at the Goethe-Institut have set up a national forum for German, looking to support and protect the teaching and learning of German. There will be another forum meeting in the summer; anyone interested in joining this, please let Louise know.
- Noted there has been a slight uptick in German learning/attainment statistics.

- The reform of the curricular support side of ES is under way. Officers, such as Louise now working in national directorate, rather than regionally.
- Learning, teaching and assessment focus on the Muir Report; looking at necessary updates to the curriculum and the response.
- One of the immediate changes is to ensure that ES has a more LA and teacher-facing role.
- Note that *anyone* can approach ES directly.
- If you are still offering German, make sure to nominate your [teacher of the year](#) (deadline 23 April).

#### 4a. Gaelic education update; Eoghan Stewart:

- [Slides available.](#)
- Useful links for Gaelic medium and Gaelic learner links; especially e-learning opportunities.

#### 5. SCILT & CISS updates:

[Slides available.](#)

- **Suzanne Ritchie, SCILT:**
  - Languages Week Scotland 2023 was very successful – [view Wakelet](#).
  - Upcoming, see [SCILT e-bulletin](#) for details:
    - Discovering the World of Arabic 2023-24.
    - Showcase of Ukrainian entries to MTOT poetry competition.
    - New professional learning menu launching before summer.
  - Ukrainian support at the Ramshorn continues.
  - Scotland's Languages Leadership Programme 2023-24 – [applications open](#).
- **Karen Liddle, CISS:**
  - See slide for recent highlights, including the celebration of Discovering China.
  - Coming soon:
    - [Discovering China](#).
    - [Eco learning partners](#): 6 primaries signed up, partnered with 6 primaries in China, beginning in the summer.
    - [An Adventure with Pandas](#): 19/04/2023, primaries and secondaries can sign up to a virtual tour of Edinburgh Zoo and a panda sanctuary in China.

#### 6. Just a minute updates from cultural organisations

- Philippe Milloux, Institut français:
  - [Slides available.](#)
  - Stats about French language worldwide.
  - Mois de la Francophonie en Ecosse.
- Javier Ramos, Consejería de Educación:
  - [Slides available.](#)
  - Activities offered, both face-to-face and online.
  - Professional development for Spanish teachers (primary & secondary), and immersion programme for secondary teachers.
  - Teaching materials at all levels.
- Elaine Buri, Goethe-Institut:
  - [Slides available.](#)
  - Professional Development opportunities.
  - Young Goethe Scheme.

- Deutsch Stunde.
- Gerry McIntosh, British Council:
  - [Slides available.](#)
  - Apply to host a Modern Language Assistant.
  - Making the case (to fundholders) for employing a MLA.
  - Involvement of MLAs in the Higher Education Sector, following a successful pilot with Strathclyde/UCMLS.
  - BC can visit schools, but please apply early.
  - Gerry McIntosh has been promoted to Project Management of Global Studies with BC, so this will be his last LANGS meeting. Gerry thanked everyone for their support over the years, and particularly for their solidarity with his (own) Ukrainian family. Congratulations offered by everyone on this well-deserved promotion.
  - Kay Turnbull will replace Gerry.
- See also updates from:
  - [World Gaelic Week.](#)
  - [Edinburgh College.](#)

**7. Sylvia Georgin concluded the meeting**

- Thanks to all who attended and participated.
- Date of next meeting will Friday 9 June 2023, more details to follow.