



## Policy on Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)



### Aims and objectives

In our Federation, we support the view that learning a modern foreign language is an entitlement for all pupils during their time in Key Stage 1 and 2. We are therefore committed to the principle that learning another language is appropriate for all children, whatever their ability or special needs. We will also seek to develop our curriculum so that teaching a foreign language is a normal part of it. We will do this for several reasons. Firstly, we believe that many children really enjoy learning to speak another language. Secondly, we also believe that the earlier a child is exposed to a foreign language, the faster the language in question is acquired, and an advantage of introducing a new language at primary school is that children tend to be less self-conscious about speaking aloud at this stage of their development. Also, it is widely accepted that the early acquisition of a foreign language facilitates the learning of other foreign languages later in life. Our main objective in the teaching of a modern foreign language at primary school is to promote the early development of linguistic competence. We believe that to accomplish this, we should help the children to do all of the following:

- familiarise themselves with the sounds and written form of a modern foreign language;
- develop particular language-learning skills;
- begin to understand a new language, and communicate in it;
- make comparisons between languages;
- learn about different countries and their people, and work with materials from different countries and communities, thus increasing their awareness of other cultures;
- develop a positive attitude towards the learning of foreign languages in general;
- use their knowledge of the foreign language with growing confidence, both to understand what they hear and read, and to express themselves in speech and writing;
- acquire, through all of the above, a sound basis for further study at Key Stage 3 and beyond.

### Teaching and learning style

We recognise that language learning in its broadest sense has three core strands: learning to communicate (with the emphasis on oracy, i.e. listening, speaking and interacting); learning ABOUT language (using literacy, i.e. reading and writing in the foreign language, to learn about the writing system, spelling and structure of the language); learning about and comparing different cultures (inter-cultural understanding). We also recognise that children should be encouraged to apply knowledge already learnt about their own language to their learning of the new language. We aim to equip pupils with strategies for language learning that they can use in the future when studying another foreign language.

We base the teaching on the guidance material in the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages, the National Curriculum Non-Statutory Guidelines for MFL at Key Stage 2 and the Wakefield Schemes of Work for MFL at Key Stage 1 and 2. We have adapted this to the context of our school and the abilities of our children.

We use a variety of techniques to encourage the children to engage actively in the modern foreign language: these include games, role-play and songs (particularly action songs). We often use puppets and soft toys to demonstrate the foreign language, and we also invite native speakers into the classroom and listen to recordings, in order to expose the children to more than one voice in the foreign language. We frequently use mime to accompany new vocabulary in the foreign language, as this teaches the language without the need for translation.

We emphasise the listening and speaking skills over the reading and writing skills. We also use a multi-sensory and kinaesthetic approach to teaching, i.e. we try to introduce a physical element into some of the games, as we believe that this serves to reinforce memory.

We make the lessons as entertaining and enjoyable as possible, as we realise that this approach serves to develop a positive attitude in the children to the learning of modern foreign languages. We build children's confidence through constant praise for any contribution that they make in the foreign language, however tentative.

We allow for differentiation by:

- using peer support – we partner pupils of disparate ability;
- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- providing resources of different complexities, matched to the ability of the child.

We assess the children's progress informally during the lessons, evaluating progress against the four National Curriculum Attainment Targets of:

- AT1: Listening and responding;
- AT2: Speaking;
- AT3: Reading and responding;
- AT4: Writing.

## **Organisation**

We teach a foreign language to children throughout Key Stage 1 and 2. In some classes we use a specialist language assistant to support the teaching. This is sometimes done by timetabling language lessons each week, or it may be done by planning for 'block' weeks of intensive instruction.

## **The curriculum**

French is the modern foreign language that we teach in our school. The curriculum that we follow is based on the guidance given in the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages, the National Curriculum Non-Statutory Guidelines for MFL and the Wakefield Schemes of Work for MFL at Key Stage 1 and 2.

We teach the children to know and understand how to:

- ask and answer questions;

- use correct pronunciation and intonation;
- memorise words;
- interpret meaning;
- understand basic grammar;
- use dictionaries;
- work in pairs and groups to communicate in the other language;
- look at life in another culture.

## **Modern foreign languages and ICT**

We subscribe to several recommended websites to support our MFL teaching through ICT. They include Education city, Espresso, Atantot and Linguascope,

## **Modern foreign languages and inclusion**

At our school, we teach a modern foreign language to all children, whatever their ability. A modern foreign language forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our modern foreign language teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

## **Assessment for learning**

We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject. We do this informally during the lessons, and also by regular testing to evaluate what the children have learned. The school uses the four national attainment targets to evaluate the progress of each child, and to provide information to the secondary school when the children transfer.

## **Monitoring and review**

We monitor teaching and learning in the same way as we do all the other courses that we teach in the school. The coordination and planning of the MFL curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in MFL, and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the headteacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in MFL, and indicates areas for further improvement;
- uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to observe MFL lessons across the school.

The quality of teaching and learning in modern foreign languages is monitored and evaluated by the headteacher as part of the school's agreed cycle of lesson observations. The headteacher reports to the governing body on the progress of children in French in the same way as for progress in any other subject. The governors' curriculum committee has the responsibility of monitoring the success of our language teaching. The headteacher also liaises

with the local secondary Federation, so that they are aware of the modern foreign language experience of our children when they move to the next phase of their education.

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