

Language education

Within Sheffield, language teaching starts between the ages of 3-5 and is available all the way up to 18. A core aspect of this is language learning for the workplace. The focus is on modern European languages especially French, German and Spanish.

Specialist language colleges

There are three specialist language schools in Sheffield – King Edward VIII, Meadowhead and Silverdale. These secondary schools have secured government sponsorship to raise standards in secondary education; in addition to delivering the broad National Curriculum they have a specific focus on their chosen specialism, both inside the school and within the wider community.

The main practical impact is a wider choice of languages for students, parents, the community and feeder primary schools. NVQ Business language courses are normally added to reflect the vocational use of languages, and languages such as Russian, Italian and Mandarin are being added to French, German and Spanish.

For more information

Specialist schools www.specialistschools.org.uk

Silverdale School www.silverdaleschool.org.uk

Meadowhead School www.meadowhead.sheffield.sch.uk

Vocational International Project Sheffield (VIPS)

This pioneering scheme is aimed at 15 year old school children to enable them to develop their language skills within a vocational context. Currently over 600 local school pupils are participating in the project, and the scheme is projected to expand further.

VIPS focuses on French, German, Spanish and Italian and combines the study of one of these languages in a vocational context with visits to local companies who use these languages on a day-to-day basis. The course is biased towards the teaching of business phrases rather than the traditional conversational tourist vocabulary. Companies offer four visits a year as well as email contact to participating students to ensure the focus of the language learning is not lost.

A recent forum reviewing the future of the project celebrated the success of the project for both pupils, who are noted to be particularly enthusiastic and motivated, and the partner businesses involved who are excited by their involvement and the progress that has been made to future workforce development.

For more information

VIPS <http://www.myv12.com/portfolio/rlnv12/issue10.htm?article=2>

WEBS-UK

This Sheffield project has been running since 1994 and offers 14 year-old students the opportunity to undertake work experience in either France, Germany or Spain.

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Over 400 students have participated so far, visiting partner schools and businesses in Amien, Bochum and Zaragoza. Students take part in an exchange program, spending two weeks working in their chosen country and staying with families of partner students, before receiving the partner student in a similar program in Sheffield. So far students from two-thirds of the city's schools have been involved.

The impact is significant for those who go, with 82 per cent achieving at least a grade C at GCSE, 50 per cent pursuing study of their chosen language to A level and 25 per cent studying their language into higher education.

For more information

WEBS (Working in Europe) www.webs-uk.org

Sheffield College

Sheffield College offers academic and Open College Network language qualifications from beginners level up to A level. The availability of the various languages is outlined in the table below.

Language	A level or equivalent		GCSE or equivalent		Beginners & improvers
	A level	OCN level 5	GCSE	OCN level 4	
Arabic	✓		✓		✓
French	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
German	✓				✓
Spanish	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Urdu	✓				✓
Italian		✓			✓
Chinese					✓
Dutch					✓
Greek					✓
Japanese					✓
Portuguese					✓
Russian					✓
Turkish					✓

For more information

Sheffield College language courses <http://digbig.com/4tpgj>

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