

Press release

More pupils of all ages to study languages

15 hubs selected as part of new programme to boost languages in schools across the country.

From: **[Department for Education \(/government/organisations/department-for-education\)](#)** and **[The Rt Hon Nick Gibb \(/government/people/nick-gibb\)](#)**

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Thousands more pupils are set to benefit from learning languages such as German, French and Spanish, as 19 schools have been selected to lead on boosting how these subjects are taught across the country.

This is the next step in the rollout of the government's flagship [language hubs programme](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/german-given-boost-as-part-of-new-schools-language-programme) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/german-given-boost-as-part-of-new-schools-language-programme>), which will raise national interest in studying languages and drive more pupils to study them throughout their education from primary schools onwards.

Data from this year's GCSE entries showed that modern foreign languages have become increasingly popular as a subject, with a 5.1% increase in GCSE entries in 2023 compared to last year and a 9.2% increase compared to 2019.

Schools Minister Nick Gibb said:

“ Young people who are confident in a second language are at a huge advantage in life. On top of the social and cultural advantages it provides, there are many economic benefits of learning another language.

“ That is why I have long called for more pupils to consider studying languages such as German at GCSE and this programme will crucially equip teachers with the necessary training and knowledge to support pupils looking to do so.”

The [language hubs programme](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-support-from-school-hubs/subject-hubs#language-hubs)

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-support-from-school-hubs/subject-hubs#language-hubs>), which will start from this month, aims to encourage more pupils to study a language at GCSE as the evidence shows that pupils who do so are more likely to study that language at A Level and have a lifelong interest in languages.

In an increasingly interconnected world, language skills are essential to business success in the global marketplace. According to a [2022 report by RAND Corporation](https://www.rand.org/pubs/corporate_pubs/CPA1065-3.html) (https://www.rand.org/pubs/corporate_pubs/CPA1065-3.html), a 10% increase in UK pupils learning Spanish or French at key stage 3 and key stage 4 could increase UK gross domestic product over 30 years from £9.1 billion to £9.7 billion or £9.5 billion respectively.

Speaking an additional language can also increase lifetime earnings by 2% and demand for language skills has increased due to globalisation. For example, a recent survey of British businesses highlighted German as the most widely useful language within their organisations.

As well as being beneficial in business, the need for linguists is becoming more pronounced in careers like diplomacy, defence and security where languages help ensure effective communication between different peoples and cultures.

Research shows that students who study a second language perform better across a range of academic subjects than students who don't study a second language. The brain's plasticity is heightened when learning a language, leading to increased cognitive flexibility and adaptability.

The programme - which is backed by £14.9 million over the next 3 years and builds on the previous [modern foreign language hub pilot \(https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-centre-for-excellence-to-boost-modern-foreign-language-skills\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-centre-for-excellence-to-boost-modern-foreign-language-skills), which ran from 2018 to March this year - will be managed by the [National Consortium for Languages Education \(https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/departments-and-centres/centres/international-centre-intercultural-studies/national-consortium-languages-education-ncle\)](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/departments-and-centres/centres/international-centre-intercultural-studies/national-consortium-languages-education-ncle) (NCLE).

The NCLE comprises of University College London, the British Council and the Goethe-Institut. An initial 15 schools from regions across the country have been selected as lead language hubs to join the NCLE's centre for excellence. The hubs will begin their support to schools from this September. A further 10 schools are also set to be selected in a second recruitment round in January.

Lead hubs will engage with schools to improve the languages offer and ensure more effective transition from key stage 2 to key stage 3, whilst making sure that pupils aged 14 to 18 from all backgrounds have the opportunity to study languages through to key stage 5.

As well as increasing opportunities among disadvantaged pupils to study languages, the programme will also increase access to home, heritage and community languages for pupils.

The programme will include a distinct [German promotion project \(https://www.gov.uk/government/news/millions-invested-in-language-lessons\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/millions-invested-in-language-lessons) to raise the profile of learning German in schools, including increasing awareness of the benefits of studying it. The German promotion project will be led by the Goethe-Institut. Included within the language hubs investment, this project is worth £400,000 and will involve increasing the number of schools that offer German, as well as championing learning the subject.

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