

Parrett and Axe School Policy on Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

1 Aims and objectives

- 1.1 At Parrett and Axe School we believe that the learning of a foreign language, currently French, provides a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for our pupils. It helps them to develop communication skills including key skills of speaking and listening and extends their knowledge of how language works. Learning another language gives children a new perspective on the world, encouraging them to understand their own cultures and those of others.
- 1.2 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:
- foster an interest in language learning by introducing children to other languages in a way that is enjoyable and accessible to all pupils;
 - familiarise themselves with the sounds and written form of a modern foreign language;
 - develop particular language-learning skills;
 - make comparisons between languages;
 - learn about different countries and their people, and work with materials from different countries and communities, thus increasing their awareness of other cultures;
 - use their knowledge of the foreign language with growing confidence, both to understand what they hear and read, and to express themselves in speech and writing;
 - acquire, through all of the above, a sound basis for further study at Key Stage 3 and beyond.

2 Teaching and learning style

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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 Catherine Cheater Schemes of Work, as recommended by Dorset LA. We are adapting the scheme to the context of our school and the abilities of our children by developing appropriate mixed age planning.
- 2.3 We use a variety of techniques to encourage the children to engage actively in the modern foreign language: these include games, finger rhymes and songs (particularly action songs) and authentic French readers. We often use puppets and soft toys to demonstrate the foreign language.
- 2.4 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, songs and finger rhymes, as we believe that this serves to reinforce memory.
- 2.5 We realise that it is important to develop a positive attitude in the children to the learning of modern foreign languages. We build children's confidence through using a wide range of

enjoyable and motivating strategies and constant praise for any contribution that they make in the foreign language, however tentative.

2.6 We allow for differentiation by:

- using peer support – we partner pupils of disparate ability;
- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- developing resources of different complexities, matched to the ability of the child.

3 Organisation

3.1 Class teachers are responsible for the delivery of discreet MFL in Key Stage 2. This usually takes the format of a 40 minute discrete session on a weekly basis. The learning is consolidated throughout the week with 2/3 'Practice Parcels' taken from the Catherine Cheater Scheme. Teachers also are developing their use of incidental language and making opportunities of combining PE and MFL activities such as 'Take 10 en Français.'

4 The contribution of MFL to teaching in other curriculum areas

4.1 English

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, and emphasises the importance of knowing the role of different word types in sentence structure.

4.2 Mathematics

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

4.3 Personal, social and health education and citizenship

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.

4.4 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.

4.5 Geography

We ask the children to do research on the different countries in which the particular foreign language is spoken (after they have first found them on a map or a globe). MFL pupils likewise learn about the climate of the countries in which the language is spoken.

4.6 Music

We teach children songs in the modern foreign language – both traditional and modern – which of course helps them develop a sense of rhythm and an ear for melody.

4.7 History

We have developed “outstanding” cross-curricular links with our topics, The Tudors and The Romans using Dorset LA resources.

4.8 PE

We are developing resources to combine MFL with PE action songs and games.

5 Modern foreign languages and inclusion

5.1 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 through appropriate teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation.

6 Assessment for learning

6.1 Most assessment is formative and is used to support teaching and learning and to inform future planning. Assessments are based on observations of children working on different oral activities and (where appropriate) written product.

6.2 We are looking to develop the use of pupil portfolio to celebrate the successes of the children.

7 Resources

7.1 We have built up strong links with the Dorset LA MFL team. This enables us to access specialist support and recommended additional resources (e.g. audio and interactive CDs; DVDs; books, games) which supplement our own collection of resources.

8 Staff Development

Teachers and other staff are given regular opportunities and encouragement to develop their own language and language teaching skills, through local authority training and network workshops. The subject leader for MFL identifies the school needs and co-ordinates professional development opportunities.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1 We monitor teaching and learning in the same way as we do all the other courses that we teach in the school.

The coordination and planning of the MFL curriculum are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping them informed about current developments in MFL, and providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- uses specially allocated management time to develop the subject throughout the school.