



MFL Policy

(Modern Foreign Languages)

This policy represents the agreed principles for the provision of Modern Foreign Languages within Shepherd Primary School. This policy has been agreed by governors within the school and all teachers representing the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

School aims

Our school community (children, staff, parents and governors) aims to:

- Learn and grow together within a safe, caring and happy environment;
- Continually encourage achievement in all aspects of school life;
- Motivate all children with a broad and challenging curriculum;
- Treat everyone with honesty and respect;
- Ensure opportunities for all.

Aims

In our School, we teach a modern foreign language to all children from Year 3 to Year 6 as part of the normal school curriculum. We do this for several reasons. Firstly, we believe that learning another language is appropriate for all children, whatever their ability or special needs and that children really enjoy learning to speak in a new language, different to their own. Secondly, we also believe that the earlier a child is exposed to a foreign language, the faster the language in question is acquired. It is a good idea to introduce a new language to children when they are at primary school, as they tend to be less self-conscious about speaking aloud at this stage of their development. It is widely believed 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:

The aims and objectives of learning a modern foreign language in primary school are:

- to foster an interest in learning other languages;
- to familiarise themselves with the sounds and written form of a modern foreign language;
- to introduce young children to another language in a way that is enjoyable and fun;
- to make young children aware that language has structure, and that the structure differs from one language to another;
- to develop particular language-learning skills;
- to help children develop their awareness of cultural differences in other countries;
- to develop their speaking and listening skills;
- to lay the foundations for future study;
- to begin to understand a new language, and communicate in it;
- to make comparisons between languages;

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 QCA Schemes of Work for MFL at Key Stage 2. We have adapted this to the context of our school and the abilities of our children by using the '*La Jolie Ronde*' scheme of work. A specialist French teacher who has French as their mother tongue delivers French to pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 on a weekly basis.

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 can use puppets and soft toys to demonstrate the foreign language, and by using software (such as '2Simple French') and appropriate websites, we demonstrate correct pronunciation and 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.

At our school, we teach a modern foreign language to all children, whatever their ability. However, we allow for differentiation by:

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

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.

We also assess at the end of each term, using the Medium Term plan knowledge and skills assessment sheets. We then use this information to inform planning and to report to parents.

The Curriculum

French is the modern foreign language that we teach in our school.

The curriculum that we follow is the '*La Jolie Ronde*' scheme of work, which itself is based on the guidance given in the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages, the National Curriculum Non-Statutory Guidelines for MFL and the QCA Schemes of Work for MFL at Key Stage 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.

The contribution of MFL to teaching in other curriculum areas

We are increasingly encouraging the 'drip-feed' of French into other curriculum areas to extend its use and reinforce its concepts. This can include the register, playtimes and ordinary classroom commands.

Literacy

The learning of a modern foreign language naturally contributes to the development of our children's listening and speaking skills. It also develops the children's grasp of linguistic features such as rhyme, rhythm, stress and intonation. They learn to understand the concept of register (as required for the French tu/vous distinction), and emphasises the importance of knowing the role of different word types in sentence structure, such as adjectives (e.g. bleu)

Mathematics

Children reinforce their time-telling skills by playing time-related games in the foreign language. Children play number games which reinforce their counting and calculation skills, expand their understanding of date and increase their knowledge about money.

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education

One of the main benefits to the children of learning a modern foreign language at primary school level is a social one. Those children who have difficulty in reading and writing, but who have good aural skills, will often find that they excel at speaking in foreign languages. This success breeds confidence, which in turn increases self-esteem and gives them a more positive attitude to school in general.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education

By teaching a modern foreign language, we contribute to the children's cultural education. They learn that many societies are multi-lingual. We teach them about festivals and customs related to the countries in which the language is spoken. We also give them the chance to hear stories set in the foreign culture.

Geography

We ask the children to carry research into the different countries in which the particular foreign language is spoken (after they have first found them on a map or a globe).

Music

We teach children songs in the modern foreign language – both traditional and modern. This helps them develop a sense of rhythm and an ear for melody and these skills can be built into assemblies. Children are also provided with the opportunity to listen to classical music by composers from the countries in question (e.g. Saint-Saëns's 'Carnival of the Animals', which is a French piece of music).

History

We teach children about significant historical figures and events in the history of the countries whose language we are studying (e.g. about William the Conqueror in the case of France).

Science

Children reinforce their knowledge of parts of the body through related games, such as a French version of 'Simon Says', or 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes', or through related songs, such as the French-Canadian 'Alouette'.

PE

We teach children dances from the countries in which the foreign language is spoken, e.g. 'Sur le Pont d'Avignon' in the case of France. Many of the games we use to teach children modern foreign languages are very active games which require fast reactions, e.g. French versions of 'Simon Says' and 'Grandmother's Footsteps'.

Early Years and Key Stage 1

All of the resources are available for use by children below key Stage 1 and whilst there is no statutory requirement, the receptiveness of younger minds to learning language means that we encourage its introduction, as deemed appropriate to class teachers. This may include reference to other foreign languages.

Modern Foreign Languages and ICT

2Simple French and Espresso form the core of our ICT resources and there are an increasing number of interactive websites that we use in conjunction with '*La Jolie Ronde*'.

ICT is increasingly used to create and present work through, for example, French quizzes, dictionary pages and art.

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.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to the modern foreign language.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning a modern foreign language. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (e.g. playing a playground game in a modern foreign language), we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

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. We complete assessments at the end of each unit. We also reward children with French stickers for good work.

Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own and each other's work.

We are occasionally involved with cluster groups with local schools which help moderate our children's progress in this subject.

Our specialist French teacher will also carry out their own assessment and pass this on to the class teacher.

Resources

We have a range of French books and sets of French-English dictionaries. 2Simple French and Espresso form the core of our ICT resources, plus many interactive websites. There is also a selection of games, posters and flash cards available in school to assist with learning.

We occasionally hold French-themed days, which have proved very successful as they are an important way of getting children to see the relevance of learning a foreign language.

Monitoring and Review

We monitor the teaching and learning of a MFL in the same way as we do all the other subjects which we teach in school.

The coordination and planning of the MFL curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader and Specialist French teacher, 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/Governors an annual summary in which strengths and weaknesses in MFL are evaluated;
- uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to observe MFL lessons across the school.

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 French teaching.

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

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.