

French Curriculum



**Highfield
Church of England
Primary School**

*And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.
(Genesis 11:1)*

Intent

We recognise the importance of giving children the opportunity to study a foreign language and develop their interest in the culture of other nations. Embedding language learning into school life presents many benefits. Through the exploration of languages, children develop both linguistically and personally. MFL learning aids children to understand that there are many languages spoken in our school and the world and that this is normal, natural and valuable. The teaching and learning of MFL should reflect the ethos of the school's Christian foundation by nurturing the cultural and linguistic experiences of each individual child made in the image of the creator God.

Purpose of Study

Learning a foreign language liberates pupils from insularity and opens them to other cultures. A high-quality language education fosters curiosity and deepens understanding of the world. Teaching enables pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and writing. It also provides opportunities for practical communication, introduces new ways of thinking, and allows students to read great literature in the original language. The language programme lays the foundation for learning additional languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries.

Aims

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

Curriculum

French is the main foreign language in our school curriculum, which is based on the KS2 National Curriculum. We teach the children to know and understand how to:

- ask and answer questions (oracy);
- read and write words and short passages (literacy);
- use correct pronunciation and intonation, memorise words, interpret meaning, understand basic grammar, use dictionaries (language learning strategies)
- work in pairs and groups, and communicate in the other language;
- look at life in another culture (intercultural understanding).

Key Stage 1 – Teachers may choose to teach their pupils elements of a language, beginning with simple phrases and finger rhymes. Less focus is given to learning vocabulary and is more geared towards enthusing children about language.

Key Stage 2 – We begin formal language learning following the requirements set out in The National Curriculum.

Organisation

We teach a foreign language to children in Year 3 – 6 for 45 – 60 minutes a week, covering three 5–6 week units per year. The class teacher normally teaches the lesson. Teachers may also choose to incorporate French into other parts of the timetable; for example, children may be encouraged to respond to the register in French.

In addition, the school sometimes hosts privately run extra curricular clubs, for example for Spanish or Mandarin.

Planning

Long term planning shows the units to be covered and term allocation, as well as information related to previous and future learning, grammar, phonics and verbs to be covered, questions and answers, key vocabulary and skills and knowledge to be assessed,

Medium term plans contain brief overviews of individual lessons, including adaptation for different levels.

Individual lessons are planned directly onto lesson presentation flipcharts. They begin with either a Prove It retrieval practice or a phonics starter, before introducing the lesson's objective to the children through a variety of games, songs and speaking / listening / reading / writing activities. They may also contain challenge questions or tasks.

Teaching French

We use a variety of techniques to encourage the children to have an active engagement in the language: these include games, role-play and songs (particularly action songs). We may also invite native speakers or university students into the classroom, in order to expose the children to more than one voice in the language. We may use mime to accompany new vocabulary as this serves to demonstrate the language without the need for translation. We emphasise the listening and speaking skills over the reading and writing skills, particularly in the lower half of Key Stage 2. We build children's confidence through praise for any contribution they make in the language, however tentative. Video clips included on the Early Start DVD sets or online may be used to introduce and reinforce vocabulary, and give children a chance to see French school, home, and town life in action.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

For each unit, a small selection of key knowledge and key skill statements are listed on the Long Term Plan, and units of work are tailored towards children developing in these areas.

We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject. This may be done informally during the lessons in order to evaluate what the children have learned or through specifically designed end of unit assessment tasks.

At the end of each unit, teachers will record which children in their class have secured and mastered the knowledge and skills requirements for any units covered that term. Overall 'best fit' grades for knowledge and skills will be recorded on SIMS in the Summer Term and reported to parents in end of year reports .

Key Stage 2 children will keep records of their learning in their French exercise books and will also gather lists of words in a small vocabulary book that stays with them throughout their time in Key Stage 2. They are encouraged to make use of these during written activities, especially in Year 5/6, when they may wish to write words that they were taught earlier in their language learning journey.