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POSITION OF GERMAN IN GRANT-AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND

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BOARD OF EDUCATION EDUCATIONAL PAMPHLETS, No. 77

Position of German in Grant-Aided Secondary Schools in England





PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE TO be purchased iffeeth riom H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses: Adiastral House, Rimon H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses: York Street, Mancheset; 7, St. Andrew's Crescent, Carditt '90 through any Bookseller' of through any Bookseller'.

1929

PREFATORY NOTE.

The following memorandum was written after an investigation into the position of German in the Grantaided Secondary Schools in England. In the opinion of the Board the facts stated in the memorandum demand the serious consideration of Local Education Authorities and Governing Bodies of Secondary Schools; and the Board hope that a substantial increase will result in the provision of facilities for the study of German in such Schools.

Board of Education,
Whitehall, London, S.W.

July, 1929.

Position of German in Grant-Aided Secondary Schools in England.

- 1. Within the last few months the Board have caused enquiries to be made into the present position of German in Grant Earning Secondary Schools. The enquiry covered all the Secondary Schools in England which are in receipt of grants under the Board's Regulations; and it is now possible to state-with comparable figures for Latin-the number of schools attended by boys or girls in which German forms a part of the curriculum in the main part of the school, the number of schools in which the language is studied only in post-School-Certificate Forms, the number of pupils studying German and the number of men and women teachers giving instruction in the subject. The purpose of this Memorandum is to state these and other relevant facts for the information of School Authorities. and to add so much of comment as a consideration of the circumstances seems to demand.
- 2. Detailed figures will be found in the Appendix, but the broad results of the enquiry may be briefly stated. The number of Secondary Schools covered by the enquiry was 1,195. It may safely be assumed that there is hardly one of these schools in which all the pupils above the Preparatory department, if any, are not required to pursue a four or five years' course of French in the main part of the school. There is no Secondary School in receipt of grants in which German is the sole foreign language studied. German, if it is included in the curriculum at all, is the second foreign language studied; and in a proportion of the schools it is taken as an alternative to Latin. This being understood, it appears from the enquiry that out

of a total of 1,195 Secondary Schools there are only 243 in which German is included in the curriculum of the main part of the school, i.e., in the Forms up to and including the Forms which are presented for an approved First Examination. Nor is this meagre provision for German due to the existence of a large number of schools in which there is only one foreign language studied and that language French. A year ago the Board made an enquiry into the position of Latin in Grant Earning Secondary Schools; and the figures when compared with those quoted above are sufficiently striking. The enquiry covered 1,177 Secondary Schools; and in 1,075 of these schools Latin was included in the curriculum of the main part of the school. It is only a small minority of Secondary Schools which do not include Latin as a possible second foreign language; and only a minority, approximately a fifth of the total number, which make any provision for German before the School Certificate stage. The relative position of German and Latin is further illustrated by the following figures. In the 1.177 schools covered by the Latin enquiry there were 131,107 pupils studying Latin; in the 1,195 schools covered by the German enquiry there were 18,430 pupils studying German. Again in the School Certificate Examinations held in July 1928 the number of candidates offering French, Latin, German and Spanish were as follows :-

French		 54,273
Latin		 23,558
German		 3,837
Spanish	4	719

Measured by the number of schools in which the language is taught, the number of pupils studying it, or by the number of candidates offering the language as a subject in an approved First Examination, the position of German is markedly inferior to that of Latin, while with French there is no comparison.

3. The Appendix includes a table showing for each Local Education Authority area the total number of Secondary Schools, and the number of these schools which include German in the curriculum up to the School Certificate stage, or only in post-School-Certificate forms. An analysis of this table brings out some interesting facts:

Out of 48 County areas there are as many as 17, comprising 175 schools, in which there is no grant-earning Secondary School, either for boys or girls, which includes German in its curriculum at any stage; and there is a further batch of 12 County areas, comprising 141 schools, with just one school apiece in which pupils have a chance of learning German in the main part of the school. Out of 79 County Boroughs there are 18 from the Curriculum of whose schools German is without exception omitted, and an additional 11 County Boroughs in which there are in all 14 schools providing for German only in post-School-Certificate forms.

Among the Local Education Authority areas, Middlesex is an outstanding example of a County and Birmingham and Bradford are examples of County Boroughs in which a large proportion of the schools make provision for German.

In the whole area south of the Thames, excluding London, there are 268 Secondary Schools and only 31 of these, of which 11 are in Kent, make provision for German in the main part of the School.

In Lancashire and Yorkshire German is included in the curriculum of the main part of the School in 37 out of 102 Boys' Schools, 19 out of 105 Girls' Schools, and in 9 out of 68 mixed schools, i.e., in 65 schools out of a total of 275. In this area, which includes many of the most important industrial centres in the country, and where small schools with all their difficulties in providing alternative courses of instruction are relatively few, the provision is certainly better but it is none too good,

An examination of the table in the Appendix suggests that the distribution of urban schools which make provision for German is haphazard and fortuitous. Nor can it be denied that, if the half dozen largest cities in the country are excluded, a parent living in a large town has no security that he will be able to find in that town a grant earning secondary school at which his son will have an opportunity of learning German; and his daughter is likely to be in a worse case.

4. It might be supposed that the present neglect of German in grant earning secondary schools was one of the unhappy consequences of the War. But such a conclusion would be quite wrong. Undoubtedly the War checked the study of German in Secondary schools; from the curricula of some schools the subject dropped out, its place being taken by Latin; into the curricula of other newly established schools it was never introduced. And the Convention with the Government of Prussia for the exchange of Assistenten came inevitably to an end. But the neglect of German is something which is older than the War: and already in 1912 in their Memorandum on the teaching of Modern Languages in Secondary Schools (Circular 797), the Board had occasion to deplore the decay in the study of German. "German is completely disappearing from the curriculum of schools in which it formerly found a place."

German if it has to be taken as a second foreign language has to meet the rivalry of Latin. The study of Latin has been gaining ground in recent years. That language has behind it its traditional association as an ancient language with the curriculum of secondary schools. Furthermore it is protected by the requirements of the Universities which, with a single exception, make Latin (or Greek) a compulsory subject either for all their entrants or, in the Matriculation or Intermediate Examinations, for those students who are proposing to take a degree in Arts. This is one reason, though it is not of course the

only reason, for the inclusion of Latin in the curricula of many secondary schools. Seeing that a great majority of secondary school pupils do not proceed to a University the requirement cannot be regarded as an adequate reason for the neglect of German in the secondary curriculum.

5. Comparative figures showing for successive years the number of schools making provision for the study of German, French, Latin are not available, but the following table (p. 8) gives the total number of candidates and the number offering each of these languages in five of the School Certificate Examinations held in the years 1913, 1920 and 1928.

The figures for the year 1913 are too small to make possible a fair comparison with the figures for 1920 and 1928; but if the figures for these two latter years are compared it will be seen that while the percentage of candidates offering Latin has increased at the expense of those offering German from the schools served by the London and the Oxford and the Cambridge Local Examinations, there has been an increase in the percentage of candidates offering German from the schools served by the Northern Universities Examination; and a still more striking increase in the case of the schools whose candidates take the examination of the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board.

6. The main facts which emerge from the foregoing paragraphs are (a) the universality of French as a subject of instruction in English Secondary Schools and (b) the rarity of German as compared, not only with French, but also with Latin. There is nothing in the Board's Regulations for Secondary Schools, nor it may be added in the Regulations of the Examining Bodies, to account for the overwhelming predominance of French in our secondary schools. The Board's Regulations give secondary schools complete liberty in regard to the choice of the foreign languages which they will teach; and the Regulations say nothing to discourage, still less to prevent, schools

Total Number of candidates and numbers and percentages offering German, Latin, French, in School Certificate Francisations

100	f and ridge Board.	% of (a) 16.1 85.5 90.1	8.3 63.3 96.4	111.4 67.5 99.2
	Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board.	(a) 895 144 765 806	3,513 290 2,224 3,387	6,409 733 4,326 6,359
	Northern Universities.	% of (a) 20.8 55.4 97	8.8 36.8 95.1	9.4 40.3 97.9
	Nort	(a) 269 56 159 261	6,039 519 2,226 5,744	15,462 1,446 6,240 15,151
ons.	Cambridge Local.	% of (a)	4·1 30 98·3	2.8 40.9 99.7
amman	Camb	(a) 3,595 226	5,371 222 1,614 5,279	6,474 182 2,648 6,453
icate Ex	Oxford Local.	% of (a) 6.3 19.5 81.2	23.9	2.1 29 92.7
school verypeate examinations	Oxf	(a) 8,461 537 1,650 6,869	7,781 236 1,861 6,812	10,432 214 3,030 9,668
SCHOOL	London.	% of (a) 20.1 35 98.2	10.6 29.5 94.4	9.4 95.8 95.8
	Lon	(a) 1,107 223 388 1,087	5,984 634 1,763 5,649	12,459 1,166 4,587 11,940
		:::::	in this	
		Whole examination, German Latin French	1920. Whole examination German Latin French	1928. Whole examination German Latin French

from teaching German. On the other hand it is perhaps hardly an exaggeration to say that to the popular mind the inclusion of French in the curriculum of a school gives the school a status which it would not otherwise possess and has become in fact a condition on which its claim to be regarded as secondary is in a measure supposed to depend. The Report of the Prime Minister's Committee on the position of Modern Languages, which was issued in April 1918, stressed in an impressive paragraph (Cd. 9036. § 65) the importance of French; but the Committee went on to observe " After the War the importance of German must correspond with the importance of Germany. If Germany after the War is still enterprising, industrious, highly organised, formidable no less in trade than in arms, we cannot afford to neglect her or ignore her for a moment : we cannot leave any of her activities unstudied. The knowledge of Germany by specialists will not suffice: it must be widespread throughout the people." It is quite unnecessary for the purposes of this Memorandum to discuss the relative importance which should be attached to the several foreign languages, ancient or modern, in our educational system; but that there should be 3,837 candidates offering German in the School Certificate Examinations and 54,273 (i.e. 14 times as many) offering French would seem to indicate a view of the relative importance of the two languages, which hardly corresponds with the facts.

If the number of people speaking a given language may be taken as in some sense a measure of the importance of the language the following figures* are significant:—

Total Estima	In Europe		
	speakir	ıg	- 12700HU - 1120
French		46,000,000	42,000,000
Italian		40,500,000	37,000,000
Spanish		70,886,000	18,000,000
German		75,000,000	71,000,000

^{*} Quoted from "Modern Languages Instruction in Canada", University of Toronto Press, 1928.

7. It is not of course suggested that French should be omitted from the School Curriculum and that German should take its place; but only that the great inequality of opportunity for learning these languages should in a measure be redressed. Where two foreign languages are included in the curriculum up to the School Certificate stage German might more often be one of them. In those Schools in which instruction in three foreign languages can be provided. German is an obvious, and in many cases a desirable, alternative to Latin. If again in a given School, or in a section of a School, only one foreign language is studied, it is not a self-evident proposition that that language should necessarily be French. The Board would desire in this connection to draw attention to the views expressed in Section 21 of Circular 797. "In some Schools . . . it will be wise to limit most of the pupils to a single foreign language. It is suggested that in some cases this language might be German. The firmly-established place held by French in the curriculum of English schools makes it unnecessary to recapitulate the great educational and utilitarian advantages to be derived from its study. But, while these should have their full weight as in the past, it should no longer be assumed, as it often has been, that for those pupils who will learn only one language other than English, the choice is necessarily restricted to French."

What foreign language or languages should be included in the Curricula of particular schools is a question for determination by the responsible School Authorities, whose action in this matter, to judge from the figures already quoted, is characterised by an unhealthy uniformity. Variety in the Curricula of Secondary Schools in a given area is in fact a need readily admitted in theory, but too seldom realised in practice. The general principle which needs to be borne in mind is that the Curriculum which is appropriate for a given Secondary School in a populous area is not a problem to be dealt with by each School independently, with a total disregard of the

Curricula of its neighbours. It is neither possible nor desirable that every Secondary School should attempt to provide instruction in each of the three foreign languages most commonly taught; and the fact that one School omits German from its Curriculum is per se a reason why a neighbouring School should make provision for that language. It is only by mutual consultation and agreement among School Authorities that the Secondary Schools of a given area can do their part in contributing, severally and collectively. to the national system.

8. It is suggested that a good many schools which now do no German might well try to arrange a three years' Course in German leading up to the School Certificate. Some of the 83 Schools which at present have German in the Sixth Form only, could probably begin earlier and make more of the subject. There are many reasons why a three years' Course in German may be pursued with advantage in a Secondary School. There will be usually a background of two years of phonetics, oral work, and general linguistic training in connection with the first foreign living language, French. The pupils beginning German will be two years older than the French beginners. It will be possible to cover in the first year of the German course the equivalent of the first two years of the French course. The earlier stages of German are less difficult for English children than the corresponding stages in French. There are serious difficulties for English children in the phonetics of German, but they are not so formidable and not so numerous as those of French. The beginnings of German are made more attractive to an English boy or girl by the fact that many of the simpler words resemble very closely their English equivalents. The general meaning could be grasped at once of an easy German story which contained words like Mann, Haus, Hand, Gras, Feld, Winter, Sommer, haben, senden, finden, kalt, warm, oft, und, so, etc., and the changes in a verb like singen, sang, gesungen, and the comparison of an adjective like gut, besser, present little difficulty to an English child. On the other hand a great many of the longer French words and the words which belong to a learned vocabulary present far less difficulty than the German ones. From the point of view of vocabulary, the later stages of French are easier for the English student than the later stages of German.

Again it is generally speaking easy to find narrative literature in German of a kind suitable for young people. Further, it is unfortunately a rare thing for an English boy or girl to hear any pleasurable music in French verse, whereas the appeal of the strongly stressed German verse is often felt at once. There is little difficulty in getting the majority of pupils in a suitably prepared class in an English school to appreciate and understand the best known simpler poems of Goethe and Heine, while the ballads of Schiller and Uhland are good literature which is readily appreciated.

 To these considerations which make for the encouragement of the study of German both as a language and a literature, two others may be added.

There is scarcely a subject in the whole range of University work, towards the knowledge of which German scholars and research workers have not made important contributions; and the ability to read German is an essential part of the intellectual equipment of those who proceed to advanced studies in many different fields.

Some recognition of this fact is shown by the inclusion of German at the Sixth Form stage in some 80 schools from whose Curriculum it is omitted in the main part of the School. But the recognition is inadequate. There are for example many Schools with recognised Advanced Courses in Science and Mathematics, which make no provision for the teaching of German even in the Sixth Form, though the need for a reading knowledge of German on the part of Science students will be generally admitted

and a suggestion that German should be taught to the pupils in question has frequently been made in the Reports of the Board's Inspectors on individual Schools.

Lastly the importance of German as of other modern languages to those pupils who are proceeding to commercial occupations is matter which is at the present time engaging the attention of the Board. If it is not further referred to here, it is only because a considered statement on the subject is being prepared and will appear in due course.

APPENDIX.

Return relating to Position of German in Grant-Earning Secondary Schools in England.

L.E.A.			of Sch Are		No. of Schools which include GERMAN in the curriculum of main part of School—Up to School Cert. standard.				No. of Schools which include GERMAN only in post-School- Certificate Forms.			
	В.	G.	В. & G.	Total.	В.	G.	В. & G.	Total.	В.	G.	В. & G.	Total.
Bedfordshire Berkshire Reading C.B. Buckinghamshire Cambridgeshire Lsle of Ely Cheshire Birkenhead C.B. Stockport C.B. Stockport C.B. Wallasey C.B. Comwall Cumberland Carlisle C.B. Derbyshire Derby C.B. Devonshire Exeter C.B. Plymouth C.B. Dorsetshire Durham Darlington C.B. Southead C.B. Sunderland C.B. West Hartlepool C.B. Essex. East Ham C.B. Gloucestershire Bristol C.B. West Hartlepool C.B. Gessex. East Ham C.B. Gloucestershire Bristol C.B. Gloucestershire Bristol C.B. Gloucestershire Bristol C.B.	4 5 1 2 3 2 4 4 3 2 1 2 2 6 1 1 2 2 2 1 3 6 6 2 1 1 2 2 1 3 6 6 2	3 4 4 2 1 2 3 4 4 4 3 2 3 7 1 1 3 1 7 2 4 1 4 2 1 2 3 1 3 2 3 5 2	1 2 - 5 - 8 - 1 - 9 7 - 14 - 10 - 1 8 11 1 1 1 1 1 - 6 1 - 2 13 3 3 -	8 11 3 3 8 5 5 5 6 7 7 5 4 4 5 5 22 2 9 2 19 3 3 2 7 4 8 13 12 2 2 2 2 3 3 1 1 2 3 1 1 2 3 3 1 1 1 1	3 -1 1 1 -1 1 2 -1 1 1 -1 1 -1 1 -1 1 1 1	3 - 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	6 -2 3 1 -3 2 1 1 1 2 -1 1 2 -4 1 -2 2 1 6 -4 1 -3 -	1 - 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 - 2 1 1 1 1	1	2	1 1 1 2 1 2 1 2 2 3 3 2 2 2

APPENDIX—continued.

L. E. A.			of Sch Are		GH CI II Sc	No. of Schools which include GERMAN in the curriculum of main part of School—Up to School Cert. standard.			No. of Schools which include GERMAN only in post-School- Certificate Forms,			
	В.	G.	В. & G.	Total.	В.	G.	B. & G.	Total.	В.	G.	В. & G.	Total.
Hampshire Bournemouth C.B. Portsmouth C.B. Southampton C.B. Herefordshire Hertfordshire Huntingdonshire Kent Canterbury C.B. Lancashire Barrow-in-PurnessC.B Blackburn C.B. Blackburn C.B. Blackburn C.B. Bootle C.B. Bootle C.B. Bourley C.B. Livergool C.B. Burnley C.B. Livergool C.B. Salford C.B. Lines C.B.	4 1 1 3 2 2 3 8 8 1 2 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 6 6 8 1 2 2 2 3 1 1 1 1 4 4 3 3 3 3 6 6 2 3 7 7	3 2 2 2 2 1 6 6 2 0 1 8 1 2 2 2 2 1 1 2 2 2 4 1 1 2 2 2 4 4 2 2 3 4 4 2 2 5 5 2	10 - 1 5 - 3 2 2 - 2 4 2 1 1 1 - 1 - 1 1 8 8 1 1 1 4 1 1 - 2	177 3 5 5 5 9 12 4 43 2 2 4 4 4 6 6 2 2 2 4 4 20 177 3 5 5 1 1 4 7 7 2 2 2 3 14 7 7 6 6 7 7 13 1 1 4 9 1	1 1 2 6 5 5 2 - 1 1 2 6 - 1 1 1 2 6 - 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	1 - 2 - 5 1 1 1 3 3 1 1 4	2 1 1 - 1	1 1 1 2 - 8 - 10 1 5 - - - 1 2 - 6 6 6 1 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - - - - - -	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	1 1 4 1 1 1 2 1 1 3	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	- 2 - 7 - 3 - 1 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 3

*												
Ĺ,E.A.		No. of Schools in Area.			No. of Schools which include GERMAN in the curriculum of main part of School—Up to School Cert. standard.			No. of Schools which include GERMAN only in post-School- Certificate Forms.			de nly	
13/0/03/3/0	В.	G.	B. & G.	Total.	В.	G.	B. & G.	Total.	В.	G.	B. & G.	Total.
Norfolk Great Yarmouth C.B. Norwich C.B. Norwich C.B. Northamptonshire Northampton C.B. Soke of Peterboro' Northampton C.B. Soke of Peterboro' Northampton C.B. Nottinghamberland Newcastle C.B. Tynemouth C.B. Nottinghamshire Nottingham C.B. Oxfordshire Oxford C.B. Rutiand Shropshire Somersetshire Bath C.B. Staffordshire Burton - upon - Trent C.B. Staffordshire C.B. Staffordshire Somethwick C.B. Smethwick C.B. Smethwick C.B. Sustand C.B. Wessal C.B. Wessal C.B. Wessal C.B. Ussal C.B. Ussal C.B. Sussex (East) Surfolk (West) Surrey Croydon C.B. Sussex (East) Brighton C.B. Eastbourne C.B. Hastings C.B. Eastbourne C.B. Hastings C.B. Sussex (West)	$\begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	4 1 3 3 3 1 1 8 5 -4 1 -2 -9 6 2 7 1 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1	2 - 2 - 4 - 1 3 2 6 - 3 5 2 - 1 1 6 - 3 2	10 2 5 8 3 3 19 10 11 11 11 21 22 4 4 18 2 2 4 4 7 7 7 3 4 4 7 7 7 7 8 1 9 1 9 1 9 1 9 1 9 1 9 1 9 1 9 1 9 1	1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 2 1 1 1	1 - 1 - 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 - 2 - 1 1	1			1 1 1 1 1	1	1 - 2 - 1 1 1 3 - 5 2 1 - 1

L.E.A.		No. of Schools in Area.				No. of Schools which include GERMAN in the curriculum of main part of School—Up to School Cert. standard.			No. of Schools which include GERMAN only in post-School- Certificate Forms.			
b) sime er Cernany	В.	G.	B. & G.	Total.	В.	G.	B. & G.	Total.	В.	G.	B. & G.	Total.
Warwickshire . Birmingham C.B Coventry C.B Westmorland	8 10 2 4 4 4 4 1 2 3 2 3 4 2 14 1 1 6 1 1 1 5 2 6 6 1 1 1 1 5 2 6 6 1 7 1 7 1 7 1 7 1 7 1 7 1 7 1 7 1 7	4 7 2 2 1 1 1 2 2 2 4 3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	2 3 - 2 10 5 2 3 - 1 1 1 1 1	14 20 4 8 15 15 16 5 6 6 5 16 5 48 2 2 2 2 6 4 15 15 16 16 16 17 16 16 16 16 16 16 16 16 16 16 16 16 16	3 7 1 1 - 2 1 6 - 5 1 - 4 1 3 -	1 2 1 1 3 - 3 - 2 1 1 - 2 1	1 1 3 - 1	4 10 2 - 1 - 1 - 2 1 - 1 1 2 1 - 9 - 3 1 5 1 5 1 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 5 1 1 1 5 1 1 1 5 1 1 1 5 1 1 1 1 1 1 5 1 1 1 1 5 1 1 1 1 5 1 1 1 1 5 1 1 1 1 5 1	311 11 1	1		3 2 - 1 - 1 - 2 1 1 1 1
Totals	461	439	295	1,195	134	76	33	243	44	31	8	83

Men, 317; Women, 179; Total, 496.

- The following Educational Pamphlets, issued by the Board of Education, have been placed on Sale:—
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No. 34. Report on the Sheffield City Museums. By Sir F. G. Ogilvie, C.B. (1919.)

Price 6d. [Out of Print.]

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