

From mountain to sea

Aberdeenshire Council - Scots Language Guidelines (Feb 2017)

The Scots language is an essential element of the culture and heritage of Scotland. In North East Scotland (Aberdeenshire, Banffshire, Kincardineshire, Moray), Scots language is known as “Doric” and will henceforth be referred to in this document as Doric.

Aberdeenshire Council will promote and support Doric, encouraging its respect and recognition in order that, what for many is the language of the home, it can be used and appreciated in other areas of life. Aberdeenshire Council specifically supports engagement with Doric in all 3-18 educational establishments.

Doric in Context

Doric is an important feature of communities in the North-East as a day-to-day spoken language and in the cultural heritage, literature, poetry and song. Doric is heard daily in work and learning environments across the North East. Doric is the language that many pupils bring to their learning setting.

2011 Census

The 2011 Census indicated that over 1.5 million people (30% of the population) identified themselves as Scots speakers. In Aberdeenshire this amounted to 119,078 people or 49% of the population over 3 years old (equal highest with Shetland Islands Council). A further breakdown by CAS Wards (Census Area Statistic Wards), Appendix 1, shows that in many areas of the North East the majority of people are Scots speakers.

Scottish Government Policy

In September 2015 the Scottish Government launched its Scots Language Policy (<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/ArtsCultureSport/arts/Scots/ScotsLanguagePolicy/ScotsLanguagePolicy-English>). The initial Ministerial statement gives a commitment to raise the profile of the Scots Language, support Scots, recognise its valuable heritage and promote its popularity and recognition. The policy recognises Scots as an essential element of the culture and heritage of Scotland, and a familiar aspect of song, poetry and literature, and a recognised feature of how we express ourselves in our community life.

Council of Europe Charter

Scots Language is identified as a language covered by the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (see appendix 2). Part II - Article 7 of The Charter – ‘Objectives and Principles’, highlights that countries (including the UK) who have signed up to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages have an obligation to base their policies, legislation and practice on a number of key objectives and principles, including the following:

- the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth;
- the need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them;
- the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life;
- the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages;
- the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire.

Doric in Education

The Curriculum for Excellence Principles and Practices state that “it is expected that practitioners will build upon the diversity of language represented within the communities of Scotland, valuing the languages which children and young people bring to school.” Key themes in the English and Literacy curriculum direct teachers to “engage with a broad range of increasingly complex texts, including Scottish and Scots texts”.

Education Scotland launched their Scots Language Policy in partnership with the Scottish Government and are committed to developing the place of Scots in education. “Curriculum for Excellence highlights Scots as a key component of bairns’ and weans’ education. Teachers and young people are discovering that learning in Scots can offer fun and constructive pathways into language and literacy.” In their Annual Review for 2015/16, Education Scotland focus on Scots in a case study for fulfilling ‘Strategic Objective 1: Building a world-class curriculum for all learners in Scotland’. In Aberdeenshire we are proud to have numerous examples of innovative and effective practice to support and promote Doric.

In the Curriculum for Excellence broad general education Scots Language is suitable for inclusion in the curriculum as a L3 language, enabling schools to acknowledge and celebrate the linguistic and cultural heritage of their learners. In an Aberdeenshire context, this can involve studying all of Scotland, or it can be specifically the cultural heritage and regional variety of Scots unique to Aberdeenshire. Doric has many unique features to its grammar and a rich range of unique vocabulary, sufficiently fulfilling the requirements of a L3 language in the 1+2 Language Policy (Appendix 3). Cultural and historical aspects of Doric also provide learners with excellent opportunities for learning about Aberdeenshire and Scotland, leading onto cross-curricular learning.

In the Curriculum for Excellence senior phase the SQA offers two courses, Scottish Studies Award and Scots Language Award which provides opportunities for secondary pupils to engage in Scots language and gain qualifications. Education Scotland has developed numerous resources for Scots language and currently has a Scots Language Coordinator to support Scots learning.

Doric in Culture

Aberdeenshire Council’s Place Partnership with Creative Scotland celebrates the area’s distinctive cultural heritage, including Doric language, literature and traditional music, assets which are unique to the area and promote a strong sense of identity.

Focussing on these thematic areas of work will provide opportunities for local communities and creatives to develop and engage in artistic programmes which will reinvigorate the distinctive stories linked to local culture. As well as making a significant contribution to the development and promotion of creative places and culture-led regeneration.

Doric Rationale, Development & Entitlements

- Aberdeenshire Council recognises the value of experiencing Doric in all areas of Scottish life, specifically education. Learners have an entitlement to engage in Doric at school as one of the three official indigenous languages of Scotland, as recognised by the Council of Europe 'Charter on Regional or Minority Languages', the UK Government and the Scottish Government.
- Aberdeenshire Council values Doric as an important part of the intangible cultural heritage (language, song, poetry, literature) of the North East of Scotland. Doric is prevalent in local communities and workplaces, and for many learners is the language they bring to the classroom. Learners should be recognised for being bilingual and given the opportunity to develop these skills in their learning.
- Aberdeenshire Council regards Doric, in its written and spoken forms as a valid means of communication. Aberdeenshire Council will endeavour to see that learners who have Doric as their first language at home and with friends are not disadvantaged at school in terms of self-esteem, access to the curriculum, achieving and attaining to their potential. Non-Doric speakers will be included in the benefits of engaging with and the opportunity to learn Doric, equipping them with the necessary skills for the world of work and life-long learning.
- Aberdeenshire Council recognises the educational benefits of embedding Doric in the curriculum across all educational establishments. Engagement with Doric potentially benefits learners by:
 - contributing towards closing the attainment gap and improving achievement;
 - building self-esteem;
 - promoting inclusion;
 - developing literacy and language skills in different contexts;
 - building partnership links between the school, the home and parents;
 - encouraging links between generations and links with the local community;
 - promoting and supporting community well-being;
 - promoting wellbeing and providing fun and enjoyment;
 - developing empathy with their own and others' cultures;
 - fostering global citizenship and Scotland's place in the World;
 - fostering creativity; developing an appreciation for local culture and heritage.

In order to enhance the status of Doric.....

Aberdeenshire Council will:

- Create awareness amongst stakeholder groups that Doric (Scots) is one of the three historical indigenous languages of Scotland and should be afforded equal respect;
- Create further awareness of the expectations and opportunities related to Doric in Curriculum for Excellence documents;
- Support a Doric Working Group to promote Doric in educational establishments;
- Share good practice in learning related to Doric among 3-18 educational establishments.
- Share good practice of Scottish Studies Award and Scots Language Award provision offered in schools in Aberdeenshire and beyond, and encourage uptake by other schools.

- Encourage partnership working between all groups and bodies with an interest in supporting Scots Language (e.g. Education Scotland; Historic Environment Scotland; Aberdeen University Elphinstone Institute; Robert Gordon University; University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) BBC, STV, local media outlets, Aberdeen City and Shire Tourism Partnership (ATP); Scots Language Centre; Into Film).
- Develop a formal partnership with Tobar an Dualchais/Kist o Riches to allow our schools and communities to benefit from this excellent resource to support learning and teaching in Doric.
- Encourage adult learning centres to offer the Scots language Award.
- Work with Education Scotland to develop CLPL training for teachers regarding Scots
- We will access support materials for the Scots Language Award from the Education Scotland and SQA websites and encourage sharing of further resources developed by teachers.

Aberdeenshire Learning Establishments will:

The Early Years Settings: 3-5

- Early Years establishments will provide environments that are rich in Doric experiences e.g. attractive wall displays, plentiful books and environmental print, developing activities for role play and plan Doric experiences which are of high quality and are firmly embedded in children's play.
- Through games, rhymes, stories, role-play etc., ensure a Doric focus on the development of vocabulary, language awareness and phonological skills.

Primary and Secondary Schools: 5 – 18

- Create environments where children are exposed to a wealth of Doric and Scots texts, books, visual displays and dialogue.
- Recognise and celebrate children's efforts and successes in Doric learning.
- Use teaching methods to develop Doric which are proven to benefit learners, including active literacy approaches, co-operative learning and higher order thinking skills.
- Support and challenge learners to develop their Doric skills and increase their understanding.
- Provide learners with plenty of opportunities to use the skills they have learned in real life and relevant ways, often through inter-disciplinary themes.
- Use differentiation of materials and methods to support the learning of all children in an inclusive way.
- Make sure staff, as appropriate, have time to take part in professional collaboration and development in their own schools and with other establishments and clusters to develop Doric.
- Make sure that all learners understand the importance and purpose of Doric in their lives.
- Support children to reflect upon their own learning and set their own next steps.
- Provide learning opportunities in Doric which are enjoyable and engaging and motivate the children to want to be involved and do well
- In secondary consideration should be given to offering SQA Scots Language Award and related units in Scottish Studies Award.

Children and young people will be entitled to:

- experience a curriculum through which they learn about Doric and the value of Doric in day to day life, culture and history in the North East
- develop an understanding of Doric as an integral part of their education and be clear about the value and benefits of Doric.
- opportunities to engage in learning through Doric and about Doric.
- a learning environment that recognises and promotes diversity and supports Doric as part of this.
- develop understanding of the responsibilities of us all to value and support minority languages and cultures.
- Know where to find information and access support making effective use of online sources such as

Education Scotland - <https://education.gov.scot/>

Tobar an Dualchais – <http://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/>

Wee-Windaes - <http://wee-windaes.nls.uk/>

Elphinstone Institute - <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/>

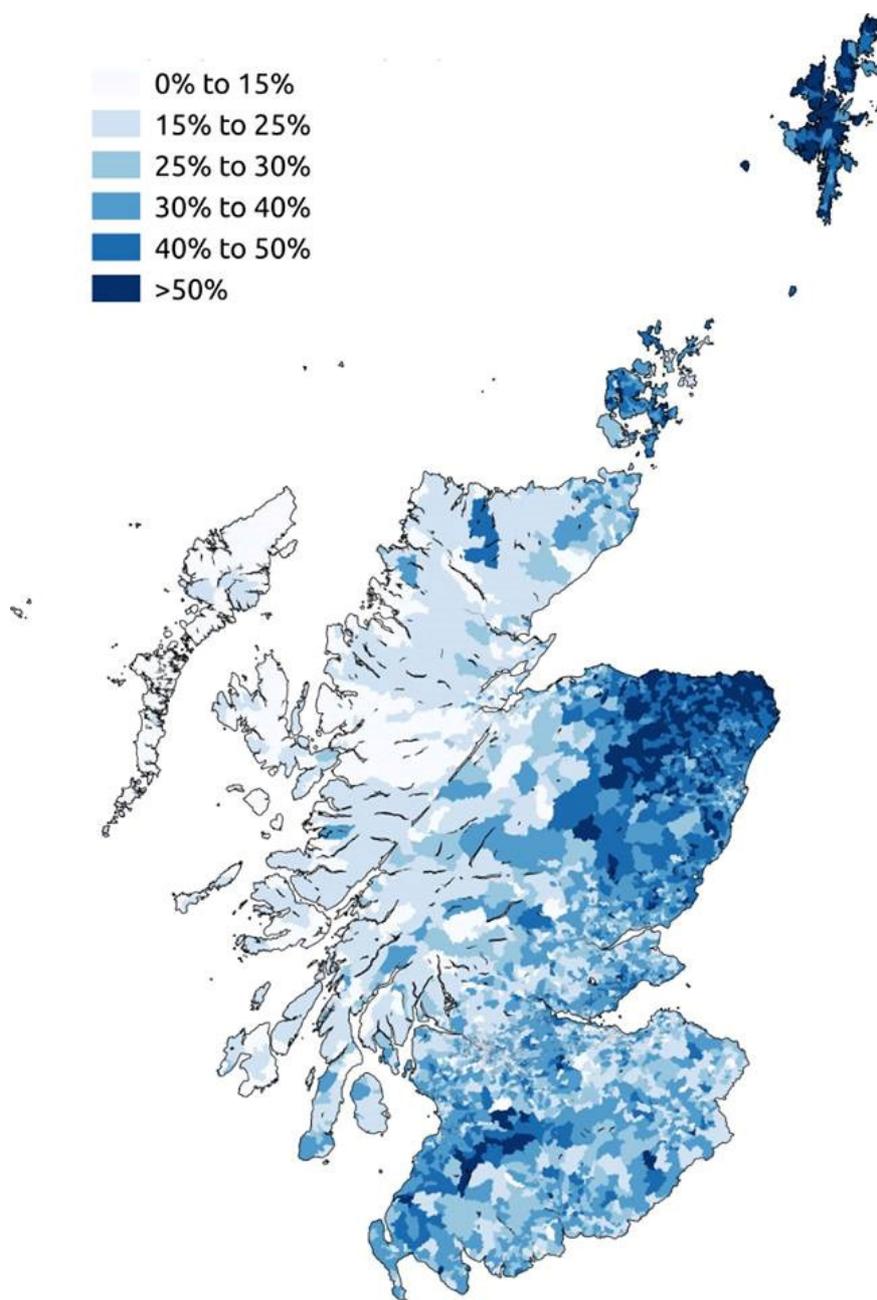
Doric Dictionary - <http://www.doricdictionary.com/>

Centre for the Scots Leid - <http://www.scotslanguage.com/>

- have access to a broad range of pathways through their senior phase including learning opportunities to study where appropriate Doric as a Scots Language Award qualification.

Appendix 1 - Map of Scots Speakers from 2011 Census

(by CAS Wards. Figures are % of population who speak Scots)



Source: SkateTier, Wikimedia, from 2011 census data.

Appendix 2 - European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (extract)

Part II – Objectives and principles pursued in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 1

Article 7 – Objectives and principles

- 1 In respect of regional or minority languages, within the territories in which such languages are used and according to the situation of each language, the Parties shall base their policies, legislation and practice on the following objectives and principles:
 - a. the recognition of the regional or minority languages as an expression of cultural wealth;
 - b. the respect of the geographical area of each regional or minority language in order to ensure that existing or new administrative divisions do not constitute an obstacle to the promotion of the regional or minority language in question;
 - c. the need for resolute action to promote regional or minority languages in order to safeguard them;
 - d. the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life;
 - e. the maintenance and development of links, in the fields covered by this Charter, between groups using a regional or minority language and other groups in the State employing a language used in identical or similar form, as well as the establishment of cultural relations with other groups in the State using different languages;
 - f. the provision of appropriate forms and means for the teaching and study of regional or minority languages at all appropriate stages;
 - g. the provision of facilities enabling non-speakers of a regional or minority language living in the area where it is used to learn it if they so desire;
 - h. the promotion of study and research on regional or minority languages at universities or equivalent institutions;
 - i. the promotion of appropriate types of transnational exchanges, in the fields covered by this Charter, for regional or minority languages used in identical or similar form in two or more States.
- 2 The Parties undertake to eliminate, if they have not yet done so, any unjustified distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference relating to the use of a regional or minority language and intended to discourage or endanger the maintenance or development of it. The adoption of special measures in favour of regional or minority languages aimed at promoting equality between the users of these languages and the rest of the population or which take due account of their specific conditions is not considered to be an act of discrimination against the users of more widely-used languages.
- 3 The Parties undertake to promote, by appropriate measures, mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country and in particular the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to regional or minority languages among the objectives of education and training provided within their countries and encouragement of the mass media to pursue the same objective.
- 4 In determining their policy with regard to regional or minority languages, the Parties shall take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by the groups which use such languages. They are encouraged to establish bodies, if necessary, for the purpose of advising the authorities on all matters pertaining to regional or minority languages.
- 5 The Parties undertake to apply, *mutatis mutandis*, the principles listed in paragraphs 1 to 4 above to non-territorial languages. However, as far as these languages are concerned, the nature and scope of the measures to be taken to give effect to this Charter shall be determined in a flexible manner, bearing in mind the needs and wishes, and respecting the traditions and characteristics, of the groups which use the languages concerned.

Appendix 3: Language Learning in Scotland: A 1+2 Approach

The report Language Learning in Scotland: a 1+2 Approach tasks local authorities and schools with ensuring that all children learn two languages in addition to their mother tongue. The Report recommends that all learners should have access to modern language learning from P1 onwards by 2020.

The '1+2 Report' as it has come to be known, states that all children should learn an additional language (L2) from P1 at the latest. They should learn a second additional language (L3) from P5 at the latest. L2 is to be embedded from the early stages of the primary curriculum and is sustained as part of transition through to the end of broad general education.

The introduction of a second additional language (L3) from P5 is a fundamental part of the 1+2 Policy. Learning a further language will give additional opportunities to build on children's literacy skills so that they develop a greater understanding of how language works. With the right approach, it will give children the confidence to learn other languages in the future. Planning for L3 should involve discussions at school and cluster level.

Learning about other cultures is, of course, a part of language learning. However, it is not intended that learning L3 should mean lessons in culture only, with a few words of language added in. Rather, learning about the culture should be integrated naturally into language learning. The key objective is learning the language.

In line with 1+2 Policy schools will be free to determine their own approaches to L3 to suit their own circumstances. These may include:

- An interdisciplinary project over a number of weeks to fit with themes being introduced elsewhere in the curriculum.
- The additional language being taught in P5-P7 in blocks of time over the three years.
- Input over a period of time from class teacher or someone else. If this option is chosen it is possible to introduce a different L3 each year, to fit in with the resources available locally at that time or the themes being delivered.

In the secondary sector, L3 may be delivered in a number of ways, provided that an L3 is a planned part of the curriculum for all during the broad general education. L3 could be studied as a full subject, elective, masterclass or enrichment activity, as long as the language learning experience allows for genuine progression.

Regardless of sector, the following guidelines should apply:

- The experience must be progressive. In other words, children will learn sufficient vocabulary and knowledge of the language to go beyond words and produce sentences.
- Children will continue to build on language learning skills. Examples include working out the meaning of a simple text by using strategies learned through literacy and through the study of L2, and using a bilingual dictionary effectively.
- They will learn to understand and use the language, building skills in talking, listening and basic writing.

There should be clear objectives for what the course or programme aims to deliver in terms of skills and knowledge about language, within context. Planning should ensure that these objectives can be achieved and that young people have the opportunity to develop all four skills. In this way, the L3 experience can be challenging, meaningful and enjoyable.