

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In our school we teach a foreign language to all children from Years 1 to 6 as part of the normal school curriculum. We 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. We also believe that 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. Modern Foreign Languages are statutory in Key Stage 2.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The aims and objectives of learning a modern foreign language in primary school are:
- to foster an interest in learning other languages;
 - 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 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.

3 Organisation

- 3.1 In Years 1 and 2, French is taught once a week. A subject specialist oversees the planning and advises on assessment.

In Years 3 to 6, a subject specialist plans, delivers and assesses French in a weekly language session.

4 The curriculum

- 4.1 French is the modern foreign language that we teach in our school.
- 4.2 The curriculum that we follow is based on the guidance given in the revised National Curriculum. 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, and communicate in the other language;
 - look at life in another culture.
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5 Teaching and learning style

5.1 We base the teaching on the guidance material in the North Yorkshire scheme of work for modern foreign languages. We have adapted this to the context of our school and the abilities of our children.

5.2 We use a variety of techniques to encourage the children to have an active engagement 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, 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 serves to demonstrate the foreign 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 they make in the foreign language, however tentative.

6 Teaching a modern foreign language to children with special educational needs

6.1 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.

6.2 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, 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.

6.3 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.

6.4 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, for example, 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.

7 Assessment

7.1 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. There are no national key stage tests, but we do award the children a school certificate showing that they have reached a certain level of competence in French. We present this to the children at the end of the year. The school uses the four national attainment targets to evaluate the progress of each child in:

- listening and responding;
- speaking;
- reading and responding;
- writing.

8 Monitoring and review

8.1 We monitor teaching and learning in the same way as we do all the other courses that we teach in the school. The headteacher also reports to the governing body on the progress of children in French in the same way as in any other subject. The governors' curriculum committee has the responsibility of monitoring the success of the teaching in French.

8.2 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.

Signed:

Date: