

## **Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Policy**

### **1 Aims and objectives**

**1.1** In our school we teach French to all our children from the Reception class to Year 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.

**1.2** The main objective of teaching French in our school is to promote the early development of a child's linguistic competence. We also want to:

- foster an interest in learning other languages;
- introduce young children to another language in a way that is enjoyable;
- make young children aware that language has structure, and that the structure differs from one language to another;
- help children develop their awareness of cultural differences in other countries;
- develop their speaking and listening skills;
- lay the foundations for future study.

### **2 Teaching and learning style**

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

**2.2** We use a variety of techniques to encourage the children to engage actively in French these include games, role-play and songs (particularly action songs). We often use puppets and soft toys to demonstrate the 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, as this teaches the language without the need for translation.

**2.3** 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.

**2.4** 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 French. We build children's confidence through constant praise for any contribution they make, however tentative.

### **3 Organisation**

- 3.1** We teach French to children from Reception to Year 6. Reception children receive 15 minutes a week, Lower Infant children receive 30 minutes a week and Upper Infants and all the Junior classes receive 1 hour per week. A subject specialist is responsible for all the teaching with the exception of our Middle Junior class where the class teacher take the lesson. We also try to involve a native speaker of the foreign language.

### **4 The curriculum**

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

The curriculum that we follow is based on the guidance given in the revised National Curriculum and the supplementary guidance published by QCA. We apply the four attainment targets for MFL to Key Stage 2. These are:

- AT1: Listening and responding
- AT2: Speaking
- AT3: Reading and responding
- AT4: Writing

However, we do not give equal weighting to each of these skills in each unit taught. For example, in the initial stages of our teaching we place particular emphasis on speaking.

- 4.2** 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.

### **5 The contribution of modern foreign languages to teaching in other curriculum areas**

#### **5.1 English**

The learning of French 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, helps them understand the concept of register and emphasises the importance of knowing the role of different word types in sentence structure.

#### **5.2 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.

**5.3 Personal, social and health education and citizenship**

One of the main benefits to the children of learning French 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.

**5.4 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education**

By teaching French we contribute to the children's cultural education. They learn that many societies are multilingual. We teach them about festivals and customs related to France. We also give them the chance to hear stories set in the foreign culture.

**5.5 Geography**

We ask the children to do research on the country of France, (after they have first found it on a map or a globe). We organise French trips for the children to experience the culture and develop their own linguistic skills.

**5.6 Music**

We teach children songs in French – both traditional and modern – which of course helps them develop a sense of rhythm and an ear for melody. We also play them classical music by composers from France for example Saint-Saëns's *Carnival of the Animals*.

**5.7 History**

We teach children about significant historical figures and events in the history of France (e.g. about William the Conqueror).

**5.8 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'.

**5.9 PE**

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

**6 Modern foreign languages and ICT**

**6.1** Our school hopes to establish a partnership with a school in France so that each child may be ascribed an e-pen-pal, with whom he or she would have the opportunity to correspond on a half-termly basis at school, and on a regular basis at home. We also enable the children to use digital and video cameras, in order to record performances of songs, role-plays or mini-dramas.

**7 Modern foreign languages and inclusion**

**7.1** At our school we teach French to all children, whatever their ability. This forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our French 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.

- 7.2** 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, 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.
- 7.3** 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.
- 7.4** We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning French. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (for example, playing a playground game in a French), we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

## **8 Assessment for learning**

- 8.1** 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. Records of assessment are kept in the teachers planning folders and the specialist teacher monitors progression.

## **9 Resources**

- 9.1** We use the Muzzy videos for children to watch in order to develop their vocabulary. French books are used in the classrooms to support children's learning.

## **10 Monitoring and review**

- 10.1** We monitor teaching and learning in the same way as we do all the other subjects that we teach in the school.
- 10.3** This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or earlier if necessary.

**Signed:**

**Date:**