**Cornish**

**Roots of the language and its nearest relations:** Celtic language and is closest to Breton and then Welsh.

**Is statutory education available in the language:** Cornish is taught as a language in around 20 primary schools to beginners level.

**High profile speakers:** Gwennan (singer/songwriter).

**More Information:** Plays written in the Cornish language in the 15th and 16th Century survive today and indeed are still performed, with a festival of the Ordinalia, a set of religious plays, planned for 2021 in Cornwall.

**Guernésiais**

**Roots of the language and its nearest relations:** Norman language and a cousin of standard French.

**Is statutory education available in the language:** Not at the moment but opt in classes are available.

**High profile speakers:** Two current Guernsey Deputies (MPs) have spoken the language in Guernsey’s States of Deliberation: Deputy Barry Paint and Deputy Jonathon Le Tocq.

**More Information:** Guernésiais has a substantial body of literature. This includes the works by Georges Métivier (1790-1881), featuring several volumes of poetry and his monumental dictionary of Guernésiais (1870).

**Gaelic**

**Roots of the language and its nearest relations:** Dating back centuries, Gaelic is the founding language of Scotland that is thought to originate from Ireland. It spread its way across the country as the principle language of the medieval Kingdom of Alba, extending from the Borders to Aberdeenshire, the Highlands and Islands. In the late 18th century, it was heavily suppressed during the infamous Highland Clearances following the turbulent Jacobite uprisings.

**Is statutory education available in the language:** Yes. This is supported by a variety of Acts including the Education Act 1980, The Schools Consultation Act 2010, The Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

**High profile speakers:** Julie Fowlis, Donnie Munro

**More Information:** Gaelic speakers are spread throughout Scotland. Of those who identified themselves as Gaelic speakers in the 2011 Census the council areas with the highest proportions able to speak Gaelic were found to be in Na h-Eileanan Siar (52%), Highland (5%) and Argyll & Bute (4%). There is also a high degree of urbanisation within the Gaelic speaking community with large numbers of Gaelic speakers living in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Greater Glasgow and Inverness.
**European Day of Languages**

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**Irish**

Roots of the language and its nearest relations: Irish is a Celtic language closely related to Scottish Gaelic and Manx, and more distantly related to Welsh, Breton and Cornish.

Is statutory education available in the language: Irish as a subject is widely available to students across the island of Ireland. There are also Irish language medium schools in which all subjects are taught through the medium of Irish.

High profile speakers: Michael D. Higgins (President of Ireland), Dara Ó Briain (television presenter and comedian), Chris Hadfield (former Canadian Astronaut).

More information: Irish is recorded to be one of the oldest and most historic written languages in the world. It is also among the official working languages of the European Union. Irish is spoken as a first language in substantial areas called the Gaeltacht.

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**Ulster-Scots**

Roots of the language and its nearest relations: Ulster-Scots is a variant of Scots and is part of the West Germanic family of languages.

Is statutory education available in the language: No

High profile speakers: John Hewitt (Belfast poet) brought Ulster-Scots poets such as David Herbison and James Orr to prominence.

More Information: Seamus Heaney was familiar with Ulster-Scots and made reference to it in his poem A Birl for Burns, “From the start, Burns’ burl and rhythm, That tongue the Ulster-Scots brought wi’ them, And stick to still in County Antrim, Was in my ear.”

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**Welsh**

Roots of the language and its nearest relations: The Welsh language relates to the P-Celtic subfamily and evolved from Common Brittonic.

Is statutory education available in the language: Yes. Welsh is currently a compulsory subject for all learners aged 3-16 years old in Wales. Pupils can study all of their subjects through the medium of Welsh in “Welsh medium schools” and in many “bilingual schools”.

High profile speakers: Matthew Rhys, Rhys Ifans and Erin Richards (Hollywood actors), Aaron Ramsey and Joe Allen (international footballers), Nigel Owens (top level rugby referee), Cerys Matthews (lead singer of Catatonia, Radio 6 presenter).

More information: In 2015, Scientists at NASA used the Welsh language as part of a satellite mission to Mars to catalogue images taken of the planet.

“Y Wladfa” is a unique Welsh-language settlement in Patagonia, Argentina.

155 years ago, a group of Welsh pioneers travelled nearly 8,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean to start a new life there.

Around 5,000 people speak Welsh in Patagonia today with many hundreds more learning the language.

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**Scots**

Roots of the language and its nearest relations: Scots originated with the tongue of the Angles who arrived in Scotland about AD 600, or 1,400 years ago. During the Middle Ages this language developed and grew apart from its sister tongue in England, until a distinct Scots language had evolved. At one time Scots was the dominant language of Scotland, spoken by Scottish kings and queens, and was used to write both literary works and official records.

Is statutory education available in the language: No. Scots is delivered in the curriculum through the Scots Language Awards and the Scottish Studies Awards.

High profile speakers: Rabbie Burns, Dr Michael Dempster.

More information: Scots language is only spoken within Scotland and it is not used anywhere else in the world by a community of significant number or extent. Therefore, steps need to be taken within Scotland, to ensure its preservation.

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**Manx**

Roots of the language and its nearest relations: One of three Goidelic or Gaelic language in the Celtic group of languages, Manx holds affinities to Irish and Scottish Gaelic.

Is statutory education available in the language: Yes, at nursery and primary level, with options for secondary students, adults and the wider community.

High profile speakers: Ruth Keggin (Musician), Phil Gawne (former Member of the House of Keys).

More Information: The Manx language has a strong oral tradition, with a great number of narrative ballads and carvals or songs based on religious texts. The oldest written text in the language ‘An Account of the Isle of Man in Song’ has been dated on internal evidence to the early 16th century. Festivals and events such as Shennaghys Jiu Celtic Youth Festival, Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering Festival, the Cooish Manx Language Festival and the Manx Folk Awards celebrate the Manx language and its associated culture for all to enjoy.

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**Jèrriais**

Roots of the language and its nearest relations: Jèrriais or Jèrriais is a dialect of Norman French closely related to Cornish and the Langues d'Oïl.

Is statutory education available in the language: No but opt in classes are available.

High profile speakers: Geraint Jennings (writer, politician).

More Information: The Jèrriais Language Strategy 2020-2023 will be published this year and will set out a plan for how to enhance the acquisition, use and status of Jèrriais. Work is underway to secure ratification of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages for the language.