UCFL Executive Committee
17th May 2024

Schools Liaison report

Professor Anna Lise Gordon (St Mary's University and ALL Trustee)

Association for Language Learning (ALL) Update

- President-elect, Judith Rifeser, continues to work alongside Liz Black during her second year as President (2022-2024).
- ALL's annual Language World conference took place on Friday 8th and Saturday 9th March 2024 in Kenilworth. There were a record number of attendees (323) and an extensive exhibition, as well as a wide range of informative keynotes, parallel sessions and workshops. Dates for next year's Language World conference at the same venue: Friday 14 & Saturday 15 March 2025.
- If any UCFL colleague would like to become / renew lapsed membership of ALL, please contact crista.hazell@all-languages.org.uk and she will arrange a 10% discount for you.

Teacher recruitment, training and retention

The House of Commons Education Committee has just released its latest report on Teacher recruitment, training and retention:
https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5804/cmselect/cmeduc/119/report.html

Key summary areas:

- Financial incentives and pay
- Alternative routes into teaching
- Training and professional development
- Subject specific teacher shortages
- Flexibility and workload
- Pupil behaviour

Of particular interest to UCFL and ALL are the sections on bursaries, scholarships and financial incentives, international teachers, and subject specific teacher shortages.

MFL is specifically highlighted as an area that is 'acutely impacted' (p7) by teacher shortages. For example, in 2023/24, there were 1023 new MFL PGITT entrants into the profession against a DfE target of 2985 (34.3%) meaning that the under-recruitment of recent years has continued.

The latest recruitment data for MFL for 2024/25 is a concern (see ITE section below) and the DfE's decision to make changes to the international relocation payment is now likely to exclude some potential trainee teachers. The Select Committee considered the international

relocation payment to be a positive intervention to encourage the recruitment and training of international teachers, and the report urges the DfE to reconsider the decision.

René Koglbauer (Chair of Trustees at ALL) provided evidence for the select committee on the importance of international teachers in the UK and this was acknowledged as a key factor in any teacher recruitment strategy. Closely related, concerns are raised about the limits being placed on the provision and funding for Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) for those interested in a career in teaching but in need of linguistic upskilling.

One impact of the teacher shortage is the lack of specialist teachers in some subjects. For MFL, the percentage of teachers with expert qualifications is as follows: French 71.7%, German 71.7% and Spanish 51.2%. The report highlights that this situation may have an impact on the take-up of MFL at GCSE and beyond, noting (p52) that: 'Out of the 86.2% of pupils who entered four of the five EBacc components 88.9% were missing the languages component in 2022/23'.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

- DfE bursaries are in place for languages (including ancient languages) for ITE 2024/25 - £25,000 tax-free.
- Applications for the 24/25 scholarship programme (£27,000 tax-free) in French, German and Spanish are being managed by the British Council.
- ALL discussions with DfE continue about issues relating to visas, relocation payments etc. for trainee and early career teachers.
- Latest data on trainee teacher recruitment for 2024/25 was shared by Jack Worth (NFER) in April, showing that MFL is currently at 46% of target – ahead of last year, but still well below required level.

School Visits Abroad

- ALL President, Liz Black, is involved in discussions at a national level about the current issues relating to school exchanges and visits abroad. This work has included the collation of case studies on the issues for consideration by key stakeholders. There is significant support from a range of organisations e.g. The Sutton Trust, as schools grapple with the complexities of the Turing Scheme and the challenges of taking pupils on international study trips post-Brexit. Baroness Cousins secured a debate in the House of Lords in April to lead a call for action in this area.