

Grand Union Language Network Newsletter

July 2026

The end of the academic year is calling! The promised quieter period after SATs and GCSE exams hasn't materialised and you are probably wondering how you are going to make it through what promises to be another swelteringly hot week, without air conditioning! July's newsletter includes some timely ideas to support with transition, European Day of Languages and a summary from our face-to-face CPD session, Do Languages have a PR problem? We've loved supporting you over the course of the 2025-26 academic year and look forward to working more closely with you all from September!

Actions from this month's newsletter:

1. Dr. Alison Porter from the University of Southampton is currently researching SEND provision in Languages. Please [complete this short survey](#) to feed into this important research.
2. Interested in the national picture about Languages? Join the NCLE team, the British Council and the researchers behind the Language Trends annual report on [Wednesday 8th July 4.00pm – 5.00pm](#) to find out more.
3. Sign up to join [Swanswell's webinar on the 8th September](#) for some practical ideas to celebrate European Day of Languages.
4. Take some time to read through the summary document from TTLN's "[Do Languages have a PR problem CPD event](#)" and start to consider what the language learning journey looks like in your setting. Share this message with your learners at the start of the academic year and with prospective parents at Open Evening.
5. What do you do with your new year 7 students in their first lesson in September? Visit our [transition corner](#) to consider some alternative approaches.

Please help us to grow our network by signposting us through your social media channels.



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West Midlands Regional Language Network Offer 2026-2027

Wednesday 8th July 16.00 – 17.00	NCLE National Webinar. Sharing the findings from Language Trends 2026. NCLE CPD Webinars - NCLE
Tuesday 8 th September 15:30-16:45	Swanswell Language Network Webinar Practical Ideas for European Day of Languages Swanswell Language Network Webinar 'Practical Ideas for European Day of Languages' 2026
September - December	Trent and Tame Impactful Language Leadership Triad Model Please e-mail Tracy Williams tracy.williams@atlp.org.uk for more details or to express an interest.
Tuesday 22 nd September 15:30-16:45	West Midlands Regional Language Network Virtual Teach Meet Reflecting on the Edexcel GCSE Summer 26 Language Exams TTLN CPD - Trent and Tame Language Network
Thursday 24 th September 15:30-16:45	West Midlands Regional Language Network Virtual Teach Meet Reflecting on the AQA GCSE Summer 26 Language Exams TTLN CPD - Trent and Tame Language Network
Wednesday 4 th November 15:30-16:45	Trent and Tame Language Network Virtual Teach Meet Do Languages have a PR problem – follow up and next steps. TTLN CPD - Trent and Tame Language Network

What's happening in the Languages World at the moment?

Language Trends 2026

Wednesday 8th July 2026 4-5pm

What does the future hold for languages education? Join chair Vicky Gough (British Council) and report authors (Queen's University Belfast) as they present the results of the Language Trends England survey for 2026, funded by the British Council.

Hear from a panel of experts including Bernardette Holmes MBE, Director of the National Consortium for Languages Education (NCLE) as they reflect on the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Learn how the NCLE is striving to bring the sector together to drive positive change.

 National Consortium
for Languages Education

 **QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

 CENTRE FOR
LANGUAGE
EDUCATION
RESEARCH

 **BRITISH
COUNCIL**

Language Trends 2026

**NCLE Webinar
16:00, 8th July**

Chaired by Vicky Gough (British Council)
In collaboration with Queen's University Belfast



[Register for the Language Trends 2026 Webinar on the NCLE website.](#)



Dr Alison Porter from the University of Southampton is currently researching **SEND provision in Languages**. She's inviting UK language teachers working with SEND learners at **primary and Key Stage 3** to share their experiences in a [short questionnaire](#).

The purpose of the survey is to understand the benefits, challenges, attainment patterns, and teacher confidence around SEND provision in language learning. Findings will inform the development of practical guidance and resources.

We'd like to hear your views on:

- ☒ The benefits of language learning for SEND pupils
- ☒ The challenges they face
- ☒ Attainment & progression
- ☒ Your confidence in meeting SEND learners' needs



**University of
Nottingham**
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

You might want to consider signing the letter of support against the closure of the Languages Department at the University of Nottingham.

[In support of Modern Language degrees at the University of Nottingham](#)



What's new on LEO?



Steph Azarpey

This term, Swanswell have been looking at the module **Languages Leadership: Spotlight on Tech and AI**, hosted by Joe Dale.

This module is a great investment of time, to help you get ahead in your planning for the next year. It really shows how AI can help reduce the teacher workload.

During his 23-minute video tutorial, Joe Dale guides you step-by-step in how to generate questions and analyse student feedback. We like that the module demonstrates how to combine familiar platforms like *Google Forms* and *Microsoft Forms* with cutting-edge AI tools like *ChatGPT*, *Claude*, and *Brisk Teaching*.

[Click to register for your free LEO account](#)

[Click to go directly to the AI Leadership module](#)

Generating questions
and analysing data with
AI

Key Features and Steps Covered 2 min	Key Benefits 1 min	Video Tutorial: EdTech to generate questions 24 mins
Generating Questions and Analysing Feedback with AI: Reflections 1 min		

European Day of Languages 2026



Whilst planning for September may be at the very bottom of your to do list, we wanted to make the task a little less daunting, by signposting some excellent resources and CPD to help you get ahead for the new year.

The European Day of Languages official site has some excellent resources, with new files added each year. Link [here](#).

The Association for Language Learning have launched a writing competition for 2026. More information [here](#).

Why not have [these](#) snap cards available at a lunch or breaktime for pupils to practice different languages.

Disney songs are always a great hit. [This](#) video has the well-known song *We Don't Talk About Bruno* from Encanto in 21 different languages! Frozen also available!

WEBINAR: *Practical Ideas for European Day of Languages*

The Swanswell Language Network is delighted to invite you to our second annual CPD session dedicated to sharing low-prep, high-impact ideas that schools can easily implement.

Join the us to gather inspiration, swap successful strategies, and connect with a community of passionate language educators. Primary and secondary welcome!



Date: Tuesday 8th September
Time: 15:30-16:45



[Register for Swanswell's Webinar on their Website.](#)

Transition Corner

How do we solve a problem like TRANSITION?

There is definitely no magic solution to KS2 – KS3 transition in Languages. For those working in KS2, your year 6 pupils may have come back from their secondary transition day, excited about learning a new language or they might be feeling deflated because they can't continue with the language they have been learning for the last four years. For those working in secondary, you may be looking forward to working with a new cohort of excited year sevens, or you may also be feeling conflicted having met your new year 7 students and discovered that they have all been studying different languages and different topics.

What can we do before the end of term?

Primary Teachers

The end of term is our chance to reassure pupils that no language learning is wasted. By taking a holistic approach, we show them they aren't starting from scratch - they are transferring a linguistic toolkit of phonics, decoding, and grammar. It's about their ability to learn *any* language.

What could this look like?

You could use the last lesson in year 6 to reflect on the knowledge, skills and values or attitudes about language learning they are taking with them to secondary school.

Even better if...

Take some pictures of the work your students do and send an e-mail to the local secondary HODS showing them a selection of the answers. This might help your local secondary schools to understand more fully what their new year seven students are bringing with them.

What knowledge, skills and values are you taking with you to secondary school which will help you in your language lessons in year 7?

1

I know lots of *French* pronunciation rules and phonemes.

2

I look for cognates (words that look like English words) and use context to work out the meaning of passages.

3

I know that learning another language helps you to connect with other people and make friends.

Secondary Teachers

Now's the time to think differently about your approach in the first few lessons in Year 7. How can you find out what your students know and help them to make links with their prior learning? There's no reason why you can't do a similar activity to the one shared above at the start of year seven. What type of things might you hope they say?

Knowledge

- I know lots of *French* pronunciation rules and phonemes.
- I know how to *describe myself* in *Spanish*
- I already speak some *Polish*
- I know that nouns in *French / Spanish* are either masculine or feminine.
- I know that adjectives often come after the noun in *French / Spanish*.
- I know that *German nouns* have capital letters.

Skills

- I look for cognates and use context to work out the meaning of new words.
- I use a range of strategies for learning new words.
- I have developed my confidence when I'm speaking different languages.
- I can use a dictionary to look up new words.
- I look for similarities and differences between English and the language I'm learning.

Or you could explore your new learner's linguistic identities by finding out which languages they already know or find out about their motivation for learning another language by exploring how they think language learning enriches their life.

It's more than a language...

Learning another language helps me to...

1

2

3

4

5



Do languages have a PR problem?

On Monday 29th June, the Trent and Tame Language Network held a CPD day with a controversial title. “Do Languages have a PR problem?” We were joined by language teachers, heads of departments, Trust leads and Rosie Thompson and Chloe Burrows from AQA to explore whether this is the case and if so, what we can do about it?

Over the course of the day, the participants had the opportunity to work through a series of reflection questions (taken from [TTLN’s Impactful Language Leadership Framework](#)) and complete a series of tasks.

The tasks supported teachers to identify what the language learning journey for students currently looks like in their setting and to think about what they want it to look like in the future. Having done this, everyone had the opportunity to develop a strategic plan for the next academic year (and beyond) to increase engagement and motivation for language learning.

[The slide deck, collaboration boards and teacher workbook are available on the TTLN website.](#)

Feedback from the day has been exceptionally positive with participants saying they valued:

“Practical ideas underpinned with academic evidence.”

“Input from other schools who have increased GCSE recruitment”

“Masses of ideas to take back, the recognition that you cannot do everything, the useful templates to prompt thinking and planning.”

“A shared example of how over time, uptake of Languages can be improved by a consistent and cumulative raising of the profile and PR of languages within school”

“Time to make an action plan”

“Ideas about transition from KS2 which I can replicate in my setting.”

Key Concept 1: When planning your ‘marketing’ strategy you need to consider all elements of the marketing mix.



Key Concept 2: When thinking about how to present the language journey in your school, always start with the why.

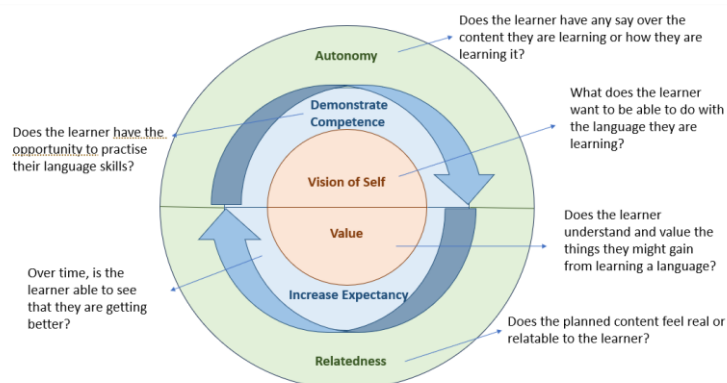
1. Why?

2. How?

3. What?

Key Concept 3:
Whatever ‘marketing slogan’ you design, consider whether it will appeal to all students in your setting; Disadvantaged students, boys and girls. If possible, link it with your school’s values, motto or focus on character education.

Key Concept 4: Your taught curriculum needs to be at the heart of everything. Consider whether your curriculum is designed to develop intrinsic motivation.



Increasing intrinsic motivation for language learning.

Key Concept 5: Consider what the language learning journey of a student in your school looks like. Think about the taught curriculum, the extra-curricular offer and how students could extend their learning at home.

Opportunities to signpost what students are bringing from KS2

Opportunities to signpost what could come next

KS3 → KS4 → KS5

