

# Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills Policy

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## 1. Overview

Languages form an integral part of life. For people living in Jersey languages contribute to our diverse and vibrant society, and so should be acknowledged and celebrated. The promotion and development of languages is essential to identity and inclusion. It is the aim of this Policy to provide a consistent framework for educators to create optimal conditions for students to achieve and reach their full potential.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Government of Jersey funded primary schools, secondary schools and colleges.

## 3. Background

For centuries Jersey has benefited from substantial migration, and has always been an outward-looking Island. It has welcomed Scottish and Irish construction workers, Breton farm workers, French religious refugees and more recently, workers from many other countries, as tourism and hospitality thrived and required a skilled workforce. Most recently, the expansion of the finance sector has brought further new arrivals. Each brought their languages to complement the Island's own tongues. Jersey now has significant communities with languages beyond English as their main language, including Portuguese, Polish, Latvian and, more recently, Romanian and Thai, as well as other smaller language groups.

Jersey is a multicultural and diverse Island, the roots inherited from history being a great source of strength, joy and inspiration. A sound educational system nourishes these roots. Before English became the language of instruction in 1912, multilingualism was commonplace, with Jèrriais, French and English prevalent in the Island.

French and English have long been official languages of Jersey, including for voting in the States Assembly. In 2019 Jèrriais was added as an official language of the States. Jersey has also signed the European Cultural Convention, which stipulates that signatories will safeguard and

promote its national contribution to European culture, which includes the Jèrriais language. Since 2016 Jersey schools have doubled the number of students studying French and established a successful Primary French language programme. We have recently extended the Jèrriais Teaching Team, broadening the reach of our Island's indigenous language.

This historical and ongoing linguistic and cultural diversity is valued in its own right. As a means to support this, Jersey has the responsibilities of UNCRC Articles 29 and 30 when 'Putting Children First', whereby the Government of Jersey agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

- The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
- In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

For Jersey to engender a socially cohesive community that is based on mutual respect and appreciation of cultural diversity, it is imperative that there is a consistent approach to the development of languages used by communities on the Island.

#### **4. Multilingualism Mission Statement**

##### **Mission**

Jersey schools encourage, welcome and respond to a diverse range of language strengths, needs and identities, with the task of preparing students to leave school/college with the linguistic, academic, and social skills and competencies they require to become successful members of the community. A key element for success is empowering children to value their own language and cultures, and those of their peers. Raising the profile of all languages has a positive impact on inclusion and well-being for students.

##### **Vision**

All learners fully and implicitly access and can enjoy an education from early childhood to Year 13 (and beyond) that results in high levels of English proficiency, mastery of at least age-related expectations, and opportunities to develop proficiency in multiple languages and broad cultural understandings.

The aims of this policy are:

- To develop Island-wide approaches to the development of languages as a key to success in a globalised world
- To raise awareness of the benefits of cultural and linguistic diversity and champion its contribution to life in Jersey
- To provide all children with equal opportunities to make progress in language development and learning in the languages of their heritage and the languages of the Island
- To support and encourage the learning of non-traditional modern languages (beyond French/Spanish/Italian/Mandarin) and home and heritage languages (Jèrriais) as having equal value in a child's linguistic development

- To raise awareness in educational settings of the language-based learning needs of any subject, and ensure that all educators, irrespective of subject or specialisation, are equipped to support language development in their classes
- To provide a framework on which to base effective in-school policies that collectively form a consistent and collaborative Island-wide strategy
- To ensure that all parents and caregivers can access information on the education provisions for their children, including for language development, thus enabling them to support their children at home.

The Jersey Language Policy encompasses the following areas of language:

**“All students benefit from opportunities to learn languages spoken in their communities and internationally.”**

All students in Jersey schools should be provided with rich and varied opportunities to engage in language awareness, language development and cultural development. While English remains the primary language of instruction in Jersey schools, it is the goal that all students will have the opportunity to engage in language acquisition in meaningful and useful ways, especially in the languages spoken in the wider community in Jersey. This policy provides support for the teaching and learning of languages that schools identify as important for the aspirations and potential of their students in a globalised world (e.g. Spanish, Italian, German, Mandarin), the major immigrant languages (Polish, Portuguese, Romanian) as well as those significant to Jersey, including Jèrriais and French. Learning languages that are spoken in the community will help build cultural bridges and provide natural opportunities for language development.

**“English has been the language of instruction in Jersey schools since 1912 and, in an increasingly globalised world, it is imperative that our students have highly developed English language skills by the time they leave education and enter the workplace.”**

All students are entitled to the highest standard of education to ensure they are suitably prepared for an increasingly competitive world of work. English is a key language in politics, business, science, technology and popular culture. The ability to speak, read and write English is generally considered a highly desirable and valuable skill. Within the Jersey education system, around 25% of students are recorded on SIMs as having EAL, with numbers varying across schools. Whilst the majority of these students were born in Jersey and have attended school since Nursery, a sizeable proportion will have arrived as International New Arrivals (INAs). These new arrivals may have had different educational experiences prior to arriving in Jersey. INAs can arrive at any time of the year, within any year group and with differing levels of Proficiency in English (PIE). These students have the dual challenge of learning English while learning through English. This policy acknowledges the challenges for students learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) and advises on the best ways to meet their needs in order to close existing achievement gaps between MLL students who are learning English and their native English-speaking peers.

**“ The home language that each child brings to school with them is a critical element of their cognitive, emotional, social, and identity development.”**

As the population of Jersey continues to diversify, schools are welcoming significant numbers of students who are speakers of languages other than English. Research focused on educating

language learner students points to a strong correlation between maintenance and development in home languages and mastery of the school language in their new environment. It also supports the integration of home languages into education for purposes as varied as literacy development, knowledge building, integration, and development of international mindedness. This policy emphasises the importance of building of knowledge in schools on multilingualism in development, and the development of strong parent/school/community relationships, to improve the academic outcomes for the Island's multilingual learners.

**“Learning and speaking Jersey’s unique, indigenous Jèrriais language can instil a sense of belonging in Islanders from all backgrounds, contributing to enhanced linguistic and cultural appreciation and potentially providing a pathway to other languages, particularly French.”**

Jèrriais was once the most commonly spoken language in Jersey. Much of Jersey’s history, geography, literature and folklore had been expressed only in Jèrriais. As a critically endangered language, Jèrriais is at risk of dying out entirely in the next decade. The introduction of Jèrriais into Island schools offers a route to revitalisation already successfully adopted by other indigenous languages such as Manx, Welsh and Irish. The revitalisation of Jèrriais in Jersey schools would allow children the opportunity to become new speakers of this indigenous language, which is key to reversing language decline. It will also offer Islanders of all ages the opportunity to strengthen their sense of belonging to Jersey and to enhance their linguistic and cultural consciousness. Through the implementation of this policy, Jèrriais will become more audible and visible in and beyond our educational settings as well as a logical addition to the linguistic repertoire of our learners. It is the aim of this policy that Jèrriais becomes fully integrated with Jersey’s curriculum, with the potential for students to receive instruction through the medium of Jèrriais.

## **5. What do we know about language learning and multilingualism in education?**

- All languages must be celebrated and valued within the community to ensure social cohesion and respect across cultures.<sup>1</sup>
- Languages are a core component of identity and reinforce a sense of belonging.<sup>1</sup>
- Multilingualism offers cognitive and cultural benefits to students which enables them to work effectively and collaboratively within the community.<sup>1</sup>
- All students, regardless of socio-economic or cultural background, and given the right structure, have the ability to become competent additional language learners.<sup>2</sup>
- Students who are learners of English as an Additional Language benefit from having their L1/home language included and leveraged in their education<sup>3</sup>
- Responsibility for students who are learners of English as an Additional Language is shared by all educators who work with them.<sup>4</sup>
- Empowering students with language and the opportunity for self-expression can significantly impact on the well-being of our students, their learning and personal growth.<sup>5</sup>
- Educational settings have, in the past, contributed to the decline of indigenous languages such as Jèrriais, and are uniquely placed to support, and benefit from, their revitalisation.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> (Spiro & Crisfield, 2018)

<sup>2</sup> (Garcia, 2009)

<sup>3</sup> (Chalmers, 2019)

<sup>4</sup> (Chumak-Horbatsch, 2020)

<sup>5</sup> (Chalmers & Crisfield, 2019)

- A child's first language provides the roots to learn additional languages, and parents should be encouraged to continue to use their home languages to strengthen and support their children's language proficiency as they join new environments.<sup>7</sup>

## **6. What are the roles and responsibilities of educators in supporting an effective Language Policy?**

- A successful Language Policy depends on the commitment and 'buy-in' of all stakeholders.
- All languages are inherently valuable and of importance to the student for their sense of identity and belonging.
- Students must be encouraged and supported to value their home language(s) and continue to develop proficiency in them, inside and outside the classroom.
- The knowledge, experience and high expectations of the teacher will enable equitable access for all students in all languages.
- Quality learning in languages is achieved with strategic planning, excellent resourcing and evidence-based methodology.
- A collegiate approach between schools facilitates effective planning along with the sharing and refinement of resources and best practice, especially for diverse languages.
- Reflective practice, including Continuous Professional Development, enables educators to review and develop their approaches to teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms.
- Schools will endeavour to build community links so that all parents and caregivers feel welcome and involved in the life and fabric of the school.
- As educators, we will aim to be exemplary role-models in attaining a high level of competency in the languages we teach.
- As educators, we will aim to be exemplary role-models in demonstrating passion and respect for linguistic diversity.

## **7. What is the role of collaboration between stakeholders (students, parents, educators, the community, specialists in supporting the implementation of the Language Policy?**

- The same key messages must be shared across all stakeholders to support the students' language development.
- Sufficient resources and appropriate support strategies will be provided across all Key Stages for parents/caregivers to engage in their child's learning.
- A flexible and considered approach to parents'/caregivers' engagement will ensure that every parent/carer feels included.
- The establishment of a strong school-home-community network positively impacts on the students' learning and self-esteem.
- Multilingual social communication between all stakeholders reinforces the diversity of the community that the schools serve.
- Schools reaching out to the wider community through events such as performances and charity events will reflect the identities and cultures of the school community.
- Settings will reflect the needs and languages of the community and be a place of accessibility for that community.

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<sup>6</sup> (Cantoni, 1997)

<sup>7</sup> (Early Education, 2021)

- Collaborations across services will provide all students with the opportunity to become familiar with Jèrriais.
- Schools and institutions will reflect on where the inclusion of Jèrriais could provide additional context and cultural content for students (i.e. tourism courses, cultural events).

## **8. What practices will be implemented to ensure that the expectations of the Language Policy are carried out in our educational settings?**

- All schools and colleges will develop an implementation plan, on the template provided, which will be the Action Plan for the Jersey Language Policy in their school.
- Schools and colleges will develop an understanding of the linguistic repertoire of their students along with the competence of their first/home/dominant language(s). This could be through home visits, induction sessions, transition as well as the use of appropriate people to undertake translations.
- International New Arrivals will complete an appropriate initial assessment in both home language (L1) and English (L2) if they do not have English as a home language or former language of schooling.
- Schools and colleges will be encouraged to recruit bi/multilingual educators to meet specific and general roles. as well as educators who have the knowledge and good practice of language learning.
- All schools and colleges will continue to follow the 2014 Jersey Curriculum, ensuring it is broad and balanced and linked to the linguistic and cultural heritage of the students in the school.
- CYPES will implement Continuous Professional Development of language pedagogy and share and review best practice for teaching and learning through evidence-based methodology.
- This professional development will be designed to support all teachers, regardless of subject specialisation, in developing a language-integrated pedagogy to support students with EAL.
- A collegiate approach will be nurtured between schools, sharing best practices, resources, etc. This can include observations of classroom practice.
- The use of languages other than English will be encouraged (home languages, Jèrriais, French) through the Island's physical and digital environments, e.g. signage in multiple languages, quality dual language texts, as well as visiting speakers.
- Schools and colleges will ensure that the linguistic landscape of the school celebrates the languages of their staff and students, as well as Jèrriais, as the local heritage language.
- Schools will, as is feasible, broaden their language teaching provisions to include the languages spoken by significant numbers of Jersey students, and the teaching of Jèrriais.
- Teachers will, where possible, be supported with opportunities to learn other languages that are a part of this Policy.
- The Jèrriais Teaching Service will provide support to schools in widening the scope of exposure to Jèrriais by providing teaching materials, support for special events, and connections for Island-based field trips and experiential learning.
- Language teams responsible for EAL, MFL, the French Experience, and Jèrriais will work together to connect and enhance language teaching and learning across provisions.
- All schools will adopt an agreed-upon assessment framework for tracking and reporting on EAL proficiency development.

- Professional development initiatives will encourage the development of approaches to education that include the whole linguistic repertoire of students for purposes of learning and development ('translanguaging').
- Reasonable efforts will be made to have key information available in accessible ways to ensure all parents and caregivers are included and well-informed, including information about language development, bilingualism, and the importance of home languages.
- The Language Policy, in an accessible form, will be available in the languages of the community.
- The Language Policy will be visible and referenced in all Island schools and colleges, as appropriate.

## **9. What are the expectations about Language Reporting and Assessing to support the Language Policy?**

- Each school and college will develop a unique school language profile, including both students and educators. This will help to understand the language context of the educational setting and to better inform the development of programmes which are in line with the goals and vision of the Language Policy.
- Each student's linguistic profile and heritage will be captured to ensure that no student is left out and that their educational needs are met in terms of learning, progress and well-being.
- Regular monitoring of the progress of students will be implemented for assessing subject knowledge, performance, engagement and predicted attainment.
- School assessment must take into account the needs of their students to ensure equitable access to assessment of all types.
- Consistency in tracking and reporting of language proficiency data is key to effective distribution of resources.

A language policy is a dynamic working document and responds to the changing linguistic ecology in which it is situated. It will be reviewed every three (3) years to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the Island's students and updated as necessary.

## **10. Monitoring and Reviewing the Language Policy**

- A monitoring process will be put into place to ensure schools and colleges develop implementation plans that align with the Language Policy.
- Guidance will be provided for schools or colleges which need support with developing or implementing elements of the Policy.
- All key stakeholders will keep abreast of curriculum changes and demands, especially in relation to research on languages in education.
- A team will be designated to explore the connections between language teams (EAL and ML) and the Jèrriais Language Strategy 2020-2024.
- Consultations will be held with school communities on a regular basis in order to act on feedback and change practices accordingly.
- A steering group will meet regularly to review current practice and identify areas that may need amending according to the changing demographics of the Island, liaising with the appropriate authorities when necessary.

This Language Policy was developed by the Language Policy Working Group (2021).

Members of the Group are as follows:

Eowyn Crisfield: External Adviser to CYPES

Lesley Stagg: Senior Adviser

Richard Merhet: Head of EAL Service

Ben Spink: Head of Jèrriais Service

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## **Key definitions**

**Multilingual Learner (MLL):** Any student who has a language or languages beyond English in their linguistic repertoire

**English as an Additional Language (EAL) Support:** A supportive provision (stand-alone and/or integrated) designed to help students who are learners of English develop full academic proficiency

## **Glossary**

**Bilingual/multilingual:** Having access to more than one language for communication in different contexts

**Cultural diversity:** having more than one cultural or ethnic group represented

**First language:** Language a child has been consistently exposed to from birth

**Heritage languages:** Languages spoken by a community for cultural purposes

**Home language(s):** Languages used regularly in the home situation of students

**International New Arrivals (INAs):** Students who arrive in the Jersey school system from outside the Island or the UK

**Jèrriais:** a Romance language and the traditional language of the Jersey people. It is a form of the Norman language spoken in Jersey, an Island in the Channel Islands archipelago off the coast of France.

**L1:** See 'First language'

**L2:** See 'Second/additional languages)

**Language of Instruction (LoI):** The main language that is used for teaching and learning in a school/system

**Multilingual Learners:** Any student who has languages other than English in their linguistic repertoire

**Proficiency in English:** The assessed level of fluency of a student receiving EAL services

**Second/additional languages:** Languages learning after the age of 3-4 years old, usually at school

**SIMS:** Student Information Management System

**Translanguaging:** A cross-linguistic pedagogy that leverages students' abilities in any language to support learning and inclusion

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