

Scotland's National Centre for Languages Newsletter

European Day of Languages 2023



Welcome to the SCILT newsletter

Editorial

Welcome colleagues to the Autumn/Winter 2023 edition of the SCILT newsletter.

As we approach the end of another term, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for the incredible work undertaken in our schools. You will find here examples of the rich tapestry of languages being learned, used, and spoken in our schools and communities. You will also find examples of how talented and determined colleagues are finding innovative ways of making languages come alive for our children and young people. The dedication and commitment you bring to your classrooms have a profound impact on our children and young people, and their futures.

This Autumn/Winter newsletter is an opportunity for us to reflect on the vital role of language skills and the significance of embracing multilingual approaches that celebrate and support all languages. In an increasingly interconnected world, language skills are more crucial than ever. They bridge cultures, facilitate communication, and open doors to a global future.

The SCILT team has been tirelessly working alongside educators across the country, and we are delighted to see the overwhelming positivity and enthusiasm with our profession to engage in continuous professional learning. It is this commitment that sets our community apart.

As for our young people, I am particularly pleased to see the continued expansion of the mentoring programme, 'Scotland's Language Explorers'. More schools than we initially anticipated have joined the programme, a testament to the growing awareness of the need to encourage learners to explore the benefits that language skills will bring to them beyond confines of the classroom and exam system. By nurturing these skills in our young people, we prepare them to flourish in a globally interconnected world. Reading the article, I was particularly struck by the comment of one young person who took part in the initial pilot.

"Languages are like the roots of a tree; we all have shared words that link us."

Given the utter horror of the violence that has been unleashed in the Middle East over the last few weeks, these words 'from the mouths of babes' seem all the more poignant. These 'shared words' are the threads that weave our global tapestry, they form the basis of our humanity, connecting people across cultures and continents. It is a message of hope and peace that people of violence and world leaders should heed.

Let's, therefore, continue to champion language skills, celebrate linguistic diversity, and inspire our learners to become global citizens who understand the profound importance of language. Together, we can nurture a generation of outward looking, globally connected people, who value humanity and can build a more socially just and peaceful world.

Wishing you all a wonderful Autumn/Winter season.



Fhiona Mackay, Director

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Languages beyond school

At the University of Strathclyde, SCILT has a number of partnerships with key organisations in Scotland, UK and further afield.



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Disclaimer - SCILT's newsletter is published twice a year and contains contributions from schools, local authorities and cultural organisations. It provides a forum for contributors to share some of the interesting work being carried out by the languages community across Scotland. SCILT, however, does not necessarily endorse or promote the practice described in these pages.

SCILT News

Espacios Increíbles final

On 24 May this year, SCILT was delighted to host the final of Espacios Increíbles at the University of Strathclyde. This was the first time the final had been in-person since the COVID-19 pandemic, and this certainly added to the excitement.

Espacios Increíbles is an interdisciplinary competition for S2-S3 which combines Spanish language with design and technology. Pupils design an 'amazing space' (espacios increíbles) and present their work in Spanish.

At the beginning of the packed programme, the six finalist schools were welcomed (Alva Academy, Dunblane High, Perth Academy, Prestwick Academy, St Andrew's and St Bride's High, and St Luke's High) and our comperes for the morning, Jack and Chiara, were introduced. We then heard from our keynote speaker, architect and creative director Becca Thomas, who

talked about some of her projects and the transferable skills gained through language learning.

When it was time for the finalists to deliver their presentations, St Luke's High came out top with their innovative design for a space for quiet reflection and relaxation in the courtyard of Santo Domingo Church in Lima, Peru. Their design was inspired by San Martín de Porres, who is the Patron Saint of Racial Equality and is buried there.

The other five finalists also did a fantastic job. The brief was for a sustainable space for health and wellbeing and the variety of creative designs met this brief. They included a water tower providing clean drinking water, a library and coffee shop, a hot air balloon raising awareness of climate change, a cube promoting biodiversity, and a health centre for the disadvantaged.

All the finalists enjoyed the final and the opportunity to present their designs to a live audience. They participated in some lively Spanish activities while the judges made their decision, making it a very enjoyable and inspiring morning to end a year of hard work.

Karen Liddle, SCILT



Explorathon 23: Getting creative with languages and art!

On 30 September 2023, the Multilingualism through Art (MtA) team hosted a stand at the Riverside Museum, Glasgow as part of this year's Explorathon extravaganza. The Explorathon programme in Scotland is brought together through a partnership between the University of Aberdeen, University of Glasgow, University of St Andrews and University of Strathclyde. The series of events is designed to showcase research, making it real, visible and accessible to all members of the public. This year did not disappoint; it was everything we had hoped for and more!

Set within the backdrop of trams, trains and transport from bygone days, the MtA stand was set with art-making materials including paint for members of the public to engage in creative activities that explored languages and art. Demand was such that throughout the event we

had a continuous flow of children (and some adults) engaged with our activities. In total over 100 language portraits and language boats were created. We even had to lay some artwork around museum exhibits as the drying rack was full!

It was wonderful to meet so many children and families, and for them to share their language stories with us through the art activities. One child, who is learning French at school, explained to me the significance of the colour orange within his language portrait. He said orange made him think about autumn in Scotland, and that the French word for autumn is similar to English. Another child explained why her portrait also included orange. She told me a lady she knows, who reads stories in Polish, has orange hair, hence the inclusion of orange in the portrait.

Whether they were writing a message on a language boat or expressing their linguistic repertoire in language portraits, it was fabulous to see so much engagement in and enthusiasm for languages. Indeed, some children were switching between languages when discussing their work with their family members, and it was heartwarming to witness so much family engagement with languages and art simultaneously. Hopefully we'll be able to return next year with our paint, paper and brushes for more fun with languages and art! Keep an eye out for updates in the SCILT weekly e-bulletin!

You can find out more about the event on the [Explorathon](#) website.

Karen Faulds, SCILT



Believe in children
Barnardo's

SCILT Scotland's National Centre for Languages

Do you want to know more about Scotland's Education System and what this means for your children/young people?

I am worried about my child what can I do?
'How can I best support my child's learning?
What is my child learning at school?
How does my young person get a place at college or university in Scotland?
What exams does my young person need to do at school and why?

Scottish Education Information Event
Thursday 15th June 2023

The Ramshorn,
8 Ingram Street,
University of Strathclyde,
Glasgow,
G1 1EX

Nursery/Primary Education Session – 11am – 12pm

Market Place with Education Professionals & Barnardo's – to gather additional information and ask questions – 12pm – 1pm

Secondary/Higher Education Session – 1pm – 2.30pm

Market Place with Education Professionals & Barnardo's – to gather additional information and ask questions – 2.30pm – 3.30pm

Form for the registration:



SCILT/Barnardo's information day for Ukrainian families

With the war in Ukraine continuing, SCILT is supporting those refugees who have made Scotland their home over the past 18 months. We understand the challenges that new Scots can face in a new country, including language barriers and cultural differences, so SCILT continues to offer English classes to Ukrainian nationals every week, and has been involved in various partnership projects to support their integration into Scottish society.

On 15 June 2023, SCILT joined forces with our partners at Barnardo's to offer an information day to support Ukrainian parents and carers who are now living in Scotland, having been displaced by the war, to help them navigate the Scottish education system and best support their young people.

Presentations were given on early years, primary, secondary and higher education. Lots of information was provided about the structure of education, the values and principles underpinning Scottish education, and the support available. Between sessions, a variety of people were on hand to offer individual support and answer questions. Interpreters, EAL specialists, SAAS representatives, staff from Barnardo's who work with refugees, and educators from primary, secondary and higher education were all able to provide support.

Karen Liddle, SCILT

Language Ambassadors online

SCILT's Language Ambassadors Programme provides learners in schools with the experience of meeting students who are studying a language as part of their university degree. It has run in various forms for several years now. Beginning as a collaboration of in-person visits with the University of Strathclyde, it evolved of necessity during Covid into an online programme, again with Strathclyde, then into a hybrid model with the University of Stirling as well as Strathclyde.

To reach as many learners as possible and to ensure that schools all over the country can benefit from the experience, no matter their proximity to a university, the programme has relaunched this year!

From session 2023-24, we are offering interactive Language Ambassador Online monthly sessions, led by a different group of students each time. These sessions are designed to promote languages to young people and to encourage learners to choose languages as part of their learning experience by hearing directly from near-peer role models. Language Ambassadors are students of

various languages, on a range of degree programmes, who are keen to share their experiences of learning languages and discovering new cultures.

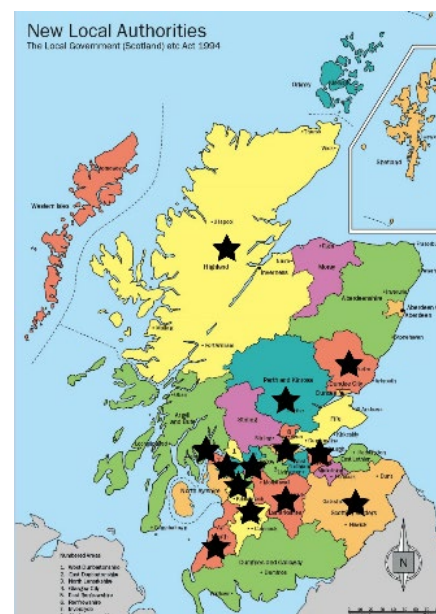
Our first session was held on European Day of Languages and was led by students from Stirling and Strathclyde studying degrees including law, marketing and business. Almost 30 schools attended, and feedback was incredibly positive. The students involved were fantastic; one even beamed in live from his year abroad in Spain! The map shows where schools joined from.

At the time of writing, we are about to hold our second session, led by students from St Andrews. Sessions are planned for each month until March and are suitable for any age group. For more information and to book to bring your class(es) along, see our [Language Ambassador Programme](#) webpage.

In addition to our online programme, some universities can offer in-person Language Ambassador visits to individual schools throughout the year.

These are arranged directly between schools and universities; a list of contacts for this can be found on the programme webpage.

Sheena Bell, SCILT



Multilingualism through Art: New online gallery launches

On 8 June 2023, we were delighted to welcome pupils, families, teachers and other educators to our online event to celebrate the work of the Multilingual Approaches through Art (MtA) project. This project, funded by the Glasgow Knowledge Exchange Fund (GKEF), and in collaboration with the University of Glasgow, University of Strathclyde and Bilingualism Matters, allowed the MtA team to work alongside teachers from 10 primary schools across Scotland, engaging more than 200 learners. The project's focus was to explore creative pedagogies to support languages (home and taught), and language learning in the primary classroom.

During the event, attendees heard from members of the MtA team including Professor Antonella Sorace from Bilingualism Matters, Dr Lavinia Hirsu (University of Glasgow) and Jane Catlin (University of Strathclyde). In addition to this, there was an opportunity to hear from some of the teachers who took part in the project and for them to share the impact that this project has had on them and their learners. One teacher commented:

“This has been a very worthwhile and enjoyable project to be part of. It was interesting to look at languages in a different way and gave me lots of ideas about how to open up languages that we already have in the classroom from the children. It has been great to give the children a chance to use and share their native languages and make connections between them through the medium of art.”

The event itself was the perfect opportunity to unveil the new online gallery showcasing the artworks created by the children. There are over 100 exhibits on show, each with a descriptor from the artist. The artworks include language portraits, a snail calligram, Exquisite Corpse and many others that explore idiomatic expressions. The gallery highlights the many ways in which languages and language learning can be explored through the medium of art, and it is wonderful to see so much thought and creativity on display. Thank you to all the teachers and children who took part.

For more information about the project and to access the online gallery, please visit the [SCILT website](#). Happy browsing!

Karen Faulds, SCILT



Positive vibes

“I honestly enjoyed being part of a community which is interested and passionate about the same thing. You could really pick up the positive vibe towards languages in the conversations.”

This is exactly the kind of response we love receiving from teachers who take part in SCILT workshops, and as our professional learning offer for primary and early years practitioners continues to diversify, we are delighted with this encouragement.

For 2023-24, the SCILT primary and early years team is offering multiple menus, new networks, and varied formats for teachers to choose from, no matter where they are in terms of geographical location or career stage:

Open Access: Monthly online workshops on different topics. Registration is open to individual educators.

Menu 1 - group bookings: Requests from whole-school, cluster, local authority or RIC language and/or professional learning leads, at any point in the year, for groups of colleagues.

Menu 2 - group bookings for early career teachers (ECTs): Requests from Initial Teacher Education colleagues and local authority probationer supporters for subject-specific workshops tailored for groups of primary education students, new and recently qualified primary teachers.

Languages in early years learning community: for individual early years and early primary practitioners.

ON THE HORIZON - Languages in primary ECT network: The network will launch in Languages Week Scotland 2024 and is for individual student, newly or recently qualified primary teachers. Find full details of all SCILT's group and individual workshops on our [Professional Learning](#) webpage

SCILT is offering more opportunities than ever before for school-based teachers to share current practice and inspire their peers. Between September 2023 and March 2024, at our Open Access workshops, educators from across Scotland will talk about how they give a languages-twist to digital tools, family engagement, cluster working, cultural and linguistic diversity celebrations, multilingual pedagogies and outdoor learning.

If you are keen to snag yourself a presenter gig at a SCILT event, why not be part of our Show and Tell for primary and early years colleagues in May 2024? Drop us a line to secure your slot – the sooner the better! Email scilt@strath.ac.uk with any queries.

Lynne Jones, SCILT



Professional learning for secondary



At SCILT, supporting languages teachers across the country through delivering the very best professional learning that we can is at the very heart of our purpose. It is also something that we in team secondary love to do! We never fail to learn something from the teachers we meet and the discussions we have.

Much of the professional learning we deliver comes from our workshop menu, which you can see on our [Professional Learning](#) webpage. However, rarely do we deliver a workshop exactly according to the descriptions shown! We tailor all our workshops to the needs and requests of the group in question each time. Indeed, we regularly deliver bespoke workshops on topics not covered in the menu but that fit with school or local authority priorities. Whatever you would like, we will do our best to deliver – just ask!

Workshops on the menu are usually booked by a teacher/development officer on behalf of their department, cluster or local authority. Due to our capacity, these are generally online, although for larger authority/RIC-level events we may be able to deliver in person. Again, just ask!

In addition to our menu, we also deliver our annual Big Question series. This consists of four workshops, with fantastic guest presenters, held in the summer term and open to any individual, to sign up to as many or as few as they wish. This year, these workshops looked at each of the four skill areas and we were delighted to welcome Robbie Kirk, Liegha Laing, Scott Jordan and Joanne Curran as our guests. Thank you to all of them for their fantastic input. Watch this space for the theme for 2024 – it's already in the planning!

New for this session is our offer of professional learning and ongoing support for Early Career Teachers. This is through bookable workshops and through monthly drop-in Language Cafés. Details of when and how to join are on the [SCILT website](#); bring a coffee and come and say ciao!

We are always open to suggestions for workshops or input. I may have said this before; just ask!

Sheena Bell, SCILT

The screenshot shows the SCILT website's 'Professional learning' page. The page has a purple header with the SCILT logo and navigation links for Primary, S1-S3, Senior Phase, Employment, Beyond School, and Parents. Below the header, the page title is 'Professional learning' and the sub-header is 'Professional Learning Partnerships'. The main content area features a yellow background with several testimonials from attendees, such as 'It was succinct and gave teachers opportunities to compare experiences and share ideas' and 'An excellent range of interactive approaches and resources to provide stimulating and simple lessons'. Below the testimonials, there is a section titled 'Professional Learning Opportunities' which lists seven categories: 1. Workshops for authorities, clusters or schools - group bookings; 2. Workshops for student and early career teachers - group bookings; 3. Scotland's Languages Leadership Programme; 4. Professional Learning Partnerships; 5. Online professional learning - open to individuals; 6. Online professional learning for student and early career teachers - open to individuals; 7. Additional opportunities. A video player is also visible, showing a thumbnail for 'SCILT's CLPL OPPORTUNITIES' with a 'Watch on YouTube' button.

Scotland's Language Explorers Programme

SCILT is excited to announce the national roll-out of Scotland's first languages mentoring scheme!

Scotland's Languages Explorers Programme is based on the innovative work carried out at the University of Cardiff to develop the MFL Mentoring scheme. The success of this scheme has inspired the establishment of similar programmes in other home nations, which has led to an increase in the number of learners continuing with languages into higher levels of study.

Piloted last year in collaboration with colleagues in the Northern Alliance and the University Council for Languages Scotland, Scotland's Languages

Explorers Programme aims to raise awareness of the far-reaching benefits of language learning and inspire a long-lasting passion for language learning amongst secondary-age learners.

Mentoring sessions are led by students from universities across Scotland with lived experiences of language learning and multiculturalism. Giving small, discrete groups of mentees the time to explore the bigger picture of language learning with a trained, supportive student mentor offers young people the chance to see for themselves, prior to making their course choices, why learning a language is such an essential skill in today's global world.

Over a period of six weeks, small groups of learners in S2 or S3 meet online with their volunteer student mentor, who discusses with their younger counterparts topics such as multilingualism, cultural awareness and transferable skills, and demonstrates the intercultural and global competencies that are developed through language learning.

Feedback from last year's mentees was positive. As the young people themselves told us:

"Languages are like the roots of a tree; we all have shared words that link us." - learner from The Gordon Schools, Aberdeenshire

"I learned that English language borrows words from other languages and that fascinates me." - learner from Lochside Academy, Aberdeen

"Being able to speak to a wide range of people means that I will have the widest number of opportunities open to me." - learner from Inverurie Academy, Aberdeenshire

Similarly, our student mentors reported that they were enthused by the curiosity and energy of the young people.

The programme has given them an opportunity to engage in mentorship training and to develop their leadership and employability skills. Crucially, it has provided them with an insight into working with young people, which has sparked interest for some of the students in pursuing a teaching career.

For more information about Scotland's Languages Explorers Programme, and to read about SCILT's school-university liaison opportunities, please visit the [SCILT website](#).

Suzanne Ritchie, SCILT



The screenshot shows the SCILT website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'Primary', 'S1-S3', 'Senior Phase', 'Employment', 'Beyond School', and 'Parents'. The 'Beyond School' section is highlighted in a purple banner. Below the banner, the text reads: 'The 'Beyond School' section of the SCILT website covers language learning options available post-secondary education.' The main heading is 'Scotland's Languages Explorers Programme'. The content includes a description of the SLEP programme, its partnership with seven universities, and a video player for 'Why become a mentor? Languages Explorers Programme 2023-24'. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Information for interested schools' and 'Information for interested mentors'.

Scottish Languages Employability Award

The Scottish Languages Employability Award (SLEA) is going from strength to strength!

In May, SCILT was very excited to receive the highest number of submissions for any deadline since the Award launched in 2019. This verification round saw 11 submissions – one primary and 10 secondary. Awards issued were:

- three bronze awards (Castlebrae Community Campus, Larkhall Academy and Wallace High)
- four silver awards (Loudoun Academy, Milne's High, Montrose Academy and Toryglen Primary)
- three gold awards (Buckie Community High, Larbert High and St Peter the Apostle High)
- one successive gold, meaning that this school gained a platinum award (Bishopbriggs Academy)

Huge congratulations to all our winners! You can read all about their fantastic work on the [SCILT website](#).

The handbook and application form are also on the website. If these submissions have inspired you, why not consider your own project? The next deadline for submissions is Friday 17 May 2024.

SLEA Local

The SLEA family has grown! SCILT has developed the SLEA Local, which provides a model for in-school events, organised at a wider, local level by teachers, DYW officers or cluster leads. It recognises and rewards employability-focused partnerships at this wider level and its key aim is to encourage and support the development of partnership activities involving several schools within a local area or network.

The first recipients of this Award are Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce and DYW Ayrshire together with 16 local schools who ran an online event with the Franco British Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Paris.

Read more about their exciting initiative, and about the award in general, on our

[SLEA Local](#) webpage and then consider applying with your own network!

Coming soon

Look out for a new arrival to the SLEA family, SLEA Green, focusing on partnerships with a global citizenship/sustainable focus: watch this space!

Sheena Bell, SCILT



SCOTTISH
LANGUAGES
EMPLOYABILITY
AWARD
DUAIS FASADH
CÀNAINÈAN NA H-ALBA



SCOTTISH
LANGUAGES
EMPLOYABILITY
AWARD
DUAIS FASADH
CÀNAINÈAN NA H-ALBA
LOCAL - IONADAIL



SCOTTISH
LANGUAGES
EMPLOYABILITY
AWARD
DUAIS FASADH
CÀNAINÈAN NA H-ALBA
GREEN - UAINE

Scotland's Languages Leadership Programme: SLLP alumni network under construction

Since it began in 2014, nearly 400 educators have completed the national languages leadership professional learning programme, run by SCILT and Education Scotland. Just like Dr Who, the programme has regenerated several times, but its central aim has remained the same – to build leadership capacity in languages education in all sectors and across the country.

The programme's 10th anniversary is on the horizon, and in February 2024 the programme team will launch a fully-fledged alumni network to bring the whole TTT/LLP family together again. One aim is to (re)connect friends, colleagues and peers who are leading, teaching and championing languages in primary, secondary and special education settings across Scotland,

another is to undertake professional learning and development opportunities together.

The timeframe is as follows:

Languages Week Scotland 2024: registration opens for the SLLP Alumni Network launch event

End of February 2024: SLLP Alumni Network launch event and applications open for SLLP 2024-25

March 2024: SLLP 2024-25 information session for future alumni-in-the-making

Look out for more details nearer the time on all the usual SCILT and Education Scotland communication channels.

Lynne Jones, SCILT



Voices of Hope – Poetry from the new Scots children of Ukraine

Last year's [Mother Tongue, Other Tongue](#) competition attracted several entries from Ukrainian young people who had recently become refugees living in Scotland, displaced by the war in Ukraine. Written in both Ukrainian and Russian, these poems were, by turns, emotional, moving, poignant, insightful and funny. We wanted to create an exhibition to capture the spirit and experiences of these new Scots Ukrainian young people. We wanted to show displaced Ukrainian people that their voices are heard and valued and that they reach out, across and beyond Scotland, to touch friends and family in other parts of the world, including Ukraine. Within Scotland's borders, these poems offer their peers the chance to understand what their new friends are experiencing.

Along with our partners at the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain (AUGB) Glasgow branch, which serves as an information and support hub for Ukrainian refugees, we created 'Voices of Hope – Poetry from the New Scots Children of

Ukraine'. This online exhibition serves as a platform to showcase the moving work of these Ukrainian children and young people. Launched as part of the [Refugee Festival Scotland 2023](#), 'Voices of Hope' aspires to raise awareness of the experiences, sorrows, hopes and dreams of the children whose poems are showcased here.

On Wednesday 21 June 2023, SCILT and the AUGB hosted an event to celebrate the launch of this exhibition at the Ramshorn building in Glasgow's Merchant City. The event provided the opportunity to celebrate the work of Ukrainian children and young people and for their teachers, parents, and the wider community to come together in solidarity and peace.

The launch commenced with opening remarks from SCILT and CISS Director Fhiona Mackay, who welcomed everyone and spoke warmly about the young poets' courage and resilience. Attendees were then treated to a viewing of the exhibition,

an inspiring showcase of children and young people's poetry, highlighting their creativity and powers of expression.

The video wall of poems can be viewed on the [Voices of Hope](#) exhibition webpage on SCILT's website. We hope you enjoy them!

Suzanne Ritchie, SCILT



Words for the World

SCILT's Words for the World competition was inspired by a quote from the inspirational young Pakistani education activist Malala Yousafzai, who said "We must believe in the power and the strength of our words. Our words can change the world."

The competition started just before the COP26 event in November 2021. The aim of the competition is for young learners, from P1 through to S6, to think and write in a language other than English about how they think the world can be a better place, fostering their development as global citizens, and encouraging them to think about their role in the world and the impact that their words can have.

The second iteration of the competition took place at the start of this year, launching in January and culminating in a live final awards ceremony on 25 April to tie in with Earth Day.

This year we received entries in 20 different languages from Gaelic to Greek, French to Filipino, Polish to Pashto! This is a beautiful reflection of the rich diversity of Scotland's languages landscape.

There were over 100 separate entries from individuals, groups and whole classes, from across the country and from both state and independent schools. Learners used and developed multiple skills in their entries, including teamwork, literacy, planning, creativity and digital skills. Issues covered were around climate change and concern for the future of our planet, racism, the need for peace, and very personal messages of hope for countries around the world which have a special place in learners' hearts. Many powerful messages were shared.

At the awards event we saw all the wonderful, shortlisted entries and heard from the judging panel. We were also delighted to receive an inspiring personal



video message from Len Pennie, well-known Scottish poet and Scots language and mental health advocate, which spoke of the huge difference that all our words can make.

You can see all the shortlisted entries and watch Len's fantastic message on our [Words for the World 2023 Awards](#) webpage.

Look out for a Words for the World challenge launching in Languages Week Scotland 2024 (29 January to 2 February), and for the return of the full competition in January 2025!

Sheena Bell, SCILT

European Day of Languages

Banchory-Devenick School

Our Rights Respecting Schools group asked if we could adapt European Languages Day to include all the different countries that are represented in our school, and so our School Cultures Week was born. We kicked off the week with the children coming to school dressed in either their national costume or the colours of their flag. During the week, parents came in and read traditional stories from their countries, sometimes in English and sometimes in their mother tongue. One of the most popular events from the week was the food tasting. We got to sample delicacies from: France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Scotland, England, Portugal, Norway, Canada, Zambia and Hong Kong/China. Throughout the week, we learned greetings and about the flags of the different countries. We ended the week with a fun scavenger hunt. This was a fabulous project as it enthused the children about language and their own heritage. It was great for parental engagement, and we even managed to tie the project into our bid to become a Gold Level Reading School.

Karen Downie, Banchory-Devenick School



Burgh Primary



On Friday 6 October, we celebrated European Day of Languages at Burgh Primary. Our P6 language ambassadors organised lots of great language activities. They ran workshops in French and Spanish for all the other classes and created a video about the languages we speak in our school. There was also a quiz to test how much we knew about European Day of Languages!

In the morning, P1-2, P2-3 and P3-4 learned French vocabulary and enjoyed a visit to our French café. P4-5, P5, P6 and P7 learned Spanish and visited our Spanish café. There was also a chance to get a photo in our French/Spanish photo booth.

Each class took part in an arts/craft activity to learn more about Spanish and French culture. P4-5 learned about La Tomatina festival and created posters. P6 learned about the artist, Salvador Dali, and drew self-portraits with a Dali inspired moustache. P3-4 learned about the Eiffel Tower and created their own versions out of paper straws.

In the afternoon, parents/carers and families joined us for a European café. Each class learned a song in Spanish or French to perform for parents at the café. Songs included La Bamba, Frères Jacques, un Poco Loco and Alouette. Our pupils, staff, friends and families had a wonderful day celebrating Spanish and French language, culture, and food. Une journée magnifique! ¡Un día magnífico!

Heather Wiggins, Burgh Primary

Lochside Academy

This year's European Day of Languages saw the first of Lochside Academy's off-timetable days for S1, to promote and celebrate a love of learning a language as well as raise students' cultural awareness of European countries' traditions.

Workshops included: An introduction to the European Day of Languages, cultural awareness quiz, geography challenge, European football tournament, poetry challenge and finally, an Ibiza dance party!

Values focused on throughout the day were ambition, support, perseverance, integrity, respect and equality. S1 students engaged well with the day and created some fantastic poems on the value of equality in Europe.

1st place poem – Equality in Europe

All across Europe are so many places, you look around so many new faces.

It's important to us to know we're so different
Different hair, different clothes,
Different skin, different toes.

There's about 200 different languages
We need to learn to unite as one.

We're from different places and different homes but we all live in Europe.

So in the end we can stay in peace and take care of all.

Lauren Coates, Lochside Academy



News from local authorities

Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Thornliebank

In August 2023, Gaelic Medium Education (GME) was introduced in East Renfrewshire with its first GME provision – Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Thornliebank – at Thornliebank Primary. Thornliebank is a well-established school and has a strong and diverse community, and we are looking forward to building on this. Gaelic language and culture are on offer as an additional learning experience for all pupils in the school, and GME is an option for learners from across the authority.

Around 20 languages are spoken across the vibrant school community. All learners in the school and nursery have French experiences as L2 and P5-7 enjoy Urdu as L3. We are now building on this by introducing Gaelic to all learners through school assemblies,

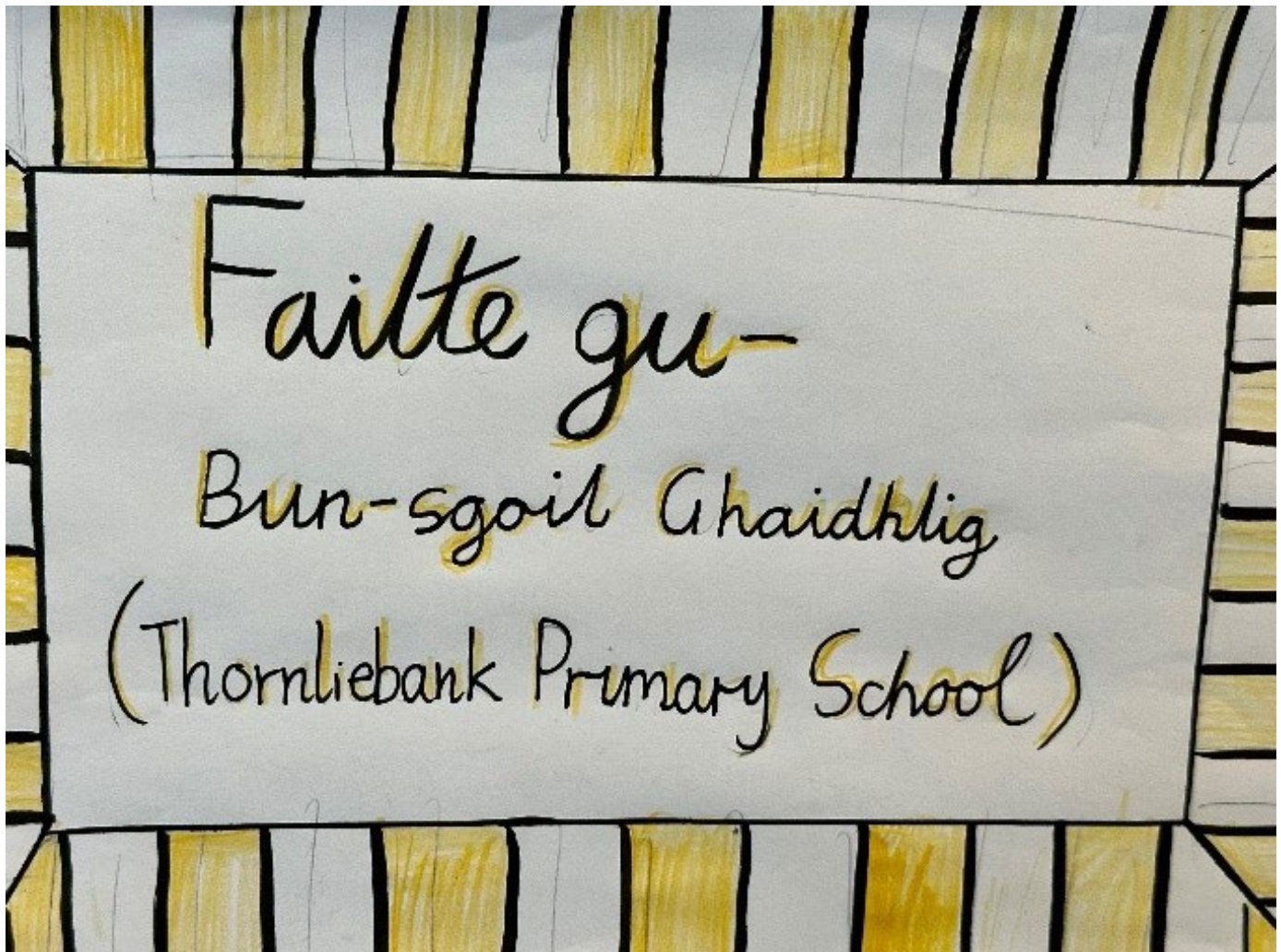
signage around the school and focus days and weeks. Our Gaelic teacher and learners are embracing opportunities to lead learning, through story and song during nursery sessions and at P1-3 assemblies. Our Gaelic Principal Teacher is running a languages and culture club with further opportunities to learn about languages, cultures and to shape wider school events.

Working in partnership and building links – with families, the wider community and other organisations – will be key to our success. Class 1 learners will have opportunities to visit other GME schools and benefit from seeing and using Gaelic in a different environment. Further to this, links are being made with libraries and parent groups to raise the profile of Gaelic and build an active



multilingual community. As GME in the area develops in the coming years, we look forward to Gaelic becoming part of the Thornliebank Primary and Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Thornliebank identity.

Adam McColgan-Smith and Joanna Paterson, East Renfrewshire



Chryston German teacher Robbie is among the best in the UK

Congratulations to Chryston High's Robbie Kirk on being named one of the best teachers of German in the UK. Robbie received the German Teacher Award at the German Embassy in London in recognition of his innovative teaching which has made such a positive impact on pupils.

He also won the Peter Boaks Prize in 2013, which recognises outstanding work in teaching German by teachers at the beginning of their career. Robbie is the first teacher to have won both awards.

The Chryston teacher was presented with his award by the German Ambassador to the UK, Miguel Berger, and UK Schools Minister, Nick Gibb, who was guest of honour at the ceremony.

The event was attended by teachers, head teachers, representatives from the education and language teaching sectors, business and media from across the UK, as well as Axel Scheffler, who illustrates Julia Donaldson's children's books.

Ambassador Berger said: "These awards are about celebrating all the hard work that all of you put into every single day – in your lessons as well as your many other activities such as school trips, competitions, lunchtime German clubs, and language festivals. "The Award is our way of expressing our gratitude and appreciation, and it is dedicated to you and to the whole German-teaching community in the UK.

"You have gone above and beyond to create an engaging and supportive learning environment, inspiring your students to excel and fostering their love for the German language. "The German Consulate General commends your exceptional work and wishes you continued success in all your future endeavours."

Robbie is ecstatic to have won this prestigious award: "I am truly honoured to have been recognised for the German Teacher Award. It was a huge surprise, and I was rendered somewhat speechless... not usually a problem. Having been a huge advocate for German throughout my teaching career

and having had the chance to expand that within my own learning community, as well as working across other local authorities, this isn't just a recognition of me as a teacher; it's for the language community of Scotland and, more importantly, the German teaching family.

"German is not only a beautiful language, but also an important one for young people to know and be able to use as we continue to strengthen economic and cultural ties with Germany, the UK's most important trading partner, and the political powerhouse of the EU.

"I would also like to thank my colleagues and the young people at Chryston, who I get the privilege of working with every day, as well as the Austrian Cultural Forum and North Lanarkshire Council for their generosity."

North Lanarkshire Council



Languages Day at Hamilton College

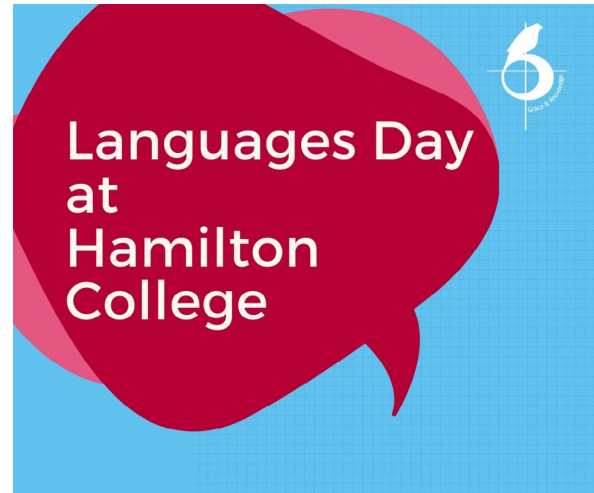
On Friday 8 September 2023, Hamilton College in Lanarkshire hosted its first ever Languages Day. The aim of this event was to inform pupils of the wide-ranging opportunities that learning a language can provide, and we were delighted to be joined by guest speakers from a range of organisations including BayWa r.e. UK Ltd, Goethe-Institut Glasgow, The University of Glasgow and SAC Consulting.

Around 180 pupils participated in the event. While all our S4-S6 language learners were given the opportunity to attend, we also welcomed groups of learners from Dalziel, Coltness, St John Ogilvie and Holy Cross High Schools.

After a short welcome speech from our Head Teacher, our Head of English and Languages and our Language Ambassadors led a talk on the benefits of language learning with a specific focus on seven of the most taught

additional languages: French, German, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Mandarin and Italian. They were followed by our keynote speakers: Sarah and Jenni from BayWa r.e. who spoke about the advantages of having language skills in the renewable energy sector.

After a short break, learners had the opportunity to take part in some workshops. Six different workshops were on offer, and pupils chose which three workshops they would like to complete. One of the most popular workshops was 'An introduction to Latin', and it was very encouraging to see how pupils who, prior to this, had had little exposure to the classical world, embraced this opportunity. Untranslatable words, and the usefulness of German in the world of work are further examples of the topics that were considered in these workshops, and we were deeply encouraged by how engaged the learners were.



Our Languages Day was a great success, and we look forward to hosting Languages Day 2024!

David Black, Hamilton College

Making international connections

In May and June this year, five groups of secondary learners and their teachers spent a week each in various locations in France and Spain. These immersive trips supported international education and global citizenship and were organised in partnership with LFEE, with funding from the Turing Scheme.

The trips were an important element in the collaborative work that had been undertaken throughout last session, with each of our Scottish school groups sharing cultural insights and applying their language skills in both digital and

traditional written exchanges with their partner schools in Carcassonne, St André, Millas, Valencia and Llíria. Learners applied their language skills to create videos, write about important landmarks, share traditional recipes and to find out about the local culture around their partner school. This allowed many more pupils than just those participating in the trips to engage in this cultural and linguistic exchange, and to build confidence in communicating with real purpose.

For those who did travel to meet our partners, they enjoyed rich programmes which allowed for mutual language learning and sharing of cultural heritage. Experiences included a farm-to-fork paella making experience, music workshops and performances, walking tours led by Spanish/French pupils, talking and listening market challenges, presentations about our local area and aspects of Scottish culture, Scottish country dancing workshops, and observing and participating in the school day.

Learners' feedback has been extremely positive, and teachers, parents and the learners themselves recognise the impact these experiences have had, including an increased confidence in speaking French/Spanish; an improved understanding of the benefits of language learning and an appetite to study, travel and work abroad; new and strengthened friendships; a consolidated sense of learners' individual identity. Moving forward, we wish to sustain these unique learning opportunities. Our schools plan to maintain these international partnerships in a variety of ways, with reciprocal visits a possibility.

Joanna Paterson, East Renfrewshire



Meta-skills

What a hectic and enjoyable term we've had at Braeview Academy. We have been consolidating our learning across the curriculum whilst developing our literacy and meta-skills.

In the BGE, we have been developing our meta-skills of creativity, collaboration, leadership, initiative and,



of course, communication! Learners in the BGE have used our playground as a jotter, created and played games to consolidate their learning, and designed and used fortune tellers to support paired-speaking. Some of our S3 classes have entered the world of flipped learning and are using self-access resources to apply their learning in context.

In our senior phase, we have been studying the context of learning, and it is often said that we learn more when teaching others. This term, Kai Smith in S4 has been taking the lead in the classroom and here's what he has to say about it.

What activity did you lead? "I led lots of different activities; my first on school and opinions, and we looked for the word we already know to then answer the questions that were asked. The second activity I led was matching

up French to English and I did lots more too! My favourite activities to lead are match ups because they are competitive."

How did you find being the teacher? "I really enjoyed it as it pushed me out of my comfort zone, and I really enjoyed doing it in one of my favourite subjects. This also gave me the opportunity to demonstrate the school values and the expectations in the department by being responsible, safe, and ambitious."

Can you use these skills going forward? "It really helped to develop my employability skills because when I leave school, I want to be a primary teacher, and I feel I can teach the kids French because of having the opportunity to practise and receive advice in the Modern Languages department."

Miss Wells, Miss Walker and Kai Smith (S4 pupil), Braeview Academy

台湾旅行 Taiwan Trip

去年六月，我有了令人激动的机会，为期十天在台湾学习台湾的文化。

Last June, I had the exciting opportunity to learn about Taiwanese culture in Taiwan for 10 days.

我和其他的交换生坐了客车前往格拉斯哥机场，然后出发前往桃园机场。

Other exchange students and I took a bus to Glasgow Airport and then set off for Taoyuan Airport.

飞行时间非常长！我们在飞机上度过了九个小时。

The flight was very long! We spent nine hours on the plane.

因为我们参观了不同的城市，所以我们住了在三家不同的酒店。

Because we visited different cities, we stayed in three different hotels.

在台湾，我们参观了许多有名的名胜古迹，餐馆，公园，寺庙和博物馆。例如，我们参观了故宫博物院的展览。我们还去了台南的一所中学，在那里我们与台湾的学生见面。

In Taiwan, we visited many famous places of interest, restaurants, parks, temples and museums. For example, we visited an exhibition at the Palace Museum. We also went to a middle school in Tainan where we met with students from Taiwan.

我觉得除了这些学习机会非常有用之外，待在一个中文国家的时间也鼓励人们更多地学习中文。

I feel that in addition to these learning opportunities being very useful, spending time in a Chinese-speaking country also encourages people to learn more about the Chinese language.

Kuba Skarzynski (S5 pupil), Castlebrae Community Campus



News from our partners

Another year fantastique for the Higher and Advanced Higher French online workshops

For the second year in a row, the Higher and Advanced Higher French online workshops, funded by the Franco-Scottish Society and delivered by Edinburgh College, took place on a national scale from September 2022 to March 2023. Thanks to the collaboration between various stakeholders (including SCILT), these workshops attracted even more pupils than in 2021-22, with 65 pupils signing up from 32 secondary schools across Scotland.

Each pupil had the opportunity to take part in three workshops with themes such as les médias or la société multiculturelle. The workshops used engaging teaching materials and activities to improve pupils' speaking skills by allowing them to produce increasingly complex sentences.

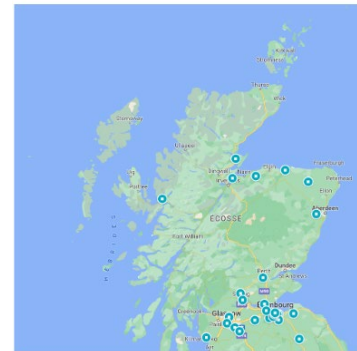
The participants also benefited from an individual speaking exam

practice session with personalised feedback and, due to demand, the Advanced Higher pupils were given the opportunity of a second one-to-one session.

Pupils appreciated the positive impact of the workshops on their French and the opportunity to meet fellow French enthusiasts from other Scottish schools. Teachers described how the sessions greatly boosted pupils' speaking confidence.

The tremendous success of the workshops demonstrates the effectiveness of online delivery for outreach projects, as well as the benefits of close collaboration between different stakeholders, to provide fairer access to additional language support for pupils in the senior phase.

Caroline Cordier, Edinburgh College



Participating schools

1. Bishopbriggs Academy
2. Boroughmuir High School
3. Buckie High School
4. Clyde Valley High School
5. Craigmount High School
6. Currie Community High School
7. Drummond CHS
8. Earliston High School
9. Firrhill High School
10. Fortrose Academy
11. Fortrose Academy
12. Holyrood RC High School
13. Holyrood Secondary School
14. Kilwinning Academy
15. Knox Academy
16. Larkhall Academy
17. Lasswade High School
18. Perth Academy
19. Plotkton High School
20. Portobello High School
21. Queen Victoria School
22. Queensferry High School
23. St John Ogilvie
24. St Kentigern's Academy
25. St Mary's Music School
26. St Modans High School
27. St Thomas of Aquin's
28. Tain Royal Academy
29. The Royal High School
30. Turrif Academy
31. Westhill Academy
32. Woodmill High School



Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the principal public body in Scotland responsible for promoting Gaelic development, has recently appointed Sian Baldwin as its new Development Officer (Teachers). Sian's focus is on offering support to Gaelic teachers, promoting Gaelic teaching as a career, and encouraging Gaelic speakers and qualified teachers to work in the Gaelic education sector.

Through visits to schools, colleges and universities across Scotland, Sian provides advice on the various routes into teaching in Gaelic Medium Education (GME) and the benefits and employment opportunities Gaelic can offer. In collaboration with Skills Development Scotland and Developing the Young Workforce, Sian also attends careers fairs and events, and she can be contacted by schools or institutions interested in promoting Gaelic careers.

Sian will host four online Gaelic training sessions, with input from other organisations, to support newly qualified teachers during the 2023-24 session.

Previous years' sessions have included input from Education Scotland, Stòrlann Nàiseanta, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skills Development Scotland and a range of Gaelic organisations. Bòrd na Gàidhlig offer funding schemes to support those who wish to teach in GME, from the Gaelic Education Grants Scheme, supporting student teachers and early years practitioners into GME, to funding for Gaelic language courses at each level, including courses offered by Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and a full-time immersion course delivered by the University of Glasgow.

With support from Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the University of Strathclyde is currently piloting a Gaelic Additional Teaching Qualification which will enable secondary Modern Languages teachers to provide Gaelic courses for learners as part of the Modern Languages curriculum in their schools.

For further information, please contact sian@gaidhlig.scot.

Ann Mhoireasdan, Bòrd na Gàidhlig



Bringing young people together: Looking forward

This year marked the full return of UK-German Connection in-person activities, and we were thrilled to see the continuation and revival of UK-German partnerships. In between partnership visits, digital initiatives continue to be a popular way to maintain connections and engage young people. At the UK-German Connection, we are delighted to support schools' efforts to keep UK-German links and partnerships alive.

German summer courses

For the first time since 2019, our German summer courses resumed, and pupils from across the UK spent two weeks in different cities across Germany. From learning more about the environment at Bremerhaven's Klimahaus, to visiting beautiful Bavarian lakes, pupils were immersed in German culture through a range of activities. One Scottish pupil described the course as, "one of the best things that I could've done as a test of my confidence, resilience and social skills".

Get involved

Applications for the [German Pupil Courses](#) will open in January 2024 and are open to pupils who are in S3 or S5 and have been learning German for at least two years.

Youth events and initiatives

We've reopened the doors to [Café Connect!](#) These free, regular meet-ups bring together young people from Germany and the UK to engage in cultural topics, make friends and practise language skills. Stay tuned for information about our upcoming Café Connect specials and youth seminars and events.

Exchange Fellowships

If your school has a partner school in [Bavaria](#) or [North Rhine-Westphalia](#), pupils can apply to spend one to three weeks at their partner school, engaging in a two-way project exchange and

experiencing school life in Germany. Applications for 2024-25 will open in spring.

As ever, we offer a range of [funding opportunities](#) for schools and youth groups and look forward to supporting your UK-German partnerships, whether digital or in-person.

Eilidh Reid, UK-German Connection



Le Concours de la francophonie is back!

What is it?

Le Concours de la francophonie is a national school competition, organised by the [Institut français d'Ecosse](#), for French-language learners and their teachers, in primary and secondary schools around Scotland.

The competition is sponsored by TotalEnergies, the Franco-Scottish society, and is organised in partnership with Education Scotland, LANGS, SCILT, the City of Edinburgh Council, the University of Edinburgh and TV5Monde.

What is this year's theme?

This year's theme is: The Paris Olympic Games 2024: Ouvrons grand les jeux!

Who can take part?

If you are a Scottish primary or secondary school offering French as an additional language, please join the competition.

The categories for entries are: P1-P4; P5-P7; S1-S3; S4-S6

How can I take part?

Submit a video of a classroom activity, in French.

The video should be no longer than four minutes.

The level of French should be adapted to age, stage and level, and the judges will take into consideration creativity and participation from ALL learners in the class.

In primary, you may want to film a regular activity where children are actively playing and having fun, learning, or speaking French.

In secondary, learners should demonstrate their French communication skills. Songs will not be accepted.

How do I register?

Please email ife.francophonie@gmail.com to register your interest. The deadline for submissions is 31 January 2024.

Are there any prizes?

Of course! There are prizes for learners, and for teachers too!

The award ceremony will take place on Friday 22 March 2024 at the [Institut français d'Ecosse](#).

Is there anything else I need to know?

For 2024, we are delighted to have the support of Maria Lyle, a famous Scottish para-athlete! Maria has kindly agreed to attend the prize-giving ceremony. All the winners will have a chance to meet her and share her passion for sport!

For further information, please visit the [Concours de la francophonie](#) website.

Sylvie Hyvernaud Ning, Institut français d'Ecosse



LFEE Europe

A taste of languages

Richard Tallaron's new book, 'A taste of languages: Stories of French and English' was launched at the French Institute in Edinburgh on Thursday 28 September by Monsieur Payer, Consul Général de France, and Madame Sylvie Charlotte Hyvernaud-Ning, Attachée de coopération pour le français. Colleagues from many schools and local authorities attended and made the evening a memorable one!

The book, which is written in French and English, is aimed at teachers, parents, and pupils. Schools around Scotland and France have already bought copies for their libraries and to use in class. The book is available on the [NuEdu Network](#) website and on digital platforms.

Richard Tallaron, LFEE Europe

Inspiring Pupils: An International Education school project

The Inspiring Pupils project is an International Education initiative that brought together partners from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Tenerife, and Cannes. It was a collaborative effort which aimed to foster creativity, digital literacy, and cultural exchange among students through the creation and showcasing of films. The project has had a profound impact on learners, providing them with a unique platform to express themselves and develop essential critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamworking skills.

The highlight of the project was the film festivals, where students from all participating schools showcased the films they had created. The film festivals not only celebrated the students' achievements but also encouraged them to explore different perspectives and cultures through the medium of film.

One of the key aspects of the Inspiring Pupils project was its alignment to the digital priorities in education of the various countries involved. Participating schools worked together to create a common framework that demonstrated how filmmaking can help teachers and learners meet the criteria necessary for digital literacy. By incorporating digital creativity into the curriculum, the project empowered students to navigate the digital world confidently.

The partners involved in the project were St Bernard's Primary and St John Paul II Primary in Glasgow; CEIP Toscal-Longuera School and CEIP Perez Zamora School in Tenerife; La Croisette Primary and Mont Chevalier Primary in Cannes; the Teacher Training Centre from Tenerife North - CEP Norte, the Mairie de Cannes and LFEE Europe.

To further extend the impact of the Inspiring Pupils project, an online training course for teachers has been developed. The course aims to equip teachers with the necessary tools to inspire students and enhance their digital literacy skills.

The Inspiring Pupils project has proven to be a transformative experience for students, gaining skills and a deeper understanding of the world around them. The project's success has been recognised at an international conference, further emphasising its significance in promoting digital priorities in education. All the resources created through this project are available in French, Spanish and English.

To learn more about the Inspiring Pupils project and its film-making programme, visit the [LFEE Europe](#) website.

Ann Marie McKee, St Bernard's Primary



Looking back on 50 years of Scottish-German exchange

The year 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of Goethe-Institut Glasgow. For half a century, our office has been a hub for all things related to German culture, language and international exchange. As one of only two offices in the UK, Glasgow holds a special position in our network of 158 offices across Europe and around the world. We are proud of having collaborated with so many dedicated partners in the language and culture sector throughout Scotland over the years, and this special occasion will be celebrated at a one-day festival; a day of German cinema, language taster classes, and a literature and dance workshop programme.

Our library, located at 3 Park Circus, welcomes visitors to browse through a wide variety of language learning materials, including German literature, films, music, and audiobooks in both German and English. Our language and education services collaborate with schools and teachers throughout Scotland,



providing school visits for classes at our institute and online resources for German teaching staff.

Looking to the future, we are delighted to be increasing the number of mobility programmes: Exchange2Change, our St Pauli football camps and our employability-focused German career roadshows. From 2024, our dynamic online platform, Gimagine Award, will offer young learners a fun and accessible way into German language and culture, and for teachers we

will continue to provide engaging training and upskilling opportunities.

We were in Aberdeen on 15 November for our German career roadshow, where we offered information and networking opportunities to students interested in studying or working in Germany! Find out more by visiting the [Goethe-Institut Glasgow](#) website.

We are looking forward to the next 50 years!

Hanna Dede, Goethe-Institut Glasgow

Scottish European Educational Trust (SEET)



Euroquiz

Euroquiz is an established and popular event in the primary school calendar. It involves teams of four P6 pupils working together to broaden their knowledge of Europe and the wider world. In 2022-23, the project directly involved more than 2,750 pupils from 31 local authorities, and SEET was delighted to work with over 550 primary schools, resulting in the highest participation rate in the project's history.

In June, SEET organized the Euroquiz final at the McEwan Hall, University of Edinburgh. The event was attended by parents and peers who cheered on the participating pupils from the gallery. The McEwan Hall was an excellent venue for the event, providing a unique opportunity for the pupils to showcase their knowledge and widen their horizons in an aspirational setting. The event recognised and celebrated the achievements of the pupils.

Additionally, this year, we introduced a live language round with native speakers for the first time, and this was a great success. To learn more about the project, please visit the [Euroquiz](#) website.

Our World

Our World invites S1-S6 pupils from across Scotland to make short, multilingual films based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Teams submit a storyboard with their film idea, and the teams with the best ideas are invited to attend a filmmaking and skills development workshop. At this workshop, a professional filmmaker helps teams to turn their ideas into reality. A film premiere and awards ceremony are held at the end of the project, and each selected team gives a presentation about their film before receiving recognition for their achievements throughout the project.

This year, Our World has two categories: [Our World Juniors \(S1-3\)](#) and [Our World Senior Phase \(S4-6\)](#). 50 secondary schools from 24 local authorities have signed up to participate. Teachers are supported in delivering Our World through a set of CPD sessions, online school visits, and the learning and teaching resources available for free on [SEET's website](#).

SEET is delighted with the engagement from schools and with the creativity and linguistic talents of the pupils who have entered this year's competition.

Jane Halstead, SEET



Languages beyond school

My experiences of the SCILT/CISS Digital Internship

Halfway through March this year, I was inspired by my French teacher to take up SCILT's Digital Internship opportunity. SCILT offer this every year. I didn't know exactly what I was getting into, but after dedicating time to the application process, it's safe to say I was more than delighted to be informed that I was chosen to be a 2023-24 intern.

I remember being nervous for the first training day, even though I am lucky to go to the same school as one of the interns. The others were new faces though and, like when I was first applying for the internship, I wasn't sure what to expect. However, my nerves were quickly forgotten after meeting the other interns for the first time and making an immediate connection with each of them, especially during the lunch hour and our group-work tasks.

Our aim as Digital Interns is to promote language learning to 15-18 year olds on social media. As a team, we have chosen to use Instagram and TikTok to achieve this goal.

We collaborate and communicate greatly as a team and have a variety of languages between us, and we each learn from one another through our unique and individual posts. Something for our audience to look out for in December is our daily advent calendar, where we will share a Christmas-related word in a different language each day, in the countdown to Christmas!

Being an intern for SCILT has been an unforgettable experience so far, and I'm so excited to see where our journey as interns takes us.



Anne Cassidy, SCILT/CISS Digital Intern 2023-24

You can follow the interns on [Instagram](#) and [TikTok](#)



Job profile



Simran Kaur, Equality and Diversity Engagement Officer

My name is Simran Kaur and I work in the Equality and Diversity Office at the University of Strathclyde. I have also worked as a translator and continue to do some translation work.

What languages have you learned?

I am a native English speaker and grew up with Punjabi at home. Although my spoken Punjabi isn't bad, I've been trying to work more on my reading and writing skills.

I studied Italian in primary school and Italian and French in high school. I also completed my undergraduate in Italian and French and my Masters in Translation and Interpretation at the University of Strathclyde.

I attended a summer school in Tianjin, China where I learned Mandarin Chinese and obtained my HSK1. I've also been trying to pick up Scottish Gaelic on Duolingo!

How have any language skills helped you in your work?

After completing my Masters, I worked for a Language Service Provider as a Translator, working with clients from French- and Italian- speaking countries. I then moved on to freelance work, mainly translating Italian academic and museum texts into English. My language skills are also useful working at Strathclyde, where so many different languages are spoken on campus.

What benefits do you think language skills bring?

Language skills have such a wide range of benefits! Being able to communicate with others in their native language is such a special feeling and gives you so much insight into other cultures and ways of thinking. You begin to see the connections between languages and cultures all around the world. It also improves your skills in your native language.

I also love being able to watch films and read books in their original languages and read posts and memes on social media. Learning language unlocks so much of the world, and you begin to realise how much else exists beyond what we are used to.

Most important is the sense of community that languages bring. Speaking and learning Punjabi keeps me in touch with my culture and heritage. They are also a vital skill in the workplace and allow businesses to tap into foreign markets, and studies show that learning languages can change your brain. It improves your short- and long-term memory and improves concentration and communication skills.

Do you have any advice for anyone considering learning a language?

Don't be afraid to make mistakes, as mistakes help us learn! Language is about communication, so if you are talking to someone, don't worry too much about getting the grammar perfect – what matters most is being understood.

Any tips on how best to approach communicating in a language you have little knowledge of?

Language and culture are interlinked. Watching films and YouTube videos, listening to music, reading books, and following social media accounts in your target language will give you a sense of how native speakers use the language, the pace they speak at, colloquial language and slang. You will also learn more about their culture(s), and it's fun!

In your experience, would you say cultural awareness is important?

Definitely. If you're using different languages at work and in your personal life, having that cultural sensitivity is really important. Having an interest in different cultures shows your respect for them.

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At the University of Strathclyde, SCILT has a number of partnerships with key organisations in Scotland, UK and further afield.

