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CORNISH

The Cornish language in education in the UK

| 2nd Edition |

| Regional dossiers series |



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Glossary

DfE	Department for Education
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
GCSE	General Certificates of Secondary Education
FE	Further Education
Ofsted	The Office for Standards in Education
SWF	Standard Written Form



Foreword

background Regional and minority languages are languages that differ from the official state language. The Mercator Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning uses the definition for these languages defined by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML):

“Regional and minority languages are languages traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state’s population; they are different from the official language(s) of that state, and they include neither dialects of the official language(s) of the state nor the languages of migrants”. The Mercator Research Centre aims at the acquisition, application and circulation of knowledge about these regional and minority languages in education. An important means to achieve this goal is the Regional dossiers series: documents that provide the most essential features of the education system of regions with a lesser used regional or minority language.

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aim The aim of the Regional dossiers series is to provide a concise description of European minority languages in education. Aspects that are addressed include features of the education system, recent educational policies, main actors, legal arrangements and support structures, as well as quantitative aspects such as the number of schools, teachers, pupils, and financial investments. Because of this fixed structure the dossiers in the series are easy to compare.

target group The dossiers serve several purposes and are relevant for policymakers, researchers, teachers, students and journalists who wish to explore developments in minority language schooling in Europe. They can also serve as a first orientation towards further research, or function as a source of ideas for improving educational provisions in their own region.

link with Eurydice The format of the Regional dossiers follows the format of Eurydice – the information network on education in Europe – in

order to link the regional descriptions with those of national education systems. Eurydice provides information on the administration and structure of national education systems in the member states of the European Union.

contents

Every Regional dossier begins with an introduction about the region concerned, followed by six sections that each deals with a specific level of the education system (e.g. primary education). Sections eight and nine cover the main lines of research into education of the concerned minority language, the prospects for the minority language in general and for education in particular. The tenth section gives a summary of statistics. Lists of regulations, publications and useful addresses concerning the minority language, are given at the end of the dossier.

1 Introduction

language

Cornish is part of the Celtic language family, spoken by Celtic settlers long before the Roman conquest. Cornish diverged as a separate language during the early medieval period, as Wales became politically separated from Cornwall. Cornish continued to be a predominant vernacular in Cornwall until the early modern era, before dying out during the first industrial revolution. The Celtic languages are split into two branches: Goidelic (Irish, Scottish Gaelic, and Manx) and Brythonic (Cornish, Welsh, and Breton). While the Roman conquest effectively began in 43 AD, Romanisation touched Cornwall only lightly, thereby enabling cultural continuity throughout the 5th and 6th centuries (Deacon, 2007), together with the survival of the language, which crossed the Channel to Brittany.

Within post-Roman Britain, Anglo-Saxons gradually drove the Celts to the margins of the British Isles and eventually overran Cornwall in the 9th century, establishing a border between England and Cornwall at the river Tamar in 936 AD, thus also separating the Cornish and the Welsh, whose languages then diverged. The Middle Cornish period (1200–1575) saw a literary flowering for Cornish, and a maximum number of speakers (an estimated 38,000, around three quarters of the population). Partial use of Cornish for religious services from the 13th century added some stability to the language. During the late Middle Ages, however, Cornish began to lose ground in east Cornwall as English influence came to dominate.

Causes were many and varied. There was the advent of the highly centralising Tudor dynasty of the 15th-16th centuries. English replaced Latin within the church during the Reformation, and the Bible was not translated into Cornish – unlike in Wales where translation was seen as a way to foster Protestantism and see off Catholic dissent (Khleif, 1979, p.62). Cornish was abandoned by the gentry, ties with Brittany eroded, and the historical population was depleted by uprisings and disease, and churned by the rolling population swells of industrialisation. Cornish lingered in the westward extremes of Cornwall into the 18th century but was in steep decline, and eventually faded

altogether from everyday vernacular usage in the late 18th or early 19th century (accounts of the famed ‘last speaker’, Dolly Pentreath, are too vague to rely on).

Since then Cornish has been manually reconstructed from its scarce written remains – a laborious and ultimately partial process. Today these reconstructed forms are used by a limited number of people, mostly in Cornwall though to some extent in other parts of the UK and abroad.

population

In the 2011 UK Census, 557 people declared Cornish their “main language”: 464 in Cornwall, 12 in neighbouring Devon, 31 in London, 3 in Wales, and the remainder scattered thinly across the UK (NOMIS, 2013). A survey conducted by the Cornish Language Partnership in 2008 reported 627 Cornish speakers, with varying fluency: 45.1% “A few words/phrases”, 41.9% “Simple conversation”, 12.9% “Fluency” (Burley, 2008). This suggests a lower figure of around 80 people using Cornish as any kind of main language, though inevitably this survey may not have reached all Cornish speakers. This is the most detailed and recent information about Cornish usage, and so the remainder of this dossier will not have separate sections on usage. All Cornish speakers are first-language speakers of English; most learned Cornish in adulthood, predominantly in private classes, independent study, or correspondence courses; although a few were raised speaking Cornish and English (Renkó-Michelsén, in prep.).

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language status

There is no specific UK legislation dealing with the Cornish language, nor any statutory obligation upon schools or public bodies to provide any services in Cornish.

Cornish, as spoken before its demise around the close of the 18th century, is not well documented. What literature once existed was poorly maintained, much simply lost. The surviving historical remains prior to its reconstruction are estimated at “about 176,000 words” total (George & Broderick, 2009, p.754) – spread across a highly disparate collection of often fragmentary texts, written over several centuries, and almost all prose rather than the spoken vernacular. This leaves an inevitably patchy

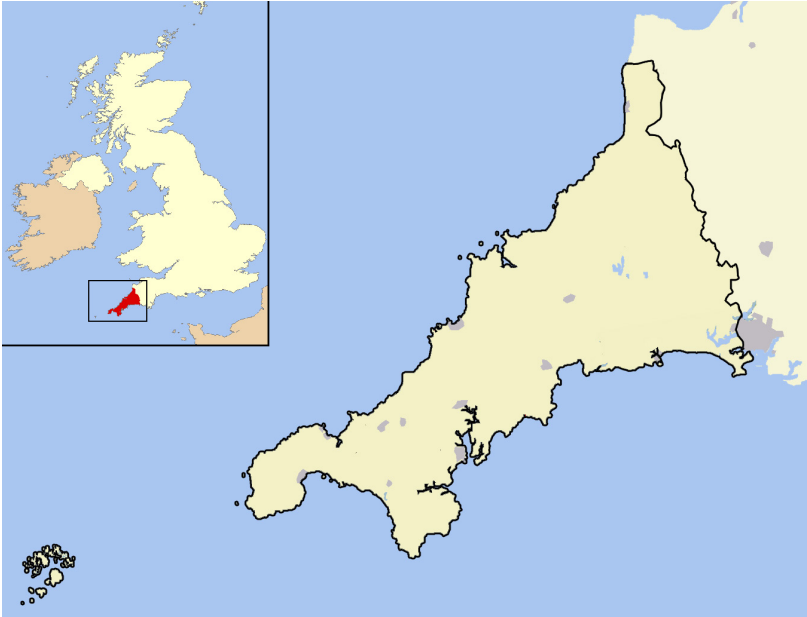


Figure 1: Geographical location of Cornwall in the UK (2008) (source: Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cornwall_outline_map_with_UK.png).

picture of what the language might have been like (Sayers & Renkó-Michelsén, 2015, pp.23–24). From the 18th century onwards, those few remains were pored over by a small number of enthusiasts and philologists with varying levels of linguistic training, increasingly with a view to filling the many gaps in the lexicon and grammar in order to reconstruct a full language. The late 19th century Celtic renaissance saw the founding in 1901 of the Celtic-Cornish Society, *Cowethas Kelto Kernuack* (Mills, 1999, p.46), superseded in 1920 by the Old Cornwall Society, which grew into the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies. In 1928, the Cornish Bardic Assembly (*Gorsedh*) formed, with twelve Bards and a Grand Bard. In 1967, the *Gorsedh* and the Federation founded the Cornish Language Board, *Kesva an Taves Kernewek*, to facilitate Cornish learning and formalise the examination process. In 1979, in order to focus its efforts on the formal work of exams, the Board founded the Cornish Language Fellowship, *Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek*, to conduct

promotional activities for the language. Growing interest in the language saw fluent speakers numbering around fifty by 1981 (Shield, 1984, p.336). The long reconstruction of Cornish from its scant written remains continued into the 20th century; but this was not a coordinated committee effort; and until the early 21st century there was profound disagreement over the most authentic reconstructed form. Cornish activism split into competing factions during the late 20th century, each supporting different reconstructed forms of Cornish.

In November 2002, the UK Government recognised Cornish under Part II (Article 7) of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (CoE, 2018a). This was unusual for the Charter, since Cornish had actually died out (before being later reconstructed for modern use). In this, Cornish benefited from a technicality: although the Charter “requires that such languages be used ‘traditionally’ within a territory in the State ... it does not seem to require that such languages must have been spoken by native speakers up to the present” (Dunbar, 2000, p.68). The Charter is a document of the Council of Europe, not the European Union, and so the UK’s plans (at time of writing) to leave the European Union will not affect this status (Cornwall Council, 2017a).

Following Charter recognition, in due course a combined European-national-local funding package ran from 2006 to 2009, intended to standardise Cornish for education and official use, and to overcome the impasse over authenticity noted above. This period saw the creation of the ‘Standard Written Form’ (SWF), an orthographic compromise between existing reconstructed forms of Cornish; and the founding of the Cornish Language Partnership ‘MAGA’ (‘maga’ is Cornish for ‘grow’ or ‘cultivate’), a public-voluntary sector partnership. MAGA (and SWF) received all subsequent central government funding; and the various factional groups generally expressed support for SWF as a means to promote Cornish widely.

In 2014, the UK Government recognised the Cornish people as a National Minority under the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities – as it had previously the Scots, Welsh, and Irish – including recognition of the

Cornish language. This may present conceptual problems for the inclusion of Cornish within the English National Curriculum, though that has not been substantively explored so we do not advance the point here.

From 2010 to 2015, the UK was governed by a two-party coalition, which spent around £120,000 per year on development and promotion of Cornish. In 2016, with the end of the coalition and the return of a Conservative majority government, the funding ended. At the time this was couched in terms of a wider devolution of state responsibilities under the Localism Act 2011; but in a TV interview on 20th March 2017, the minister responsible during the funded period confirmed that the funding had simply been political leverage for a coalition deal on bigger fiscal cuts elsewhere, hence its swift end after the end of the coalition (Sayers, 2017). A 2016 parliamentary petition to reinstate the funding was rejected in November 2016, with confirmation that this was now entirely the responsibility of Cornwall Council and the Cornish Historic Environment Forum (Cornwall Council, 2017b). Nevertheless, the 2010–16 period raised the profile of Cornish such that it is still used in symbolic ways, for example on road signs and some business signage and promotional material, as well as routinely in email sign-offs, and in other low-level but noticeable ways in civic discourse. There are also cultural events involving Cornish song, poetry, and performance. Cornwall Council maintains a Cornish Language Office with a Cornish Language Lead and Support Officer; it has a Strategy for 2015-2025, revised 2017 (Cornwall Council, 2017c), though the Strategy's aims are purposefully broad, ultimately dependent on funding decisions by Cornwall Council.

In 2013, Cornwall Council ran a study of attitudes among its employees. Although not an academic study, and not demographically representative of Cornwall overall, this showed majority support for the view that Cornish makes Cornwall more distinctive, and for wanting to learn some Cornish. More research is needed to understand the views of Cornwall's population overall.

**status of
language
education**

There is no legislation for (or indeed against) Cornish as a subject or medium of instruction; it is simply not mentioned. Cornish could conceivably be taught as a 'modern language' if there were parental demand and pedagogical capacity. Cornwall Council Language Lead Mark Trevethan states that the majority of schools focus their modern language provision on French, German and Spanish, viewing Cornish as an extracurricular "local history subject". He suggests clearer guidance is needed from the UK Government's Department for Education that Cornish is "an appropriate subject to teach" (personal communication, 11th March, 2018).

**education
system**

Education in Cornwall is administered as part of the English education system. Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland have devolved education systems. Most state schools are funded by local government; these 'maintained' schools must follow the National Curriculum specified by the Department for Education. Meanwhile there is a separate category of school, 'academies', also funded by the state but directly from the Department for Education instead of local authorities; these are exempt from the National Curriculum. Academies were established as a result of the Learning and Skills Act (2000). Heavily promoted by successive governments, they now represent 26% of England's schools (DfE, 2016), and nearly 40% of pupils (DfE, 2017, Table 7b).

Up to age 16, the National Curriculum is organised into four "Key Stages" (KS). KS1 begins at the start of compulsory education, age 5. KS1 and KS2 cover primary education (until age 11). KS3 and KS4 run to age 16.

KS1 to KS3 end with government-specified assessments. KS4 ends with a series of subject-specific national qualifications, the General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs). From age 16 to 18, students either pursue a vocational apprenticeship or study for a second set of national qualifications, A-levels. While Academy schools are not mandated to the Key Stage structure, they still prepare pupils for GCSEs and A-levels as they are the most widely recognised.

Most pupils wishing to continue to university take A-levels, but

other qualifications, both academic (e.g. International Baccalaureate; Pre-U) and vocational (e.g. NVQs, BTEC Extended Diploma), are increasingly accepted as alternatives.

Teaching of at least one modern foreign language is compulsory in KS2 and KS3 (ages 7–14), and every state school must offer at least one language at GCSE level. The status of Cornish within this framework is discussed below.

There are no significant differences in the way compulsory education is delivered in Cornwall compared to the rest of England, except the proportion of academies which sits at 58% (calculated from Cornwall Council, 2017d), over twice the 26% figure England-wide (DfE, 2016). As above, there is no statutory requirement on any schools to teach Cornish.

private and public

England has both free state schools and fee-charging “independent” schools. By historical quirk, independent schools are called “public schools” - centuries ago, before state provision of education, these schools charged fees but were comparatively more open than other “private” schools which were constrained to pupils of a particular religion, location, etc.

Like academies, although independent schools are not constrained to the National Curriculum, most enter pupils for GCSEs and A-levels.

In Cornwall, the education system consists of mostly state schools, with only eight independent schools (Cornwall Council, 2017e).

bilingual education forms

A high-water mark for Cornish provision in compulsory education came during the 2010–16 period of central government funding discussed above, when MAGA sent three language learning packs to all primary schools across Cornwall. In 2012, MAGA’s two part-time Education Officers worked with around twenty schools across Cornwall. MAGA also delivered training on Cornish to teachers, providing teaching materials and some taster sessions – typically one-off workshops inside regular classes.

Currently, following the withdrawal of central government funding, Cornish is mostly taught in voluntary and private contexts. There are also regular conversation groups arranged less formally.

administration During the 2010–16 period, MAGA employed two part-time Education Officers who liaised with schools and facilitated other Cornish teaching endeavours. There was never any compulsory instruction in Cornish, though it formed an extra-curricular element of teaching at many schools across Cornwall, which these Officers helped deliver.

At present, the teaching of Cornish is not centrally administered, and Cornish is not mentioned in the English National Curriculum.

inspection Since 2006, the structure of Ofsted has drawn upon business models – appointing a Chair, an executive board and regional officers, and reporting annually to Parliament (Schedule 11 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006). In April 2007, Ofsted merged with the Adult Learning Inspectorate to cover post-16 state-funded education as well. Higher Education Institutions (universities and other degree-awarding bodies) are inspected by the Quality Assurance Agency.

Ofsted inspects maintained schools, academies, some independent schools, and numerous other educational institutions including Early Years (pre-school) provision. It also inspects and regulates initial teacher training, publishing its findings and reporting to the Department for Education.

Prior to 2005, schools were inspected every six years, for one week, having received two months' notice. This was criticised by teachers as disruptive, while other critics saw the notice period as a potential bias, enabling schools to present an inaccurate picture. Since September 2005, a new system of short-notice inspections has focussed on school management and quality assurance.

For independent schools, if a school is within the Independent Schools Council, it is inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate. Other independent schools are inspected by the Schools Inspection Service. These are all ultimately overseen by Ofsted.

Regarding oversight of Cornish teaching and learning (which takes place outside compulsory education, as above), the Cornish Language Board (*Kesva an Taves Kernewek*) holds annual written and oral exams, aligned with assessment

at GCSE and A-Level. The Cornish Language Office has an Examinations Policy, last reviewed December 2016, to encourage efficient planning and management of exams, and clear guidelines. The policy is to be reviewed biennially by Cornwall Council's Cornish Language Lead, who manages delivery of the learning programme.

**support
structure**

The Association of Cornish Language Teachers is a voluntary body originally emanating from MAGA in 2014, but now operationally independent. It seeks to oversee training of Cornish teachers, although teaching Cornish is not officially regulated, and so affiliation is voluntary.

Meanwhile another voluntary body, Akademi Kernewek, is responsible for corpus planning for Cornish, setting standards for the language, developing the dictionary and carrying out research.



2 Pre-school education

target group Statutory education under the English system begins at age 5. Since 2010, all 3- and 4-year-olds are entitled to 15 hours' free Early Years provision for 38 weeks of the year – in settings including state nurseries, nursery classes, and primary school reception classes. There are also voluntary pre-schools and privately run nurseries, playgroups and individual registered childminders.

structure The Education Act 2002 extended the National Curriculum for England to include the Foundation Stage (age 3–5). The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which came into force in 2008, is a regulatory and quality framework which covers the provision of learning, development and care for children in all registered Early Years settings – state and private – between birth and the academic year in which they turn 5. The EYFS Profile is a required statutory assessment of each child's development and learning achievements at the end of the final year. Since April 2017, this framework has applied to all providers on the Early Years Register in England.

The EYFS specifies curricular requirements for learning and development. "Language" is specifically referred to insofar as children should "reach a good standard in English"; although providers must also enable children to develop and use their "home language". Formal reports on progress for each child are written at age 2 and 5. Results must be submitted to the local authority, who must in turn provide this data to the Department for Education.

legislation The Department for Education dictates both policy and curriculum. The system builds on the original 1944 Education Act and its amendments, the introduction of a National Curriculum in the Education reform Act 1988, and the Education Act 2002 which extended this to the Foundation Stage. The statutory framework for Early Years provision across all providers, state and private, refers to learning and development requirements

given legal force by an Order made under Section 39(1)a of the Childcare Act 2006.

language use

While Cornish is not a mandated curricular requirement, Cornwall Council under its 2015–25 strategy has contracted community interest company *Golden Tree Productions* to develop and support the use of Cornish, including within targeted pre-schools. The objective is to embed Cornish language sessions across the timetable, initially accounting for 20% of sessions within one pre-school, increasing to 40% of sessions across two pre-schools in 2017–18, and incrementally thereafter. This comes within a wider strategic framework of “growth”, “impact” and “normalisation” for Cornish (Golden Tree Productions, 2016).

There is reportedly some demand for Cornish language teaching from Early Years providers, primary schools, and parents (CoE, 2018b). This has been supported as far as possible by community teachers, and resourced by the Cornish Language Office. One pre-school group, largely reliant on volunteers, provides Cornish language activities once a week. The non-profit body *Movyans Skolyow Meythrin* [Nursery Schools Movement] was set up by Rhisiart Tal-e-bot in Camborne in 2009, to teach Cornish to young children and their families. Within this movement, Early Years teacher Emilie Champlaud established the bilingual Cornish/English *Skol dy'Sadorn Kernewek* [Cornish Saturday School], a crèche for 2–5-year-olds, along with simultaneous child-centred Cornish lessons for their parents, to facilitate spoken Cornish in the home. More recently, Tal-e-bot has established *Skol Veythrin Karenza*, since February 2017 the first Ofsted-registered fully Cornish-medium day care provider, suitable for children up to age 8. Champlaud has been quoted as saying, “I live in Cornwall and the native language of Cornwall is Cornish. Over 50% of school children in Cornwall identify as Cornish so it makes sense for us to make Cornish available to them as much as possible” (Tal-e-bot 2018). But this took concerted effort and private crowd-funding, so wider expansion of Cornish language sessions is likely to be less fully immersive.

In August 2017, interested parents assisted by *Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek* launched a voluntary play-centred Cornish learning group for children and families, meeting at weekends in Redruth.

**teaching
material**

The teaching of Cornish and the development of educational resources is heavily dependent upon volunteers, with many educators lacking formal training. Training is currently offered by various means. The Association of Cornish Language Teachers, *An Ros Dyski*, offers support to those teaching or keen to teach Cornish, including provision of online materials. Cornwall Council have stated their intention to develop support for pre-schools, schools, teachers and parents, to increase opportunities for children to learn Cornish.

In addition to educational resources developed as a result of teacher training, a small selection of books and multimedia resources for very young children, some interactive, has been produced on a voluntary basis by language activists at various times, for example:

- *Keur Kernewek* [Cornish Choir], a CD of 45 Cornish language songs for children under 5, produced by Rhisiart Tal-e-bot with help from *Gorsedh Kernow*, MAGA, Redruth Town Council, DBS Music, Cornish rock band *Hanterhir*, and students from Plymouth University and Cornwall College, Camborne.
- *Planet Kernow*, a CD with children's songs including *Krokodil Nownek* [The Hungry Crocodile], produced by Anne Sandercock.
- *Konin ha Pryv*, animation in spoken Cornish with English subtitles, for pre-school children, produced by Laura Hardman and Jack Morrison.
- *Orvil an Morvil: Onan, Dew, Tri/Orvil an Morvil: Lies Liw*, the story of a whale, a colouring book for very young children, produced by Pol Hodge.
- *Ydhyn*, a colouring book of birds with vocabulary in Cornish, produced by Brian Webb.

- Golden Tree also aim to produce a resource app tailored to pre-school children, to be available from June 2018 (Mark Trevethan, personal communication, 28 March, 2018).

statistics

The total per category of Early Years provision in Cornwall (regardless of language) is as follows:

Category	Total
Registered childminders	278
Crèche	7
Day nursery	118
Forest school	2
Maintained nursery schools and classes	32
Nursery school/class	9
Nursery units of independents	5
Pre-school playgroups	133
Private nursery schools	1

Table 1: The total per category of Early Years provision in Cornwall (2018) (regardless of language). (Source: Cornwall Council, www.supportincornwall.org.uk).

Official categorisation of pre-school education is less clear than higher levels. The Department of Education figures show the number enrolled at “state-funded nurseries” in Cornwall as of January 2017 at 146 (DfE, 2017, Table 7b). This clearly fails to capture total attendance in a population of over half a million. Government statisticians have confirmed to us that there is no collated data for all Early Years childcare. The closest available estimate of total 2-year-olds in early education places in Cornwall is 1,760 (DfE, 2017, Table 1LA); 3- and 4-year-olds 11,680 (ibid. Table 2LA). This gives a possible figure of 13,440 for all children in pre-school education in Cornwall.

3 Primary education

- target group** Primary schooling covers three age ranges aligned with the Key Stages mentioned earlier: nursery (under 5); infant (5 to 7/8: KS1); and junior (up to 11: KS2). In England, primary schools generally cater for 4- to 11-year-olds.
- structure** Some primary schools have an adjoining nursery or children's centre. Most children in England end primary school at 11 and proceed to secondary school, though there are some 'middle schools' for various age ranges from 8 to 14; these are variously classed as primary or secondary.
- The major goals of primary education are to achieve universal basic literacy and numeracy, and establish foundations in science, mathematics, and other key subjects. Children in England are assessed at the end of KS1 and KS2.
- The Department for Education describes the National Curriculum as just one aspect of education, encouraging "time and space to range beyond the National Curriculum specifications" (DfE, 2014). Teachers are expected to develop lessons to expand pupils' understanding and skills. The Secretary of State for Education is required to publish programmes of study for each National Curriculum subject, setting out the "matters, skills and processes" to be taught at each Key Stage. Schools, however, are free to choose how they organise the school day, as long as the content of the National Curriculum programmes of study is taught to all pupils, to the satisfaction of Ofsted.
- legislation** The National Curriculum emanates from the Education Reform Act 1988. Legally there is no requirement to teach Cornish; we discuss possible forms of primary level Cornish teaching below.
- language use** In England, the National Curriculum designates all languages other than English as "foreign languages", unlike in Wales where Welsh has separate status. While Cornish is not English, it is also clearly not foreign. It is unclear whether the English National Curriculum designates Cornish a "foreign language" or whether Cornish requires a separate curriculum.

Languages are not compulsory in maintained schools at KS1; however, “foreign languages” are compulsory at KS2 (including for pupils whose first language is not English). Teaching may be of “any modern or ancient foreign language”. The focus of study in modern languages is instrumental utility and practical communication, while for an ancient language it is reading comprehension and appreciation of a civilisation – as a foundation to studying modern languages at KS3. Potentially Cornish could be either ancient or modern, although naturally the spirit of language revival would favour the latter. It is suggested that schools should dedicate no less than 60 minutes per week to language teaching, but this may comprise multiple, shorter sessions.

Cornish is not a requirement in education, and some educators have been reluctant to introduce it, citing lack of capacity, priority of other school activities, and competing pressure to achieve in key subjects (Croome, 2015). More recently though, Cornwall Council has highlighted the utility of Cornish in engaging young children in all curriculum areas, and in developing a “sense of place”; Cornish is also characterised as providing “a good introduction to learning other languages” (Cornwall Council, 2017i). Since 2016, Cornwall Council has contracted *Golden Tree Productions* to develop and support teaching, learning and use of Cornish. They aim to embed Cornish as a modern language across a core group of primary schools, rising from 5 to 50 within a five-year period. Other planned projects include engagement of up to 700 primary pupils in language learning. At time of writing we do not yet have substantive information about implementation.

Learning of modern languages is realised by various means, including weekly delivery of core sessions (phonology, grammatical structure, vocabulary), the use of ICT, stories, games and other activities, and through art, history, and enrichment days. Some schools have strategic plans to integrate language learning into the wider curriculum and the daily routines of the school. A limited number, among them St Wenn and Ludgvan, have also taken such an approach to Cornish (Croome, 2015). A time of writing, 15 schools made up of two “clusters” – Penzance

and Liskeard – are delivering one term of “Cornish as a modern language” (Mark Trevethan, personal communication, 28 March, 2018).

**teaching
material**

While no Cornish language school teaching materials are endorsed by the Department for Education, Cornwall Council’s Cornish Language Office maintains some resources at Learn CornishNow.com. Golden Tree plans a replacement website with resources grouped according to user level. MAGA has previously distributed learning packs to all primary schools, constructed around the Porth series, produced in 2010 with EU funding as a joint venture between MAGA and Golden Tree. Porth is the primary resource for teaching in schools, although MAGA did not collect follow-up data showing how much these were actually used. At time of writing, Golden Tree are making this resource available online. Other material suitable for primary school age children has generally been developed and produced ad hoc by activists and cultural organisations via independent publishers. Translations of popular English language children’s books have also been published, most recently 500 copies of *Ted a Rewl an Bys*, a Cornish translation by Pol Hodge of Frank Cottrell-Boyce’s *Ted Rules the World*. Launched in 2017 on the International Day for Protection of Children, and distributed free, the project was made possible by crowd-funding. The book was also the first publication to use a new typeface ‘Mr Tont’, created by Tracy Allanson-Smith to “capture the Cornish experience” in this form.

In 2013, Diglot Books, a small independent publisher, successfully petitioned Amazon to distribute *Matthew ha'n Eskisyow Glaw* (*Matthew and the Wellington Boots*) by Esme Carre, translated into Cornish by Stephen Gadd, through Kindle Direct Publishing. Other Cornish language books and other resources suitable for school age children include:

- The Oxford Children’s Cornish-English Visual Dictionary (2013), Oxford University Press.
- *Spot ha'y Lyver Bras a Gynta Geryow/Ple'ma Spot?* First books in Cornish for young children, featuring Eric Hill’s popular Spot the Dog, translated by *Kowethas an Yeth*

Kernewek. A sound file to the text, read by Steve Harris, is also available.

- *Topsy ha Tim*. Various titles from the well-known series by Jean and Gareth Adamson, translated into Cornish for young children by *Kowethas*, financed by crowd-funding.
- *Tales from Porth/More Tales from Porth*. Will Coleman. A series of six stories for beginners and children, with an interactive audio CD.
- *Kanow Flehes*. Songs for children, sung by children, for 6–11-year-olds. Book and DVD.
- *Briallen ha'n Alyon*. Steve Harris. A story in Cornish and English about a child's journey in space.
- *Winni-an-Pou*. A.A. Milne's Winnie the Pooh translated into Cornish by John Parker.
- *An Ynys Dhu* (The Black Island) / *An Kanker Dhibaw Owrek* (The Crab with the Golden Claws) – Hergé's Tintin stories, translated by Mark Trevethan, Cornish Language Lead, Cornwall Council.

statistics

There are currently 235 primary schools in Cornwall:

Type of state-funded primary school	Number of schools
Community (LA maintained)	32
Voluntary-controlled (LA maintained)	4
Voluntary-aided (LA maintained)	14
Foundation Trust (LA maintained)	49
Academy (State-funded independent)	136

Table 2: *School types in Cornwall. (Source: Cornwall Council, 2017d).*

The number of pupils enrolled in state-funded primary schools in Cornwall in January 2017, including academies and free schools, was 42,618 (DfE, 2017, Table 7b).

4 Secondary education

target group Secondary education in England starts at KS3 (age 11) and continues to either A-levels or apprenticeships (age 16–18).

structure Pupils aged 11–14 follow the KS3 curriculum set by the Department for Education, unless they attend academies or private schools which design their own curricula. From 14 to 16 (KS4), pupils in all schools prepare for GCSEs; at 16–18 they work towards A-levels or apprenticeships. Many secondary schools end at KS4, when separate “sixth-form colleges” take over for 16–18 provision. The name “sixth-form” is a vestigial survival of a time when education was separated into Forms.

legislation The Education Act 1944 facilitated compulsory education to age 16, and ensured state schools were free to attend. Notable subsequent legislation includes the Education Reform Act 1988 establishing the National Curriculum; and provisions for academy schools in 2000 (noted earlier).

The curriculum for the Key Stages and A-level is set by the Department for Education, with “assessment objectives” in each subject – measured by attainment in exams designed by a small number of accredited assessment providers.

language use The National Curriculum mandates the study of at least one language other than English at KS3. Schools must still offer at least one language at KS4, but pupils may opt out. Still, the English Baccalaureate, used as a measure of schools’ performance at GCSE level, requires a grade C or above in a language, giving schools an incentive towards language provision.

At A-level, pupils typically study 3–4 subjects; none is compulsory. Of 786,050 A-levels taken in 2017, 28,210 were in modern languages; this rate varied little in the last few years (Ofqual, 2017).

Assessment at GCSE and A-level is provided by four exam boards; between these, 19 languages are currently offered at both GCSE and A-level. Cornish is not among them. KS3 is not constrained to exam board provision, but there is little appetite for languages not subsequently assessed at GCSE. A GCSE in Cornish was offered in the 1990s but was discontinued due to low demand (Hut, 2001). In 2016, Cornish MP George Eustice campaigned for its reintroduction, without success. Cornish teaching at secondary level is therefore extra-curricular, mostly outside scheduled teaching time. Currently it is available in secondary schools only “as part of wider language awareness or diversity classes and activities” (CoE, 2018b).

**teaching
material**

There has been no significant development of Cornish language materials for secondary education. Promoting acquisition of Cornish has historically been targeted at adults, and more recently younger children; the various materials available are generally not suited to teenagers.

statistics

There are currently 31 state-funded secondary schools in Cornwall: 14 are maintained by the local authority, with 11,141 pupils; 17 are academies, with 17,808 pupils (DfE, 2017, Table 7c).

5 Vocational education

target group Vocational education is targeted in its broadest form towards 14–24-year-olds, but centres principally on the 16–19-year-old group.

structure Vocational education is jointly administered by the Department for Education and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills; they work alongside the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, the National Apprentice Scheme, the Skills Funding Agency, and the National Careers Service. Vocational education and skills training are available through various education providers, usually Further Education colleges (educational institutions between school and university) and workplace settings. Training courses for 16-year-olds include Applied General qualifications (equivalent to three A-Levels), technical level qualifications relevant to specific occupations, traineeships for 16–23-year-olds with learning difficulties, Technical Baccalaureates, and workplace apprenticeships.

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legislation The principal legislative instruments pertaining to vocational education are the Education Act 1997, and the Technical and Further Education Act 2017 (which amended the 1997 Act). The latter focusses principally upon provision, access and opportunity for pupils in schools, with regard to information concerning approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. The relevant phase of education is specified as beginning at age 13 and ending at age 18. The relevant qualifications are those approved under section A2DA of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

language use Since Cornish is mostly learned in privately run classes, and mostly used in social settings and cultural events, there is little by way of specific policy directed at vocational learning of the language. Nevertheless, the Cornish Language Office at Cornwall Council maintains an emphasis on certain uses of Cornish within Council business, for example bilingual email signatures and corporate branding. Meanwhile many

businesses make symbolic use of Cornish in their signage and some branch names, including large chains such as Asda, Tesco, and Wetherspoons, as well as many local businesses. This is mostly limited to signage rather than training of staff, though token greetings in Cornish and English are sometimes encouraged.

**teaching
material**

There are no teaching materials specifically dedicated to vocational use.

statistics

Given the relatively low level of vocational usage, there are currently no statistics about it.

6 Higher education

structure

Over 100 higher education institutions in the UK have degree-awarding powers; they may confer degrees in any subject they choose, subject to internal verification. All such degrees are subject to the same external standards, and in principle are all equally valued. However, in practice there are hierarchies according to reputation, ranking in national league tables, per-student funding, research prowess, and other criteria. This allows universities to impose different entry standards, though at time of writing not different levels of fees.

Degrees in the UK tend to focus on only one subject (or two in 'joint honours' degrees). Language degrees often involve the study of two languages, but can instead substitute the second language for a related subject, typically linguistics, English, or philosophy.

legislation

As with school education, university education in England is the responsibility of the Department for Education. Universities in England are regulated by the Office for Students, successor to the Higher Education Funding Council England. Education is fully devolved across the UK, so there are separate equivalent organisations in the other UK nations. While these bodies are in charge of funding and regulating universities, each institution internally verifies its own curricula.

language use

In 2004–2006, the European Commission-funded 'Celtic, Regional and Minority Languages Abroad Project' (www.cramlap.org) listed four UK institutions teaching Cornish: Falmouth University; the University of Cambridge; the University of Exeter; and Queen's University, Belfast. Two are located (wholly or partly) in Cornwall: Falmouth; and Exeter (Penryn campus). However, this provision has since waned. Falmouth mostly specialises in art and design, not languages; Exeter now only offers postgraduate supervision on topics related to Cornwall through its Institute of Cornish Studies – which has only one permanent member of staff, whose research interests are non-linguistic. The member of staff at Belfast with interests

in Cornish no longer works there. Cambridge now makes no explicit mention of Cornish on its “Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic” syllabus. Substantive degree-level study of Cornish is therefore not possible in the UK.

Academic research on Cornish tends to be published in English. We are unaware of any published works of academic research written in Cornish.

teacher training In the UK, education can be studied widely at degree level (Bachelor of Education); these graduates can go straight into a teaching job. Graduates of other subjects can transition into teaching by taking a year-long Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). There are other shorter training methods for graduates; and teachers can train “on the job”. These all culminate in Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), enabling work in state schools. Private schools are not so constrained and may hire as they see fit.

Teachers tend to train with a subject specialism, but once qualified are not restricted. Any QTS Cornish speaker could therefore teach Cornish if it were ever offered. As Cornish currently tends to be taught on a private basis, primarily to adult learners, teachers need not have a teaching qualification, and many do not. The only training available for those wishing to introduce Cornish in schools is a single session for trainee teachers (CoE, 2018b). Additional training opportunities have also recently been established by Golden Tree, a company funded by Cornwall Council to “develop Cornish language teaching and communications” (Cornwall Council, 2017f).

pre-school training

The pre-school level is one area where targeted teacher/carer training for Cornish provision has recently been initiated, albeit on a very limited scale.

Training sessions run by an Early Years specialist, in association with *Movyans Skolyow Meythrin*, provide Early Years professionals with a free, practical introduction to basic words

and phrases, and discussions about Cornish culture. Delivered at Level 3 (equivalent to A-Level), the sessions on offer include *Introducing the Cornish Language to Young Children*, and *Cornish Language Learning and Practice*, an online course with remote support.

Early Years practitioners taking this training can progress onto a Level 4 (first year undergraduate level) university course, launched in 2015, the 'Cornish Language Practice Project (Early Years)'. Accredited by Plymouth University and run at Cornwall College, Camborne, the course does not assess Cornish proficiency as such but ability to use Cornish constructively with young children. The course covers topics such as *Understanding Bilingualism*, *Creating Resources*, and *Integrating Language and Play*; the focus of the language provision is on Cornish. Cornwall Council can also arrange non-accredited specialist training for Early Years teachers who require tutor support to learn the language or develop their skills further for use with young children (Cornwall Council, 2017i).

The Level 3 training above is funded by the European Social Fund within the 2014–20 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme in England. At time of writing the UK is planning to leave the European Union, at which point this funding will naturally end. There is no current plan for this funding to be replaced.

primary training

Above we have noted some past instances pertaining to primary contexts, for example the work done by MAGA's Education Officers in schools, and the work of Golden Tree in some school settings. However, the current situation is subject to significant change, and we have not identified any substantive accredited training programmes that train primary teachers to teach Cornish.

secondary training

We have not found any training designed to deliver specific qualifications to secondary teachers in teaching Cornish as a subject.

in-service training

Similarly, we have not found any training designed to deliver specific qualifications to teachers of in-service trainings.

statistics

In 2016, 32.5% of UK school graduates went on to UK universities (UCAS, 2016). In 2015–16, there were 1.75 million undergraduates across the UK and half a million postgraduates (Universities UK, 2017).

As stated above, two accredited universities operate in Cornwall: Falmouth University (in its entirety) and the University of Exeter (Penryn campus only); 2,465 students were enrolled at the latter in 2017–18 (University of Exeter, 2017) and 5,385 at Falmouth in 2016–17 (HESA, 2018).

The Department for Education's School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) scheme was unable to provide us with the number of teachers being trained within Cornwall.

7 Adult education

structure
language
courses

There are weekly classes at different proficiency levels listed on LearnCornishNow.com (endorsed by MAGA). These privately organised sessions are run in hired rooms inside a range of venues, from educational institutions to municipal buildings, churches, and teachers' homes. They may receive minor administrative support from Cornwall Council but are not subject to formal curricular standards. The website LearnCornishNow.com also has some self-teaching materials.

Cornwall Council's Cornish Language Office has an Examinations Policy, last reviewed in December 2016, to encourage efficient planning and management of Cornish exams, and clear guidance. The policy is to be reviewed biennially by the Cornish Language Lead.

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A 2017/18 operational plan update by Cornwall Council (2017g) notes the development of a Cornish language assessment for children and adults, accredited by the national examination board company WJEC, www.wjec.co.uk. In summer 2017, 30 people passed the "Entry Level Spoken Cornish" exam (ibid.). There is also the longer standing Cornish Language Board exams (not nationally accredited), which a number of people pass every year from basic to advanced proficiency, e.g. 55 in total in 2016 (MAGA, 2016, p.1).

language use

We are not aware of any adult education settings for Cornish promoted specifically as Cornish-medium classes. The somewhat *ad hoc* nature of learning opportunities, often organised by private individuals or Cornish language interest groups, means that levels of Cornish-medium instruction vary greatly between tutors and classes. Similarly, online tutorials and podcasts made by private individuals display varying levels of Cornish-medium instruction.

Moreover, there are no centrally collated statistics showing how consistently the people passing the above exams progress

through further levels of exam, and/or actually use Cornish in everyday life.

statistics

At time of writing, LearnCornishNow.com lists 36 classes across Cornwall, one in Bristol, and two in London.

8 Educational research

Research specifically focusing on Cornish is relatively sparse, and none has focused entirely on education. Studies listed below in the 'References and further reading' section touch on relevant areas, including privately run classes, family transmission, history of language revival, teacher attitudes, and the current and potential future policy landscape.

Postgraduate research into aspects of the Cornish language has been carried out at institutions within the UK and abroad, though with little systematicity. Within Cornwall, the Institute of Cornish Studies (originally launched in 1971), administered by the University of Exeter, continues to produce its eclectic journal *Cornish Studies*, more recently shifting its emphasis towards an interdisciplinary 'New Cornish Studies'. Within this paradigm, studies of the language and its role include critical sociolinguistic consideration of the role of Cornish in cultural differentiation and identity discourse. The reconstruction and revival of Cornish is generally regarded as important in the modern Cornish identity, though – given its relatively low speaker numbers – more for its symbolic value than as an everyday vernacular. Such value though is not trivial; indeed, it contributes to the fascinating distinctiveness of this fledgling reconstructed language.

Annual conferences organised by the Institute of Cornish Studies, and by SKIANS – the Cornish Language Research Network – provide an additional focus for dissemination of research, typically featuring presentations from a mix of academics, civil servants, members of *Gorseth Kernow*, and interested others.

9 Prospects

From its demise around the late 18th century until the 20th century, Cornish was remembered only by a small clique of enthusiasts. Its gradual reconstruction from scattered historical written remains into a usable language – extrapolating linguistic norms, borrowing from Cornish dialect and adapting from Breton and Welsh – saw Cornish grow slowly but steadily. Speaker numbers in 1981 were estimated at fifty (Shield, 1984, p.336); by 2007 a few hundred (PFECMR, 2007, p.6). Interpretation of more recent data, as discussed at the outset of this report, suggests at least maintenance of this level, with perhaps 80 using reconstructed Cornish as an everyday language.

Moreover, with the exception of 2010–16, this gradual increase has mostly come without significant state funding. And since the agreement over the Standard Written Form helped soothe the decades-long feud between factional groups, there is now less of the friction and division that had so obfuscated the language movement (Sayers, 2012, p.104).

Withdrawal of most state funding in 2016 has significantly stymied plans to advance the language in state education, as reflected in the many action points facing “significant risks or barriers” in an August 2016 draft report by a Working Group established by Cornwall Council to address the provisions of the Framework Convention (Cornwall Council, 2016). A subsequent revised draft of this report in March 2017 similarly warned, “Activity is severely limited by funding levels” (Cornwall Council, 2017b, p.4), but still noted ongoing activities, for example those discussed earlier by Golden Tree, “with a view to 10 primary schools teaching Cornish in 2017” (*ibid.*, p.13).

Lobbying of central government is likely to remain a focus, since the local authority budget is under such intense pressure: Cornwall Council is facing significant real-terms funding cuts (Cornwall Council, 2017h), as are most local councils in England (LGA, 2017); Cornwall is also one of the poorest regions of the UK (ONS, 2016, §7) with corresponding extra pressures on funding. Such lobbying, however, will be difficult since the Cornish language falls within the purview of the Department of

Communities and Local Government, whose budget has fallen by 65% – the most severe cut of all government departments (Institute for Government, 2018). This is also the department responsible for some of the most pressing and basic services including housing and refuse collection – against which minority language revival may seem to government ministers like an expensive diversion.

The time of writing this dossier may be a low ebb, but those few years of significant state funding between 2010 and 2016, and the 2014 recognition of the Cornish people under the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (including the Cornish language), have delivered a kind of enduring status and visibility for the language. Despite the funding cuts, Cornish is still in use on all new road signs; it is still used in some corporate signage; it is popular in email signatures and other token salutatory contexts; it still attracts significant voluntary action and has gained some crowd-funding for specific initiatives including a Cornish-medium nursery.

The largely voluntary effort that saw Cornish reconstructed for modern use may see the language continue to be used in at least symbolic forms for the foreseeable future.

10 Summary statistics

Category	Total
Registered childminders	278
Crèche	7
Day nursery	118
Forest school	2
Maintained nursery schools and classes	32
Nursery school/class	9
Nursery units of independents	5
Pre-school playgroups	133
Private nursery schools	1

Table 1 (reproduced from page 17): The total per category of Early Years provision in Cornwall (2018) (regardless of language). (Source: Cornwall Council, www.supportincornwall.org.uk)

Type of state-funded primary school	Number of schools
Community (LA maintained)	32
Voluntary-controlled (LA maintained)	4
Voluntary-aided (LA maintained)	14
Foundation Trust (LA maintained)	49
Academy (State-funded independent)	136

Table 2 (reproduced from page 21): School types in Cornwall. (Source: Cornwall Council, 2017d).

speaker numbers

The 2011 UK Census reports 557 people declaring Cornish their “main language”. As noted earlier, interpretation of a survey conducted by the Cornish Language Partnership in 2008 suggests a lower figure of around 80 people using Cornish as any kind of main language.

education provision

The total number enrolled in each level of education in Cornwall is as follows:

State-funded nurseries	146*
State-funded primaries	42618
State-funded secondaries	28949
Universities	7850

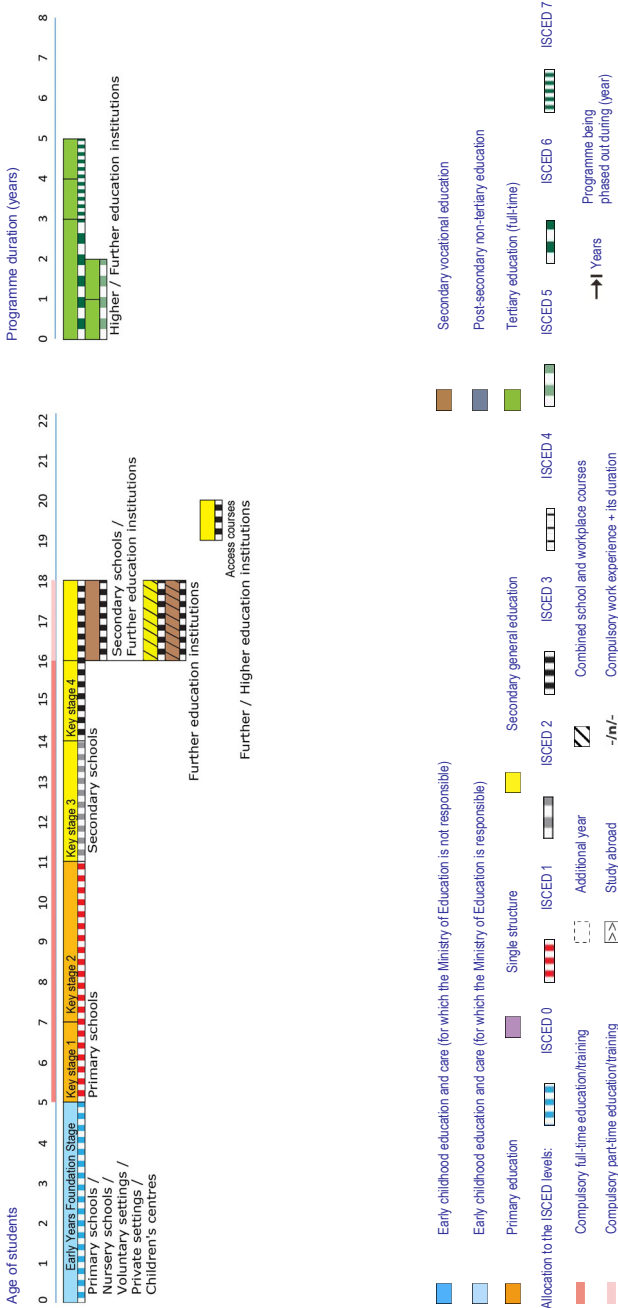
Table 3: Numbers enrolled within each level of education in Cornwall (2018).

* As noted earlier, this figure captures only a fraction of actual provision. Government statisticians have confirmed to us there is no collated data for all Early Years childcare. We arrived at a possible figure of 13,440 by comparing other datasets.

Two accredited universities operate in Cornwall: Falmouth and Exeter. 2,465 students were enrolled at the latter institution in 2017–18 (University of Exeter, 2017), and 5,385 at Falmouth in 2016–17 (HESA, 2018). Neither currently offers substantive instruction or assessment in Cornish.

provision of Cornish classes There are 36 privately run Cornish classes across Cornwall, one in Bristol, and two in London.

The structure of the education system in the UK in 2016/2017



Source: Eurydice (2016 / 2017)

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Other websites on minority languages

Mercator Research Centre www.mercator-research.eu
Homepage of the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning. The website contains the series of Regional dossiers, a database with organisations, a bibliography, information on current activities, and many links to relevant websites.

Mercator Network www.mercator-network.eu
General site of the Mercator European Network of Language Diversity Centres. It gives information about the network and leads you to the homepages of the network partners.

European Commission <http://ec.europa.eu/languages>
The website of the European Commission gives information about the EU's support for language diversity.

Council of Europe <http://conventions.coe.int>
European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992) and *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995). European Treaty Series 148 and 157, Strasbourg.

Eurydice <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice>
Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.

European Parliament Committee – supporting analyses database

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/supporting-analyses-search.html>.

In this database you will find research papers produced by the European Parliament's research service. A study for the CULT Committee, conducted by Mercator, is published in 2017: *Minority Languages and Education: Best Practices and Pitfalls*.

NPLD

<http://www.npld.eu/>

The Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) is a European wide network working in the field of language policy & planning for Constitutional, Regional and Small-State Languages (CRSS) across Europe.

FUEN

<https://www.fuen.org/>

The Federal Union of European Nationalities is the umbrella organisation of the autochthonous, national minorities/ethnic groups in Europe and represents the interests of European minorities on regional, national and European level.

What can the Mercator Research Centre offer you?

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partners The Mercator Research Centre is the leading partner of the European Mercator network, initiated by the European Commission in 1987. The Mercator network partners are: Mercator Media, hosted at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth, Mercator Legislation, hosted at the Ciemen Foundation, the University of Barcelona in Barcelona, the Stockholm University in Sweden and the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Hungary. Mercator also works and co-operates closely with a large number of research organisations and universities. This cooperation includes partners in the province Fryslân and other parts of the Netherlands, as well as partners across Europe and beyond. The main funding body of the Mercator Research Centre is the provincial government of Fryslân. The EU and regional authorities in Europe also regularly fund projects and activities.

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The Mercator Research Centre organises conferences and seminars on a regular basis. The main target groups are professionals, researchers and policymakers from all member states of the Council of Europe and beyond. Themes for the conferences are: assessment & best practice, educational models, development of minimum standards, teacher training and the application of the Common European Framework of Reference.

q&a

If you have any questions, please contact us at:
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