

# Modern Foreign Languages

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## Curriculum Rationale

The MFL faculty seeks to enrich the lives of our pupils by offering an aspirational curriculum which also allows pupils to succeed. Pupils are given the opportunity to build their language skills by incorporating tenses and grammatical concepts that build the foundation of learning a language early on. We also strive to broaden pupils' horizons by showcasing the culture, food and traditions of the language that they are studying. Our aim is for pupils to be citizens of the world, aware of how others live their lives and be able to develop their proficiency in the target language across the four main skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. We want pupils to enjoy learning languages and are inclusive in our approach, thus resulting in an increase in confidence and progress across the years.

Within our classrooms, pupils are encouraged to begin each lesson by practicing their speaking, immediately immersing themselves in the target language. Our curriculum and teaching and learning practice, ensure pupils are equipped to be tolerant of other cultures as well as providing them with communication skills, resilience and the ability to work independently as well as part of a group. At KS3, pupils have three lessons a week throughout the school year that will enable them to maximise their progress on their language learning journey.

The threshold concepts against which pupils are assessed in MFL have been created and developed by specialist teachers across the Trust. This allows us to ensure that all Dean Trust pupils are receiving the same high-quality curriculum offer and being assessed against the same criteria.

The threshold concepts for MFL at KS3 are based on four fundamental skills of the subject:

- Listening – Pupil's ability to listen to the target language and identify the key information of what has been said
- Reading – Pupil's ability to read the target language and identify the key information in the text.
- Speaking – Pupil's ability to respond orally in the target language.
- Writing – Pupil's ability to write in the target language and communicate key ideas.

These are the key areas which allow pupils to develop a strong understanding of the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in MFL.

In MFL at KS3, each year group develop all four skills of learning the target language. This includes learning key vocabulary specific to each unit as well as covering all of the main present, past and future tenses. All the units are designed to allow them to be able to communicate and understand a range of topics in MFL as well as allow for interleaving and revision of general vocabulary and tenses that are applicable and can be manipulated across the year.

Our curriculum at KS3 is ambitious and inspiring, and exposes pupils to all main grammatical concepts so that they are fully equipped to express themselves in the target language. The content of what we have chosen to teach is based on topics that pupils will

want to communicate about and where we can incorporate cultural aspects as well. This ensures that we develop pupils SMSC skills and understanding of the world. We believe that these topics are essential and are varied for pupils to discuss a range of subjects including technology, the environment and relationships.

## **Curriculum Overview**

Pupils often arrive with minimal knowledge of the target language. At the start of year seven, we aim to introduce the basic concepts of language learning in thorough detail so that all pupils can gain the same skills and knowledge from the beginning. This can include consolidating some of the basic vocabulary pupils are taught in primary school such as colours, numbers and animals but then begin to provide more detail and start forming sentences.

Pupils in KS3 currently take part in MFL for three lessons a week. The KS3 curriculum is purposefully designed so over the six units of work, pupils in each year group have the opportunity to gain new knowledge that builds and revisits prior knowledge. Pupils are shown the links between previous learning and new learning across different contexts. This leads to pupils being able to embed the key knowledge across KS3 to automaticity. Retrieval practice is consistently included in lessons at KS3, where pupils constantly revisit prior knowledge through do now activities and the content of the lesson. Learning a language is all about building on previous learning which enables pupils to communicate from simple sentences to more detailed paragraphs, allowing progression as well as retrieval of knowledge through the year groups.

The MFL curriculum at KS3 is divided into a variety of age appropriate topics but the complexity of the topics and skills increase as pupils progress through the years.

## **AQA GCSE Languages**

At KS4, we offer GCSE Spanish as well as GCSE French to those pupils who have been studying it and some Home languages\*. The topics are the same for all languages and all four skills are assessed.

This 2-year course exposes pupils to the topics that they have learnt at KS3 increase in complexity. The key concepts learnt at KS3 provide the perfect stepping stone for pupils to achieve well at KS4.

Each of the four skills are assessed and each is worth 25% of the overall grade awarded. The topics are grouped into three main themes:

- Theme 1: Identity and Culture – this involves family and relationships and exploring festivals and traditions and customs as well as free time activities and interests
- Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest – this includes discussing where you live, the environment and holidays
- Theme 3: Current and future study and employment – this explores the topics of school and careers

\*Home languages are subject to the ability and proficiency of each individual pupil.

One of the most effective tools used in the mathematics curriculum to ensure key knowledge is revisited is the use of low stakes quizzes and testing. In mathematics, pupils across each key stage carry out retrieval practice at the start of each lesson. At the end of a sequence of learning, pupils are expected to draw upon knowledge and understanding

from more than the current module of learning, to clarify and communicate their understanding to an abstract and interconnected scenario. Lastly, the faculty's homework policy has been designed to optimise low stakes quizzing and provide purposeful opportunities to practice their knowledge and understanding.

KS3 pupils will clarify and communicate their knowledge and understanding at the end of each module in a task designed to provide the opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their learning. This is alongside cumulative assessments in the autumn, spring and summer. Furthermore, pupils in KS4 will clarify and communicate their knowledge in the format of GCSE examination style questions throughout modules and in cumulative assessments in the autumn, spring and summer of KS4.

At the beginning of Year 10, pupils are set based on their ability, and begin to follow a 'Foundation' or 'Higher' scheme of work. Whilst this is not necessarily indicative of the pupils' tier of entry, it provides pupils with the opportunity to hone the skills best suited to allowing them to achieve their best at GCSE. Final decisions on tiering take place in the first term of year 11, ensuring that pupils have optimum time to address the misconceptions, cement the key knowledge and have a deep understanding of the structure of their cumulative examinations.