

Modern Foreign Languages at St Osmund's CE Middle School

Curriculum Intent, Implementation and Impact

Curriculum Intent

At St Osmund's, our Modern Foreign Languages curriculum aims to inspire and empower all pupils to develop a lifelong enjoyment of language learning. We believe that learning a language is an essential part of becoming an outward-looking, culturally aware individual. Through our curriculum, pupils develop the knowledge and skills needed to communicate confidently, while building a strong foundation for further language study at upper school and beyond.

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure progression in key areas such as phonics, vocabulary, grammar and communication skills. We are committed to ensuring that language learning is accessible to all pupils, enabling every learner to experience success and develop confidence in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

A key aim of MFL at St Osmund's is to foster curiosity about the wider world and to promote respect for diverse cultures, languages and perspectives. Through this, pupils develop empathy and a deeper understanding of their place within a global community, reflecting our Christian values of Hope, Community, Respect and Love.

By the end of Year 8, pupils will be able to understand and produce short spoken and written texts, manipulate familiar language to express their own ideas, and engage in simple spontaneous interactions. This ensures they are well-prepared for further language study at Key Stage 4 and beyond.

Spirituality in MFL

One of our key objectives in Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) is to foster curiosity about the world beyond our local community and to promote respect for individuals with diverse cultural identities and languages. We aim to encourage students to consider broader ways of living by providing insight into how others experience life. In our Year 8 topic on "Holidays," students reflect on opportunities they've had to visit remarkable places worldwide. For those who have not traveled extensively, this topic serves as inspiration to explore ways to experience such opportunities in the future.

Starting in Year 5, students are encouraged to express their own interests and share them with peers, fostering a respectful and inclusive environment that values differences within the group.

We provide opportunities to discuss cultural differences in Spanish- and French-speaking communities, exploring these topics without judgment. For example, students look at how Christmas celebrations vary across Spain and France.

The curriculum builds foundational knowledge from Year 5 through Year 8, preparing students to engage with more in-depth topics in Key Stages 4 and 5.

We normalise making mistakes and taking risks in our lessons, reassuring students that errors are a natural part of the learning process. Pupils are given structured opportunities to reflect on and celebrate their achievements, which often result from resilience and dedication. This approach promotes personal growth and a sense of fulfillment.

Careers in MFL

At St. Osmund's, our Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) curriculum focuses on the essential skills required to effectively learn a language: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Within these core competencies, we emphasise the development of transferable skills that benefit students across various subject

areas and support a wide range of career paths. Strong communication skills are vital for success in both personal and professional contexts.

We intentionally teach students how to actively listen, interpret meaning, and pay attention to both detail and context. In speaking activities, we prioritise pronunciation and intonation to ensure clarity, along with fluency and confidence in expression. A significant aspect of our approach is to build students' confidence in verbal communication. Our speaking assessments are designed to challenge students to step outside of their comfort zones, encouraging spontaneous responses and adaptability - skills that are advantageous in job interviews and public speaking engagements.

Additionally, we explicitly instruct students in grammar and relevant grammatical terminology to enhance their English language proficiency. This helps students understand how to write and speak in a grammatically correct manner and to craft more sophisticated responses.

Skills gained in MFL can be used in careers such as translation, diplomacy, teaching, travel and tourism, international business and law.

Curriculum Implementation

Assessment

We use a structured assessment approach to monitor pupil attainment and progress in Key Stage 3 through a clear programme of summative assessments. In Key Stage 2, assessment is primarily formative, with teachers using ongoing strategies such as questioning, observation and retrieval activities to check understanding and inform teaching.

Assessment outcomes are used to inform feedback to pupils and to shape future planning. Following formal assessments, pupils are given opportunities to reflect on their performance and make improvements, supporting their ongoing

progress. Following each formal assessment, students have a DIRT lesson, where they reflect on areas of strength and make improvements to their work.

We also make effective use of formative assessment within lessons to identify misconceptions and address gaps in understanding. Retrieval practice is regularly embedded through recall activities at the start of lessons and throughout teaching sequences, helping pupils to retain and build on prior learning. This ongoing assessment enables teachers to adapt teaching in real time and plan subsequent lessons to meet the needs of all learners.

Curriculum Design and Structure

Our MFL curriculum is designed to provide a coherent and progressive learning journey from Year 5 to Year 8. Pupils study either French or Spanish throughout their time at St Osmund's, enabling them to build depth of knowledge and develop strong foundations at Upper School, where they continue with the same language. In Key Stage 2, pupils receive one lesson per fortnight, increasing to two lessons per week in Key Stage 3, allowing for greater depth and progression in language learning.

The curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure progression in both language knowledge and skills. It is structured around clearly defined units of learning, with an emphasis on the cumulative development of vocabulary, grammar and phonics as the key pillars of language acquisition. Curriculum maps outline the progression of knowledge and skills across each year group, ensuring continuity between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

Learning is deliberately spiralled, with regular opportunities for pupils to revisit and build upon prior knowledge with increasing complexity. This approach supports long-term retention and mastery of key language concepts.

Teaching and Learning Approach

Our teaching focuses on developing the four key language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Pupils are explicitly taught the strategies needed to succeed in each of these areas, alongside the core components of phonics, vocabulary and grammar.

Speaking is prioritised within lessons, with regular opportunities for pupils to practise and develop confidence in oral communication. We support pupils in progressing from structured responses towards more spontaneous use of language over time.

Teachers model high-quality language use and provide clear examples of successful outcomes, particularly in writing. Questioning is used effectively to check understanding, address misconceptions and extend pupils' thinking. The use of target language is encouraged to immerse pupils in language learning, while ensuring that understanding remains secure. We use sentence builders and knowledge organisers to support students in their productive skills

Elements of GCSE-style assessment are introduced at Key Stage 3, including the use of writing mark schemes and structured speaking tasks. This ensures pupils develop the skills and confidence required for future examination success.

Curriculum Impact

Pupils demonstrate secure and developing knowledge of vocabulary, phonics, and grammar, which they can apply across the four key skills.

Over time, pupils show increased confidence in speaking, moving from simple structured responses to more spontaneous communication whereby they can ask questions and extend their responses. In writing, students show progress from writing short, simple sentences to writing a paragraph containing 3 tenses in year

8. This can be seen in the work in their books, and in their formal assessments at the end of a unit.

Work scrutiny shows clear progression from understanding vocabulary and structures to manipulation of grammar and extended written and spoken work. Quality assurance highlights strengths in effective modelling and scaffolding and building on student independence.

Overall, pupils speak positively about their MFL lessons and demonstrate engagement and participation in lessons. They value the extra-curricular opportunities to visit Paris at the end of year 8, and the language leaders' weekly lunch time club.