

MFL Policy



‘Love, Learn and Shine Together with Jesus. ‘

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St Matthew's Policy for Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

SMSC Statement

At St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, we recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures.

Overview

In our school, we teach a foreign language to all children in Key Stage 2 throughout the year as part of the school curriculum. Key Stage 2 children are taught for half an hour by their class teacher or FLT and another half an hour of retrieval activities within class. We teach foreign languages to all children for several reasons. Firstly, we believe that many children enjoy learning to speak another language. Secondly, we also believe that the earlier a child 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 children at primary school age, as they are less self-conscious about speaking aloud at this stage of their development. It is also widely believed that the early acquisition of a foreign language facilitates the learning of other foreign languages later in life.



The aims of MFL are:

- To foster an interest in learning other languages;
- To introduce young children to another language in a way that is enjoyable and fun;
- To make young children aware that language has structure, and that the structure differs from one language to another;
- To help children develop their awareness of cultural differences in other countries;
- To develop their listening and speaking skills;
- To begin to develop written language skills;
- To lay the foundations for future study;
- To help build confidence in children to apply language knowledge when in real life situations e.g. holidays;
- To enable children to be able to communicate with children from other cultures.

In addition, learning a foreign language can improve children's understanding of their own language and reinforce learning in other areas of the curriculum, as well as foster an interest in other cultures.

St Matthew's MFL Curriculum

At St Matthew's, the modern foreign language that we teach is Spanish. The curriculum that we follow is based on guidance given in the revised National curriculum 2014 and provided by School Improvement Liverpool. We teach the children to know and understand how to:

- listen attentively to spoken language and show understanding by joining in and asking and answering questions;
- 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
- memorise words;
- interpret meaning;
- understand basic grammar;
- work in groups and pairs to communicate with others in another language;
- look at life in a different country and culture;
- communicate with children from a Spanish speaking school.

Teaching and Learning Styles

At St Matthew's, our Spanish lessons are taught to our KS2 students through a mixture of lessons from an external language specialist, employed by School Improvement Liverpool and class teachers. Class teachers also practice Spanish with the children at different points through the day, for example when lining up calling numbers or saying the date in Spanish each day. Throughout the Spanish lessons we use a variety of techniques to encourage the children to have an active engagement in the modern foreign language: these include games, role-play and songs (particularly action songs). We often use puppets and soft toys to demonstrate the foreign language. We frequently use a mime to accompany new vocabulary in the foreign language, as this serves to demonstrate the foreign language without the need for translation. We emphasise the listening and speaking skills over the reading and writing, although we do promote written language too and children complete written tasks at the end of each half term.

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 helps reinforce the children's memory. We make the lessons as entertaining and enjoyable as possible, as we realise that this approach to teaching helps to develop a positive attitude in the children to the learning of modern foreign languages. This is further reinforced by holding special modern foreign language weeks and days where the children can really get involved with activities linked to other cultures. We build children's confidence through constant praise for any contribution they make in the foreign language, however tentative.

The school promotes equal opportunities and fairness of all resources used to ensure all children are receiving interactive lessons. Children with other languages at home are encouraged to use them for educational benefit and parents are offered advice about what is appropriate. Efforts are made to ensure languages used at home are highlighted in the classroom once the teacher has been notified.

Teaching a modern foreign language to children with special educational needs

At St Matthew's, we teach a modern foreign language to all children, whatever their ability. A modern foreign language forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. 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 child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. 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 children 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

We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in this subject. We do this informally during the lessons, and also by regular testing to evaluate what the children have learned. There are no national key stage tests for MFL. The school uses the four national attainment targets to evaluate the progress of each child in:

- listening and responding
- speaking
- reading and responding
- writing

Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated by the coordinator to ensure policies are up dated with the latest initiatives. Evaluation will include: effectiveness, ease of implementation, identifying any amendments needed and additions required to the policy as a result of legislation changes.

Teachers should ensure that they are confident with the subject matter and inform the MFL Coordinators of their training and support needs. The MFL Coordinator should ensure that they are well-informed of current ideas and developments in Modern Foreign Languages by attending appropriate courses and keeping up to date with new initiatives. They should disseminate gathered information to colleagues.

We monitor teaching and learning in the same way as we do all the other subjects that we teach in the school. The Headteacher also reports to the governing body on the progress of the children in Spanish in the same way as in any other subject.

The Headteacher, MFL coordinator and class teacher all liaise with the local secondary schools too, so that they are aware of the modern foreign language experience of our children when they move to the next phase of their education.

