**Improving uptake in modern languages in the senior phase – 3 - Transcript**

**Lady with patterned cardigan**: So for the first time ever our pupils have been given the option to drop French at the end of S3. So at the end of S3 I did a number of learner surveys with the pupils and one thing that really came out in the feedback was that they really enjoyed the media study part of the course which was studying a French film. The French film was Neuilly sa mére! and it was really popular with the pupils of the S3 course. So we studied the film, we all went to the Assembly Hall to watch the film like we had a day out at the cinema, the pupils really loved that. It’s quite a current film, they can relate to it then thereafter we did a series of lessons preparing them for a speaking test and also a wee reading test as well and some classes also did a writing element to that. So, I think that was quite an effective strategy to use at the end of S3 because it’s their lasting memory of French and a lot of them I think it did help them to see it as quite an enjoyable subject and not just something that’s purely grammar focused and that’s certainly something I think that has supported our fairly high numbers into S4.

**Lady in denim jacket:** In our department we try to make the languages as relevant as possible and to try to provide the pupils with opportunities to use it in as many as real life situations as we can so for example most of the S1 and S2 have a French or Canadian penpal and we have an exchange with letters and they send each other cards and little gifts and things which is really nice and then we also run a French exchange for the pupils which is really for third year pupils and over and it’s with a school in Brittany in France and our pupils spend a week in France in October and the French pupils and their teachers spend a week here, they’re actually here now and they live with them and they live their life for a week and I think the experience of having a French friend with someone that they can communicate with and share their life with and they do tend to keep in touch with their partner and to have that experience with them it’s very very motivating for them and their little brothers and sisters and for the whole family really because they’re living in their house. The exchange, we’re very lucky it has a high profile within the school. We have a lot of support from SMT and from the parents as well and it is a lot of work and commitment from the staff on our side and on the French side. When we see the pupils having this experience with each other it really does make it worth it and it’s very popular with the pupils so I feel very pleased that we have that in our school.

**Lady with grey top:** I think in our school we’ve had to market our subject for quite a number of years. Our junior curriculum is really based on choice, a strong element of choice S1, at the end of S1, the end of S2, the end of S3, pupils make choices at all levels. So, I think we’ve had to think creatively to ensure we have a good choice structure in place in terms of the curriculum. So in S1 we have pupils studying all three languages, which is French, Gaelic and Spanish and we try to ensure that there’s a pathway of progression in their language that they want to take forward to S3 and it kind of gives them ownership of their language and a personal investment and it means that they really do believe they’ve chosen a language so they want to carry on with it. I think it’s also about think about maybe trying to think creatively about the options that are available. In S3 we have created for a certain number of pupils the languages for life and work award, we’re following that in S3. So really we’re trying to ensure that courses are appropriate for pupils. I think as well finally because we are spread over three languages our classes as they come through to the end of S3/S4 they are quite mixed ability and that in itself means that we’re all very aware that we have to ensure high expectations in each of the classes. Not setting the classes has actually had quite a positive impact. Although initially we thought it might not, it has actually quite a positive impact on pupils feeling successful at all levels.

**Lady with red top:** Just to follow on and maybe the timetabling, we’ve taken quite a flexible approach as well allowing where we look at the senior phase as one. One of the things that we’ve done that’s been really successful is allowing our pupils to do a higher in S4 if they wanted. Obviously we’re talking about really able pupils. Pupils who we would probably have lost most of them to other subjects had they not been able to do a higher earlier, obviously quite an appealing thing being able to do a higher earlier when they start to think about their university etc. so we’ve been able to capture that and keep them in the department to do a higher early and this year we’re trialling allowing pupils to bypass the higher course and go straight onto the Advanced Higher course so same sort of thing and to try and personalise the curriculum a bit more rather than just follow the same path as everybody. Obviously we needed SMT support for that, it wouldn’t have worked otherwise and they were great in making sure that this could work for us. One of the things they did was to give those pupils an extra study period just to build their confidence a bit and just to make them feel that they had as much of a chance as everybody else even if they did it early. Obviously we still have to wait for the results of that this year but it looks as though they’ve done extremely well and it’s been very successful. They’ve really risen to the challenge and it’s just and so much so they’ve shared that experience with the year below and we have three times as more this starting session than we had last year so it’s really kind of growing and for us it’s great. We’re really not losing those pupils. I know in the past, I mean in the past we had them till S4 because of Standard Grade but now we would have lost them because they couldn’t do their National 5 in that column. It’s just been a blessing really.