

Our Lady's Catholic High School

Modern Foreign Languages Curriculum Area Statement of Intent

Languages are for life. The study of a Modern Foreign Language is seen as an important part of our pupils' education as languages are part of the cultural richness of our society and the world in which we live and work. Learning languages contributes to mutual understanding, a sense of global citizenship and personal fulfilment. Pupils learn to appreciate different countries, cultures, communities and people through learning a language. The ability to understand and communicate in another language is a lifelong skill for education, employment and leisure in this country and throughout the world. The vision is to continually improve standards through an engaging and challenging curriculum which values the strengths of all, celebrating the success of pupils in the four linguistic skill areas of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, whilst working independently or collaboratively, as well as ensuring pupils acquire a solid foundation grammatically and in terms of vocabulary.

Starting Points and KS2

The expectations set out in the KS2 POS state that Primary age pupils should make substantial progress in one language, laying the foundations for further foreign language teaching at KS3. It also states that KS2 teaching should enable pupils to communicate ideas, facts and feelings in speech and writing, with a knowledge of phonology, grammatical structures and vocabulary. However, pupils arrive at our school with differing degrees of prior knowledge, with many having been taught only the very basics in terms of language and skills. There are differences between the amounts of language studied at each feeder Primary school, as well as the language taught. In this way, the Curriculum Area wants all pupils in Year 7 to quickly reach the same point. The content and skills set out for Year 7 are therefore planned in a way that ensures the basics are covered initially, allowing staff to build a picture of who knows what, offering challenge to those who have received greater exposure to a language at KS2 through offering them ways to extend, followed by a full immersion both grammatically and in terms of topic area vocabulary as the SOW develops. The same happens in Year 8 when half of the year group begin the study of a second foreign language.

The Curriculum at KS3 and KS4

At KS3 pupils study the National Curriculum for learning Modern Foreign Languages. Teaching focuses on developing the breadth and depth of pupils' competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing, based on a sound foundation of core grammar and vocabulary, enabling pupils to understand and communicate personal and factual information that goes beyond their immediate needs and interests, developing and justifying points of view in speech and writing, with increased spontaneity, independence and accuracy. All of this provides suitable preparation for further study at KS4.

In terms of grammar and vocabulary, pupils are taught to identify and use tenses or other structures which convey the Present, Past, and Future as appropriate to the language being studied and the year group in question. Pupils are taught to use a wide-ranging and deepening vocabulary, allowing them to give and justify opinions and take part in discussion about wider issues, whilst using accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Our pupils learn to listen to a variety of forms of spoken language to obtain information and respond appropriately, transcribing words and short sentences that they hear in speech from

the class teacher in predominantly target language led lessons, in listening extracts played through audio, in song, or indeed when listening to their peers. They learn to do this with increasing accuracy, initiating and developing conversations, coping with both familiar language in lesson content, as well as more unfamiliar language and unexpected responses such as when they need to ask for something in the lesson. As pupils develop their grammatical and linguistic competence further still, they learn to speak with growing coherence, confidence, and increasingly accurate pronunciation and intonation, which class teachers check and correct in whole class repetition and questioning, formally assessing Speaking in End of Module Assessments.

At KS3, the French Scheme of Work starts with *Dynamo 1* in Year 7, followed by *Dynamo 2* in Year 8 and *Dynamo 3* in Year 9, from Pearson. The Spanish KS3 Scheme of Work starts with *Viva 1* in Year 8 and *Viva 2* in Year 9. At KS4 pupils extend and build on what they have learned in KS3, broadening and building on grammar, language and skills in preparation for terminal examinations in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. In KS4 French and Spanish, there is one book and SOW covered over two years, but differentiated versions of resources are available. The French Curriculum follows *Studio* and the Spanish *Viva*, with the Schemes of Work produced from the more difficult of the two books available. The Curriculum Area selected the KS3 and KS4 schemes due to the progression of language and grammar set out in them, as well as how they build the skills required at KS4 from the outset in Years 7 and 8. Furthermore, the culturally rich content and assessments available felt appropriate for our school and our pupils. All of this is justified in subsequent pages, starting on page 5.

A Curriculum which is ambitious for all

All pupils study a broad, ambitious and inclusive curriculum. Planning of schemes of work, as well as adjoining resources and assessments, are done so with appropriate challenge for all in mind. Where differentiated resources are provided by Pearson, the Curriculum Area selects the more difficult ones, but makes adaptations so that SEND pupils and the high ability are taught with equal ambition. Class teachers do not lower their expectations but teach in a responsive and adaptive way by offering targeted support, reacting to the challenges pupils face when presented with topic vocabulary and grammar in class by repeating content where necessary or re-teaching it in a different way.

Extra-curricular activities, and Careers related enrichment

In addition to the academic opportunities available to pupils in our school, the Curriculum Area ensures that extra-curricular activities, careers related enrichment, and assistance with next steps are a feature of the curriculum. At both Key Stages pupils have the opportunity to take part in the European Week of Languages in September each year, with Bake Offs, designing Day of the Dead masks, and other linguistic opportunities and competitions. Furthermore, there is a cross curricular residential to Normandy linked with Humanities in KS3, as well as residential to Paris and Barcelona at KS4, which provide an opening in to the culture of the countries of language studied and provision is made for the disadvantaged. Possible opportunities to exploit careers related enrichment are set out by the Curriculum Area in the MFL Careers document and in the Schemes of Work, with reference to knowledge and skills based learning linked explicitly to languages evidenced.

Sequencing of the Curriculum

The MFL French and Spanish curriculums are sequenced in a way that develops pupil knowledge grammatically and linguistically. In this way, the first teaching of topic vocabulary and key grammatical points are made explicit in schemes of work, as well as how these are built on and revisited throughout the subsequent learning journey. Each Module has a double page recap, which introduces language from primary level or language learned in previous modules, in a simple way, and ends with a consolidation section, that provides extension work at two differentiated levels. There are many examples of interleaving in the delivery of the curriculum, with spaced practice to increase the ability of pupils to work from memory. Class teachers exploit the cultural capital of each unit of work, which is set out in the curriculum overviews which follows starting on page 5.

Preparing pupils for KS4

The Curriculum Area ensures that pupils are prepared for KS4 study firstly through ensuring that the way in which pupils are taught at KS3 exposes them to the type of skills, content, grammar and task types they will learn at KS4, such as speaking and writing from memory, taking part in role-plays, describing photos, enhancing their work with literacy and grammar, developing the resilience to troubleshoot when under pressure in assessment situations and completing listening and reading comprehension. In addition, the first module of Year 10 revisits key knowledge and skills from the KS3 curriculum and the interleaving that is in place within the curriculum at KS3 allows pupils to not only build up their banks of knowledge and grammar, but to revisit key areas at intervals.

Rationale for Curriculum Planning

Our Curriculum is interleaving in design, so that learning is spread out over time rather than being concentrated in short periods. In this way, it allows pupils to both progressively develop and revisit language as well as the four different skill types (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) through exposure to broad vocabulary and grammatical content, elaborating on what has been previously learned. The content builds in complexity, incorporating authentic and literary texts, role-play, translation, picture-based discussions throughout, all in preparation for KS4. The curriculum is also designed to encourage pupils to be adaptable in their learning, transferring vocabulary and skills to different topic areas, increasing their fluency as a result.

Curriculum links to local, national, regional context and economy

Although pupils are taught to describe their local area and where they live throughout their learning of a language, there are no specific references or opportunities to link to a national context. However, the cultural capital of all units of work are set out in the Intent and teaching resources, which staff exploit in lesson time. Furthermore, our local cultural context has no single, dominant language. Preston is a multicultural city, and our school population reflects this. The most frequently spoken foreign European language among our pupils would be Polish and there are no local Spanish, French or German speaking communities in Preston, or large businesses that provide employment where a specific foreign European language is needed. Hence our school and Curriculum Area decided on French and Spanish as the Modern Foreign Languages to be studied because it allows us to fall in with what is taught in our Primary schools, what is taught in other local schools who support us in the Preston MFL

Network, and these two languages are important for international business throughout Europe and beyond.

Assessment

Summative assessments carried out at the end of each module of work and in end of year examinations aim to gauge the progress being made against the four skill areas studied in MFL of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, as well as against the targets the Curriculum Area sets for pupils each year. This also allows us to see where any gaps in attainment exist and to make comparisons between students as well as key groups of learners, with focus groups and underachievers highlighted and interventions agreed for subsequent assessments, which class teachers lead on. Assessments are standardised in work reviews, moderation and the analysis of attainment of the classes in each year group, with a focus on key student groups. This is consistent across the Curriculum Area. Assessments in place across the Curriculum Area at KS3 and KS4 also prepare students for the terminal examinations at GCSE, should they wish to opt for one or two languages. In addition, each teacher continually assesses the understanding of the class and makes appropriate live or subsequent adjustments to ensure key concepts are understood and remembered.

See MFL Assessment Policy.

CPD

The Curriculum Area is proactive in continuing their professional development and staying up to date with any changes that affect the teaching of MFL. Whole school input is discussed and reflected upon, with links to our subject area explored. Fortnightly Curriculum Area Development Time sessions provide staff with the opportunity to share progress with their personal teaching and learning appraisal objectives, which is recorded formally in Development Time notes. Furthermore, any feedback from relevant Inset or wider research being completed by individuals is shared for the benefit of all, and changes to the curriculum, national or in terms of our own subjects and school, are regularly discussed.

Developing vocabulary

The teaching of reading, writing and communication are key features of the MFL Curriculum and class teachers are clear in their expectations of pupils learning to develop communicatively, as this is at the core of language learning, and takes either the spoken or written form. Linguistic and grammatical expectations are set out in Schemes of Work, Curriculum Area Intent and the teaching resources created collaboratively, so that all staff know what the expected level is. Many pupils are able to communicate confidently with the class teacher, using vocabulary learned in topic areas as well as transferable key literacy phrases to connect ideas, discuss and speculate in both their spoken and written responses. The development of vocabulary is also frequently enhanced by reading, through comprehension tasks, and teachers exploit the etymology of language where possible, as well as explore synonyms and antonyms in the target language. Pupils are required to practise and learn topic area vocabulary, guided in class by their teacher, and asked to reproduce it from memory with increasing frequency in class.

MFL Curriculum Area