

31.10 Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Policy

Imagine a school where pupils have the confidence to express themselves whatever the language.

Where pupils learn Spanish in a variety of interactive ways, including the use of digital technology, to communicate orally and in writing. Pupils will progress from undertaking simple oral exercises (involving games and songs) to developing the skills that will enable them to undertake more spontaneous conversation. As pupils increase their vocabulary and grasp the key grammatical and spelling conventions, they will increasingly express themselves with confidence, independence and creativity.

The teaching of Modern Languages is a key element of the education of pupils at Magdalen Court School from Year 5 onwards. Pupils should have the opportunity to experience learning Spanish, through communicative methodology. It is hoped that pupils will develop awareness of the language we teach and of the country through its cultural and historical connections. The learning of Spanish as our foreign language should be stimulating and motivate pupils towards further learning of languages both European and wider. The natural link between languages and other areas of the curriculum can enhance the overall teaching and learning experience. The skills, knowledge and understanding gained make a major contribution to the development of pupils' oral and literacy skills and to the understanding of their own culture and that of others.

Our approach to language teaching is based on using the language for real life purposes. Pupils are encouraged to communicate in the foreign language in class and there is a strong emphasis on motivating pupils through games, competitions and spontaneous interaction. Magdalen Court School believes in a communicative approach in which all pupils can actively engage in meaningful tasks. A multi-sensory and kinaesthetic approach to teaching is used as well as an emphasis on the use of games, rhymes, CDs and songs including ICT. Teachers aim to make lessons as enjoyable as possible so that every pupil develops a positive attitude to the learning of Modern Foreign Languages. Pupils' confidence is built through praise for contributions they make, however tentative. Our policy of commencing language learning in the Prep School is based on research outlined in 'Languages for All' (DfES) illustrating that pupils already learning languages by the time they reach secondary education are more receptive to language learning and are more motivated. Early language learning can reinforce literacy skills and nurture enthusiasm that is carried on into secondary school.

Aims and Objectives

We believe that many pupils really enjoy learning to speak another language and that the earlier a pupil is exposed to a foreign language, the faster the language in question is acquired. We also believe that it is a good idea to introduce a new language to pupils when they are at primary school, as they tend to be less self-conscious about speaking aloud at this stage of their development. It is widely believed that the early acquisition of a foreign language facilitates the learning of other foreign languages later in life.

The aims and objectives of learning a Modern Foreign Language are:

- to foster an interest in learning other languages;
- to introduce young pupils to another language in a way that is enjoyable and fun;
- to make young pupils aware that language has structure, and that the structure differs from one language to another;
- to help pupils develop their awareness of cultural differences in other countries;
- to develop their speaking and listening skills;
- to lay the foundations for future study.

Organisation

We teach a foreign language to pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage for two lessons a week, Years 1 and 2 for one lesson a week, and from Year 3 to Year 6 for two lessons a week. Within the Senior School, lessons take place at least once a week and at least twice if a language is being taken for a GCSE. Subject specialists teach the foreign languages.

MFL curriculum planning

Our curriculum planning is in two phases (medium-term and short-term). Our medium-term plan maps the MFL topics for Spanish studied giving details of each unit of work for each term. The MFL specialist subject teachers draw up these curriculum maps and create their own individual short-term plan for weekly lessons, which they keep.

The curriculum that we follow is based on the guidance given in the revised National Curriculum. We teach the pupils to know and understand how to:

- ask and answer questions;
- use correct pronunciation and intonation;
- memorise words;
- interpret meaning;
- understand basic grammar;
- use dictionaries;
- work in pairs and groups, and communicate in another language;
- look at life in another culture.
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Teaching and Learning Style

We base some of the teaching on the guidance material in the QCA scheme of work for Modern Foreign Languages. We have adapted this to the context of our school and the abilities of our pupils.

We use a variety of techniques to encourage the pupils to have an active engagement in the Modern Foreign Language: these include games and role-play. We use drama to accompany new vocabulary in the foreign language, as this serves to demonstrate the foreign language without the need for translation. We focus on all four of the key skills areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. We also use a multi-sensory and kinaesthetic approach to teaching, i.e. we try to introduce a physical element into some of the games, as we believe that this serves to reinforce memory. We make the lessons as entertaining and enjoyable as possible, as we realise that this approach serves to develop a positive attitude in the pupils to the learning of Modern Foreign Languages. We build pupil confidence through constant praise for any contribution they make in the foreign language, however tentative.

Embedding languages in the curriculum & exploiting opportunities

As staff become more aware of language teaching methodology and more confident in their language skills, languages will be increasingly embedded in the curriculum. The coordinator together with the teaching staff, will identify opportunities in medium term planning and ensure the necessary resources are accessible/available. Opportunities for speaking another language should be exploited, be it in the playground or in the classroom. All staff in the school are responsible for ensuring this.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching is in line with the recommendations of the National Curriculum Modern Foreign Languages Order and the framework for the various key stages. The teaching takes full account of the different experiences, strengths and interests of our pupils whilst complying with statutory requirements and guidance on inclusion set out in the National Curriculum. Learning objectives are derived from progressive strands of teaching and learning to include oracy, literacy and intercultural understanding. Language learning is also enhanced through knowledge about language and strategies for learning languages.

Oracy

Oracy, listening, speaking and spoken interaction, has a more prominent place in language learning than in many other areas of the curriculum. In their early stages at Magdalen Court School, pupils will spend much of their time listening, speaking and interacting orally and will be given regular and frequent opportunities to listen to a good model of pronunciation. This emphasis on exposure to sound patterns of a language is particularly important because pupils will be reliant on the classroom for much of their spoken language experience. This experience is reinforced by lunch-time language clubs run by the subject teacher for GCSE students, giving them ample opportunity to boost their confidence by practising both their reading and their listening skills.

Pupils are therefore encouraged to:

- Communicate with each other in pairs and groups and with the teacher
- Use language for real purposes as well as to practise skills
- Develop their skills and understanding through games and role play
- Take part in imaginative and creative activities
- Use everyday classroom events as a context for spontaneous speech
- Discuss their own ideas, interests and experiences
- Listen or view for personal enjoyment as well as for information

Literacy

The literacy skills of reading and writing are supported by, and reinforce the development of oral skills. They will take on greater prominence at Year 6 and beyond as pupils become familiar with the relationship between sounds and letters in the new language.

Learning another language, pupils:

- Develop the capacity to learn and to use language
- Strengthen understanding of their own linguistic and cultural backgrounds through connections and comparisons
- Apply the visual, linguistic and cognitive strategies already learnt to a new language
- Decode and make meaning of different text types
- Apply and adapt language convention to create meaning in a range of text types and media

Pupils therefore have the opportunity to:

- Access a widening range of texts in print and on line
- Develop a knowledge of the writing system, the spelling and the structure of language
- Write sentences for different purposes and audiences

'Learning other languages gives us insight into the people, culture and traditions of other countries and helps us to understand our own language and culture.' P12 Language for All (DfES)

Intercultural Understanding

At Magdalen Court School, intercultural understanding and the right to language competence are seen as an essential part of being an informed citizen. Pupils develop a greater understanding of their own lives in the context of exploring the lives of others. They learn to look at things from another perspective, thereby helping to give them an insight into the people and traditions of other cultures. Pupils will become more aware of the similarities and differences between peoples, their daily lives, beliefs and values. Learning a new language inevitably and naturally brings pupils into contact with aspects of the culture of other countries and the practical nature of language learning will make this contact more tangible. Pupils grow in confidence as they learn to recognise different elements of the belief systems of speakers of the target language. They become increasingly aware of the ways in which these systems are expressed through language and cultural practices. As they compare and contrast different beliefs and cultural practices, including their own, they understand more about themselves and become more understanding of others.

Pupils are therefore given the opportunity to:

- Work with authentic materials in Spanish
- Listen to and view native Spanish speakers
- Consider their own culture and compare it with that of Spain or other countries and the wider community of the specific country
- Recognise cultural attitudes as expressed in language and learn the use of social conventions
- Take part in special enrichment activities within school and form links with schools in other countries
- Use the internet, email and experience educational visits abroad

Knowledge about Languages

At Magdalen Court School, pupils will increasingly develop insights into the nature of language and its social and cultural value. When learning a language, pupils reinforce and reinterpret knowledge and understanding gained in learning their mother tongue. This in turn supports effective communication both in speech and writing and increases awareness of pronunciation and intonation and how these influence meaning, together with how users adapt language in formal and informal contexts.

Pupils will therefore be encouraged to:

- Foster an interest in learning other languages
- Be curious about language
- Be aware that language has structure and that the structure differs from one language to another
- Develop their awareness of cultural differences in other countries
- Develop their speaking and listening skills
- Lay the foundations for future study
- Extend language teaching beyond mother tongue learning

Each unit of work contains key grammar and vocabulary and aims to reinforce other areas of the curriculum and gives opportunities to reflect on similarities and differences between peoples/countries where Spanish is spoken.

Language Learning Strategies and the Acquisition of Skills

An important aim of learning a language is to familiarise pupils with strategies which they can apply to their learning in all subjects. Pupils will have regular opportunities to identify and apply a range of language learning strategies. By doing so they will develop an awareness of how they learn and the ability to plan and use specific strategies for particular tasks.

Pupils will therefore be encouraged to:

- Look at the face of the person speaking
- Listen attentively for gist and for detail
- Use the context of what they see to help them determine meaning
- Use gesture or signing to show understanding
- Practise new language frequently
- Use games and other strategies to commit familiar language to memory
- Remember rhyming words
- Learn phrases by heart, songs, jokes, poems etc
- Follow instructions and directions
- Ask about meanings, seek clarification or repetition
- Ask and answer questions, give instructions
- Ask and give information
- Imitate pronunciation and intonation patterns
- Express agreement, disagreement and personal feelings
- Describe and discuss events in various tenses

Teachers also use mime to present new vocabulary as this serves to demonstrate various languages without the need for translation.

Language teaching at Magdalen Court School is fully inclusive. No pupil is excluded by reason of a learning difficulty, or because they have English as an additional language. Experience has indeed shown such pupils can derive particular benefit from taking part in MFL learning activities in which they may be less disadvantaged than in other areas of the curriculum.

Language learning activities are planned in such a way as to encourage the full and active participation of all pupils. Work is differentiated as appropriate to the needs of individual pupils. Pairs and groups for collaborative work may be made up in different ways depending on the task.

The teaching of foreign languages at Magdalen Court School draws on experiences from many sources dependent on the level being taught and the age of the pupils. Examples are:

Out and about

- Visitor information
- Basic weather
- Local amenities
- Accommodation
- Public transport
- Directions

Customer service and transactions

- Cafés and restaurants
- Shops
- Dealing with problems

Personal information

- General interests
- Leisure activities
- Family and friends
- Lifestyle (healthy eating and exercise)

Future plans, education and work

- Basic language of the internet
- Simple job advertisements
- Simple job applications and CV
- School and college
- Work and work experience

Pupils are exposed to a range of texts from a wide variety of cultures. Materials are provided in the pupils' target language: original texts, translation dictionaries, audio books, CDs, DVDs and online resources.

Texts and Resources:

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|-----------------------|--|
| • Text books | • Films |
| • CDs | • Internet |
| • Readers (Bibliobus) | • Software |
| • Newspapers | • School Trips |
| • Magazines | • Realia e.g. leaflets, timetables, menus etc. |
| • Maps | |

Teaching a Modern Foreign Language to Pupils with Special Educational Needs

At Magdalen Court School we teach a Modern Foreign Language to all pupils, whatever their ability. A Modern Foreign Language forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all pupils. Through our modern foreign language teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each pupil's different needs.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the pupil may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the pupil to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the pupil's needs. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) may be introduced. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to the Modern Foreign Language.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning a Modern Foreign Language. Where pupils are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a playground game in a Modern Foreign Language, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Assessment

KS1 & KS2

We assess the pupils in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject. We do this informally during the lessons, and also by testing to evaluate what the pupils have learned. There are no national key stage tests, but we do award the pupils certificates showing their progress. We also present the children with a medal at the end of the year to recognise their effort and achievement in Spanish. The school uses the four national attainment targets to evaluate the progress of each pupil in:

- listening and responding;
- speaking;
- reading and responding;
- writing.

Pupils will therefore be fully involved in the assessment process, understanding the learning objectives, setting targets and recording and celebrating progress and success. Evidence of attainment is gathered in written records.

KS3 & KS4

Formative assessment takes place on an ongoing basis. We aim for our pupils to:

- Become more aware of the importance and value of knowing different languages
- Value and promote cultural diversity
- Reflect and evaluate ways in which our pupils can learn
- Develop responsibility in pupils to take responsibility for their learning
- Build up knowledge and understanding

Summative assessment takes place on a regular basis, usually at the end of each unit in the Senior School. Levels are assessed based on QCA performance descriptors for MFL.

Pupils are encouraged throughout their language lessons to assess and reassess themselves by using their "Confidence Line". This allows them to gauge how they are progressing when first meeting or when practising new material. This allows them to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and assess how they individually can progress, encouraging them towards the longer-term goal of becoming independent language learners. They complete regular self assessments and set themselves targets as well as being set individual targets by their language teacher. This is aimed at encouraging them towards the longer-term goal of becoming independent language learners.

Additionally, pupils' work is assessed informally on the basis of observation during the lesson. This is particularly important for oral work. At the end of a piece of work, pupils may check each others' answers, particularly for a listening or reading activity, but the teacher will always mark and comment on the work. Very simple comments are made in the target language such *as muy bien, buen trabajo, fantástico*, etc and longer comments in English. Verbal feedback is also given with examples of good practice and where relevant, suggestions for improvement are made and shared to encourage and motivate.

At the end of each module of work, there is a module assessment covering the units of work studied. this allows the teacher to assess pupil progress.

There are four GCSE attainment targets in MFL :

- Attainment target 1: Listening and responding
- Attainment target 2: Speaking
- Attainment target 3: Reading and responding
- Attainment target 4: Writing

In EDEXCEL GCSE

- 20%
- 30%
- 20%
- 30%

Date: August 2016

Mrs A.Cafro

MFL co-ordinator

To be continuously monitored and reviewed by no later than two years from the date shown above.