

Modern languages

Achievement and challenge 2007–2010

In 2008 Ofsted published *The changing landscape of languages: an evaluation of language learning 2004/2007*. This report follows up achievements since then and examines the current challenges. Some aspects of language provision seen during this survey were better than in the schools visited during the previous survey. The primary schools in this survey were making good progress overall in introducing languages for their pupils. However, the report also highlights important weaknesses and the barriers preventing good language learning, including insufficient use of the target language in secondary schools.

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Executive summary

In 2008 Ofsted published *The changing landscape of languages: an evaluation of language learning 2004/2007*.¹ The current report follows up achievements since then and examines the remaining challenges. Since the 2008 report, the Government, its agencies,² local authorities and schools have put a lot of energy and support into improving languages provision but there is still much to do.

This report draws on evidence from survey visits conducted between 2007 and 2010 in 92 primary schools, 90 secondary schools and one special school. The primary and secondary schools were located in urban and rural areas across England. More secondary schools with sixth forms and specialist language colleges were visited in 2009–10 than in the first two years of the survey. Evidence has also been drawn from primary school inspection reports, and from five further education and sixth form college inspections in 2009–10.

Principally, this report analyses provision for modern languages in schools over the last three years. During this time, studying a language has been compulsory in Key Stage 3; in Key Stage 4, provision has been statutory but students have not been required by law to study a language. Since languages were made non-statutory in 2004, the proportion of students at Key Stage 4 taking a language qualification has gradually declined from 61% in 2005 to 44% in 2010.³

The recent government White Paper recognises this decline and indicates the intention to encourage take-up through schools introducing a five-subject English Baccalaureate, which would include a language, and which is expected to be given prominence in the performance tables for five GCSE grades at A* to C.⁴ Take-up in Key Stage 4 was much improved in the schools visited when students had enjoyed purposeful experiences in Key Stage 3. These included being able to say what they wanted to say and opportunities to talk to or work with native speakers.

The study of languages has been introduced gradually in primary schools to meet the former Government's requirement that, by 2010, primary schools should have provided an entitlement for Key Stage 2 pupils to learn a language.⁵ During the three years of the survey, the primary schools visited were at varying stages of introducing

¹ *The changing landscape of languages* (070053), Ofsted, 2008; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070053.

² For example, the Training and Development Agency for Schools.

³ *Statistical First Release: GCSE and Equivalent Results in England, 2009/10 (Provisional)*, DfE, 2010; www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000963/index.shtml.

⁴ For further information, see: *The importance of teaching – the Schools White Paper 2010*, Department for Education, 2010; <http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=CM+7980>.

⁵ This was an outcome of the recommendations of The National Languages Strategy in 2002. The background to its monitoring and implementation can be found in *The changing landscape of languages*.

languages. Some were well-advanced in 2007; some were just starting in 2009. Overall, progress towards providing an entitlement for Key Stage 2 pupils was good or outstanding in approximately two thirds of the schools visited. By 2009–10, just under three quarters of the primary schools visited were using their own staff to plan and teach languages.

Part A of the report is devoted mostly to reporting on achievement, teaching and learning, the quality of the curriculum and leadership and management in primary schools. Part B reports on similar aspects in Key Stages 3 and 4. Part A also reports on progress towards providing entitlement to language learning in Key Stage 2, an issue inspectors evaluated in depth. Part B reports on issues which have been investigated in detail in secondary schools: reading, information and communication technology, and take-up of languages in Key Stage 4. Part C reports on post-16 outcomes and provision.

An increasing number of primary schools provided languages during the course of the survey. The large majority of the schools taught French. Almost all the schools provided suitable time on the timetable.⁶ In half the schools visited, pupils' progress was at least good, particularly in speaking and listening, the skills predominantly taught. Teachers were often skilful, combining very well their knowledge of primary teaching methodology with their knowledge of the language. Around a third of the primary schools visited were beginning to develop intercultural understanding and some were celebrating and building on their pupils' heritage languages. By the end of the survey, despite some weaknesses, it was clear that, overall, senior leaders in the schools visited were committed to making the initiative work.

Since the publication of *The changing landscape of languages* in 2008, some improvements have been made in attainment in secondary schools nationally. The number of students gaining grade A* to C in a language at GCSE has improved slightly.⁷ In over half the lessons observed during the survey, students' progress was generally good or occasionally outstanding towards the objectives set for the lesson. The overall effectiveness of modern languages was good or better in six out of ten of the schools visited. However, too often, the teaching was too uninspiring and did not bring the language to life for pupils. The key barriers observed to further improvement in Key Stages 3 and 4 were teachers' lack of use of the target language to support their students' routine use of the language in lessons, as well as providing opportunities for them to talk spontaneously; providing good opportunities for developing reading; and ensuring consistent marking for improvement.

Part C of the report considers post-16 provision which was principally inspected from 2009 to 2010 in sixth form colleges and further education colleges, and was a particular focus in school sixth forms in this period. Part C also revisits Ofsted's

⁶ Recommendations for implementing the QCA schemes of work were that the time allocated should be no less than an hour a week: a discrete lesson plus follow-up during the week at different times. One discrete lesson with no follow-up until the next one inevitably led to pupils retaining less.

⁷ See note 3.

report on good practice that was published in 2009.⁸ Take-up of languages post-16 was low but has increased since 2007. Entries in French have remained steady, they have declined slightly in German but have increased in Spanish and lesser-taught languages.⁹ The students observed generally achieved well, because of the good quality of the provision. However, retention was sometimes low because the students had not appreciated the level of challenge that study beyond GCSE would pose.

Key findings

Primary

- Achievement was good or outstanding in just under six out of ten of the primary schools visited. Pupils made most progress in speaking and listening because this was where most emphasis was placed in lessons. Although there were good examples of systematically planned reading, these were rare and even more so for writing.
- Pupils' enjoyment of language learning in the primary schools visited was very clear. They were usually very enthusiastic, looked forward to lessons, understood why it was important to learn another language and were developing a good awareness of other cultures.
- Teaching was good in two thirds of the 235 lessons observed. Despite some occasional shortcomings in pronunciation and intonation, primary teachers' subject knowledge and their teaching methods were predominantly good.
- Senior leaders were very committed to introducing modern languages into primary schools. The initiative featured well in whole-school planning with a clear rationale for how and when it would be taught and by whom. Weaknesses lay in assessment, and the monitoring and evaluation of provision, often because leaders did not feel competent enough to judge language provision.

Secondary and post-16

- The overall progress made by students at Key Stages 3 and 4 was good or outstanding in over half of the 470 lessons observed. However, there were weaknesses in too many lessons, particularly in speaking, listening and reading in modern languages.
- In many of the secondary schools visited, opportunities for students to listen to and communicate in the target language were often limited by many teachers' unpreparedness to use it. Too often, students were not taught how to respond to everyday requests and thus routine work in the target language and opportunities to use it spontaneously were too few.

⁸ *Identifying good practice: a survey of college provision in English language and literature, and modern foreign languages* (070248), Ofsted, 2009; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070248.

⁹ *GCE/Applied GCE A/AS and equivalent examination results in England 2009/10 Provisional Statistical First Release*, DfE, 2010; www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000964/index.shtml.

- Inspectors evaluated reading in modern languages in 33 of secondary schools visited as a specific issue. It was ill-thought through in over half of these schools. Reading was not taught beyond exercises in course books or previous examination papers and teachers made insufficient use of the wealth of authentic material that is available to develop students' speaking, listening, writing, knowledge about language, language learning strategies and intercultural awareness.
- The schools visited did not begin teaching extended writing early enough in Key Stage 3 for students to make good progress in being creative and expressing themselves spontaneously from early in their language learning.
- Numbers choosing modern languages in Key Stage 4 have declined since the subject became optional in 2004, falling from 61% in 2005 to 47% in 2007 and remaining low at 44% in 2010. However, in the specialist language colleges visited, numbers remained high; they provided good teaching and an innovative curriculum. In half of the 28 specialist language colleges visited, the curriculum was judged to be outstanding.
- Most secondary students had positive attitudes to learning languages despite low take-up in Key Stage 4 and they knew why languages could be useful to them in the future. Their intercultural understanding, however, was weak in the majority of the schools visited because they did not have good opportunities to develop it.
- Teaching in Key Stage 4 was focused on achieving good examination results, but this did not always prepare students sufficiently for study at a more advanced level, post-16.
- Assessment was better in the schools visited for this survey than for those in the 2004–07 survey. However, inadequate standardisation in Key Stage 3 assessments resulted in outcomes being unreliable. In over half the schools in the survey, marking remained inconsistent within departments.
- Most of the secondary schools visited had not yet modified their Year 7 curriculum or adapted their teaching of languages to build on, and exploit, the increasing amount of work being undertaken in the primary schools from which they drew their pupils.
- Teaching and learning were good in most of the post-16 providers visited, and the relatively small numbers of students on modern language courses achieved well.

Recommendations

The Department for Education should:

- consider how best to support, both nationally and locally, the effective consolidation of modern languages in primary schools
- consider how to promote good speaking skills at Key Stages 3 and 4.

Local authorities, or groups of schools working together, should:

- support increased liaison between primary and secondary schools to bring coherence and continuity to pupils' learning in modern languages at the point of transfer.

Primary schools should:

- build on their good work in speaking and listening, including language learning strategies and knowledge about language, to develop pupils' early skills in reading and writing
- ensure intercultural understanding is built into work where it does not yet feature prominently.

Secondary schools should:

- put much greater emphasis on regular use of the target language in all lessons
- make more use of authentic materials to help develop students' language skills and their intercultural understanding
- broaden approaches to teaching and learning to enthuse students and increase their confidence, competence and ambition in modern languages
- consider, as a matter of urgency, the implications of recent developments in primary languages for their curriculum in Year 7 and how they build on students' prior attainment.

Part A. Languages in primary schools

1. The primary schools visited in this survey were at varying stages in introducing a language or languages into their Key Stage 2 curricula, with some well-advanced in 2007 and others just starting in 2009. Some schools concentrated on one language throughout the key stage; others taught one in Years 3 and 4 and another in Years 5 and 6.¹⁰
2. A key factor in the development of primary languages was the support provided through funding by the Government for training as well as the development of the Key Stage 2 Framework and the schemes of work developed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA).¹¹ Classroom teachers gradually developed their expertise over the period of the survey and schools began to feel more confident in their provision.

Achievement

3. Progress in modern languages was good in half the 92 primary schools visited during the survey period and was outstanding in seven. In judging what pupils had achieved since beginning to learn a language, as well as oracy and literacy inspectors took account of pupils' knowledge about the language, their language learning strategies and their intercultural development. Achievement was measured against these five strands which are explained in the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages.¹²
4. Pupils' achievement in listening and responding was stronger than in reading and writing, partly because that is what teaching focused on in early language learning, even in Years 5 and 6 where content was often similar to that in Years 3 and 4. Pupils generally listened hard and responded enthusiastically. In the better schools, pupils were often willing and confident speakers, with good pronunciation and intonation. This was usually as a result of input from a native speaker into the lessons, sometimes through the use of DVDs. In one school Year 3 pupils repeated phrases from stories and Year 5 had made a video recording of themselves presenting weather forecasts in French; they also enjoyed describing the planets in French, drawing on their knowledge of the solar system from work in science.
5. Overall, pupils' progress in reading was less good than speaking, and it was often not developed systematically from an early stage in learning a language.

¹⁰ The background to the recent development of primary languages and the findings from the previous survey can be found in *The changing landscape of languages – an evaluation of language learning 2004/07*, (070053), Ofsted, 2008; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070053.

¹¹ For further information on the schemes of work, see:

www.primarylanguages.org.uk/resources/schemes_of_work/qcda_schemes_of_work.aspx.

¹² *The Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages* (1721-2005DCD-EN), DfES, 2005; <http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DFES%25201721%25202005&>.

Nevertheless, there were good examples where schools made it a particular focus and resources were used well such as 'big books', readers, home-made books and the electronic whiteboards, helping pupils to deduce meaning through clues and cognates (words with the same origin). In a few of the schools, pupils were given helpful reading tasks for homework.

6. Writing was the least developed skill in most of the primary schools visited; it was generally not planned for until at least the later stages, if at all, and where it was, pupils were often limited to copy writing and filling in gaps on worksheets. However, in around one in 10 schools writing was impressive because of the complex sentences pupils could form in Years 5 and 6. The following examples illustrate elements of good development in writing. In one school a batch of letters from their link school was used by Year 6 for reading and writing and for them to develop work for younger pupils.

Pupils wrote words and phrases accurately, and they could use a framework to write about a familiar topic. Year 5 pupils could describe their daily routine by combining familiar phrases with a small number of commonly used connectives.

Year 5 pupils wrote simple letters about themselves to the French school with which they had established a link.

Pupils read, matched and wrote words accurately from early on and later there were some good examples of sentence formation. There was evidence of a small amount of free writing, such as describing Christmas. Progression throughout Key Stage 2 was clear.

7. Where pupils did get to write more than simply single words, this work was sometimes linked well to reading, creativity and story writing or poetry and was supported by good dictionary work. One pupil said: 'Doing stories is making me understand French more'. This example describes the good practice in one school:

Reading and writing were well developed. Pupils were introduced to books and understood the story with support from the teacher. Pupils copied words and phrases accurately and were learning to experiment with writing in a foreign language. Pupils had access to dictionaries and were beginning to learn to use them, for example, by putting words into alphabetical order.

8. Knowledge about the language and understanding of basic grammar were generally developing well and were often helped by pupils' developing English literacy skills. There was less evidence of language learning skills except where reading had been introduced systematically, as in the following example.

Pupils' understanding of basic grammar and structure was developing so that they knew about gender and the position of adjectives. In one Year 4 class they spontaneously made up phrases about animals, for example,

'un grand lion jaune', using their prior knowledge and having been taught 'grand' and 'petit' in the lesson. They were sufficiently involved to query why the adjective was suddenly in front of the noun.

9. A good example of pupils showing understanding of sound-spelling links occurred when two Year 4 boys wrote 'un chat blue' on their mini whiteboards and read it out to each other. They immediately realised that they could not pronounce 'blue' as 'bleu' and that they had used the English spelling. They quickly corrected their work. In this class pupils instantly took to spelling in French, and were conversant with how the alphabet sounds in French.
10. In another example of pupils' growing knowledge about languages and their ability to make comparisons with their own, young pupils showed some understanding of masculine and feminine. They recognised that there are different systems in different languages with two boys bringing up similarities and differences between Arabic and Gujarati and French.
11. Intercultural understanding was being developed well in a number of schools, and a majority were looking beyond the tokenistic approach that is more common in secondary schools. In a few of the schools, pupils used websites to gain an understanding of cultures associated with the languages they were learning. They learnt about festivals in school and appreciated when native speakers told them about what happens similarly to or differently from what happens in England. They valued opportunities to see real children of their own age going about their everyday lives in other countries, when on trips or viewing DVDs. The following examples show how pupils were developing this kind of understanding very effectively.

Pupils' cultural understanding was excellent. They had regular contact with other cultures through trips and visits, such as a recent visit to France. Pupils also learnt about the culture of other countries through topics in school. For example, a topic on China covered many aspects of the Chinese way of life, including festivals and traditional songs, as well as the language itself. One pupil said 'I can talk to different people all over the world... although it takes a long time'.

Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about what they had learnt from talking to trainee teachers from Switzerland and Belgium. They were keen to learn about life in other countries and were fascinated to know that Swiss people often knew how to speak several languages.

12. An increasing number of the schools visited explored the cultural heritage of bilingual or trilingual pupils in their schools, and pupils talked with great respect about each others' languages.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of heritage and home languages were good because the staff worked hard to promote respect for the school's cultural diversity. Pupils enjoyed the recent Languages Day during

which they learnt short phrases in a wide variety of languages spoken by members of the school community, including Italian, Mandarin, Norwegian, Welsh, Japanese and Portuguese. Each week, all pupils learnt and practised a greeting word in a new language. As a result, they appreciated the diversity of languages spoken in the school, racial harmony was promoted well and intercultural understanding was good.

However, not all schools had achieved this and pupils did not always benefit from the multilingual possibilities that their school might offer.

13. Pupils' enjoyment of language learning in primary schools was clear. They were often very enthusiastic, looked forward to lessons and generally had a mature understanding of why it was important to learn a language. They were very well behaved in lessons. Boys and girls were equally well motivated. Very occasionally a few older, more able pupils felt that they were not challenged sufficiently.

Teaching and learning

14. Teaching was good or outstanding in just over two thirds of the lessons observed and in seven of the schools it was outstanding. Out of a total of 235 lessons observed during the survey, only four were inadequate.
15. Predominantly, teachers' subject knowledge was good with class teachers well-supported by native speakers, foreign language assistants, additional adults or other specialists, and by resources which provided good models of spoken language for pupils to emulate. Class teachers' understanding of primary methodology and their work with pupils in developing literacy supported the development of the modern language well. The example below illustrates the effective development of teaching and learning.

Teaching was led by the languages coordinator. She was a graduate in Spanish, trained as a secondary teacher, who had switched to primary teaching a few years before. Her subject knowledge and primary teaching skills were excellent. She was supported on some days by the local authority outreach teacher, who helped her coach other colleagues who were less confident. The result of this well-planned developmental work meant that class teachers and teaching assistants were increasingly confident and pupils experienced a high standard of teaching.

16. Occasionally teachers' subject knowledge had some shortcomings, particularly pronunciation and intonation, resulting in pupils pronouncing words poorly. A few of the teachers seen were not able to sustain the target language during the lesson, so that the only language they spoke was the few items of vocabulary they were teaching. In the better schools, the pupils had access to authentic voices through technology such as DVDs. However, occasionally, despite many strengths in teaching, the use of the target languages was too

limited, so that pupils heard less than they might have, and did not practise the language sufficiently.

17. There was often a very well-planned variety of activities in lessons to achieve the learning objectives. These took account of the different strands in the Key Stage 2 Framework and maintained pupils' interest. Teaching in the best lessons seen was dynamic and the pace of work was maintained throughout.
18. Particularly effective practice in reinforcing language learning is illustrated by this example.

The class teacher recycled prior learning when introducing new work. So, for example, when learning words for animals, pupils also used colours and numbers, learnt in earlier classes, to make phrases. The class teacher devoted a lot of time to the subject; she regularly took opportunities during the week to reinforce work done in the dedicated French lesson. Pupils regularly reinforced their learning with simple exercises on the computer. They had been encouraged to speak and sing the language confidently so they had plenty of practice in using French in different contexts.

19. Teachers generally used interactive whiteboards well to present work and to involve pupils. More generally, ICT was also used effectively to give pupils access to a variety of authentic voices. Although there was relatively little wider use of computers by pupils for learning languages, inspectors saw a few particularly good examples:

One school made good use of authentic children's materials on the Internet. One group used a French toy shop website to research what they could buy for 100 Euros and then produced a graph of the results. They had also had the opportunity to record themselves digitally performing a puppet show in French. This allowed them to work from memory and to perfect their pronunciation and fluency.

In another school, pupils watched a video of a native Spanish speaker describing a weather forecast. Useful words and phrases were displayed on the wall. Pupils were to use hand-held video cameras to record themselves making a weather forecast covering South America in Spanish. Pupils planned it quickly on paper in Spanish and made recordings. They edited their work on the computers in the ICT suite and then watched another group's video. This video they assessed against criteria, on using Spanish and pronunciation, that had been set by the teacher.

20. The quality of assessment in primary languages was predominantly satisfactory. In the 75 schools in which inspectors evaluated assessment, it was good or outstanding in 16 and inadequate in 11. Where it was good, schools had begun to devise systems which informed progression and transition to secondary

school. These were often in-house systems, similar to those used with other foundation subjects and they were assessing progress in all four skills effectively. A few schools had begun to look to a commercial system, such as The Languages Ladder,¹³ or at least to trial it with Year 6. Other than these, there was a variety of mainly informal assessment including 'can do' statements and/or records in mark books which were not followed up. One problem reported by the primary schools visited was that some secondary schools to which their pupils transferred showed little interest in individual pupils' records of their achievement at Key Stage 2.

21. Nevertheless, the majority of teachers monitored progress in lessons, providing good oral feedback; they used mini whiteboards well to assess learning, and corrected errors sympathetically. Self- and peer assessment was more prevalent than in previous reporting. In one school, for example, assessment was good and developing fast. Oral feedback to pupils was clear and encouraging. Older pupils used helpful self-assessment sheets which reinforced their learning. Later in the year, parents received a report on their child's progress in Spanish and the junior version of the European Language Portfolio¹⁴ was to be used for transition to secondary school.

The quality of the curriculum

22. Overall, the curriculum was good in just under half of the 92 primary schools visited. In seven schools it was outstanding and it was inadequate in five. The judgement on the quality of the curriculum judgement is less positive than the judgement on the quality of the teaching because of the complexity, for the primary schools visited, of introducing a new subject and embedding it across the primary curriculum.
23. The curriculum in the outstanding schools was characterised by:
 - all Key Stage 2 pupils learning a language
 - integration of languages with other subjects
 - discrete language teaching once each week, with the time allocated to it often increasing as the pupils got older, and short daily integrated sessions of language learning
 - one main language (or even two languages) but frequent, and planned, references to other languages, especially to those used by the school's pupils
 - the Key Stage 2 Framework used as the main tool for planning

¹³ This is a national recognition scheme for all ages in all four language skills. It was an overarching aim of the National Languages Strategy that a system should be created 'to endorse achievement in languages skills at levels of competence for all ages in a wide range of languages'.

¹⁴ For further information on the European Language Portfolio, see:

www.ciao.co.uk/European_Language_Portfolio_Junior_Version_CILT_Publications__7692175.

- careful tailoring of any external schemes of work or commercial materials to the needs of different classes
- progressive planning for skills development focused on listening and speaking, with reading and writing underpinning these skills
- opportunities for pupils who spoke other languages to demonstrate and/or teach these to other children.
- parents and adult speakers of other languages invited into school
- pupils' achievement in languages celebrated regularly through assemblies and languages days.

24. Although the quality of the curriculum was one of the weaker aspects of the provision in the primary schools visited, it was notable that they were settling more comfortably into teaching a language using one or more of their own teachers, rather than relying wholly on external support. A combination of classroom teachers and an external specialist teacher generally supported provision well, as in this example.

A large four-form entry school decided that attempting to develop the skills of all the classroom teachers was a very difficult task in the short term. French was therefore taught by a qualified languages teacher in Years 4 to 6 who was also a part-time consultant for the local authority on primary languages. In Year 3, two of the class teachers taught the language to the four classes, with the support of the French foreign language assistant. The school had decided to use one specialist teacher in Years 4 to 6 to ensure progression and so that the level of the teacher's subject knowledge was sufficiently high for teaching in Year 6.

25. Another example shows how a school moved successfully from French being taught by a specialist to being taught by class teachers. This was carefully accomplished.

The school decided to move towards classroom teachers teaching languages. The languages coordinator had a post-graduate certificate in education that included primary modern languages. This stood her in very good stead to develop the languages curriculum, with the excellent support of the headteacher, governors and the community. The coordinator facilitated this by teaching a year group with the classroom teacher learning alongside her. This took place for Year 3 in 2007/08 and for Year 4 in 2008/09. The Year 3 teacher now teaches her class by herself and, in the lesson observed, was very effective.

The school's plans for this approach to cover Years 3 to 6 in due course were very sound, and the coordinator had sufficient time outside her own classroom to develop this.

26. If too much work was done by an external teacher, the modern languages work was often not followed up effectively by class teachers. An external specialist

often taught in other primary schools in the area and was not given enough time to brief the class teachers properly.

27. In the primary schools visited, the time devoted to languages ranged from 30 minutes to 60 minutes a week. In some schools it increased with age, with pupils having 30 minutes in Years 3 and 4, along with some reinforcement during the week, to 50 or 60 minutes in Years 5 and 6. Only 30 to 40 minutes with no carefully planned reinforcement was insufficient for pupils to make good progress.
28. The most popular language in the schools surveyed was French. Spanish or German were taught in a few. Lesser taught languages such as Turkish, Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Arabic or Urdu also featured in some areas. Schools' rationales for the languages they chose to teach were generally sound. Though constrained by who was available to teach and their levels of knowledge, many tried to look beyond this, garnering support through the local authority, a local secondary school or specialist language college.
29. By 2009–10 the large majority of the schools visited had planned their provision using the Key Stage 2 Framework or the QCDA's schemes of work (which are based on the Framework and the five strands of primary language learning).¹⁵ At least half of them used commercial schemes of work based on the Framework which were supported by local authorities that provided training in how to use them.
30. Mostly, the schools ensured that the schemes were adapted to their needs. However, not all of them adapted their schemes sufficiently, for example to meet the needs of mixed-age classes, older pupils or higher-attaining pupils. Although reading, writing and intercultural development featured in the schemes of work, they were not always transferred effectively into classroom practice. The example below illustrates some of the curricular shortcomings found during the survey.

The work was based on a well-regarded scheme of work but the school had not adapted the content to reflect its own circumstances. For example, the approach to be used in its mixed-age classes was not explained. The time allocated for teaching the subject was less than recommended. Sessions that were in addition to the weekly lesson on the timetable were not planned systematically. There was too much inconsistency across the classes in what teachers decided to teach and progress through the scheme to date had been at a fairly slow rate.

¹⁵ *A scheme of work for key stage 2*, QCA, 2007; units 1–12 available in French, Spanish and German. *Key stage 2 scheme of work for languages*, QCA, 2009; units 13–24 available in French, Spanish and German. For further information, see:

www.primarylanguages.org.uk/resources/schemes_of_work/qcda_schemes_of_work.aspx.

31. On the whole, planning for progression throughout Key Stage 2 remained a weakness. This was partly because, in many of the schools visited, the content taught to pupils in Years 5 and 6 was similar to that taught in Years 3 and 4, albeit sometimes in a different language. This was often because the school had introduced language learning to all year groups at the same time. In some of the schools visited, the result was much repetition of vocabulary, even when pupils had mastered a particular topic, and not enough long-term consolidation as they progressed to higher levels. Few of the schools visited in 2009–10 had planned for progression, although most of them were aware that they needed to do so.
32. Inspectors saw good examples of cross-curricular and extra-curricular provision, for example French cafes, Spanish lunches for the community, visits to the Europa Centre,¹⁶ visits from native speakers of a language, and language or multicultural weeks, as in the examples below. Two of the schools participated in the 'Teach a friend a language' initiative,¹⁷ and a few participated in visits abroad.

The school provided opportunities beyond the timetable to take part in language events such as The European Day for Languages and a Spanish Day, and there were links with a Spanish school. Pupils had the opportunity to sing in Spanish in the choir. There were links to a recycling project and some developments with science and mathematics in Year 5. Numerous parents and carers joined the Spanish lunches that the school put on for them and their children.

The 'Teach a friend a language' day was a rich event, with participating pupils showing high levels of enthusiasm for, and commitment to, languages. The pairs of pupils worked to develop high-quality dialogues and clearly enjoyed the process of sharing a language. The 'peer teachers' (pupils) spoke about how they had discovered more about their home language by demonstrating it and explaining it to their friends. The 'learners' talked about the insights they gained into culture, as well as language. The performance of their dialogue on stage demanded significant courage; the growth in their confidence and self-esteem was tangible.

Links with a leading local football club resulted in the Spanish-speaking goalkeeper visiting the school and answering pupils' questions. A number

¹⁶ The Europa Centre is a simulation centre that houses a mock town where children and adults learning a language can practise it. For further information, see: www.europacentre.co.uk/.

¹⁷ 'Teach your friend a language' is a competition for schools where their pupils work with other schools and teach their language to others. For further information on curriculum enhancement, see: www.primarylanguages.org.uk/teaching__learning/community_languages/curriculum_enhancement.aspx.

of the pupils also participated in a visit to the stadium for an event linking languages with international football.

33. The following extracts from school inspection reports published during 2009/10 show how languages added to the provision in those inspected.

'There are many visits, including residential, and visitors to the school. The school runs successful events such as its international study weeks and a wide range of popular clubs including Spanish.'

'French provides information and insights into communities further afield and there are some interesting links globally.'

'The school's work towards the successful award of International School has enabled pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. Modern foreign languages are a key feature of the curriculum: French is supplemented by a Spanish club and Mandarin is taught in Year 6.'

'Work is successfully undertaken to develop pupils' understanding of other cultures through, for example, discussions of festivals and beliefs as well as celebrating the different languages and cultures represented within the school.'

34. A few of the schools visited had introduced a language in Key Stage 1 or the Reception class. This often resulted in a very strong ethos for language learning and intercultural awareness within the school. Very young pupils talked about how they loved learning new words and phrases and the games and songs associated with them.

Leadership and management

35. The quality of leadership and management was good or outstanding in over two thirds of the 92 primary schools visited and was not inadequate in any of them. Almost all the senior leaders seen were committed to making the primary languages initiative work and, in the very best cases, this also involved governors and parents. Subject leadership or coordination, quite often, had been established only recently but they generally generated enthusiasm throughout the school. The coordinators were aware of what their roles entailed and how to establish languages across the school. This example describes a school where leadership and management were developing well.

Language development is embedded in whole-school planning. A separate plan for the development of the subject is frequently updated and contains appropriate priorities. Self-evaluation is accurate and honest. Outcomes are considered and a range of evidence including lesson observations contributes to the evaluation. This has led to improvements in teaching and ensured progress towards implementation.

36. Leadership was outstanding in 11 of the schools visited. The following characteristics were evident:
- a very clear rationale for languages provision and the language(s) chosen
 - merging of policy and practice
 - languages featuring in whole-school planning
 - strong support from senior management and governors
 - strong subject leadership
 - whole-school involvement in the initiative
 - languages forming an integral part of the school's management systems
 - school assessment procedures applied to languages
 - high-quality monitoring, review and self-evaluation
 - effective use of national frameworks and guidance
 - high-quality resources, including ICT
 - use of local training opportunities, with professional development planning and review, based on clear auditing
 - links with local networks and initial teacher education institutions
 - strong links with secondary schools and discussions about transfer.
37. The schools which were judged to be satisfactory lacked some of the key features described above. Most noticeably, there were relative weaknesses in assessment; monitoring, review and self-evaluation; training opportunities; and links with other schools and institutions. The better schools observed were aware of these needs through accurate self-evaluation and had action plans in place for improvement.
38. For various reasons, monitoring and evaluation, particularly through observing lessons, remained a weakness. Most commonly, senior staff did not feel competent to evaluate language lessons where they had no experience of teaching them. However, some effective monitoring was carried out through informal discussion with pupils and staff and through joint planning of schemes of work.
39. The practice of allowing class teachers planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time while specialists taught languages to the class was much less prevalent than previously. So, even where schools still had external language teachers, class teachers were learning alongside their pupils. Several headteachers told inspectors of their opposition to using PPA time in this way and were keen to involve their staff fully in language work, as in this example:

The headteacher provides a good level of support for the subject's development. The rationale is well considered and the documentation of good quality. The headteacher is committed to using class teachers to

teach the language as this is such a small school but has been careful to plan this in a measured way to build up the confidence of teachers.

40. In a small minority of the schools visited, a lack of teaching resources, such as 'big books', simple reading books and DVDs had a negative impact on improving progress, particularly in reading. In others, resources were underused. For example, computers were not used to develop reading and writing and intercultural awareness.
41. Transition arrangements to secondary schools, the joint responsibility of both phases, were generally underdeveloped. However, in around one in five schools, good links had been established with one of the main secondary schools to which the pupils moved on, with reciprocal visits undertaken by teachers, and specific projects developed to 'bridge the gap'. The following example shows what one school was doing.

Good links with the main secondary destination schools had been established, with reciprocal visits undertaken by teachers. Formative and summative assessment procedures were under development to suit the school's own systems and to ensure the appropriate transfer of information into Year 7.

42. Access to, and the impact of, staff training was good or outstanding in 41 of the 70 schools where inspectors made a judgement on this aspect. Early in the survey, it was identified as an area for development in a number of schools. Later on, as it became more widespread, training was proving helpful in the large majority of the schools visited. Audits of the knowledge and skills of school staff were generally being conducted, but it was not always clear how the information gained fed into decisions about training.
43. Training took a variety of forms. Local authority courses included training on methodology or language or both, sometimes linked to the schemes schools were following, or the QCDA schemes. Some of the authorities had begun courses for coordinators in order to improve leadership of the subject. Some of the sessions were organised in-house by the local authority, a local secondary school or a specialist language college which was supporting the provision. There was also effective training through networking: clusters of schools working together, sometimes including a secondary school. Some schools had enabled a teacher to attend a CILT or British Council course in the country of the language they taught to improve their linguistic knowledge. The examples below show how four schools had taken advantage of the opportunities available.

Continuing professional development is a real strength. A group of teachers, with the Chair of Governors, meets early in the morning once a week to develop their Spanish with the languages coordinator. She models good practice in the activities she leads and enables colleagues to discuss points of language-teaching methodology. The school uses external

support very well. Work with the local authority's primary languages support team enables more class teachers to benefit from expert demonstration and coaching.

Staff undertake regular training locally, using the local authority and support from the language college. Teachers have improved their language skills as well as their teaching techniques and they swap classes to ensure that pupils receive high-quality teaching linked to the strengths of the teaching staff.

Teachers are supported well through training by the local authority adviser and through strong collaboration within the family of schools. As a result, teaching is continuing to improve despite some challenging staffing difficulties.

The school supports teachers' professional development very well and almost all staff have attended initial lessons in Spanish. About half have gone beyond this, including one who has attended an intensive course in Spain.

Entitlement to language learning in Key Stage 2

44. From January 2010 Key Stage 2 pupils have been entitled to learn a language during the school day (rather than in extra-curricular activities). Inspectors made schools' progress towards this goal a particular focus of their visits, and this section summarises the progress made.
45. Progress towards achieving this entitlement was good in just under two thirds of the 92 primary schools visited. It was outstanding in six schools and inadequate in only one. The proportion in which progress was good increased from a half in the first year of the survey to two thirds in the final year.
46. Most of the schools visited in the final year of the survey had introduced a language to two or more year groups and just under three quarters of the schools were using their own staff to plan and teach languages. Most of these schools had a specialist teacher on the staff. In the smaller schools surveyed, the specialist teacher often taught all the classes, while in larger schools she or he acted as a consultant for colleagues or taught some of the classes, usually Years 5 and 6. Almost all the schools had established contact with their local authority advisers or consultants, varying from initial discussions through to advice and bespoke training.
47. Over the period of the survey, senior leaders were increasingly committed to the initiative and action plans had been drawn up. The rationale for deciding which language to teach was sound with improving, sustainable plans. Weaknesses remained in establishing systems for assessment and in

implementing monitoring and evaluation of the provision and pupils' achievement.

48. Examples of good and outstanding progress in ensuring this entitlement are illustrated below.

Progress towards implementing the entitlement was outstanding. The school had introduced Spanish in a very methodical way and, as a result, the initiative had generated high levels of support from pupils and staff and from the wider parental community. All Key Stage 2 pupils learnt Spanish. There was an effective model for teaching this and very good provision for all pupils in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum, teaching and learning were exemplary.

Progress towards implementing the entitlement was good. Now in its third year of developing Key Stage 2 languages, the school had achieved some significant successes – notably older pupils' confidence and competence in German – and managers were clear about where elements of provision had not worked so well. Current staffing and clear plans for future sustainability showed good capacity for the subject's future development.

Part B. Modern languages in Key Stages 3 and 4

Standards and achievement

49. The overall picture, nationally, during the period covered by this report, has been one of reducing numbers of students taking modern languages in Key Stage 4 but improving attainment for those who do enter for qualifications. Numbers have reduced throughout the period for French and German. Participation in Spanish, Italian and other languages has increased slightly with a similar upward trend in attainment to that in French and German. This pattern was broadly reflected in the schools visited for the survey.
50. Nationally, the proportion of GCSE entries awarded grades A* to C in French, German and Spanish – the most commonly taught languages – increased from 66%, 71% and 69% respectively in 2007 to 71%, 75% and 74% in 2010.¹⁸ Girls gained markedly higher results than boys, and fewer boys studied a language. The proportion of Year 11 students taking a language declined from 46% in 2007 to 44% in 2010.^{19 20}

¹⁸ *Statistical First Release: GCSE and Equivalent Results in England, 2009/10 (Provisional)*, DfE, 2010; www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000963/index.shtml.

¹⁹ *Statistical First Release: GCSE and Equivalent Examination Results in England 2006/07 (Revised)*, DCSF, 2008; www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000768/index.shtml.

²⁰ *Statistical First Release: GCSE and Equivalent Results in England, 2009/10 (Provisional)*, DfE, 2010; www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000963/index.shtml.

51. Schools now are not required to submit their students' levels of attainment in languages for national comparison at the end of Key Stage 3. (This was not the case at the time of Ofsted's previous report on modern foreign languages.²¹) Most departments in the schools visited tested different skills in Key Stage 3, with varying regularity, and reported on these through their school's data-tracking systems. The reliability of tests and the levels awarded varied, as the previous report also found. Inspectors still found departments that awarded different National Curriculum levels without persistent and consistent use of the requirements that students should use, for example, the past and future tense or apply grammar in new contexts. The requirements are set out in the *Programme of study for key stage 3 and attainment targets*.²²
52. Students' achievement was good or outstanding in 55 of the 90 secondary schools visited, with 12 schools judged to be outstanding in this respect. In over half the lessons observed, students' progress was good or outstanding; it was inadequate in 25 of the 470 lessons seen. These overall figures reflect, in part, a higher than average proportion of specialist language colleges. Across schools generally, progress varied in different year groups, being weakest in Year 9 and strongest in Year 11. This reflected the higher levels of motivation, generally smaller groups and the emphasis on examination success in Year 11. Progress in different skills also varied.
53. Although students' listening skills were generally satisfactory, they were not always strong because their development in some of the schools visited relied too heavily on exercises from text books. Opportunities for students to listen to teachers' requests and instructions in the target languages and to listen to and respond to other students were limited. The skill of listening in order to respond orally appeared very much in decline in some of the classrooms visited. Moreover, the least academically able students were often not given enough support to make sense of what they were hearing.
54. Speaking, which was a key issue at the time of the previous modern languages report, remains a concern. There were some excellent examples of lessons where teachers and students used the target languages most of the time and students made good or outstanding progress. However, in other lessons, inspectors rarely heard the target languages, despite there being good opportunities for the target language to be used. Even in the strongest departments, students had too few opportunities to use their languages to communicate in a realistic manner. Overall, speaking was the weakest skill in four out of five of the schools visited. Good or outstanding progress was characterised by clear links between the teachers' demands and opportunities for the students to speak in meaningful situations. Cues and information gap

²¹ *The changing landscape of languages – an evaluation of language learning 2004/07* (070053), Ofsted, 2008; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070053.

²² See <http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/subjects/key-stage-3/modern-foreign-languages/index.aspx>.

activities²³ prompted creative speech, gradually moving students towards spontaneity: that is, being able to say what one wants to say.

55. Students said they spoke quite a lot in lessons and they enjoyed it greatly. However, where inspectors observed students speaking, this was generally prepared, for example written role plays. Too much speaking still relied on writing, thus hindering the development of spontaneous talk. Where students did not understand the conventions between sounds and spelling, commonly known as sound-spelling links, pronunciation and reading aloud were often weak and a barrier to communication. A large majority of the students were still reaching the end of Key Stage 4 with no real idea, for instance, of the effect of an accent on an individual letter or what a cedilla denotes in French. In a minority of the secondary schools visited, students said that writing was the dominant skill practised, to the detriment of speaking.
56. The following examples show how students in two of the outstanding schools visited developed good listening and speaking skills.

Because teachers consistently used the target language for managing lessons and because the students had well-developed linguistic skills deriving from their bilingualism, they made excellent progress in listening and were confident speakers with good pronunciation. They routinely used the target language for communication, using drama, the school's performing arts specialist subject, to enhance their performance.

Students showed a willingness to speak; the way in which they had been taught to manipulate the language and to cope with 'information gaps' ensured they could react spontaneously and enjoyed doing so. In a Year 11 lesson, the teacher pushed them hard to respond to different parts of a dialogue where the content kept changing. They could do this only by listening hard and having the confidence to 'have a go'. Their knowledge of verb paradigms and how to apply these in communicative contexts was particularly worth noting.

57. Reading was good in a small number of the schools visited. The students seen were confident to draw on the context of a text as a clue to meaning, employ their knowledge of cognates and use reference material to work out what short, written passages meant. Students who could do this made good progress. They also used their knowledge from strategies they had been taught in literacy or primary languages in Key Stage 2 to help them. Some of the lessons seen built on this knowledge but too many did not. Passages of text were mainly from text books in Key Stage 3 and previous GCSE papers in Key Stage 4, and rarely from more exciting resources and real life. This is discussed later in this section.

²³ 'Information gap activities' are activities where learners are missing the information they need to complete a task and need to talk to one another to find it.

58. Students' writing, especially in Key Stage 4, was good in the majority of the languages departments visited, although it often relied on model texts or scaffolding²⁴ and frequently focused on practising for the requirements of GCSE examination coursework. It was rarely imaginative and exciting. Many of the students seen responded well to advice to use a variety of tenses and to extend their work with opinion and reasons. Extended or free writing was particularly strong when it was taught from early in Key Stage 3.
59. The following brief extracts from inspectors' notes show how students can be challenged from the early stages of language learning to develop their skills of independent reading and extended writing.

'Students make good progress in reading and in extended writing from the early stages. Their grammatical understanding is developing well as this is an aspect that is generally well taught.'

'Students are able to deduce meaning from text, even when they have met few of the words before, using language learning strategies built up from early in their language learning.'

'They begin to write in paragraphs with accuracy from early on in their learning.'

'Extended writing begins from early in Year 7 where they are expected to write paragraphs which gradually get longer and more complex and set the foundation for the extensive writing they all do in Key Stage 4. There are excellent examples on display as well as in exercise books. Students present their work very well.'

60. In about one in five of the schools visited, students in Key Stage 3 had a good understanding of, and an ability to apply, grammatical rules. This example is from a department where students' grammatical knowledge and understanding were strong.

'Understanding of grammatical structures is very impressive. For example, students in a Year 8 class, just beginning their second term of German, demonstrated a firm understanding of accusative case endings. Year 9 lower-attaining students used perfect and present tenses in French confidently and accurately.'

61. However, students' written work in Key Stage 3 was often too short, with single words, filling gaps in worksheets, and very little extended creative writing because students did not know, or could not apply, grammatical rules. In many of the classes observed, inspectors did not see students progressing from

²⁴ 'Scaffolding' here refers to providing students with a frame, starter sentences or other written support for them to construct a text.

writing words, then sentences and then paragraphs, and written work did not underpin the spoken word.

62. Since the advent of more widespread modern languages work in primary schools, more emphasis has been put recently on how students are developing intercultural knowledge and understanding. The secondary schools visited were increasingly aware that this is a strand in the Key Stage 2 Framework and some were looking to include it in their own provision. The following exemplify where students were beginning to build up such awareness.

Students' intercultural understanding was very strong and was well-supported by the activities in which the school was involved through its specialist status. Students had had a wide range of contact with speakers of other languages and their cultures. A group of Year 11 students won a regional competition called 'Do you speak European?' Independently, they planned and created a presentation, taking as a starting point the students in their own schools who spoke other languages. A Year 9 student spoke at some length and with enthusiasm about the fact that there were students in his school who spoke a number of languages. There was a real feeling that, in their words, it was 'cool' to speak languages in the school.

Students developed a very good understanding of the culture of other countries as this was a frequent part of the curriculum. They were well aware of the similarities and differences between different cultures as this was celebrated widely across the school in language lessons as well as in assemblies and other events. Students were encouraged to take part in many cultural activities, including watching a play in Spanish, talking to the many foreign visitors and visiting important exhibitions and venues.

Intercultural development was highlighted as a weakness, however, in around a third of the 30 schools visited in the final year of the survey.

63. Students' attitudes towards learning modern languages were mostly positive. They said that, on the whole, they enjoyed the subject and they worked enthusiastically and with commitment in lessons. This was more noticeable where there was a good school ethos for language learning, encouraging students to meet people from other countries and share experiences, and fostering the importance of being multilingual. Negative attitudes were sometimes engendered by students' perceptions that their needs were not being met. For example, this occurred in Key Stage 3 where there was an over-emphasis on writing; little marking; inequitable access to ICT, or students' desire to learn a language other than the one they were being taught at the time. In Key Stage 4, negative attitudes often stemmed from the dominance of the GCSE examination content and too much learning by rote. Badly organised notes in exercise books or folders were sometimes an outcome of such negativity, as well as making revision difficult.

64. Students' knowledge about how languages could be useful beyond school and contribute to their economic well-being was generally good. Where this aspect was outstanding, students often had opportunities to meet people from other cultures and share their experiences of different languages.
65. Too many of the students seen during the survey were learning for GCSE examinations through 'rote learning' and reliance on written work. Although they generally gained good results, this did not necessarily equate to competence in a language, as Ofsted's report *Identifying good practice: a survey of college provision in English language and literature, and modern foreign languages* made clear:

'Many further education and sixth form colleges worked collaboratively with schools to provide a coherent offer and to ensure continuity for those students wishing to continue with languages or to start languages when they left school. However, colleges found many students ill-prepared for study at advanced level, even when they had very good GCSE grades. Often, much of the first year of college study was used to give students a good foundation for their advanced studies, curtailing opportunities to give learners a wider range of extension activities to enhance their language learning.'²⁵

Teaching and learning

66. In all but one of the 90 secondary schools visited, teaching was at least satisfactory.²⁶ It was good or outstanding in 60 of the departments seen and outstanding in 10. Overall, teaching was weakest in Year 9.
67. The following strengths were commonly observed in teaching that was judged to be good:
- well-managed relationships: teachers took care to build up students' confidence and encourage them to take risks
 - teachers' good subject knowledge, including knowledge of the examination syllabus
 - clear objectives in lesson plans, ensuring that prior learning was recapped, and that the lesson had a logical structure so that planned outcomes were reached
 - effective use of the interactive whiteboard to present and explain new work

²⁵ See note 8.

²⁶ When judging the overall quality of teaching and progress made, inspectors take into account not only the lessons observed, but also marking and assessment; the use of ICT; encouragement for independent reading, writing or research; and opportunities beyond the classroom for students to speak beyond their topics, spontaneously. Some of these features may be better or weaker than in the lessons observed.

- good demonstration of the target language by the teacher to improve students' listening skills and pronunciation
- lively and varied lessons which students enjoyed
- effective, collaborative work in groups and on paired tasks
- careful monitoring of students' progress.

68. The following additional strengths were noted in the outstanding teaching seen:

- teachers' expert use of the target language
- planning that took students through a logical series activities and catered for the needs of all students
- pace and challenge: students were expected to do a lot of work in the lesson
- thorough practice of new work before students were expected to use it
- very effective use of activities bringing the whole class together to test learning, monitor progress and redirect the lesson if necessary
- intercultural knowledge and understanding built into the lesson
- language learning strategies taught very well to develop students' understanding of learning the language
- very good deployment of teaching assistants and foreign language assistants in lessons.

69. The following brief examples, taken together, begin to paint a picture of what practice was typically like in the good and outstanding schools visited.

Teachers presented very good role models for speaking as they used the target languages consistently, using English only when appropriate to do so. They also ensured that students had the building blocks of grammatical knowledge so that they could say what they wanted to say. A Year 9 Spanish lesson and a Year 10 French lesson showed how well students had grasped verb forms, and what a lot they knew about them.

Foreign language assistants were integrated into lessons and supported students as well as providing a different 'voice'. In a Year 7 lesson in the multimedia lab, the foreign language assistant took one half of the class while the teacher took the other. The two groups were not split by ability. In this lesson, the foreign language assistant also played games later on with the students on the interactive whiteboard to consolidate the earlier presentation of new language by the teacher.

As a result of a problem-solving session in small groups, the students in a Year 11 French lesson rapidly increased their range of language and

structures to express their views on a variety of topics. They shared these with the rest of the class before preparing a short résumé of their views and presenting it to the class. Very high expectations and a brisk pace were maintained throughout.

Several students in a small class had special educational needs and/or disabilities. The teacher had to have regard to a number of behaviour support plans and was skilled at keeping the students on task. The resources were well-prepared and supported a wide range of activities which ensured that the students were enthusiastic about language learning.

70. In one school, the inspector saw several examples of excellent practice.

The teacher allowed the students to set their own targets for how many of the new language items they were going to memorise by the end of the lesson. When that was done, she told one or two of the more academically able students: 'I want you to add two to your target'.

From the French music playing quietly as the students entered the room to the management of all activities and routines, the teacher maximised the opportunities to use French and create a French atmosphere. As a result, there was total engagement. Students rose to the challenge of the imaginative and well-differentiated tasks.

In a small group of Year 7 students who had special educational needs and/or disabilities, the teacher used Spanish at all times for managing the lesson and resorted to English only after other strategies to help the students to understand, such as mime and demonstration, had been tried. As a result, the students, who were still in the very early stages of learning the language, were at ease with hearing Spanish and were developing excellent accents and very good intonation.

71. In the best lessons seen, teachers taught using the target languages and this extended opportunities for the students; in other lessons, teachers used English to tell and explain rather than using the modern language to show what students had to do. Teachers did not always teach students the routines they needed to carry out day-to-day exchanges outside the area of the topic. Within departments, the best practice was not always shared.

72. Where the teaching was weaker, inspectors frequently saw the following:

- work that reflected a weak understanding of students' different levels of progress: some academically less able students found the work too difficult and received too little support; the most able were not challenged
- insufficient monitoring of the progress of all students during the lesson

- the teaching of rules and how to apply them (for example, pronunciation, sound-spelling links, grammar) was insufficient
- the target language was used insufficiently by teachers and by students
- time was lost on unproductive activities such as copying out the objectives for the lesson or completing exercises without understanding the meaning of the words, or simply spending too long on one activity
- there was too much talk by the teacher and not enough emphasis on getting the pupils to speak meaningfully
- there was too much reliance on mechanical exercises and worksheets and insufficient creative writing
- too little work was expected and accomplished in the time available.

73. In the one school where the teaching was judged to be inadequate, expectations were too low, approaches were inconsistent across the department, and there were no opportunities for students to use the language creatively. Other weak practice is illustrated by the following examples.

There was weak planning for one-hour lessons; a lack of differentiation for the more and less academically able students; activities that were too simple for the level of the class and, in one lesson seen, the management of behaviour was poor.

In a Year 7 lesson, good language learning strategies were planned but the teacher had not discovered that half the students had covered these at primary school; the department had not found out what its Year 7 had learnt before and reviewed its provision in the light of this.

74. The positive impact of the explicit teaching of language learning strategies was evident in departments visited later in the survey.²⁷ For example, in a good Year 10 Spanish lesson, students were encouraged to draw on both their knowledge of English and French cognates to decode the meaning of vocabulary and phrases about parts of the body. In another lesson, cognates from both English and another language which students had already studied were usefully drawn upon to help them understand the meaning of new vocabulary. Word association strategies were also deployed to help students remember new words.

75. However, other opportunities were missed, as in this example.

There was an explicit focus on helping students to learn strategies to make sure they understand how they learnt. This was mostly effective in

²⁷ The impact of the primary modern languages initiative began to have an effect in secondary schools which became aware of the Key Stage 2 Framework and the strands relating to language learning strategies and knowledge about language.

Key Stage 4, when it was linked to examination preparation, but in Key Stage 3 there were occasions when students were not required to apply the strategy in the foreign language and so did not make enough progress in using the language itself. For example, students were asked to work out how to learn some adjectives but were not actually expected to remember them or to use them accurately.

76. Students who developed good language learning strategies were better equipped to perform more successfully in the different language skills, could cope with the study of a second language more effectively and were more able to acquire new languages in the sixth form quickly and successfully.

Assessment

77. Assessment was an area of concern in Ofsted's previous report on modern languages. It noted that the way students' work was marked was often unhelpful, particularly in Key Stage 3, and that assessment data were often not used effectively to set targets. In 42 of the 71 schools visited for this survey, where assessment was evaluated, it was good or outstanding and this was reflected in the quality of teaching.²⁸ However, marking remained very inconsistent within departments in just over half of the schools visited.
78. In the best practice, regular assessment of all four language skills, as well as tracking and target-setting, enabled students to know how well they were doing and what they had to do to improve. Guidance they were given was often related to grade or level descriptions and therefore showed students how to move to the next level.
79. The following examples, from different schools, illustrate some of the good practice seen.

As a result of regular post-unit assessments, students knew the levels they were working at and, generally, what aspects they needed to improve. Marking was supportive. There was good use of data in each class: each teacher had a list of students' attainment which was regularly updated. Teachers paid particularly good attention to individual learning plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Students were given regular little tests in all four skills. Any dips in performance were discussed with them and their parents or carers. The school's excellent assessment and tracking system allowed potential problems to be identified early and these were tackled swiftly and effectively. For example, in the previous year, the tracking showed that some students studying French were not achieving as well as they should

²⁸ Inspectors did not introduce a graded judgement for assessment until 2008.

in speaking and writing. Procedures were put in place to help them and the department then attained its highest-ever GCSE results in French.

Students completed work in 'best books' which was then marked in great detail. Feedback was extensive, indicating clearly what students had to do to improve. Students said this was very useful as they knew how well they were doing and the particular areas they needed to improve.

80. Weaknesses that satisfactory and the one inadequate department had yet to overcome included the following:
- lack of standardisation of Key Stage 3 teacher assessments, making them an unreliable measure of progress: since students were not able to manipulate the language in speech or writing, assessments of them at Levels 5 and 6 were not secure. Teachers' interpretation of the criteria for the attainment target were too narrow. For example, if a student used two tenses and gave an opinion, in the teacher's view, this automatically merited Level 6
 - inconsistent and unhelpful marking, with some serious errors going uncorrected; some guidance was limited to the narrow range of criteria in the level descriptions, such as 'to add a tense' or 'give an opinion'
 - insufficient regular assessment of speaking in Key Stage 3.
81. In a few of the schools visited, even when there was regular assessment, teachers did not use it consistently to help students to make better progress. In one school, for example, although marking and assessment were intended to raise standards, variability in the quality and frequency of the targets set by staff reduced their effectiveness. In other schools, teachers regularly assessed in lessons how well students understood, but then did not always act on what they found out.

The quality of the curriculum

82. The quality of the curriculum was at least satisfactory in 83 of the 90 schools visited and was good or outstanding in 53. It was good in the special school visited. Seven of the secondary schools had a narrow and unsatisfactory curriculum.
83. The impact of the languages specialism on curricular provision was very good. In 16 of the 28 specialist language colleges visited, the curriculum was judged to be outstanding. Although these schools have extra funding to develop their curricula and provide for external partners, it was important to know that their commitment to doing so was, for the most part, well established. An outstanding curriculum is illustrated by this example from a specialist language school.

Students learn French intensively when they arrive in the autumn term in Year 7. The provision is broadened from January so that all the students learn French and one other language. German, Spanish, Italian or Japanese are provided as second languages. Opportunities in Key Stage 4 are outstanding. The choice of languages, as well as different types of courses, is excellent. Students choose from five languages in the core, including a French national vocational qualification. They can then choose from enrichment, accelerated or extended courses which also include a wide range of languages. In addition to core provision, in three of the four options pathways, languages are available again. The British Airways Language Flag Award is also taught.²⁹

84. A major feature of the outstanding curricula seen was the range of languages offered to and studied by students, generating a high take-up in Key Stage 4 and post-16. These often included some less frequently taught languages such as Urdu, Arabic, Russian, Japanese and Mandarin. There was often a strong emphasis on cultural understanding, to a large extent through regular visits abroad and an extensive range of enrichment activities, for example, languages days or weeks, visits from native speakers and clubs for students to try out other languages. Students empathised with the language or languages and could see the purpose of their studies. One school visited had identified good opportunities for intercultural development through the languages department's contribution to citizenship, which was an excellent venture.
85. The very large majority of the schools were able to offer opportunities for some students, usually but not always the more academically able, to learn two languages, although few continued to take two in Key Stage 4 other than in the specialist language colleges visited. Almost all the schools offered a good range of study support and facilitated examinations in home and heritage languages, along with the occasional enrichment activity, such as a theatre event or a visit abroad.
86. Other strengths of the better provision seen were the imaginative exploitation of ICT and the opportunities students had to be creative with language.

One language college visited had pioneered a number of innovative ways to improve language learning, including podcasts, a language college blog and a wiki virtual learning system. The blog contained many ideas and resources on language teaching and received about 150 hits per week, approximately half of which were from students and half from other schools, some of them abroad. The wiki system enabled students to store their work online and staff to check and mark it. It also enabled students to communicate rapidly with staff about language learning. The college

²⁹ The British Airways Language Flag Award Scheme is a vocational oral language test, which is available to any school in the UK. For further information, see: www.britishairways.com/travel/csr-learning-centre/public/en_fr.

had also begun to use a social networking service to remind students about coursework deadlines.

87. A few schools were particularly innovative. In one school, for example, the students had the opportunity to teach a language in the community and in another there was a 'section bilingue' class.³⁰
88. Although a very small minority of the schools were beginning to adapt their Year 7 curriculum to build on primary school practice, this was not widespread. However, almost all the secondary schools visited were in contact with the primary schools from which their students were drawn, in some cases undertaking planning together. Specialist language colleges generally took their role seriously in supporting primary schools to develop languages. The provision of carousels of different languages in Year 7 'tasters' was popular in some schools; this provided knowledge about languages and, where it was done well, encouraged cultural understanding and a broader interest in learning languages.
89. Examples of secondary schools building effectively on primary language learning include the following:

The vast majority of the school's Year 7 students came from just one primary school and the pupils in Year 6 had all been taught a language by staff from the secondary school. The first cohort of students who learnt a language during Year 6 had just completed their GCSEs and results were well above those of the previous cohort. The curriculum in Year 7 had been adapted to take account of students' prior language learning and students were making especially good progress in speaking.

The appropriateness of the scheme of work was constantly reviewed and this had resulted, for example, in a change to the Year 7 scheme. It built on primary modern languages and supported transition to the school and to the study of language at the secondary school. Specific lessons were planned to reinforce the links with primary languages. In one lesson seen, the teacher worked with the published scheme used by the primary school. She told the class most of a story about a pig and a sheep. This was well supported with gestures and visuals. She then asked the students to guess how they thought the story might end. They made some creative suggestions and the teacher gave the students an ordering activity to see if they could remember more detail. They did this well. Finally, the teacher used the text of the story to practise sound-spelling links. Students approached the new words confidently and read them accurately.

³⁰ A 'section bilingue' is a bilingual stream in which students learn through the medium of French and English or their home language.

90. In general, the time allocation for languages was at least adequate in all the schools visited. The exception was where lower-attaining students were given less time so that they could study literacy; this reduced the time they had to reach their potential in a modern language and the strategy also did not recognise the contribution learning a language could make to their literacy development. There was still often only an hour allocated to a second language in Key Stage 3 but it was not clear what impact this had on outcomes, particularly since assessment was so variable in Key Stage 3. About one in 10 of the schools visited looked outside the main curriculum time, using after-school classes, to secure provision for second languages.
91. The schools with good or outstanding curricula had searched for appropriate, alternative accreditation to GCSE for students who might benefit from it, for example looking to offer a new language at BTEC as an option for Key Stage 4 students or accredited achievement at the end of Key Stage 3. This is exemplified by a Year 10 boy who described how his attitude to learning a language had been turned around by learning Spanish on a vocational course; far from wanting to drop the subject, he was now enthused and enjoying himself. Departments were not always helpful with their guidance to students about whether to continue with a language and how it could help them in the workforce. The following exemplify how the best schools surveyed had broadened their approach to accreditation to make sure that language learning included as many students as possible.

The school, together with the local authority's Minority Ethnic Achievement Service team, supported students with heritage languages to take a GCSE, for example in Spanish, Portuguese, Polish or Turkish. The school provided help in after-school clubs. These languages were usually taken in Key Stage 3. Students then did AS levels, mostly with very good results, and they often continued with their study at local colleges.

The choice of languages at Key Stage 4 had been well-thought out. The choice met – exceptionally well – the needs of a school which was inclusive in its approach and had 'languages for all'. All the students had to take a language, even students studying for a Diploma. The range of accreditation at Key Stage 4 was broad. German was a GCSE course; French, for the majority of students, was an AS level course because GCSE was attained in Year 9 and Spanish was learnt from scratch (*ab initio*).

92. Around one in five schools visited had looked to enter year groups early for GCSE, either whole or in part. This had had a good effect in some cases but it had not always worked. Sometimes the school's rationale for this was not clear and could cause students to achieve a lower grade than they would otherwise have done and to lose touch with languages beyond Key Stage 3.

93. Few schools in the survey had used the Languages Ladder to support assessment and provide accreditation through Asset Languages.³¹
94. There were a number of weaknesses in schemes of work for modern languages. They tended to replicate the content of the course books or examination requirements and gave little detail about teaching approaches such as the use of the target languages, reading, grammar, creativity, intercultural understanding or the use of ICT. The result, for some Key Stage 3 students, was lessons of mainly mundane and lexical content which failed to capture their interest. Few of the schemes seen indicated how students of different abilities might be taught. Between 2008 and 2010, around a quarter of the departments had made changes to accommodate the 2007 Key Stage 3 curriculum and the flexibility it gave them to work in a more cross-curricular way in the school. Few of the schools were using the new Key Stage 3 Framework for Languages which was available from September 2009.³²
95. The following three examples from inspectors' notebooks record some positive features of curriculum plans and schemes of work.

'Schemes of work are detailed and helpful for all key stages. The French schemes for Key Stage 3 clearly take account of the revised National Curriculum and highlight the development of thinking skills.'

'The school has modified its curriculum in Year 7 and the subject is contributing to Year 7 projects related to independent learning and thinking skills, Themed days are to be organised and projects for the summer term, linking with 'food', are planned. The link with citizenship is excellent.'

'The curriculum plans for the new school-wide Year 7 programme are much more detailed and helpful and are the result of good collaboration across subjects and within the department. There is a good focus in plans on developing skills for learning.'

96. The special school visited illustrated how the curriculum could be developed to meet the particular needs of its students. Key Stage 3 students worked to the Key Stage 2 Framework for an hour a week with further teaching during the week and made good progress from their starting points. They worked in

³¹ The Languages Ladder is a national recognition scheme for languages. Asset languages is the formalised assessment system of the Languages Ladder, leading to an award, through teacher assessment or externally. For further information on the Languages Ladder, see: *The Languages Ladder Steps to Success* (00811-2007BKT-EN), DCSF, 2007; www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/languages/Languages_Ladder/. For further information on Asset Languages, see: www.assetlanguages.org.uk/.

³² *The Key Stage 3 Framework for Languages* 2009, overview of the five strands of progression and learning objectives: <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/secondary/foundationsubjects/modernlanguages>.

groups and much of their learning was personalised for their particular needs. The teachers used sign language and the students' home languages to support their development.

97. A number of factors combined to make an inadequate curriculum:
- unsatisfactory, outdated schemes of work that lacked details about progress and continuity of learning
 - content that was not suitable for the full ability range
 - insufficient time for some students in Key Stage 3
 - failure to provide curriculum entitlement to languages in Key Stage 4
 - no enrichment activities of any sort.

Leadership and management

98. Leadership and management were good or outstanding in 60 of the 90 schools visited and inadequate in five. The following example from an inspector's notebook shows what outstanding leadership can look like.

'Overall, leadership of the team is undertaken by a very experienced head of faculty, who works closely with a knowledgeable advanced skills teacher based in the school. She undertakes a wide range of outreach activity in the local area, working with feeder primary schools and other secondary schools. These links enable the faculty to have an up-to-date understanding of best practice in languages teaching and learning. High-quality leadership of the different languages ensures that students make continuing good progress. Good practice is shared effectively across language teams.'

99. Key features of outstanding leadership and management observed in 16 of the schools were as follows:
- a successful and relentless focus on raising standards in languages
 - observation of teaching and learning, and providing coaching and feedback accordingly, to ensure consistent high quality
 - effective use of assessment to improve outcomes
 - good use of 'student voice' and other types of evidence on which to base self-evaluation
 - effective liaison with the primary schools from which the Year 7 students were drawn and, where appropriate, with partner post-16 providers.
100. In contrast, weak subject leadership was typified by inconsistent practice across the department, for example in the use of the target language, extended writing, marking, using ICT and implementing departmental policies.

Inadequate departments had no policies for their practice; others were in need of updating.

101. Strong support from the school's senior leadership team and governors was normally pivotal to success and to a strong ethos for language learning across the school. This was often reflected in:

- well-resourced departments which had interactive whiteboards in each classroom as well as other technology
- a dedicated languages area
- funding for small teaching groups
- good support from additional adults, including foreign language assistants.

Staffing problems, however, such as persistent absenteeism, meant that subject leadership and management sometimes suffered, despite support from senior leaders.

102. The following examples from inspectors' notebooks illustrate some of the ways in which senior leaders supported modern languages in particularly effective ways.

'The biggest strength of senior leaders' support is the modelling of good leadership and the pairing of the department with excellent subject areas in order to provide coaching. The departmental review carried out immediately prior to the visit was very thorough and confirmed the findings of the inspection. This demonstrates that the senior leaders have good capacity to challenge and support the work of the subject leaders.'

'The senior leadership is very supportive and recent line management has improved the direction and outcomes of the department substantially. In order to promote languages and to support the few students who wished to continue post-16, the school has more recently allowed classes of very small numbers to continue. This has led to a five-fold increase in the numbers of students taking up a language in Year 12.'

'Languages are shortly to move into a new suite of rooms, immediately behind reception in the new school as the headteacher wants to show off the department and ensure that it is the first department visitors to the school will see.'

103. Inspectors judged departmental self-evaluation only from September 2007 and so the findings here do not relate to all the 90 schools visited. Accurate self-evaluation was particularly good in the final year of the survey as departments had had more time to get to grips with the process. The following department exemplifies good practice.

Self-evaluation was supported at departmental level by the senior team. Results were carefully analysed in terms of outcomes for groups of

students and by aspects of the examination. The department was supported to redress any weaknesses that were identified. For example, results were lower than expected in 2008 for French and analysis showed that this was due mostly to poor performance in speaking. The department was given time and resources to tackle this. It was the focus of classroom observations by subject leaders, and an oral element was included in the mock examinations. Speaking was improving in most of the Key Stage 4 classes.

104. However, a failure to plan for the most pressing needs and make improvements was a key issue in about one in nine of the schools visited. For example, there were departments which had identified needs such as tackling boys' underachievement, focusing more on speaking skills, tackling weak teaching, improvements to their curriculum, or improving take-up in Key Stage 4; but it was not clear what the departments were going to do about them.
105. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning were rigorous in around two thirds of the departments visited but they lacked sufficient focus on learning and progress in others. For example, one school had shown commitment to language learning by ensuring that all classes were taught by someone with knowledge of the language and by encouraging its many bilingual students to gain a qualification in their heritage language. Senior leaders had a sound knowledge of the department. Some of their evaluations were incisive and insightful. They had drawn up a development plan for the subject. However, it had been prepared without the involvement of the teaching team and lacked the necessary subject-specific detail that would have made it really effective. It was not based on any identification of weaknesses in achievement or in teaching.
106. Good or outstanding departments often encouraged innovation and made some very good use of local initiatives and networks. One department, for example, was involved with a number of projects to develop good practice with other city schools, was working with some of its primary schools and was involved in a speaking project with the National Languages Strategy Strategic Learning Network.
107. In a few of the schools visited, resources and accommodation were poor, including old and uninspiring text books. The students in one of the schools visited where resources and accommodation were very limited were aware of the difference in the quality of the facilities between the languages department and elsewhere. The limited access to ICT seriously affected the range of opportunities for learning that the department could offer. An increasing number of departments used ICT for sharing data and resources.
108. Access to, and the impact of, professional development for teachers was very variable in the schools visited. Generally, training was provided for any aspect of new examinations but this was less so for deepening teachers' professional

knowledge. However, inspectors saw outstanding practice in a few schools, such as the specialist language school described here.

The head of department demonstrated effective teaching through her training role. She and the second-in-department monitored marking and give written feedback to the team on the strengths and weaknesses. She also paired up teachers in departmental meetings so that the relatively inexperienced could learn from their experienced colleagues. The teachers had also benefited from international staff development. For example, two teachers went to Berlin to attend a seminar on teaching developments in European languages. Another teacher travelled to Canada to research immersion teaching in French.

109. Inspectors found that in-service training linked to whole-school development sometimes took precedence over subject-specific training and teachers had few opportunities to update themselves in subject work, even when, for example, the 2007 secondary curriculum was introduced and workshops were provided regionally. Applications to courses or attendance at local networks were sometimes limited by the lack of local authority advisers, even when there was no other barrier. There was evidence of the good impact of training for teaching and learning assistants in working with students in languages and also of some work in assessment for learning. Training was not always carefully targeted, however, because of poor audits of the skills of staff.

Specialist language colleges 2007–10

110. Twenty-eight of the schools visited in the sample were specialist language colleges of one type or another.³³ The effectiveness of modern language provision in 23 of these colleges was good or outstanding. In eight it was outstanding. This quality was often related to their curriculum provision, their support for other schools and their extended services in the community, such as adult learning. In general, these colleges had more impact on modern language learning than most other schools.
111. Specialist language colleges were required to ensure all students took a language to the end of Key Stage 4 until April 2009 when the requirement was reduced to 80%. Despite this, almost all the specialist language colleges visited for this survey entered at least 90% of their cohorts and a majority retained almost 100%. They also managed to retain some students who studied two or more languages in Key Stage 4, although the numbers were often small.

³³ Specialist language colleges range from those which have languages as a single specialism, schools where languages are the second specialism, schools where languages are a combined specialism with another subject, and language academies. Currently, there are 562 such colleges in England: 214 have a single specialism, 290 a second specialism, 42 have a combined specialism and 16 are academies. For more information visit: www.ssatrust.org.uk/Pages/home.aspx.

112. In the good or outstanding departments, there was robust commitment from senior leaders to make the specialism work, ensuring a strong ethos for language learning, with staff and students who supported the specialism completely. In Key Stage 4, progress in lessons was generally good or outstanding despite the fact that the language colleges visited had entered all or almost all their students for accreditation in at least one language.
113. The specialist language colleges visited tended to have very strong curricular provision, particularly in terms of the range of languages offered, the time available to study them, the range of accreditation routes, the variety of enrichment provision and international activities. The examples below are from different specialist schools in urban, inner city and rural locations.

The curriculum was matched exceptionally well to students' needs. Outcomes were analysed carefully and programmes best suited to students' needs were introduced. The Arabic course was used well in Year 7 to develop students' skills for learning; the newly introduced National Vocational Qualification in Year 9 had had a very positive impact on students' attitudes; and the very wide choice at Key Stage 4 exemplified the school's inclusive approach to languages. Early examination entry in Years 9 and 10 provided challenge and encouraged many students to think in terms of studying two languages as the norm. The chance to study AS level in Key Stage 4 stretched the higher attaining students and eased the transition of linguists into further study. The curriculum was very well enhanced with an excellent and varied choice of language visits, exchanges, business contacts and competitions. These were highly valued by students.

There were outstanding opportunities in Key Stage 4, both in the choice of languages and in the different types of course available. Students were able to choose from five languages in the core (including a French NVQ). They could then choose from 'enrichment', 'accelerated' or 'extended' courses which also included a wide range of languages. Students were supported to take examinations in home/heritage languages whenever they were ready and gifted students could enter examinations early, supported individually. The range of exchanges, trips, extra-curricular work and European days contributed outstandingly to students' enjoyment and their understanding of different cultures. Students' cultural understanding was enhanced still further through the school's international work, with visitors from abroad and links to other curriculum areas, such as collaboration in mathematics with a school in France.

All students studied French in Year 7 and they then had a wide choice of a second foreign language for Year 8: German, Gujarati, Panjabi or Spanish. All students continued with two languages until the end of Year 9. As many students in the school were bilingual when they arrived in Year 7,

this rich choice of both European and community languages prepared them very well for future language learning. Students who joined the immersion class in Year 7 had to make a commitment to continuing this work over three years, as the course was highly structured. ICT and citizenship were learnt through the medium of French, with students working in discrete tutor groups in a mini-‘section bilingue’. This course was very popular and highly valued by students. The school offered a wealth of extra-curricular languages activities, including short visits abroad for younger students and home-stay visits with well established partner schools abroad for older students. Students valued these opportunities highly and described, in a very mature and sophisticated way, how the visits developed their social and cultural understanding.

114. Because of their extra funding, specialist language colleges generally had better access to ICT than other schools and a wider range of resources, although this was not uniquely so.
115. Most of the specialist language colleges visited lived up to the expectations that they would engage in considerable outreach work with primary schools, local secondary schools and the wider community.

Support for the development of primary modern languages was very well developed. Very good use was made of local authority and school partnerships to ensure that primary schools developed a strategic and sustainable approach to languages in Key Stage 2. A significant role was also played by the school in the training of primary teachers.

The work some students did in the community, teaching a language in primary schools or care homes, for example, was popular and contributed well to the school’s close links with its community. The department was not complacent and was looking to see what more it could add to its community programme.

116. Weaker aspects in the five satisfactory specialist language colleges included students failing to develop good speaking skills; mediocre assessment, including the non-correction of serious errors; failure to build on students’ earlier learning in primary schools, despite good support for those schools; and a lack of sufficiently effective guidance for students’ future language learning.

Key issues inspected during 2007–10

117. During the period of the survey three key issues were inspected in secondary schools: reading, ICT and the take-up of languages in Key Stage 4. The outcomes are outlined below.

Reading

118. Ofsted's previous report on modern languages, covering the period from 2004 to 2007, noted that reading was not taught well enough overall and that, in most of the schools visited, resources for reading were limited to textbooks. This was a specific concern since reading can stimulate speaking and writing, support listening, help students to understand how a language works and enhance their intercultural awareness. Reading was therefore followed up as a key issue in the first year of the current survey.
119. There were considerable shortcomings in the development and use of reading across the 33 schools visited in 2007/08. The quality of the provision seen, although inadequate in two of the schools, was outstanding in five schools and good in less than half of the 33. The following extract shows just how much had been done to develop reading in one of the outstanding schools.

A variety of texts was used from Year 7 onwards, including texts of different lengths from a variety of authentic and web-based sources. Opportunities for reading were identified in schemes of work. Students were confident when reading aloud; their pronunciation did not hinder communication. In speaking and writing tasks, the students were able to re-use language they had read. A teacher of a Year 10 French class used a poster effectively to develop students' speaking, listening and writing skills and as a stimulus for them to practise recently learned structures. The students were able to use their knowledge of English or other languages to work out meaning. The teachers planned their work carefully, using cognates effectively to increase students' confidence in the reading tasks, and the students were encouraged to explain the strategies they used themselves in remembering or working out the meaning of new vocabulary.

Reading was used to develop intercultural understanding. For example, in the lessons seen, students explored the differences and similarities between places in a town and different kinds of holiday accommodation. In a Year 9 lesson students were able to skim the text for general information and scan it to find specific detail. They were able to explain to others the techniques they had used. The students used dictionaries and reference material actively and proficiently to understand text. Homework tasks were used well to reinforce and extend the reading techniques practised in the lessons.

120. In a small number of schools, texts were used to teach language patterns and to extend students' knowledge of the target language; this was more prevalent in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3. In a few of the schools visited, the teachers expertly linked the written and spoken word to improve students' pronunciation and, in these schools, the students could read aloud well. However, where students were unaware of sound-spelling links, they made errors in pronunciation which often went uncorrected and hindered their communication.

The following is an example from a department in which, despite an instance of poorer practice, reading was mostly taught well.

Pupils in Key Stage 3 were aware of different strategies for understanding texts, such as using cognates and similarities with other languages. In several lessons, the teachers made this very explicit by asking pupils to explain what strategies they could use. In one lesson seen, however, the teacher focused solely on listing the strategies and did not allow pupils time to see if they could use them when reading the text. Pupils generally had good pronunciation when reading aloud as they were taught systematically about the relationship between sounds and spellings and had pronunciation guides to help them remember the rules. Texts used for reading were regularly used as a model for writing, for example, pupils prepared a model answer for an examination question using a text that they had read and analysed. There were, however, fewer examples of pupils using creative texts to produce their own work.

121. Students were mostly well prepared for the reading test at GCSE. They had good strategies to help them understand the meaning of unfamiliar words and to get the gist and main points of a passage. However, when their grasp of important key words, such as subject pronouns, was poor, this got in the way of their full understanding of what they were reading.
122. In the good provision seen, teachers used stimulating materials to encourage students to read for personal reasons or research; dictionaries and reference sources were used well. However, the majority of the 33 schools visited relied heavily on short texts from the course books and past examination papers for reading, except in sixth forms, and the students used glossaries rather than dictionaries to look up words. There was very little evidence that students had access to authentic materials, even via the internet. In discussions with inspectors, students said that they rarely used materials such as newspapers, magazines, comics or novels.
123. Few of the schools used texts to develop intercultural understanding or interest in the subject and had little or no language stock in the school library. Reading for pleasure was rare even when the materials were available. Few departments had a reading policy and nor had they incorporated the development of reading into their schemes of work.
124. To improve practice, the departments visited needed to:
 - develop a systematic approach to reading, including the use of dictionaries and reading authentic materials as required, that helps students to attain Level 5 and beyond in reading from as early as possible in their language learning
 - develop cross-departmental reading practice which is enjoyable and engaging (for example, older students reading to and writing books for younger ones) and encourages pupils to read for interest and pleasure

- incorporate reading activities beyond those in the text book into schemes of work and lessons
- use reading to develop good pronunciation, expand students' knowledge about language and their intercultural understanding, and stimulate communicative speaking and writing activities.

Information and communication technology

125. During the survey visits in 2007–08, and previously, inspectors saw very little use of ICT in language lessons, not even to develop reading (which was a key issue for observation for the secondary schools being visited during this period). Although teachers used electronic interactive whiteboards, where they had them, for presenting and consolidating work, students painted a worrying picture of unequal provision in terms of their own use of ICT: one year group might use it but not another; one key stage but not another; one teacher might use it in lessons, but not another. Planning to use ICT, where the resources existed, was often outdated and mention of it was frequently absent in schemes of work. In particular, the way it could be used to enhance language learning was not exemplified. Therefore, from autumn 2008 to spring 2010, inspectors focused on how well teachers and students were using ICT to improve language learning.
126. The practice in over half of the 57 schools visited during this period was good or outstanding; it was outstanding in seven schools. In 23 of the schools practice was satisfactory and, in two of the schools visited, the use of ICT was inadequate. In these two schools, the students rarely used ICT, even though an ICT suite was available. When they did use it, it was only to copy up their coursework in Key Stage 4. Although the practice seen in this sample of schools was better than that seen during the previous survey, there were still schools where it was not good enough to enhance students' learning in modern languages.
127. About three in four departments were adequately resourced with electronic whiteboards and these were used well to make new learning clear and practising it enjoyable. In one of the schools, the teachers used ICT well used to present new language and to make the learning more interesting and enjoyable. For example, a teacher took photographs of well-known staff and students and put them into a presentation on the interactive whiteboard to illustrate the difference, in speaking Italian, between greeting children and adults. However, students did not use the whiteboards often, despite programs which were interactive.
128. In the schools in which the use of ICT was good or outstanding, it was used effectively to motivate students by, for example:
- the imaginative use of common applications to develop speaking skills, writing and redrafting for accuracy

- widespread use of digital recording to support students with special educational needs
- the creation of blogs
- informing students at school what was happening on a languages exchange trip
- video conferencing
- making videos and commenting on the performance of other students
- manipulating the interactive whiteboard games involving listening and reading via wireless mice.

ICT was also used to give students opportunities to complete extended writing tasks. In one lesson seen, it helped them understand the world of business: they prepared a PowerPoint presentation in French on the theme of introducing their business to new clients.

129. There were also opportunities for private study and some reading or research on the internet to develop intercultural awareness. A few schools – but not many – used email to connect to schools abroad, for example, where emails were sent to make initial contact, then a virtual tour of their school was made for the exchange visitors, and presentations were made on return from visits. However, using email to contact young people in other countries was not widespread, even though many young people are very confident users of email, texting and the internet outside school. Email was used in the best schools to correct written work and to monitor progress.
130. One of the schools visited used ICT to facilitate learning Latin through video-conferencing with Cambridge University at lunchtimes, as well as younger students learning it through an electronic course in the network room. One girl described to inspectors how useful Latin was because it helped her with the grammar of the other languages she was learning. Another school used electronic hand-held assessment technology well in Japanese lessons to enliven learning and to assess students' progress in a swift and efficient way from which everyone benefited.
131. When practice was not as good as these examples illustrate, the schools generally lacked vision as to how ICT could be used to enhance language learning, raise achievement and evaluate practice. The departments, or individual members of staff, in some cases, were far behind the students' own use of such technology. Even where ICT was used quite extensively, little thought had been given as to what value it added. It was unlikely for inspectors to find policies for its use or activities in the schemes of work unless the course books had cited some. Within the departments visited, there was considerable variation about which students used ICT; this was sometimes still because of teachers' lack of confidence or lack of monitoring by the subject leader. The departments did not ensure that students used ICT as often as possible to redraft to improve the accuracy of their work, to develop their writing for

different audiences or to highlight their progress; or that it was used regularly for reading, research including intercultural awareness, independent work and speaking skills.

132. Across the schools visited, there was still considerable variation in the availability of and access to ICT resources and equipment to be used in teaching languages. Specialist language colleges generally had better access than other schools. Priority was very often given to vocational courses.

133. Key features of the outstanding use of ICT were:

- the department or coordinator made an effort to stay up to date with technological developments and had an excellent vision of how students could be helped in their language learning by using ICT
- students' entitlement to use ICT was well met
- ICT was used innovatively to practise all four language skills
- ICT was used to increase accuracy and creativity in writing; spellcheckers were used knowledgeably
- the interactive whiteboard was used regularly by students
- students used the internet, email or both to find out about the language and the cultures of the countries and communities where the language was spoken
- the department had its own website or virtual learning environment, used for storing additional work to which students and teachers had access
- the use of ICT was monitored and led to higher standards
- there was a policy for using ICT and its use was written into schemes of work which were updated regularly.

134. Outstanding use of ICT is illustrated in the following examples.

ICT was used very well to give students clear models of language and to enable them to practise in lively and entertaining ways. All the teachers in the language team used electronic whiteboards to present new language and activities. Most used this facility highly creatively, enabling students to work interactively and develop their understanding of language in challenging, fast-paced and very enjoyable ways. Language games were highly developed and almost all the lessons seen included activities where students competed against the clock. Since the students were carefully grouped for these activities, they supported each other fully and so were all winners! Students' very good understanding of grammatical structures was a clear outcome of this high-level, interactive work. One lesson ended with the focus grammar points for the lesson encapsulated in a delightful animated short story. One of the students said, as she left the room, that she intended to try it out for herself through the internet that evening.

Students used different applications to improve their language learning, for example, to develop reading skills through a wider range of materials available on the internet. Teachers used the interactive whiteboards to present new language and to engage students well. Students themselves used them to present their own ideas and to practise using new language. All students used ICT purposefully and regularly to develop their language knowledge and skills and to find out more about the countries and communities of the language they were studying. The subject leader had a very good vision for the use of ICT and led by example. The departmental website provided effective materials for teachers and students. The department's access to resources was excellent: it had its own ICT suite exclusively for languages and this and the department's materials were used regularly and routinely to improve learning and achievement.

Take-up in Key Stage 4

135. Since September 2004 when languages were no longer mandatory in Key Stage 4 and became an entitlement instead, their take-up has declined steadily. In 2007 the proportion of students at the end of Key Stage 4 attempting a language at GCSE was 47%.³⁴ In 2010 the proportion had declined further to 44%, though this still compared well with other foundation subjects. As noted previously, take-up was much higher in specialist language colleges.
136. In January 2006, the then Minister of State for Schools wrote to secondary schools in England to ask them to look carefully at their take-up and, where it was low, to plan for a benchmark of 50% or, if take-up was above 50%, a benchmark of 90%.³⁵ Ofsted has inspected take-up in all language inspections throughout the survey. All schools nationally were also asked to give this information in their self-evaluation forms for institutional inspections, but this rarely happened.
137. Setting aside the specialist language colleges and the special school visited, in over two thirds of the remaining schools visited less than 50% of the students chose to study a language. Overall, proportions ranged from none in Key Stage 4 to over 90%. In 10 schools visited, the proportion was around 50% and in a further 12 take-up was over 60%.
138. Generally, few of the above schools visited heeded the request to plan to reach the benchmarks and there was little planning for this, either at school or subject level, even when the schools knew it was a problem. Where take-up

³⁴ *Statistical First Release: GCSE and Equivalent Results in England, 2006/07 (Revised)*, DfE, January 2008; www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000768/index.shtml.

³⁵ The letter to secondary schools is available at this website: www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/languages/.

was rising, the support from the school's senior leadership was usually good, even where specialist subjects had to take precedence.

139. The widening of the Key Stage 4 curriculum in recent years had given students more choice, so even if they liked modern languages, they felt there were more promising options to help them in their futures. This was particularly the case if studying languages remained a very academic route with no vocational options. Languages were still perceived to be difficult compared with other subjects. Some of the Key Stage 4 students to whom inspectors spoke felt that they were 'condemned' to mixed ability classes because there were so few students and they could not progress quickly enough. Another factor was the lack of a choice in languages, either because of a lack of expertise in school or because of the system of options. The two examples below illustrate some of the difficulties schools faced in encouraging greater take-up of modern languages.

The number of students taking a modern language in Key Stage 4 in one school was still well below the Government's target. This was being tackled with some success but the lack of choice in languages because of the lack of staff expertise militated against this. The numbers had risen from 12% in 2009 to 18% in 2010.

The school was well below the 50% benchmark set by the Minister of State for students studying a language in Key Stage 4. The school moved from a position in 2008 where no students formally studied languages to GCSE level to one where a language was studied in both Year 10 and Year 11. At the time of the survey, some 9% of students in Year 10 were studying a language. Although entitlement was met with language options, no student had opted to study a language in the forthcoming Year 10, partly because of clashes with other subjects they preferred.

140. Not all the schools were successful in explaining to students how learning one or more languages might support their future economic well-being. One school visited, however, had introduced evening classes in A-level Urdu as an incentive for students who could see a more long-term future for their language learning; these classes had produced outstanding results. Ensuring that Key Stage 4 students had good opportunities to go on trips abroad was also an effective strategy. Some students said that visits tended to be reserved for Key Stage 3 students because of examination commitments in Key Stage 4.
141. Despite the lack of formal plans to improve take-up, the large majority of departments had introduced strategies to try to do this. Most importantly, this included trying to improve provision at Key Stage 3, giving students tasters of several different languages and enabling them to use ICT more in both key stages.

142. In addition to providing high-quality, engaging and relevant language teaching and learning, the following strategies were found to be helpful in different schools in increasing the numbers of students studying languages:
- promoting the usefulness of languages more strongly throughout the school, particularly through motivational talks from external speakers, including ex-students who had found good use for their languages, and linking with businesses
 - changing the structure of the Key Stage 4 timetable to make it easier for students to get a fresh start in a language they wanted and providing different accreditation. A Year 10 boy who was studying Spanish from the beginning said: 'I am really enjoying this and would never have believed that learning a language could be so enjoyable; I am so glad I did not give up'
 - introducing a wider range of languages so that students could make a choice
 - introducing Urdu into Year 7 as a possible incentive to continue and fast track in Year 10
 - introducing smaller classes in Key Stage 4, grouped by ability, with a high degree of personalised learning
 - celebrating success: one school, for example, sent postcards to the parents of successful students, emphasising the value of languages
 - introducing forms of accreditation other than GCSE, such as Asset languages, and earlier accreditation in Year 9 or 10.

143. The benefits of alternative accreditation are illustrated in this example:

Alternative accreditation had attracted students in Year 11 back to learning languages. The 'Sports Leader UK Foreign Language Leader Award' attracted a number of girls who had dropped languages in Year 10. The course was part of the Sports College's offer and built on a similar vocational course aimed at teaching PE in primary schools to younger pupils. Students learnt how to teach a language lesson with the eventual aim of teaching lessons to primary pupils or to Year 7 pupils. Students much enjoyed the lesson that the inspector observed.

Part C. Post-16 language provision

144. Overall, A-level entries in modern languages increased slightly between 2007 and 2010 (from 28,377 to 29,836 entries).³⁶ Entries in French remained

³⁶ *Statistical First Release: GCE/Applied GCE A/AS and Equivalent Examination Results in England, 2009/10 (Provisional)*, DfE, 2010; www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000964/index.shtml.

relatively steady, while entries in German declined; entries in Spanish and 'other languages' continued to rise.

145. In modern languages, the proportion of students progressing from GCSE to A level is lower than in other optional subjects that have large GCSE entries. For students taking A levels in 2010, the figure was approximately 8% in each of French and German and 11% in Spanish. This compared with 23% in history and nearly 26% in art and design.
146. Overall, take-up of languages in the 31 school sixth forms visited for this survey remained low, although it was increasing from very small numbers in some of the schools. A high drop-out rate from languages was sometimes linked to students' lack of understanding of the level of challenge the language would pose at AS and A level compared with GCSE. Funding and resources were generous. Where numbers were small, good support for languages generally meant classes continued.
147. Where modern languages were inspected during five of Ofsted's college or sixth form inspections in 2009–10, the evidence showed that success rates in examinations were generally high, at or above national averages. However, this was a very small sample and should not be used to extrapolate to the national picture of provision in colleges. Learners' progress in relation to their starting points was variable. They showed good oral skills in languages, using language accurately and fluently and some developed practical skills. In some cases, they did not have sufficient opportunities to develop all four skills fully. Outcomes and provision in sixth form colleges were generally better than those in colleges of general and further education.
148. In the 31 school sixth forms visited, students achieved well in lessons. There were very few lessons seen where inspectors judged students' progress to be less than good. Students were generally very happy about the teaching they received, which was often supplemented by individual tuition.
149. The teaching observed in school sixth forms was good or outstanding in around nine out of 10 lessons and students were willing to use the target language. The teachers and students often used the internet effectively to develop reading and intercultural awareness and this was often better than in the classes for younger pupils. The following exemplifies outstanding sixth-form teaching and learning.

The teacher spoke Spanish for almost the whole lesson and provided explanations in Spanish to students about any aspect they found difficult. This encouraged them to ask questions of the teacher in Spanish and also to discuss among themselves in Spanish when completing written work. The teacher also peppered the lesson with useful idioms and phrases which extended students' language knowledge. The use of resources – videos, worksheets, games, textbooks – was very good.

150. In the five colleges visited, the teaching was generally good or outstanding but matching learning to the different ability groups was sometimes underdeveloped. Teachers used an appropriate range of activities to promote learning, although information and learning technology was rarely used effectively to improve learners' progress. In some cases, teachers did not do enough to ensure that all the learners were sufficiently involved in their own learning. Assessment of learning was variable. In some cases it was weak and individual learning plans were not used well to plan and monitor learners' performance against their targets.
151. Generally, the colleges visited provided a good range of languages, including less widely taught languages such as Russian, Japanese, Latin and British Sign Language. The most common qualifications were AS and A level and Open College Network.³⁷ In one college, inspectors judged the accreditation used to be unsatisfactory because it concentrated solely on reading skills. Only one of the colleges visited provided good opportunities for enrichment for learners: some learners participated in exchange visits, while others took advantage of work experience abroad. In one case, learners were working well with students in local schools to promote language learning.
152. In parallel with the programme of visits to inspect modern languages in schools, a survey of good practice in further education and sixth form colleges was carried out in 2008–09, and the findings are summarised below.³⁸ Most of the strengths described were also evident in the good school sixth forms.
153. There was good achievement in languages in the best colleges, with success rates for A and AS levels matching or improving on already high national averages. Achievement in qualifications such as Open College Network and Asset Languages was also good, although it sometimes masked a lack of challenge and slow progress for learners. The improvement in high achievement rates, particularly at A level, was against the background of a large drop in the number of candidates for these qualifications over the last five years. Fewer students were following the traditional GCSE to A-level route since languages are no longer compulsory for pupils over the age of 14.
154. Standards of work were generally good, particularly in sixth-form colleges, where the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening were developed methodically, giving learners the tools to manipulate the language and to further their own learning independently. In the best classes, learners developed skills such as focused listening and critical reading. Inspectors' observations showed the learners had very good communication and comprehension skills and used language accurately. They spoke confidently in a

³⁷ The Open College network is an accreditation system through a national framework. For further information, see: www.nocn.org.uk/Homepage/.

³⁸ *Identifying good practice: a survey of college provision in English language and literature, and modern foreign languages* (070248), Ofsted, 2009; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070248.

good range of scenarios and coped well with different speech patterns and registers.³⁹

155. There was much good teaching and learning. In many cases, a good range of activities not only engaged learners but also helped them to develop their interest in the foreign language and culture and to remember what they had learnt. Colleges supported their learners very well by making sure that the work was matched well to their needs. The teachers knew the learners very well and worked hard to ensure that they were able to build on their language skills effectively. For instance, analysing and correcting mistakes in a focused way helped learners to understand the error and how it could be eliminated. In the best provision, this was done systematically so that learners were not overwhelmed, but could concentrate on just a few relevant points, using support from their peers to reinforce learning.
156. Resources were used effectively to enhance learning. In one college, learners used video-conferencing successfully to speak to their peers in France. They heard up-to-date colloquial language and learnt about issues that were important for French students. The ability to interact through this medium gave them a better understanding of body language, gesture and facial expression. In another college, the tutors used their first-hand experience of different countries and cultures well to introduce interesting and appropriate realistic items into their teaching. The target language was used effectively for classroom business, instruction and interaction. In most cases, teachers modelled language very well at a level that was appropriate for their learners. In one case, foreign language assistants were used effectively to support learning. Information and learning technology was used very well to enhance learning and to promote and support independence. The internet provided access to genuine models of language models and supported communication with people from different cultures. Some colleges used websites such as YouTube very well to promote understanding and discussion of current issues.
157. Most colleges had clear entry criteria, and, where necessary, good initial assessment for learners but few colleges had language aptitude tests for learners on entry. Formative assessment was generally supportive and helpful. Long-term target setting was usually clear and well planned; however, in some colleges, there was insufficient emphasis on clear, short-term targets for learners and lesson objectives were occasionally imprecise. In many instances, teachers informed and challenged learners about their attitudes towards equality and diversity through their language lessons. This was particularly strong in French and Spanish.
158. The range of courses to meet learners' needs was generally satisfactory. Many institutions offered *'ab initio'* (introductory) language tuition, and this was well

³⁹ 'Register' refers to the choices a speaker makes to reflect the context, the subject being discussed, and other factors.

received. Colleges were offering fewer opportunities for language learning than previously, although what was offered was generally very well focused on needs. This was particularly so in the context of languages for work, where some colleges were working well with employers to give learners good opportunities to practise their skills. Some of the colleges focused well on enhancing the linguistic competency of their employees by offering bespoke language courses.

159. Most of the colleges used enrichment activities successfully to promote interest and learning. Learners took opportunities to study abroad, often staying with families where they practised their language in a natural environment. Most colleges offered theatre trips and visits to places of cultural and linguistic interest to engage their learners in languages. Learners benefited considerably from these activities and their linguistic knowledge was enhanced when it was placed in its cultural context. Colleges used links with other countries very effectively to extend learners' knowledge and interest.
160. Learning was well managed in most colleges, and was structured well to support learners. Team work in departments was very good and lines of responsibility were clear. Leaders and managers had sound methods for ensuring the quality of learning. They observed teaching and learning regularly and used what they found well to support professional development. However, in some cases, specific issues, such as using the target language effectively, were not picked up by non-specialists. In most cases, ways of advising and guiding learners about further opportunities, including university, were good. Some sixth-form colleges had particularly good links with universities.
161. The areas for improvement cited in the report included: extending the range of qualifications to ensure that they were appropriate and challenging and extending the range of teaching to ensure that all four language skills were fully developed by all learners.

Notes

This report draws on evidence from Ofsted's surveys of modern languages conducted between 2007 and 2010 in 92 primary schools, 90 secondary schools and one special school. The sample of secondary schools visited included a larger than average proportion of specialist language colleges (28) and visits to 31 sixth forms. The primary and secondary schools were located in urban and rural areas across England. More secondary schools with sixth forms, and specialist language colleges, were allocated to the survey sample in 2009–10. No school that was in one of Ofsted's categories of concern (that is, having a notice to improve or requiring special measures) was included in the sample of schools visited.

Inspectors evaluated achievement and standards, teaching and learning, the quality of the curriculum, and the leadership and management of language provision in these schools. In the secondary schools, inspectors selected reading (during 2007–08), information and communication technology (during 2008–10), and take-up in Key Stage 4 in 2007–10 for particular attention; in the primary schools, inspectors evaluated the schools' progress towards providing an entitlement for pupils to learn a language in Key Stage 2.

A selection of primary school inspection reports for 2009–10 was also scrutinised.

In addition, the report draws on evidence from five further education and sixth form college inspections in 2009–10 and from a survey of good practice in colleges' provision for languages in 2008–09. Inspection of languages in school sixth forms was also intensified in 2009–10. Inspectors aimed to observe at least two lessons, depending on what was being taught at the time of the visit.

In 2009, Ofsted also conducted a small-scale, follow-up telephone survey of 14 primary schools. These 14 schools, when they had first been contacted to be included in the sample, either during this or the previous survey, had been found not to be teaching a language at Key Stage 2. All but two of the 14 had since made progress in providing modern languages. The two which still did not do so were in challenging circumstances and said that they were concentrating on the core subjects.

Further information

Publications by Ofsted

Identifying good practice: a survey of college provision in English language and literature, and modern foreign languages (070248), Ofsted, 2009; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070248.

Subject-specific guidance for inspectors on making judgements during subject survey visits to schools, Ofsted, 2010; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/20100015.

The changing landscape of languages – an evaluation of language learning 2004/07, (070053), Ofsted, 2008; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070053.

Other publications

Exemplification for foundation subjects, demonstrating national standards at Key Stage 3, QCDA, 2010; <http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/assessment/exemplification/index.aspx>

Key Stage 3 Framework for Languages, DCSF, 2009 (The National Strategies Secondary); <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/search/secondary/results/nav:46155>

Languages for all; languages for life (PP113/D16/4457), DCSF, 2002; www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/languages/

Language trends 2009, CILT, ALL, ISMLA, 2009 www.cilt.org

Modern foreign languages Programme of study for key stage 3 and attainment targets, QCA, 2007; <http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/subjects/key-stage-3/modern-foreign-languages/index.aspx>

Review of modern foreign language provision in higher education in England (The Warton Report) (2009/41), HEFCE, 2009; www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_41/

The importance of teaching – the Schools White Paper 2010, Department for Education, 2010; <http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=CM+7980>

The Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages (1721-2005DCD-EN), DfES, 2005; <http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DFES%25201721%25202005&>

The Languages Ladder Steps for Success (00811-2007BKT-EN), DCSF, 2007;
www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/languages/Languages_Ladder/

Websites

www.primarylanguages.org.uk/resources/schemes_of_work/qcda_schemes_of_work.aspx

Full information about the QCDA schemes of work for Key Stage 2 languages is available from this site. The schemes of work have been developed to enable pupils at Key Stage 2 to achieve the learning objectives in each of the five strands of the *Key Stage 2 framework for languages*. A total of 24 units is available in French, German and Spanish for schools and teachers to adapt for their own purposes.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/languages/

This site, dedicated to languages, gives access to the 2002 National Languages Strategy which, among other things, provided the impetus for the Key Stage 3 Framework, primary languages and The Languages Ladder. It also includes a letter to secondary schools about setting Key Stage 4 benchmarks.

<http://cilt.org.uk>

CILT is the national centre for languages. The site provides information, training and resources for language teaching and learning.

Annex. Schools visited for this survey

Primary schools	Local authority
Alumwell Junior School	Walsall
Annesley Primary and Nursery School	Nottinghamshire
Banks Road Primary School	Liverpool
Bowbridge Primary School	Nottinghamshire
Bramley Sunnyside Junior School	Rotherham
Bransty Primary School	Cumbria
Bromley Hills Primary School	Dudley
Brunswick Primary School	Sheffield
Bugbrooke Community Primary School	Northamptonshire
Carlton Junior and Infant School	Kirklees
Cheadle Heath Primary School	Stockport
Cranford Park Primary School	Hillingdon
Deaf Hill Primary School	Durham
Dove Bank Primary School	Staffordshire
Duston Eldean Primary School	Northamptonshire
Field Junior School	Hertfordshire
Fossdene Primary School	Greenwich
Fulford Primary School	Staffordshire
Gildersome Primary School	Leeds
Gossops Green Community Primary	West Sussex
Grange Park Primary School	Enfield
Grosvenor Road Primary School	Salford
Grove Road Primary School	Hertfordshire
Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School	Birmingham
Healing Primary School	North East Lincolnshire
Holywell Church of England Primary School	Devon
Howard Primary School	Croydon
Jarrow Cross CofE Primary School	South Tyneside
Kingsholm Church of England Primary School	Gloucestershire
Kirby Hill Church of England Primary School	North Yorkshire
Ledbury Primary School	Herefordshire

Loughton School	Milton Keynes
Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School	Croydon
Mayflower Primary School	Leicester City
Milldown Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	Dorset
Monkleigh Primary School	Devon
Mount Pleasant Junior School*	Shropshire
Mrs Mary King's CofE (Controlled) Primary School	Lincolnshire
Norton Canes Primary School	Staffordshire
Ormesby Primary School	Redcar and Cleveland
Parkway Primary School	Bexley
Ravensmead Primary School	Staffordshire
Rise Park Primary and Nursery School	Nottingham City
Rotherfield Primary School	Islington
Ryvers Primary School	Slough
Salterlee Primary School	Calderdale
Sea View Primary School	South Tyneside
Shifnal Primary School	Shropshire
South Petherton Junior School	Somerset
St Aidan's Catholic Primary School	Manchester
St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School	Birmingham
St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided School, Preston, Weymouth	Dorset
St Antony's Catholic Primary School	Redbridge
St Brendan's RC Primary School, Harwood, Bolton	Bolton
St Catherine's Hoddesdon CofE Primary School	Hertfordshire
St Cuthbert's Church of England Primary School	Blackburn with Darwen
St Cuthbert's RC Primary School	Hartlepool
St Francis RC Primary School	Manchester
St Gabriel's Church of England Primary School	Blackburn with Darwen
St Gilbert's RC Primary School	Salford
St James CofE Primary School, Daisy Hill	Bolton

St James' RC Primary School	Salford
St James the Great RC Primary and Nursery School	Croydon
St Luke's Church of England Primary School	Rochdale
St Luke's RC Primary School	Salford
St Mark's Church of England Aided Primary School	Bournemouth
St Martin's CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School	Wiltshire
St Mary Immaculate Catholic Primary School	Warwickshire
St Michael's East Wickham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School	Bexley
St Pius X Catholic Primary School	Cumbria
St Thomas Moorside CofE (VA) Primary School	Oldham
St Thomas More Catholic Primary School	Staffordshire
St Thomas of Canterbury RC Primary School	Medway
St Vincent's RC Primary School	Westminster
St Wilfrids Catholic Primary School	Wigan
Stechford Primary School	Birmingham
Straits Primary School	Dudley
Swalwell Primary School	Gateshead
Temple Herdewyke Primary School	Warwickshire
The Deanery Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School	Birmingham
The St Margaret's Church of England School, Withern	Lincolnshire
Thorn Grove Primary School	Hertfordshire
Valley Park Community School	Sheffield
Waterloo Primary School	Tameside
Wellhouse Junior and Infant School	Kirklees
West Boldon Primary School	South Tyneside
Western Community Primary School	North Tyneside
Westoe Crown Primary School	South Tyneside
Weston Park Primary School	Bristol City of
Woodingdean Primary School	Brighton and Hove
Woolacombe School	Devon

Wrenbury Primary School	Cheshire East
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Secondary schools	Local authority
Alderbrook Leading Edge School and Arts College	Solihull
Beaumont School	Hertfordshire
Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Language College	Lancashire
Breeze Hill School*	Oldham
Broad Oak Sports College	Bury
Bullers Wood School	Bromley
Burntwood School	Wandsworth
Cansfield High Specialist Language College	Wigan
Charlton School	Telford and Wrekin
Chatham Grammar School for Girls	Medway
Chellaston School	Derby
Chesham Grammar School	Buckinghamshire
City of Leeds School	Leeds
City of Norwich School	Norfolk
Cliff Park High School	Norfolk
Convent of Jesus and Mary Language College	Brent
Derby Moor Community Sports College	Derby
Fearns Community Sports College	Lancashire
Finham Park School	Coventry
Glossopdale Community College	Derbyshire
Greencroft Business and Enterprise Community School	Durham
Haygrove School	Somerset
Hesketh Fletcher CofE High School, Atherton	Wigan
Hitchin Boys' School	Hertfordshire
Holloway School	Islington
Holly Lodge Foundation High School College of Science	Sandwell
Holte School	Birmingham
Honiton Community College	Devon
Impington Village College	Cambridgeshire

Jarrow School	South Tyneside
Joseph Whitaker School	Nottinghamshire
Judgemeadow Community College	Leicester
Katharine Lady Berkeley's School	Gloucestershire
Kineton High School	Warwickshire
King Edward VII School	Norfolk
Lea Manor High School Performing Arts College	Luton
Litcham High School	Norfolk
Little Lever School Specialist Language College	Bolton
Longdendale Community Language College	Tameside
Lyng Hall School	Coventry
Millais School	West Sussex
Mount Carmel RC Technology College for Girls	Islington
NCHS The Science College	Staffordshire
New Mills School Business & Enterprise College	Derbyshire
Northgate High School	Suffolk
Oaklands School	Tower Hamlets
Oldfield School	Bath and North East Somerset
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic High School and Engineering College	Lancashire
Park View Community School	Durham
Parkside Community College	Cambridgeshire
Pilton Community College	Devon
Plymstock School	Plymouth
Quarrydale School	Nottinghamshire
Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School	Lincolnshire
Redhill School and Specialist Language College	Dudley
Ridgewood School	Doncaster
Robert Pattinson School	Lincolnshire
Royal Manor Arts College	Dorset
Saint Mary's Catholic School	Hertfordshire

Salendine Nook High School	Kirklees
Sandy Upper School and Community Sports College	Central Bedfordshire
Selston Arts and Community College	Nottinghamshire
Sir Jonathan North Community College	Leicester
Southam College	Warwickshire
Southgate School	Enfield
Spennymoor Comprehensive School	Durham
St Ambrose Barlow RC High School	Salford
St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School and Byron College	Durham
St David's Roman Catholic Technology College*	Middlesbrough
St John the Baptist Catholic Comprehensive School, Woking	Surrey
St Peter's Church of England Aided School	Devon
St Peter's CofE (A) High School and International Language College	Stoke-on-Trent
St Robert of Newminster Roman Catholic School	Sunderland
Sunnydale Community College for Maths and Computing	Durham
Swanshurst School	Birmingham
Tanfield School, Specialist College of Science and Engineering	Durham
Taverham High School	Norfolk
Teign School	Devon
The Arnewood School	Hampshire
The Chadwell Heath Foundation School	Redbridge
The City of Leicester College	Leicester City
The Duchess's Community High School	Northumberland
The Queen Katherine School	Cumbria
The Robert Manning Technology College	Lincolnshire
Tiverton High School	Devon
Trinity School	Cumbria
Walton High School	Staffordshire
Woodbridge High School	Redbridge

Woolston Community High School	Warrington
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Special school	Local authority
Nether Hall School	Leicester City

***These schools have now closed.**