

# **Gig Mill Primary School**

## **Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Policy**

September 2023



# Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Policy

## 1. Introduction

This policy document sets out the school's vision, principles and strategies for the delivery of Modern Foreign Languages. It will form the basis for the development of Languages over the next three years. This policy was developed in the Autumn term of 2023 by the subject lead and ratified by the Head Teacher, the Chair of Governors & Governing Body.

## 2. Rationale

The overall rationale for pupils learning a foreign language within the school follows the National Curriculum for Languages Purpose of Study.

- Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils' curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world.'
- 'Language teaching should provide the foundation for learning further languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries.'

As the UK is becoming an increasingly multicultural society, we have a duty to provide our children with an understanding of other cultures and languages. By teaching a modern foreign language we believe this provides the children with a secure foundation of language learning skills.

Learning a language enriches the curriculum, providing excitement, enjoyment and challenge for the children, helping to create enthusiastic learners and to develop positive attitudes towards language learning throughout life. The natural links between languages and other areas of the curriculum can enhance the overall teaching and learning experience. The skills, knowledge and understanding gained make a significant contribution to the development of children's oral and literacy levels and to their understanding of their own culture(s) and those of others. Language also lies at the heart of perception about individual identity and community. Thus, learning other languages shapes children's ideas in this critical area as well as giving them a new perspective on their own language.

Language learning stimulates children's creativity. Children enjoy taking an active part in language lessons. They join in with singing, reciting rhymes and poems and respond to stories. They create mimes, sketches and role-play, imitating accurate intonation and pronunciation. They play games, take turns, make things, take the role of the teacher and experiment creatively with the language.

Language learning supports Literacy. Children spend much of their time in language lessons speaking, listening and interacting – more than in most other subjects. They take part in role-plays, conversations, question and answer sessions, sing songs, recite or perform to an audience and respond to a wide range of aural stimuli. This emphasis on communication underpins children’s capabilities in speaking and listening. Analysing foreign words also underpins their own knowledge and understanding of words and phrases in their own language. Grammatical knowledge is also further developed as learning another language reinforces grammatical rules in both their mother tongue as well as the language being taught.

Language learning leads to gains across the curriculum. Children gain a greater understanding of not only Literacy but across a range of subjects including Geography, Citizenship, Music, PE, Art and Mathematics. Through creative language learning this recycles, reinforces and reinterprets existing knowledge and can lead on to learning new skills.

Language learning supports and celebrates the international dimension. In our modern world, it is becoming increasingly apparent that we are part of a multicultural society with a plethora of languages spoken. Although our society enjoys much more linguistic diversity than in the past it remains a place where the motivation to learn another language is affected by the position of English as a widely spoken language across the world. This makes it crucial that we instil a positive attitude towards learning another language from an early age.

Language learning enriches employability. The desirability for employees to possess another language has dramatically increased in the business sector as international trade continues to grow. This also increases an individual’s earning power in recognition of these additional skills. By providing children the opportunity to learn a language early this enhances their employability if they continue to master a given language. It has also been proven through recognised study that the earlier an individual begins to learn a language the easier it is to learn.

### **3. Aims for Languages**

The school’s aims align with the National Curriculum to ensure that all pupils:

- understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources
- speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and continually improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation

- can write at varying length, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt
- discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in the language studied.

Further to the aims listed in the National Curriculum the school will strive to achieve the following:

- To foster an interest in learning other languages
- To introduce young children to another language in a way that is enjoyable and fun
- To gain enjoyment, pride and a sense of achievement
- Explore and apply strategies to improve their own learning
- To lay the foundations for future study in the target language and/or other languages
- Explore daily life and traditions in another culture
- To develop an awareness of cultural differences between countries and to promote understanding and tolerance between these.
- To develop a sense of belonging to a wider world

#### **4. Curriculum Organisation**

A four-year programme is in place to teach a foreign language for all children across Key Stage 2 and fulfil the requirements of the KS2 Programme of Study in the National Curriculum. The language taught is French and is timetabled each week as an explicit lesson lasting up to one hour. This is taught by the subject lead who is also a specialist language teacher. Alongside dedicated language lessons, practice is also achieved by embedding the target language with the class teacher through further activities, through cross-curricular work in other subject areas and by using the target language for real purposes in daily classroom routines. The pupil's exposure to languages is further supported by the school's linguistically and culturally diverse display policy. Extra-curricular provision of language learning is offered in the form of a Spanish club and a world languages club.

The curriculum overview plan is progressive in developing pupil capability within the target language using the three pillars of language learning:

- Phonics
- Vocabulary
- Grammar

The curriculum topics are carefully structured to incorporate these three aspects and scaffold pupils' learning. Through the practice of phonics they acquire a set list of vocabulary to then

manipulate with high frequency verbs in different contexts. Prior learning and knowledge are regularly revisited to ensure language is embedded in pupils' working memory.

The topic unit plans, alongside other assessment tools, are working documents to identify the success of activities and to make improvements where necessary to ensure the appropriate expectations are reached. Once a unit has been completed the teacher will evaluate the planning sheet to inform future planning.

The curriculum follows the subject content stated by the National Curriculum:

- listen attentively to spoken language and show understanding by joining in and responding
- explore the patterns and sounds of language through songs and rhymes and link the spelling, sound and meaning of words
- engage in conversations; ask and answer questions; express opinions and respond to those of others; seek clarification and help
- speak in sentences, using familiar vocabulary, phrases and basic language structures
- develop accurate pronunciation and intonation so that others understand when they are reading aloud or using familiar words and phrases
- present ideas and information orally to a range of audiences
- read carefully and show understanding of words, phrases and simple writing
- appreciate stories, songs, poems and rhymes in the language
- broaden their vocabulary and develop their ability to understand new words that are introduced into familiar written material, including through using a dictionary
- write phrases from memory, and adapt these to create new sentences, to express ideas clearly
- describe people, places, things and actions orally and in writing
- understand basic grammar appropriate to the language being studied, including (where relevant): feminine, masculine and neuter forms and the conjugation of high-frequency verbs; key features and patterns of the language; how to apply these, for instance, to build sentences; and how these differ from or are similar to English.

The focus of study will be on practical communication where children will make substantial progress in a balance of both the spoken and written language.

## **5. Curriculum Leadership and Management**

The subject lead, in conjunction with the Headteacher, leads the provision of languages within the school.

The subject lead will facilitate the use of languages in the following ways:

- By teaching the target language (French)
- By updating the policy and curriculum overview
- By adapting unit and lesson planning to accommodate current needs
- By ordering and updating appropriate resources
- By ensuring opportunities are given for all pupils to develop their language capability and that progression is taking place
- By continuing with professional development in language teaching and learning to keep updated with current developments.
- By providing training and support to class teachers to maintain the identified subject knowledge required and access appropriate further activities to use outside of the explicit weekly lesson taught
- By contributing to the School Improvement Plan on an annual basis
- By management of links with secondary schools for which it is a feeder school to collaborate on curriculum and transitional issues

## **6. Language Teaching Methodology**

The school believes that pupils learn more effectively if they are enjoying what they are doing. A wide variety of activities are used to teach languages: choral repetition, games, songs, quizzes, poems, rhymes, storytelling, mime, puppets, role plays, activities, presentations and written work. Explicit phonics sessions teaching grapheme-phoneme formations and phonic-related activities are used to enhance pupils' pronunciation of learned vocabulary and to accurately sound out unfamiliar words. IT is used across the school to motivate pupils and provide visual and interactive stimulation for language learning. The school endorses the principles of a distinctively primary approach to language learning:

- Provide a rich and varied input of the language, so that children hear and interact with the sounds and patterns of the new language.
- Use active learning to engage motivation
- Use games and songs to maximise enjoyment
- Embed languages in class routines and school life
- Integrate language learning across the curriculum to connect with learning in other subject areas

As learning develops pupils are given more and more opportunities to engage with the culture of the target language (French), learning about the places, festivals and other aspects of daily life. They develop confidence in writing from memory, building up over the course of KS2 to being able to write a short paragraph independently.

Alongside the specialist MFL teacher, native speaker sound files are also used to provide the children with authentic sources to study from which further supports and enhances pupil's accurate pronunciation and intonation.

## **7. Embedding MFL in the Curriculum**

The school believes pupils will learn languages more effectively by having frequent exposure to them. Class teachers will support language learning outside of the explicit language lesson, so the target language (French) becomes increasingly embedded in the curriculum. The subject lead will highlight opportunities and deliver these in staff training sessions and provide the resources to accompany this. The subject lead will also be a source of reference to support existing classroom staff in the implementation and maintenance of embedding the target language.

The pupil's exposure to languages is further supported by the school's linguistically and culturally diverse display policy.

## **8. Recording, Assessment and Reporting**

Pupils' progress against the two productive language skills, speaking and writing, will be recorded at the end of each topic. This assessment information is shared with the class teacher and is used to support future planning, teaching and learning. A summary assessment of the skills achieved for each pupil in language learning will also be reported back in the end of year reports in line with school policy.

Assessment data is passed on to the relevant secondary schools where the pupil is due to attend upon leaving Year 6.

Some evidence will be kept for two years. This might include a description of the context and an explanation of how the pupils completed the topic, photographs, discussion, saved work and printouts (if any produced) of differing pupil's work. This will accompany the children throughout their time at the school and beyond. Language work will be marked in line with the school policy on marking.

A questionnaire regarding language teaching will be given to six children of varied abilities in each class once a year to inform planning and give the subject lead an insight into pupil opinions and how the target language (French) is being delivered in the school.

## **9. Inclusion**

All pupils, regardless of race, gender or socio-economic status, shall have the opportunity to develop languages capability. The school will promote equal opportunities and fairness of distribution of languages resources.

The school recognises the motivational advantages of the use of languages by children with special educational needs. Tasks will be adjusted to suit the specified needs of those children who are identified as SEND and in line with their ISP plans. Also, tasks will be adjusted to suit those children working at a greater depth level within the subject compared to their peers.

Where pupils speak languages other than English at home, these languages are celebrated and discussed in language-learning lessons. Pupils will hear native-language speakers as part of their language learning and the cultural diversity of French-language speakers will also be acknowledged as French is a language spoken across the world.

## **10. Resources and Accommodation**

All documents relating to the implementation of the MFL curriculum will be found on the school's internal online system under the Staff Documents/Curriculum/MFL folder. A variety of resources are also available in various locations around school. These include children's reference books, teachers' resources, story books, realia and audio/visual materials. A full inventory list of all MFL resources and its location in school is kept updated on the school system. All teacher resources are kept together in the staff room so that this is easily accessed by all staff.

Each Key Stage 2 classroom has at least two bilingual dictionaries in the target language specific to the year group. Each classroom will have a display poster detailing the topic vocabulary they are currently learning which will be clearly visible for both children and staff to see. Each classroom from Year 4 to Year 6 will have the French date displayed underneath the English date on the board at the front of the classroom. Each classroom from Year 5 to Year 6 will have a wall display next to the analogue clock to tell the time in the target language. A section in the library exists for bilingual books and language learning reference books, in both the target language taught within the curriculum (French) and any other languages books that have been acquired, for children to read in their free time.

The subject lead is responsible for maintaining resources, monitoring their use and organising storage. Resource purchasing is in accordance with normal school procedures and is based upon the MFL budget and school priorities.



## **11. Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring is carried out by the Headteacher and the subject lead in the following ways:

- Informal and formal discussions and identifying CPD needs.
- Informal and formal discussions with pupils.
- Evaluating pupil's written work in their books and a review of marking.
- Lesson observations.
- Regular reviews of the MFL policy, curriculum overview and unit topic plans.

## **12. Health and Safety**

Language lessons comply with the school's Health and Safety Policy.