

Modern Foreign Languages

The MFL Dept. aim to develop pupil's language skills to enable them to converse, read, understand and write language with ever growing confidence. We are preparing our students with the vision to travel and work within the global economy and to be able to share their language skills in the workplace and whilst meeting others from abroad. We offer rich experiences to encourage cultural capital, such as cultural visits, a chance to appreciate art, literature and culture so that students are naturally inquisitive and curious, and can enjoy diversity.

The curriculum is planned around a five year skills based curriculum which leads to GCSE and beyond in terms of qualifications. Our students need to be resilient, risk takers and logical thinkers in order to access the rigours and demands of the new GCSE and A levels. The needs of our learners are met by resource materials, scaffolded tasks, sentences builders, writing frames and exam booklets and recordings. We also use Quizlet, Seneca, Google Classroom and Google Drive to support our students. We regularly assess in MFL and where possible offer the opportunity for 4 skills. This gives us regular feedback for us to advise, refine and measure progress and allows us to target areas of weakness. In order to build long term knowledge we keep adapting and interleaving prior learning as well as focusing on key skills. We hope that opportunities and trips abroad also help to improve their confidence and foster a love of learning a language.

At KS2 there is a mixed experience as students come from a range of primary schools which deliver a foreign language to varying degrees. Due to this we introduce a skills curriculum in the first term in KS3 which based on research helps with the KS2 to KS3 transition and builds on the national framework (Martine Pilette) which we still use as a source of reference. This helps us to address these differences and to solidify the grammar work which is covered in KS2 English, e.g phonemes and project this onto the foreign language so our students are equipped with the skills to tackle any language. (JLB on behalf of TCS worked on a SLN:Teignbridge, KEVICC, Teign, Newton Abbott and their partner primary link. The project was focused on transitioning primary languages into secondary. (2011-2012 in TCS in partnership with Hazeldown which was our initial trial of these strategies. As a result of focusing on listening skills first, we try to develop confidence in oracy in the latter stages of each block of learning, after having been exposed to lots of authentic language material. We aim to give students the opportunity to experience two languages so they are equipped to see the parallels between the two languages and can pick up another language should they wish to do so at a later date.

With this in mind, after having a flavour of both languages, at the end of year 7, based on their progress and engagement, students are invited to either continue with both languages or specialise in one in year 8. At the end of year 8, after having had the opportunity to experience either both French and Spanish or specialise in one language, they then get to choose which language(s) they would like to specialise in further in year 9. This is the pathway which will lead them to their option choices at GCSE for languages.

There are two tiers of entry at GCSE: Foundation and Higher. Our five-year curriculum gives scope for both tiers to be experienced from year 9 onwards to allow students the opportunity to maximise their potential. This includes experiencing past papers under exam conditions in both tiers as much as possible in order to make an informed decision on the best tier of entry for that student in the final exam. In order to support students which find accessing a foreign language challenging, informed by recent foreign language teaching research (Gianfranco Conti and Steve Smith), we provide 'chunk' learning in the form of sentence builders and we are trialling a new methodology to stimulate the audiological loop, which puts listening skills at the forefront of our teaching.