

## MFL Mentoring Steering Group Update April/May 2022

The following report provides details of the progress of the two streams of activity relating to the MFL Student Mentoring project. These are:

1. The Year 8/9 Online Mentoring Programme.
2. The Teacher Resources Programme.

The report will also highlight activity to carry on into the new 2022-23 cycle of MFL Mentoring, with information about a new stream of work which will focus on marketing and communications relating to International Languages.

The project team are grateful for the continued support of colleagues.

### 1. Summary of Year 8/9 Online Mentoring 2021-22

#### Project Summary

The project received funding to work with a minimum of 45 schools and a maximum of 65 schools in the academic year 2021-22. Two rounds of 4-6 sessions of mentoring were delivered to Year 8 and 9 learners. All sessions across both semesters took place online. Turbo-mentoring was also successfully reintroduced and facilitated online.

#### Total School Partners

Once again, the project secured excellent support from partner schools throughout the year. The total number of schools engaged over the course of the 2021-2022 cycle are as follows:

- Partneriaeth: 12
- GWE:16
- CSC: 17
- EAS: 16
- No consortia affiliation:8

#### **Total: 69 schools**

The number of new schools that worked with the project this year are: 11 schools (Crickhowell, Brynmawr, Maesteg, Whitchurch, Welshpool, Denbigh HS, Hawarden HS, Darland HS, Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi, St John Lloyd, Chepstow)

#### Individual School Reports

In September-October 2021, the learner baseline survey gathered 5,803 responses which have been used as a basis for the individual school reports. In total, 42 schools were provided with an individual report and each of the consortia were provided with a report based on the outcomes from schools in their consortia. The report summarising the findings for all-Wales is available here: [https://www.canva.com/design/DAE7JCTVc9Y/ffb2\\_T5q8NzvjnnhLS7nLw/view](https://www.canva.com/design/DAE7JCTVc9Y/ffb2_T5q8NzvjnnhLS7nLw/view)

Teachers were asked to feedback on how useful the reports had been and how they intend to use them within their context. As of 27/04/22, 16 teachers have provided feedback. 100% of respondents agreed that the report would be 'very useful' or 'useful.' 75% of respondents agreed that the report was 'very accessible' with the further 25% agreeing that it was 'accessible.' Respondents predominately intended to share the report with staff in the International Languages department and Senior Leadership Teams. Other groups that were mentioned included staff in other departments and school governors. Respondents commented the following when asked how they hope to use the report:

- *To inform staff on student reasons for uptake of international languages or not & to moderate teaching as appropriate.*
- *To share with colleagues in the department in order to maximise uptake.*
- *To reinforce the need to support and invest in the department.*
- *To make SLT aware of the challenges of IL in respect with other Welsh schools but also compare the progress the department has made and look at areas we still need to work on.*
- *To support our promotion of MFL GCSEs, allowing us to focus on the reasons pupils may not take a language. To help leadership gain an understanding of the uptake situation and potentially allow for more leeway in terms of minimum numbers for courses to run. (We had no French class last year due to the 10 pupil minimum requirement).*
- *As part of Self eval tool/ Options evening/ future planning.*
- *As an opportunity to look at development areas and as a focus for raising the profile of languages in our school and curriculum development plan.*

All respondents agreed that they would 'definitely' or 'probably' want a similar report next year if it were possible.

## Partnership with First Campus

In the second semester, MFL Mentoring collaborated with First Campus to deliver mentoring sessions in 5 schools. 10 mentors received training specifically on working with schools in areas of high socio-economic deprivation before taking on the additional placements. First Campus' work focuses on working with schools in the most deprived areas of South Wales. Schools that are engaged in this pilot project are:

- St. Illtyd's Catholic High School
- Willows High School
- Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda
- Cantonian High School
- Pen-y-Dre

The continuation of partnership with First Campus is currently under review.

## Mentors

Mentors have now completed their 2021-2022 cycle of mentoring.

The following statistics relate to the engagement from mentors over the course of the 2021-22 cycle:

- number of applications: 155 applications (128 full + 27 partial) and 6 Oxford applications
- number trained: 115 invited to training; 82 completed training
- number placed in a school for either semester 1 or 2, or for turbo-mentoring: 66 mentors

## Accreditation

All mentors were offered the opportunity to complete the accreditations created by the project in the last academic year. [Click here to view Unit 1](#) and [here to view Unit 2](#).

9 students completed Unit 1 in the first semester (3 from Cardiff, 2 from Swansea, 2 from Bangor and 2 from Aber). 4 students completed Unit 2 in the second semester (3 from Cardiff and 1 from Swansea). 1 student completed Unit 1 in the second semester (1 from Swansea).

## 2. Year 8/9 Online Mentoring 2022-23

### Project Summary

The project will deliver **face-to-face and online mentoring in up to 70 schools across Wales in the 2022-23 cycle of mentoring**. This will involve recruitment of approximately 160 mentors and training of 100 to allow for sufficient attrition based on the higher attrition experienced over the last 2 years.

It is envisaged that at least half of schools will engage online. **Prioritisation of schools** will be based on information collated via the schools application form and in collaboration with Consortia Leads. Schools that have experienced a decline over the last 2 years will be prioritised, with schools with high FSM allocated places first.

Training will most likely be delivered as a blended event, with visits to partner universities for a day of workshops and training complemented by a number of online workshops. Award and Recognition ceremonies will be reintroduced where possible. Significant additional staff time will be allocated to **supporting teachers** during this period to maintain momentum as they face curriculum rollout and overcome the challenges of the last 2 years of COVID-19 restrictions.

### University Recruitment

The project maintains very strong partnerships across its five existing partner universities: Cardiff University, Swansea University, Aberystwyth University, Bangor University and University Wales Trinity Saint David. The format for university bursaries is likely to follow the same pattern as in the most recent year and will be confirmed in the coming weeks.

In this new cycle, the project team are reaching out to other universities in Wales in an effort to expand the scale and impact of the project. Universities approached include:

- Wrexham Glyndwr
- University of South Wales (USW)
- Cardiff Metropolitan University

These universities don't have modern languages departments but do have a linguistically and culturally diverse student body. The project team are currently working in collaboration with colleagues from GO Wales, from within the Careers and Employability Services and with Work Experience colleagues from within these institutions to develop the project's profile. A lead from each of these institutions will be nominated in due course, should the partnerships proceed.

The project team have also approached the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD).



## School Recruitment

For the second time, schools have been asked to complete an application form to apply to be part of the project in the coming year. This is to ensure that the project is working with the schools who are most in need and to determine an equitable geographic split across Wales. The application form will be reviewed if it proves a barrier to participation.

The project team are working with Consortia Leads to advertise the opportunity to schools and are emailing partner schools regularly. All schools who have been involved in the project at some point in the last 3 years will also be contacted. The project team intend to continue to reach more schools across Wales who have not previously participated in the project.

As of 27/04/2022, the project has received the following number of school applications:

- Partneriaeth: 7
- GWE: 8
- CSC: 9
- EAS: 8
- No consortia affiliation: 4

**Total applications: 36**

## Mentor Recruitment

Recruitment of mentors for 2022-23 started in March 2022. The earlier launch of recruitment is intended to support increased recruitment to account for the additional attrition observed in mentor numbers in the last 2 years. This advance recruitment will also allow more time for DBS checks in June and for schools to complete the learner baseline survey in July lessening pressures on schools in September. This should also mean that the mentoring cycle can begin more promptly after the mentor training is complete. This approach may not work for all schools, but it will provide greater flexibility.

Once again, the project team are keen to recruit mentors from a wide variety of backgrounds and subject areas. The team have been using social media, appearing in newsletters and approaching the following departments to disseminate information about the project as widely as possible:

- Schools/departments offering social science, humanities and arts courses.
- Languages for All or equivalent
- Global Opportunities or equivalent
- International Office or equivalent
- Careers and Skills Development
- Student Volunteering
- Students' Union and societies

As of 28/04/2022, the mentor applications are as follows:

- Cardiff University: 68 applications (52 full, 16 partial)
- Swansea University: 46 applications (33 full, 13 partial)
- Bangor University: 19 applications (15 full, 4 partial)
- Aberystwyth University: 8 applications (6 full, 2 partial)
- University of Wales Trinity St. David: 7 applications (5 full, 2 partial)
- University of South Wales: 3 applications (1 full, 2 partial)
- Wrexham Glyndwr: 0 applications
- Cardiff Metropolitan: 0 applications



**Total applications: 151**

The deadline for mentor applications is **16 May 2022**, after which students will be either accepted on to the training, interviewed or placed on a reserve list. However, as new partnerships have been developed this year, the project will allow some leeway in the deadline for new universities with student recruitment.

### 3. Teacher Resources

#### Project Summary

The project will continue to **create resources in support of the Curriculum for Wales**. This work will *extend the existing materials* and see the creation of new materials in the latter stages of the mentoring cycle. Materials will be created that are suitable for year 6 and year 7 with a possible focus on transition. The way that delineation between stages will be managed is still under review. Strategic working with IL leads for Primary and Secondary in Consortia will be mobilised to best affect. The format developed in the last 8 months will form the backbone for the ongoing development of this work stream.

#### Primary Engagement

LJ presented a snapshot of the resources at a CSC Curriculum event on 27 January 2022. Following the event, primary teachers contacted LJ expressing great interest and enthusiasm in the resources. Following approval from the Focus Group, 5 primaries were invited to trial the resources with their learners. The data collated was analysed alongside the feedback from secondary schools to determine the best focus for the resources should further work be undertaken.

#### PGCE Engagement

BB and LJ presented a snapshot of the resources to a group of PGCE students from Cardiff Metropolitan University and Swansea University. Students were studying for PGCEs in MFL, English and Welsh. The resources were received with great enthusiasm with PGCE tutors commenting that these resources would be hugely supportive of the Curriculum for Wales and that they provided concrete examples to PGCE students of what teaching and learning could look like under the new curriculum. Possibilities for partnership and collaboration are being explored.

#### Focus Group

Two further focus groups took place in February and March 2022, to complement the 2 that took place in the latter part of 2021. The focus group meetings focused on gathering views and insights from teachers about their experiences of the resources and feeding back on the user-testing that took place. The format and function of the focus group is currently under review.

#### User-testing

Five completed resources - alebrijes, idioms, lego, surfing and biscuits - were released for user-testing to teachers in the Focus Group at the beginning of February. The trial group included 5 primary schools. Feedback was collated from learners and teachers. A presentation with details from the outcomes of the user-testing can be found [here](#). A summary of the findings is as follows:

14 responses were collected from teachers. The key conclusions were:

- Everyone was appreciative of the resources and could see benefit.
- Anxiety about balancing multilingual nature of resources with the language taught in the classroom in Secondary.
- Relatively split views across Secondary; enthusiasm from Primary teachers.
- More adaptation for individual contexts and language needs.
- Mixture of feelings of preparedness for Curriculum for Wales.

230 responses were collected from learners in Secondary and Primary. The key conclusions were:

- Learners particularly enjoyed the use of multiple languages and the creative elements.
- Learners were able to see the connections between languages and with other subjects even without collaboration with teachers from other AoLE.
- Primary learners were consistently more positive than secondary learners though there were fewer responses from Primary schools.

### Ongoing work and development

Further development of resources will be informed by this feedback. Primarily, the team will now look to deliver the following:

- **Create two versions of each resource.** One that is suitable for primary (with the additional scaffolding that is required) and one suitable for year 7.
- **Reiterate the existing resources to integrate findings from the user testing.** This will particularly include developing the resources to hit progression step 3 for the year 7 resources.
- **Develop further resources** that reflect the findings from the user-testing.
- **Publish the resources on the website** when they have met approval.

### Collaboration

The project continues to work with a small team of colleagues based at Ulster University creating a Language Awareness for Key Stage 3 ('LAWKS-3') module. More information about the project can be accessed [here](#). We continue to learn from their linguistics expertise and are reshaping some of their detailed linguistics resources to be used in Wales.

## 4. New Stream: Marketing and Communications Materials for schools

This new stream of work is underpinned by the project mission to shift the attitude and mindsets of the 48% who have not closed their minds to IL for GCSE. It will offer tools to flood positive messages about international languages within schools and to their wider communities.

The project will divide this work package into two parts. Part one will see the creation of a **series of targeted resources and assets** that can be used to inform learners, parents, careers advisers and senior leaders about learning languages and to reframe the messages around languages and careers. Messages underpinning the MFL Mentoring project will be mobilised as key success factors for the project to date. The resources might include: leaflets, posters, email templates, business cards with key statistics, social media templates, infographics, presentations.

Part two will include a **suite of asynchronous materials and training** which support teachers to maximise the resources and assets, these might include: communications strategies for social media;

communications strategies for learners; how to pitch languages successfully; what to do at the careers fayre; what do languages at university really look like. All materials will be available bilingually.

## 5. New Discrete Package: Scoping Reading Mentoring Project

This discrete piece of work is a scoping exercise to be carried out by the MFL Mentoring team, in collaboration with Ondata Research Limited, to scope how a mentoring project could be mobilised to support reading in schools across Wales. The overarching aim of the project is to determine how mentoring or similar initiatives could be used to raise reading standards as part of the roll out of the Curriculum for Wales. The scoping exercise will also propose organisational models which would facilitate a pan-Wales roll out of a mentoring initiative. The work will seek a solution that aligns with Welsh Government's disadvantaged agenda and community schools' approach and which facilitates delivery of an all-Wales programme of activity. The work may also need to flex to ongoing findings relating to covid impact on literacy and reading levels.

The work will be completed in collaboration with Ondata Research Limited and will be undertaken in five linear stages.

1. **Scoping - Case Studies:** key national and international mentoring project case studies.
2. **Scoping - Experts & Stakeholders:** interview and survey experts in literacy, reading and mentoring to determine attitudes and needs.
3. **Explore the User:** determine who the potential user of the mentoring service might be with specific focus on age group, learner characteristics and success criteria.
4. **Explore the Mentoring Model:** consider different types of mentoring and partnerships required.
5. **Recommendations and Operational Models:** based on the findings from the above, a set of recommendations will be made. Based on the needs, organisational models will be proposed and timelines for delivery of a project suggested.

## 6. Other Outcomes

**Recruitment of additional team members:** advertising for two additional team members will shortly be live and will be shared with the group.

**National Strategy for Educational Research and Enquiry A Seminar Series 2021-2022:** LJ and CG gave a presentation on 27<sup>th</sup> April entitled: 'International Languages in Secondary Schools in Wales: Why Don't Learners Choose Languages and How Can Mentoring Provoke Change?'

**Confucius talk:** BB and LJ provided a talk to students at the Confucius Institute in April 2022, to provide information about the Curriculum for Wales and language learning.

**Institute of Government and Public Policy Presentation:** CG gave a presentation on the MFL Mentoring project at an event on 'Shaping the Future of Modern Foreign Languages in Education' in March 2022.



MENTORA ITM  
MFL MENTORING

**The Alliance of Modern Languages, Area Studies and Linguistics Subject Associations UK (AMLUK)**

**Annual Symposium Event:** LJ will be giving a presentation at [this event](#), entitled: International Languages in Secondary Schools in Wales: Why Don't Learners Choose Languages and How Can Mentoring Provoke Change 'International Languages in Secondary Schools in Wales: Why Don't Learners Choose Languages and How Can Mentoring Provoke Change?' It will take place on 13<sup>th</sup> May.

**Future Leaders Fellows Development Network Session:** in collaboration with Physics Mentoring, LJ will be providing a session for the [FLFDNetwork](#). The session is entitled: 'Research in Practice: Policy, Practice and Schools Engagement' and will take place in July.

**Promotional video:** the project is finalising a short promotional video which outlines the project's vision. This will be shared shortly.

**Funded Internships:** the project will be hosting 3 interns between May-July 2022 to support discrete aspects of the project.