



Department of Modern Foreign Languages Curriculum Statement

Intent

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 at Thomas Telford School. We believe that learning a foreign language should be accessible for all students in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4; 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 and tolerant citizens in a multi-lingual, multi-cultural and inter-dependent world. We celebrate success at all levels; we encourage those with a particular talent for languages to achieve the highest levels of attainment and we support those with additional educational needs to achieve realistic goals in language learning. All pupils work towards achievable yet challenging learning intentions, in order for them to make rapid progress 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. Pupils are encouraged to become successful communicators by improving their ability to express their thoughts and ideas confidently in the target language. Alongside linguistic competence we teach our students about other cultures; pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own cultural background and language and to make comparisons with the languages and cultures of other countries. 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

MFL teachers have access to a wide range of digital and online materials to support teaching and learning and we are fortunate to have subject specialists delivering French, Spanish and German across KS3 – KS5. We focus on the five skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and translation. Students are aware of how their learning builds on prior learning and teachers ensure they frame language lessons within a clear context. We teach target language grammar explicitly from Year 7, so that students deepen their knowledge about how language works and enrich their vocabulary as they progress through their learning. We provide students in years 7 – 11 with a half termly outline of learning intentions, a vocabulary list, grammatical structures and a 'Big Picture' over view which enables students to see what their future learning will entail. 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, vocabulary and grammatical structures over time. We provide plenty of opportunities for students to apply their knowledge independently and we review prior learning as a matter of course at the beginning of every lesson. Good use of AfL and regular key assessments across the five skills ensure pupil progress is well monitored and gaps in understanding are addressed. As pupils progress in their language acquisition, they are increasingly able to cope with a variety of situations in which they can communicate with speakers of French, Spanish or German. 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, Spanish and German are in line with or above National averages, which is very encouraging as 93.3% of the Year 11 cohort in 2019 took Ebacc subjects, compared to a National figure of 40%. The study of a foreign language by the majority of Y11 contributed to the Ebacc average point score of 5.79 and 83% pass rate Grade 4+, 60% 5+ in 2019.

Uptake for MFL courses at Sixth Form has grown, and a number of MFL students have gone onto to study language degrees at University or colleges. The Department runs annual foreign trips to provide students with the opportunity to experience the culture of the target language first hand.