



Department of Modern Foreign Languages Curriculum Statement – updated October 2022

Vision

The MFL Department is committed to providing a meaningful and enjoyable learning experience for all our students, and we are proud to teach languages as part of the core curriculum (KS3 and KS4) at Thomas Telford School. We have high expectations of all our pupils and we promote mutual respect and positive relationships. Our aim is to raise the status of language learning and to encourage young people and parents to recognize the valuable cross-curricular and life skills that learning a foreign language brings. We are committed to preparing our students to become responsible citizens in a multi-lingual, multi-cultural and inter-dependent world. We are ambitious for all our students and we expect all learners to develop their knowledge of another language alongside their cultural understanding. The Modern Foreign Languages Department has a key role in promoting positive attitudes towards speakers of other languages and towards people from diverse cultures.

Implementation

Pupils gain knowledge of the vocabulary, grammar, and phonics of French and Spanish. Students practise speaking, writing, listening and reading skills across specific themes and we adapt our teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those capable of the highest attainment and those with special educational needs. We ensure that we teach those capable of proceeding to Advanced level in ways that enable them to do so. All pupils work towards clear learning outcomes, working towards a useful level of linguistic competence. Through learning French or Spanish and German in KS5, our pupils build on their literacy skills in English. MFL teachers have access to a wide range of digital and online materials to support teaching and learning and we have subject specialists delivering French, Spanish and German across KS3 – KS5. Students are aware of how their learning builds on prior learning and teachers ensure they frame language lessons within a clear context. We provide students in years 7 – 11 with a half termly outline of the subject matter they will be taught, a vocabulary list and grammatical structures. We are keen to emphasise the importance of recycling language, within a lesson, a sequence of lessons and across the years and we have designed our curriculum to embed specific skills, phonics, vocabulary and grammatical structures over time. We provide plenty of opportunities for students to apply their knowledge independently and we review prior learning and understanding as a matter of course throughout our lessons. In KS5 students continue to study thematic content alongside grammatical structures, more complex language and a wider range of vocabulary. They build on their KS4 language skills and develop greater spontaneity and originality in their speaking and writing. AFL and regular key assessments across the skills ensure pupils' progress is well monitored and gaps in understanding are addressed. We provide session 3 support for all aspects of language learning across the Key Stages; KS4 and KS5 students in particular make use of this time in preparation for oral and written examinations.

Impact

GCSE outcomes in French and Spanish 2022 are well above National averages. 97.2% of the Year 11 cohort in 2022 took Ebacc subjects. The study of a foreign language by the majority of Y11 contributed to the Ebacc average point score of 5.98, with 82% pass rate Grade 5+, 92% 4+ in 2022. Uptake for MFL courses at Sixth Form has grown, and a number of MFL students have gone on to study language degrees at University or colleges, including Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

Impact of Covid-19

During the periods of school closures, MFL teachers undertook a number of online webinar training sessions. We worked hard to upskill our teaching and learning approaches to meet the emerging needs of the students. Staff became well versed in voice recording tools, online quiz apps, Microsoft forms and video



recording. We promoted language-learning apps for additional independent study, directed students to a number of useful websites and took out a subscription for LanguageNut, an excellent online learning platform for MFL. We recognize that remote learning poses its particular challenges for language learners and teachers often had to reiterate the fact that online translation tools are a poor substitute for authentic language.

We reviewed our Programmes of Study to ensure that the topics we were teaching during the lockdown period were the most accessible to students and we aimed to help our students develop all four-language skills. We shared sound files and listening materials with students and some students submitted recorded sound files to teachers. This was particularly successful at A level when students were able to practise aspects of the speaking exam during individual Zoom sessions and as recorded sound files. In addition, all students submitted written work for written feedback and staff were able to give detailed feedback using Qwikr, a voice-recording tool.

Our curriculum plan ensures that our students re-visit key topic areas and that we recycle language regularly. Our reviewed and revised curriculum, updated for September 2022, will ensure that students revise and revisit key language and grammar points in line with our progress plans.

We are conscious of the impact that the COVID pandemic has had on learners of all abilities and backgrounds and we will endeavour to provide all students with a supportive and positive environment in lessons. The MFL Department will continue to provide enrichment opportunities for students, in line with Government guidelines. When possible we will look to offer opportunities to travel abroad once again and we will continue to promote language-learning opportunities as they arise.