

Saint John Fisher Catholic Primary School



Modern Foreign Language Policy

“To live, love and learn and learn in our caring community.”

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Introduction

The learning of a foreign language provides a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for our children. At St John Fisher we believe that many children really enjoy learning to speak another language. We also believe that the earlier a child is exposed to a foreign language, the faster the language in question is acquired. Learning another language raises awareness of the multilingual and multicultural world and introduces an international dimension to our children's learning, giving them an insight into their own culture, and those of others. At St John Fisher we recognise the importance of introducing a foreign language at an early age, supporting the belief that the early acquisition of a foreign language facilitates the learning of other foreign languages later in life. The learning of a language provides opportunities to develop cross-curricular links and reinforces knowledge, skills and understanding developed in other subjects.

Inclusion

The statutory inclusion statement in the national curriculum for England describes school's responsibility to provide a curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils. The statement provides examples of how this responsibility can be met. It sets out three principles that are essential for teachers and schools to follow when developing an inclusive curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs including those pupils who are identified as gifted/talented/more able beyond their year group.
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

The aims of the National Curriculum

When planning their provision, schools and teachers should also consider two broad aims of the National Curriculum.

Aim 1. The school curriculum should aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve.

Aim 2. The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

Rationale

According to the DCFS (2009) Key Stage Two Framework for Languages, learning a language enriches the curriculum. It provides enjoyment and challenge, creating enthusiastic learners and develops a positive attitude towards language learning throughout life. The skills, knowledge and understanding developed through the teaching of a Modern Foreign Language serve to enhance children's speaking and listening skills, as well as strengthen their understanding of their own culture, and those of others.

The main areas for development as laid out in the Framework are as follows:

Language learning stimulates children's creativity

Children enjoy taking part in language lessons. They join in with singing, reciting rhymes and poems and respond to stories. They create mimes, sketches and role play, imitating accurate intonation and pronunciation. They play games and experiment creatively with language.

Language learning supports oracy and literacy

Children spend much of their time in language lessons speaking, listening and interacting. They take part in role plays, conversations and question and answer work, sing songs and recite, perform to an audience and respond to a wide range of oral stimuli. This emphasis on communication, underpins children's capabilities in oracy, which is critical to effective communication, as well as a key foundation for Literacy.

Language learning leads to gains across the curriculum

Children approach a broad range of learning activities in a new and challenging context; these relate to mother-tongue literacy, numeracy and other curriculum areas. This can lead to deep learning and significant gains in their general understanding as they recycle and reinterpret existing knowledge.

Language learning supports and celebrates the international dimension

All children should be provided with the opportunity to learn a language in order to gain insights into their own lives and those of others around the world. They need the chance to make

contact with people in other countries and cultures and to reflect upon their own countries and those of other people.

Language learning offers opportunities for children to:

- gain enjoyment, pride and a sense of achievement
- express themselves creatively and imaginatively in another language
- apply and develop their knowledge of languages and language learning
- explore and apply strategies to improve their learning
- explore their own cultural identities and those of others.

DSCF (2009): *The Key Stage Two Framework for Languages*; p 4-5.

The National Languages Strategy

The National Languages Strategy for England sets out the Government's commitment to increasing the nation's languages capability, and a vision of languages as "a lifelong skill - to be used in business and for pleasure, to open up avenues of communication and exploration, and to promote, encourage and instil a broader cultural understanding" (page 5).

"Every child should have the opportunity throughout Key Stage 2 to study a foreign language and develop their interest in the culture of other nations. They should have access to high quality teaching and learning opportunities, making use of native speakers and e-learning. By age 11 they should have the opportunity to reach a recognised level of competence on the Common European Framework and for that achievement to be recognised through a national scheme." (page 15)

The National Languages Strategy is also an important element within the Primary National Strategy, reinforcing key approaches to teaching and learning, which are set out in *Excellent and Enjoyment* and *Every Child Matters*.

Curriculum Organisation

At St John Fisher we have chosen a multi-lingual approach with an emphasis on transferrable language learning skills. In 2012 children are learning French and German with support from Cardinal Wiseman Secondary School. In other years, Spanish has also been taught.

Key Stage Two

All Key Stage Two children are taught a Modern Foreign Language. Children are taught German or French for 45 minutes each week, by non-specialists, who have a good knowledge of the language or by specialist teachers from Cardinal Wiseman.

Language work is displayed in the ICT suite.

Key Stage One

Although the National Curriculum and Framework are designed for Key Stage Two, we have chosen to begin some exposure to languages through the *World Wide Wanderers*- Coventry Local Authority's scheme of work designed for Early Language Learners

The curriculum

The curriculum follows the topics titles suggested by QCA; however these are used as a starting point only. There are also units based on storytelling techniques as recommended by our local authority. Planning is based on the National Curriculum (2000) and the Key Stage Two Framework for Languages (DCSF, April 2007). Expectations and outcomes are linked to the National Curriculum (2000) and the DSCF Languages Ladder (2010) and *Assessing Pupils' Progress in MFL* (APPL 2010; Sefton Local Authority).

Oracy

Children will spend much of their time listening, speaking and interacting orally, listening to good models of pronunciation. Children listen to their teacher, to songs and rhymes, to each other, to native speakers, to recorded and online speech and songs, recognising familiar and unfamiliar sounds.

Children reproduce the sounds themselves and create phrases and sentences. They engage in simple conversations to obtain and provide information and share opinions. Cross-curricular opportunities are provided for children to reinforce and develop their own language.

Literacy

Literacy skills are supported by, and reinforce, the development of oracy. As they increase their understanding of the language, children gain increasing access to different forms of text. Children will have opportunities to apply their skills and understanding to read, enjoy and make use of a widening range of texts.

They will be provided with opportunities to write simple sentences and short texts for different purposes and audiences, using a frame or model to support as required.

Intercultural Understanding

Language competence and understanding are a vital part of being a citizen. Through exploring the lives of others, children will develop a greater understanding of their own lives. They learn to look at things from another's perspective and gain an insight into the people, culture and traditions of other cultures. This strand provides many opportunities for cross-curricular links.

Knowledge About Language (KAL)

When learning a new language, children reinforce and reinterpret knowledge and understanding gained in learning their first language(s). They develop insights into the nature of language and its social and cultural value. They become aware of rules or patterns in language. KAL supports children in communicating effectively in speech and writing.

Language Learning Strategies

An important aim of language learning is to familiarise children with strategies which they can apply to the learning of any language. During Key Stage Two, children should have regular opportunities to identify and apply a range of language learning strategies. Strategies explored in language lessons can also be used for learning in other subjects.

Planning

Lesson plans include a variety of techniques to encourage the children to have an active engagement in the Modern Foreign Language lesson. These include:

- games;
- role-play;
- songs (particularly action songs);

Mime is frequently used to accompany new vocabulary, as this serves to demonstrate the foreign language without the need for translation, providing opportunities for all children to participate in lessons. Multi-sensory approaches (VAK) to teaching and learning also ensure that the varying needs of pupils are met.

Assessment

The Role of the Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator is responsible for fostering and developing links with the Foreign Language Departments at Cardinal Wiseman Secondary School.

The co-ordinator is also responsible for attending relevant in-service and disseminating information to the school SMT, staff and Governing Body. The co-ordinator will also ensure that SMT is updated on all developments and publications from the LA, DCFS, Ofsted and all other relevant agencies.

Resources

Links with secondary schools provide opportunities to locate and share resources. ICT resources, such as linguascope, a subscription website, and Early Start, a DVD based scheme of work provide excellent resources for the delivery of Modern Foreign Languages. Suitable resources will also be purchased as required, on approval from the Principal.

Special Educational Needs

The needs of children recognised as needing additional SEN support will be met wherever possible by ensuring positive involvement at a suitable level and differentiated activities to meet the needs and abilities of all children.

Equal Opportunities

Access to the teaching and learning of languages will be ensured for all children at St John Fisher in line with the school Equal Opportunities Policy.

"Delivering an entitlement to language learning so that every pupil at Key Stage Two is offered the opportunity to study at least one foreign language by the end of the decade is the centerpiece of our strategy"

National Languages Strategy.

K Taylor

September 2013

References

- National Curriculum (2000)
- Marking and Making Progress on the DCFS Languages Ladder (2010)
- The Key Stage Two Framework for Languages (DCSF 2009)