

MFL Curriculum Intent Statement

Curriculum Design

As a department, we have picked out twelve communicative functions from *The Functional-Notional Approach: From Theory to Practice* (Finocchiaro and Brumfitt, 1983) that we aim to cover throughout our schemes of learning from Year 7 to Year 13. This does not preclude a grammatical approach to language teaching if needed, but it does give wider-world purpose to Schemes of Learning. We have chosen:

- Describing & identifying people (including oneself)
- Making arrangements
- Describing past events
- Describing places, objects & natural phenomena
- Comparing & contrasting
- Making plans for the future
- Creating questions
- Describing routine behaviour in the present
- Indicating agreement & disagreement
- Expressing one's feelings
- Describing routine behaviour in the past
- Solving problems

Each unit of work should develop competence in at least one of the communicative functions through the topic vocabulary. Lexicogrammatical structures and explicit grammar will be taught with naturally appropriate topic areas (future tense and jobs, for example).

Due to the lack of parity in primary school languages provision, we commence Oracy First as a levelling tool to provide equality of opportunity for all our language learners. For those who may be revisiting prior learning, we view this as an opportunity to deepen knowledge and understanding of the content as it will be delivered in a more academically rigorous way than it would be delivered to a primary school audience (use of metalinguistics, for example). Oracy First is continually used as a method to baseline and differentiate at the end of the first half term of Year 7.

Oracy First approach in Year 7 is designed to build confidence in spoken language and promote engagement and motivation in the subject ab initio. We have chosen to reference our Year 7 Oracy First units against the oracy framework developed by School 21 (see appendix) for the following reasons:

- Motivation in second language acquisition depends on rates of success in the early stages of acquisition. Oracy First allows for high levels of success in the initial stages of second language acquisition (Gardner and Lambert, 1959);
- Following the Rose review (2006), it is widely accepted that in-depth understanding of the phonic system, both synthetic and organic, is essential to literacy. Oracy first allows development of phonic patterns in second language (L2);
- the impact that oracy has on closing the gap between PP learners and non-PP learners – up to six months' additional progress (FFT Teaching & Learning Toolkit 2019).

Grammar and topic coverage in Years 7, 8 and 9 serve as a solid foundation to GCSE study, whilst maintaining its wider world application. The National Curriculum was used as a reference point to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum were incorporated into Years 7 and 8 units of work as a minimum.

Schemes of learning in Years 9, 10 and 11 have been in place for three years and have developed and adapted as the new curriculum has become more clear and new resources have become available. Schemes of learning in Year 9 start to echo GCSE topics, enabling us to offer a broad and balanced curriculum over a longer timescale to encourage mastery and deeper understanding of the subject (topic) matter (vocabulary). Breadth of curriculum is guaranteed because:

- Schemes of learning are still benchmarked against communicative functions, which bridge academic study and real-world application of the language;
- Lexico-grammatical structures are continuously reused and recycled, which echoes communication patterns and second language acquisition theory;
- Grammar is plotted out on a five- (seven-) year trajectory, so only the input vocabulary is affected by echoing GCSE topics in the schemes of learning from Year 9 onwards.

The entirety of the curriculum has been audited to ensure it includes all grammatical aspects that would be needed to access post-Level 3 study, which have then been distributed throughout all phases of study (years) to maintain manageability and avoid cognitive overload in learners.

Curriculum maps provide clarity and guidance for learners and practitioners regarding direction

Curriculum Structure

All students learn French in Year 7. The rationale behind this is that French is an enabling language, which allows for analysis of English language, with a lot of lexical similarity to English. It is also opaque in its pronunciation, allowing learners to understand difficult phonic structures as a common entity for the entire year group. One side of the year (Baby) takes Spanish and one side (Lake) takes German. This is to broaden our curriculum offer further. Some input from parents is requested on entry to advise banding decisions. We are refining this process this year following parental feedback. Six lessons allocated to MFL are divided equally between the two languages studied.

[Paused due to COVID-19 restrictions] At the end of Year 7, learners are put into sets. This is to maintain Years 8 and 9 as a knowledge-rich foundation to Level 2 study. Those in sets one and two continue with two languages in order to maintain the broadest curriculum possible. Those in sets three and four still maintain their broad offering by continuing with one language, having opted at the end of Year 7 for their preference. In this instance, all six hours allocated to MFL are given to their chosen language in order that learners have a more solid understanding before taking GCSE options in Year 9. We expect that this will encourage confidence in early language learning and encourage EBacc uptake at the options process.

In Years 10 and 11, learners are placed into classes dependant on option blocks for timetabling and recruitment reasons.

The Oracy Framework



Use the oracy framework to understand the physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional skills that enable successful discussion, inspiring speech and effective communication.

