

Intent

**If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.**

Nelson Mandela

### **Why and how are we teaching languages?**

At Penwortham Priory Academy, the MFL Curriculum is at least as ambitious as the National Curriculum.

The MFL curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior language learning from Key Stage 2 and use this to provide a challenging learning experience, which engages pupils of all abilities and character. We recognise that all pupils will have been exposed to languages at different levels throughout Key Stage 2.

We strive to support and challenge all language learners in developing the thinking skills and confidence to consider themselves as 'World Citizens', who are part of a multicultural, mutually respectful world. The department is fully committed to developing strong, lifelong linguistic skills and encouraging a curiosity and interest in linguistics. Our ambition is for the pupils to have a love of languages; in doing this we nurture linguistic inquisitiveness and intrinsic motivation.

The department was part of NCELP's Modern Foreign Language Hub (**now known as LDP**) and learning is carefully planned to support progress of learners at both Key Stages. The pillars of language knowledge are phonics, vocabulary, and grammar. Within our pedagogy, skill starts as structured, supported understanding and meaningful practice, and gradually builds to freer production, in which learners can recall and manipulate a wider range of language to communicate meaning. We believe that pupils deserve to understand the 'big picture', how this links to the schema of the subject and importantly other subjects. The department endeavours to make learning languages fun and meaningful, providing many opportunities for both collaboration, independent work, and a plethora of possibilities for spontaneous speech.

Progression is determined largely by the functions of grammar, and the frequency and usefulness of vocabulary and phonics. We aim to avoid introducing too much language too fast and progression is checked using a variety of assessment techniques. Presentation of new sound-symbol correspondences and vocabulary is followed by integrated revisiting and consolidation throughout KS3.

The curriculum is layered incorporating a variety of inward to outward facing topics which we feel reflect the increasing maturity and changing interests of the pupils. At every possible opportunity we expose our learners to a variety of texts in the target language and encourage reading for a variety of purposes.

We value the opportunities to take pupils on trips and visits and there are vast number of trips abroad for pupils to take advantage of.

## Implementation

### How is our curriculum delivered?

MFL provision is delivered by three French specialists. All teachers are highly qualified and experienced teachers, and all colleagues have extra responsibilities in school.

The MFL department employs a range of strategies to ensure, pupils learn in an enjoyable, positive, and inclusive environment. We follow a hybrid approach to teaching languages; a successful combination of LDP methodology and carefully selected strategies of Dr Gianfranco Conti's (a respected MFL teacher and neuroscientist). To enable our pupils to become successful language learners, we have reviewed our curriculum and create resources to suit our learners.

Allocated curriculum is as follows:

Year 7	2 hours of French
Year 8	2 hours of French
Year 9	2 hours of French
Year 10	3 hours of French
Year 11	3 hours of French

Mixed ability attainment groups give pupils, who might normally be in a lower set, a confidence boost when they pick up new ideas faster than pupils who usually excel. For those at the top end we are stretching and challenging them by increasing the depth, rather than the breadth, of their learning. By ensuring that there is a mix of paired/group and individual tasks set in class, closed and open-ended tasks and that the pace of lessons is varied, we can identify those who need support, based on how they're performing in that lesson, rather than on a previous test result.

### What do we teach and why?

[The MFL Pedagogy Review](#) concluded that:

'Pupils need to gain systematic knowledge of the vocabulary, grammar, and sound and spelling systems (phonics) of their new language, and how these are used by speakers of the language.

They need to reinforce this knowledge with extensive planned practice and use to build the skills needed for communication.'

At Priory we follow the rationale behind the LDP research and sequencing of teaching. However, the lessons are adapted and replanned to suit **OUR LEARNERS**.

NCELP's Schemes of Work and resources build on the findings of this review and develop pedagogy that is research-informed and practice-informed. Engagement with it therefore strengthens subject teachers' specialist knowledge, a stated Ofsted priority.

Key aspects of LDP's rationale

- Practice is frequent, spaced, meaning and form-focused, and involves an element of struggle.
- The rationales for teaching the core strands of phonics, vocabulary and grammar inform [the rationale for our Schemes of Work](#).
- Learning is carefully planned to support progression for most learners at KS3 within a low exposure foreign language setting.
- Progression is determined by the functions of grammar, and the frequency and usefulness of vocabulary and phonics, and avoids introducing too much language too fast.
- ‘End points’ denote planned progression to the end of KS3 and KS4:
  - Phonics – confidence in understanding and producing the key Sound Symbol Correspondences (SSCs) is established by the end of KS3.
  - Vocabulary – 360 words approximately are taught per year at KS3 and KS4 with systematic revisiting of vocabulary within a month, within a term, and within a year. The focus is to teach the most frequently used vocabulary of the language.
  - Grammar – high-frequency grammar functions are taught and revisited several times over KS3 and KS4, features for persons, subjects, tenses and aspect and a range of key syntax (word order and relations between words).

### **How do we assess and why?**

Formative assessment is used regularly throughout the Department to inform the next steps in teacher planning. We use a variety of timely mini tasks and “low stakes” tests to create a dialogue between the teacher and pupil. This is consistent feature of language lessons.

The department uses vocabulary and grammar assessments to assess progress and understanding in these areas. Pupils are heavily involved in the peer marking of these assessments and time is allocated to complete “personal learning checklists”, correct misconceptions and importantly celebrate successes. As a department we collaborate and review assessment results. Areas of weakness and misconceptions are weaved back into our teaching moving forwards. This is achieved in a variety of ways.

Questioning and whiteboard work makes up a large part of the language classroom and is used as formative assessment. This enables teachers to check understanding and make an informed decision about their teaching.

Phonics are formatively assessed each and every lesson through whole class, grouped and paired activities. Language Nut homework activities also provide teachers with valuable information.

### **What does assessment look like in our department?**

Please see the attached assessment document.