

## WHAT IS LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR?

### **The Common European Framework for Languages** Introduction

*... the aim of language teaching is to make learners competent and proficient in the language concerned.*

**Terry Davis, Secretary General of Council of Europe, speaking in Strasbourg 24th Sept. 2004 in a speech to mark the European Day of Languages:**

*Language learning is a powerful tool for building tolerant, peaceful and inclusive multicultural societies. The experience of learning a new language helps to develop openness to other cultures and acceptance of different ways of life and beliefs. It raises awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and promotes tolerance of people with a different lifestyle.*

**Action Group Report 'Citizens of a Multilingual World', pages 13/14:**

*... languages at school has an essential role to play in preparing all students for citizenship of the wider society. If it helps them become sensitive to the languages and culture of others and develops in them sufficient confidence and competence to be able to use their languages, however modestly, in their interactions with other citizens, then we believe they are more likely to understand others and to be respected by them. In this way the wider society becomes more open, democratic and inclusive.*

### **'Europe, Language Learning and Special Educational Needs'**

SOEID 1997 (distributed to all secondary and special schools)

*Pupils with special educational needs are citizens too; indeed, it could be argued that they more than most need a clear sense of themselves in community. Without an awareness of themselves and of the close and local communities to which they belong, the idea of a European community can have no meaning . . .*

*... For some pupils, the community will be their immediate environment; for others it will embrace the many interlocking communities, including Europe, which make up our modern world. For most, the programme will include an opportunity to become familiar with the culture and language of some of our European neighbours.*

**Special Educational Needs in Europe: The Teaching and Learning of Languages: Insights and Innovation** European Commission January 2005

*... For SEN, as for non-SEN, the value of learning languages goes beyond the learning of linguistic features and rules...*

*...describing success is not a question of foreign language learning for the sake of learning a language, but foreign language learning as a platform for enhanced education and personal development.*

**Teacher of children with additional support needs** Quoted in 'Life in Another Country: A Guide for Teachers and Students' LT Scotland March 2005.

*My pupils began with only the haziest understanding that they live in a country called Scotland and that they speak a language called English. Only after investigating a country in depth did they begin to move towards a notion that there might be lots of other countries. It was only when we began to look for a second country to investigate that the notion of Europe and Scotland/Britain within Europe could be addressed in any meaningful way.*