

MFL at Litcham School

INTENT

1. To deliver the MFL National Curriculum.
2. To deliver a knowledge-led spiral MFL curriculum, where knowledge and skills are taught and consolidated through frequent revisiting.
3. To deliver a broad MFL curriculum that is appropriate for every student, giving them the opportunity to experience learning two foreign languages before specialising in one.
4. To promote high expectations and aspirations, enthusing and inspiring students in order to equip them with the knowledge and skills to be intercultural citizens. We aim to build the cultural capital of our students with a range of enrichment opportunities including overseas visits and the study of foreign language films and festivals.
5. To deliver an engaging and enjoyable MFL curriculum that is knowledge rich, and through the teaching of grammatical structures, syntax and vocabulary enables students to thrive and succeed in language learning.
6. To provide a high-quality languages education which fosters pupils' curiosity and deepens their understanding of the world.

IMPLEMENTATION

Curriculum Delivery

- Students in Years 3 to Year 6 follow the MFL National Curriculum and focus on learning French. Students receive one French lesson per fortnight, delivered by a language specialist from the secondary phase. A specialised scheme of work has been produced for use in the Primary Phase which includes the opportunity to appreciate stories, songs, poems and rhymes in French to reinforce the language and develop accurate pronunciation and intonation. Topics are taught termly and include age appropriate activities which build on the prior knowledge and skills in readiness for language learning at the secondary phase.
- It has always been our intention at Litcham to offer French, Spanish and German to GCSE level. We are currently in the process of modifying our KS3 provision. In Year 7 students now study both French and Spanish and have three lessons of each language per fortnight. With guidance, they are given the opportunity to select which language to specialise in from Year 8. Students in Years 8 and 9 receive 6 lessons of MFL lessons per fortnight. Current Year 9 students were able to commence learning German at the start of the year. In this year group there is also a class of students who began Spanish in Year 8. All classes are mixed ability.
- Students in Year 7 to Year 9 follow the MFL National Curriculum and teachers supplement their varied teaching resources using selected activities from: Dynamo, Studio and Tricolore (French), Stimmt (German) and Viva (Spanish).
- Students are encouraged to continue studying a language in KS4 and all three currently run in both Years ten and eleven. It is currently possible to study two languages at GCSE and all languages follow the Pearson/EDXCEL specification. Students in Key Stage 4 have 5 hours of MFL lessons a fortnight which include both single and double lessons in mixed ability classes.
- Collaborative planning ensures a common approach to MFL lessons. We have developed units of study which encompass a range of linguistic structures needed for successful communication, embedding challenge, metacognition, memory techniques and literacy. When teaching grammatical structures, we use the correct terminology and make explicit links to students own language. Our questioning encourages students to deduce the grammatical patterns and rules to further their understanding.
- The study of a range of texts, film, music and YouTube videos all feature in MFL lessons to spark an interest in foreign language cultures.

Teaching and Learning (including pedagogical approach and research)

Our topic areas and linguistic structures are frequently revisited during KS2 and 3 and we view them as building blocks for deeper learning at KS4. Students will use increasingly sophisticated language so Year 7 and 8 students are able to offer basic answers to core questions, whilst students re-visiting topics will be expected to use the target language more independently. The department has developed a range of retrieval activities including low stakes quizzing, which are used in each lesson along with entry or starter activities. We ensure our retrieval work includes vocabulary and

syntax from various stages in our curriculum and that regular recycling occurs. We employ a wide range of teaching strategies to engage and challenge learners. We have prioritised the introduction of Conti style sentence builders and tasks to encourage frequent recycling of language to promote confidence in students. We are further exploring the Conti method to increase our range of listening activities.

Speaking activities are at the core of our lessons and can include question/answer, interview, role-play and mini presentations. They are scaffolded in order to support all learners and lead to students feeling well prepared for more independent work where they can adapt the language and aim for fluency. These are also regularly used as preparation for writing tasks. Teachers encourage independence with students use of language by gradually reducing the support where appropriate. Target-driven writing tasks are differentiated to take into account all abilities but allow for challenge and aspiration.

We make use of a variety of online learning resources to consolidate language acquisition. These are frequently used to set homework tasks and in KS4 provide more opportunities to practise exam style questions.

Extra-Curricular

The MFL department offers a number of enrichment activities. Staff endeavour to organise one foreign trip a year and successful trips to Germany and France have run recently. Spanish trips are run when numbers of students are high. A number of Secondary / Primary projects run with schools within the cluster these have included: Christmas card exchanges, cooking projects and model making.

A whole year group Spelling Bee is held in Y7 and Christmas letters are written to elderly residents in a French care home.

IMPACT

At Primary Phase, assessment activities are included throughout each MTP and students are informally assessed by their subject teacher. Although students participate in all four skills, most assessment occurs during speaking and writing activities. Retrieval practice is included during the register and in games / speaking activities conducted in lessons. Reinforcement of the written word takes place ranging from practising single words to being able to write short sentences independently. The subject teacher provides written feedback in students' workbooks as per school marking policy.

In KS3, formal assessment takes place at the end of each module in a range of skills, with one receptive and one productive as a minimum. Success criteria enable the students to know what to include and what to aim for in their work. The department is developing the speaking and writing assessments so that these all include banded descriptors for envisaged attainment. Differentiated target driven tasks occur frequently and are a continuous method of informing progress. These are marked by teachers in a positive manner and include next steps comments for further progress. Students in Key Stage 3 also take part in knowledge quizzes and are less formally regularly tested on recent vocabulary during each module. Learning walks, our 'open-door' learning environment in MFL and book checks all enable the Heads of Department to monitor progress alongside the sharing of more formal assessment data.

Uptake for one of the three language GCSE's at Litcham has remained strong, allowing a large number of students to access the EBaCC. Students are gradually introduced to GCSE style assessment in KS4, although elements such as picture description, translation and short presentations have been subtly introduced earlier. Students are assessed in listening, reading and writing at the end of each module and also complete a range of Key Questions to assist with building up their repertoire of answers in speaking. Assessments generally follow the current format of the GCSE exam and appropriate grade feedback is given. Oral skills are formally assessed in Y10 and Y11 during mock speaking assessments but informal assessment / questioning are integral parts of each lesson at KS4.

Strategies for students at risk of underachieving include a range of interventions, such as being given an additional opportunity to complete assessments again, extra support in lessons, a move in the seating plan, departmental report or more scaffolding to help them understand tasks. At KS4 students are invited to sign up for individual speaking work at lunchtimes / after schools in an attempt to make them feel more confident about the final speaking examination. Postcards are sent home for sustained effort across a number of weeks. Students (and parents) often comment that they enjoy MFL lessons, due to the feeling of success they encounter and the range of activities experienced.