

Modern Foreign Languages at St Osmund's Middle School

Intent, Implementation and Impact

November 2021

Curriculum Intent

Rationale

At St Osmund's, the over-riding intention of our MFL Curriculum is to inspire and empower all our children to develop a life-long enjoyment of learning a foreign language. It is also our intention that they will have all acquired the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in their further language studies. Thirdly, all pupils will have developed a deeper understanding of the importance of language learning and cultural understanding that will contribute to their development as a global citizen of the future.

Visions and Values

We have developed an ambitious MFL curriculum that reflects the Christian values of our school (Hope, Community, Respect and Love). As a department, we are passionate about language learning and the MFL Curriculum inspires pupils to learn a language through the delivery of lessons that are exciting, energetic and accessible to all. In both key stages, the Curriculum empowers pupils to succeed by teaching them the core skills and knowledge that delivers excellent levels of achievement and progress for all.

We teach pupils to reflect on cultural differences and to build tolerance and break down barriers through learning a language, which underpins our Christian values.

In the 21st century, MFL is about intercultural inquiry through learned languages. Culture is important in language learning, and language is important in culture-learning. Both are enhanced by a critical appreciation of what the language is and the culture from where it originates.

The MFL curriculum is being constantly reviewed to promote intercultural learning and language acquisition as interdependent equals. As we develop awareness of and celebrate our cultural diversity in school, this becomes an ever more important part of the MFL experience at St Osmund's.

Curriculum Implementation

Our core intention is to deliver an ambitious MFL Curriculum that enables all pupils to make excellent progress from Year 5 through to the end of Year 8 and we have worked hard to implement this effectively in all year groups.

Assessment

We have a clear summative assessment schedule that delivers the necessary information for tracking pupil attainment and progress at the key milestones across the school year, and have integrated it into the curriculum plans. We are improving tracking of progress by setting targets at the start of the academic year and reviewing progress at key points in the year. The results of assessments inform our individualised target setting and future lesson planning. After every formal assessment, pupils have the opportunity to review their performance and set personal targets for improvement. We prepare all pupils well for formal summative assessments and we have started to integrate GCSE style assessments into lessons and the assessment materials so they develop the necessary skills for success in the future.

We have a policy to use good formative assessment practices regularly within our teaching to ensure we identify misconceptions and gaps in understanding. We regularly review previous learning and integrate many recall activities at the start and during every lesson as part of our rigorous lesson planning. The use of formative assessment allows us to individualise lessons in real time and informs our planning of the next lessons.

Reading, Writing and Speaking

Pupils at KS3 have Independent Learning Booklets and Knowledge Organisers, which give them all the key vocabulary and grammar structures required to access and succeed in the learning. The Knowledge Organisers link to each topic at KS3 and reflect the increasing levels of challenge and developing complexity planned into the curriculum. At KS2, pupils have Knowledge Organisers with all the key language and structures for the whole year.

We teach strategies for speaking, reading and writing overtly and include them in every lesson, as recall of skills is as important as recall of vocabulary and grammar. We use questioning constantly and effectively to check for learning, identify misconceptions and challenge pupils to think. Targeted questioning and a no hands up policy is now integrated into all lessons.

We model good examples of written work and success criteria for each piece of formal writing are and often refer to these for informal pieces as well. Pupils are very aware of what a good piece of writing looks like and its key components. The department has examples of banded written work for all year groups for each topic and we moderate writing each term.

We use sentence builders to promote access by all pupils to the key language and structures and to promote engagement of all pupils in a mixed ability classroom.

Speaking is the most challenging skill to acquire so our policy is to include speaking activities in every lesson. We aim to teach pupils the necessary structures and language

to speak spontaneously, however this is difficult to implement well with limited curriculum time.

We try to use target language to immerse the children in the language but not at the expense of understanding the key language learning objectives.

Roles and Responsibilities

The SL reviews the MFL Curriculum annually to ensure it meets our needs and reflects current best practices within language teaching. While the subject lead is responsible for curriculum design, every teacher contributes to curriculum and lesson planning and creates individualised teaching resources for their own classes. We have been allocated collaborative Curriculum planning time. Resources are shared on the t:drive for everyone to use. The Schemes of Learning are clear and the team is able to implement them effectively.

The subject lead monitors and reviews quality of teaching and pupil outcomes by doing regular lesson observations, learning walks and scrutinises books. The MFL department at St Osmund's benefits from two experienced MFL specialist teachers up to Advanced Level standard. The SL is responsible for identifying gaps in teaching knowledge or skills and puts CPD in place.

The SL has bi-weekly meetings with the SLT lead to inform on MFL curriculum issues. There are termly subject meetings but MFL team regularly meets informally as and when the need arises.

Design

At KS2 (Year 5 and 6) pupils continue to learn French and the curriculum builds on previous knowledge gained from their First School French language learning experience. We are currently reviewing the Year 3 and 4 Curriculum in all our feeder schools with the intention to get parity of experience. We hope to ensure that all feeder schools are delivering the same French Curriculum in Years 3 and 4 in terms of skills and knowledge. This year we introduced greater depth in literacy skills at KS2 and there is evidence of higher standards of writing in French

The focus in KS2 is on continuing to make language learning fun and enjoyable whilst also building on their core skills (Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing) and subject knowledge in preparation for KS3.

At KS3 we make the learning more relevant by offering a choice of languages, French or Spanish for study from Year 7. Pupils can choose the language most relevant to their needs and interests. The KS3 curriculum is very ambitious with high challenge but we scaffold carefully to make it accessible to all.

The MFL Curriculum specifies the big ideas in terms of vocabulary knowledge and language skills central to mastery for each unit of study (module) with an integrated

assessment plan. The KS2 and 3 National Curriculums have informed our Curriculum design but also the needs of Thomas Hardy's and the revised GCSE requirements. We have recently introduced GCSE style writing and speaking tasks into the Curriculum so pupils are accumulating skills early on in KS3. We use the Rachel Hawkes Language Learning Steps to help pupils visualise and track their progress by skill in each Year group. All three Middle Schools work closely together with Thomas Hardy's Upper School to ensure consistent curriculum design.

We have four spiralled curriculum maps that show the language learning skills and vocabulary knowledge for each year and the progression between each Year group.

Language learning and progression is cumulative and we regularly refer back to previous learning as we build up knowledge and skills. The units of learning are not discrete, stand-alone units; it is a cumulative, spiralled learning path. Central to this is the long-term accumulation and retention of knowledge and skills. Lessons always begin with DNAs and regular revisiting of key vocabulary and concepts but with increasing complexity.

We teach key vocabulary and grammar concepts in lessons and then support by the use of Knowledge Organisers and independent learning booklets.

We use many techniques to scaffold the learning; writing frames, success criteria, acronyms, songs, low-stake quizzes to regularly recap previous learning and make it accessible to all. Sentence builders are now a key tool that we use to promote accelerated progress in writing and speaking.

We formally assess each Module/unit of study for the new explicit learning as well as checking the spiralled skill progression. Assessment informs our planning going forward to ensure full understanding of all key concepts. We use homework to consolidate and support the learning in class.

We try to keep the Curriculum fresh and implement new ideas for teaching based on recent research and we aim to deliver lessons that inspire, engage and promote effective learning.

Curriculum Impact

Equality of Provision

We carefully designed the MFL Curriculum to be accessible and challenging to all pupils, irrespective of their starting point. Our expectations are high for all pupils and we aim to achieve expected progress within all groups of pupils. We have implemented a PP support plan to ensure we quickly identify pupils requiring extra support, with strategic seating plans and peer support. We have detailed knowledge of SEN children who are supported by vocabulary sheets, knowledge organisers, scaffolded tasks and

differentiated activities where necessary. There are opportunities to monitor and evaluate the progress of PP and SEN pupils more formally and rigorously.

The decision to trial mixed ability teaching groups is a reflection of our commitment to deliver a high challenge Curriculum to all pupils.

However, we also provide for Prior Higher Attainers, or any children who are able to grasp the learning within the lesson rapidly, by giving the children more advanced sentence builders with advanced vocabulary and grammar structures, differentiating the KO to encourage higher attainment in writing and speaking and providing additional stretch activities for each unit of study. We also run a weekly Higher Attaining speaking club for French and Spanish.

Progression of the Curriculum

Through regular assessment (formative and summative), we identify and fill gaps in knowledge and understanding quickly and effectively. Teachers understand how the content taught builds up and can predict and eradicate misconceptions before they emerge.

We identify underperforming pupils and put interventions in place quickly. We share the curriculum overview with pupils, explaining how the curriculum builds over time with increasing complexity.

Beyond the everyday experience

We offer a Year 8 trip to France, which is very popular, gives pupils the opportunity to use their French language skills and builds positive relationships between pupils and staff. We allocate PP funding to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to take part.

We offer a lunchtime conversational group for Year 8 G&T pupils, which we would like to develop further.

We celebrate International Day of Languages annually in September with a hugely popular Bake-off competition and sale to raise money for a local charity. We have recently ensured that we promote the cultural diversity of our school cohort.

We have previously had a school partnership with two schools in France and would like to rejuvenate this opportunity for the children to communicate with children in France, post Covid.

We are working with the Culture Club in school to maximise opportunities to promote global cultural awareness with languages wherever we can. We have produced a video for the school website promoting our school cultural diversity where the students introduce and promote the school in their native languages.