

MFL (Spanish) Policy

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School



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Review Date

Vision and Aims

At St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, we believe that learning a modern foreign language enriches children's education and broadens their understanding of the world. Learning Spanish gives pupils the opportunity to communicate with others, develop their confidence and curiosity, and appreciate languages and cultures beyond their own.

Rooted in our Catholic mission, we want every child to recognise the dignity and value of people from different countries, cultures and backgrounds. Learning another language encourages children to listen to others, communicate respectfully, celebrate diversity and develop an understanding of our place within a wider global community.

We maintain high expectations for all pupils, including those with SEND, pupils learning English and those facing disadvantage. We want children to develop positive attitudes towards language learning and to understand that making mistakes are a natural and important part of learning a new language.

Through Spanish, pupils are encouraged to:

- listen carefully and respond appropriately;
- develop accurate pronunciation and intonation;
- speak with increasing confidence and spontaneity;
- understand and use an expanding range of Spanish vocabulary and phrases;
- read and understand simple Spanish texts;
- write words, phrases and sentences with increasing accuracy;
- recognise and apply simple grammatical patterns;
- develop confidence in communicating with others;
- develop knowledge of Spanish-speaking countries and cultures;
- compare aspects of Spanish-speaking cultures with their own experiences;
- develop curiosity about other languages and communities;
- appreciate the importance of respectful communication.

Progression in Spanish

Our Spanish curriculum is carefully sequenced so that pupils build upon previously taught vocabulary, structures and knowledge.

Spanish is taught throughout Key Stage 2 in accordance with the National Curriculum for England. Pupils develop the four key language skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Grammar and vocabulary are taught progressively alongside these four skills.

By the end of Year 6, pupils should have developed a secure foundation in Spanish and be able to understand and communicate using familiar vocabulary and simple grammatical structures. They should be able to listen and respond to spoken Spanish, participate in simple conversations, read and understand familiar written Spanish, and write phrases and sentences with increasing independence.

Pupils revisit previously taught vocabulary regularly so that important knowledge is retained. New language is introduced through meaningful contexts and connected to prior learning wherever possible.

Progression includes increasingly complex vocabulary, sentence structures, grammatical concepts and opportunities for communication as pupils move through Key Stage 2.

Curriculum Design and Planning

At St Matthew's, Spanish is planned as a progressive curriculum rather than as a series of disconnected topics. Teachers consider what pupils already know and ensure that new vocabulary and grammatical structures build upon previous learning.

Planning identifies the key vocabulary, language structures, pronunciation, grammar and cultural knowledge that pupils should acquire.

Lessons provide opportunities for pupils to:

- hear Spanish spoken accurately;
- practise pronunciation and intonation;
- repeat and rehearse new vocabulary;
- respond to questions and instructions;
- participate in paired and group conversations;
- use sentence stems and modelled structures;
- read words, phrases and short texts;
- record and write their own Spanish;
- revisit and retrieve previously taught language;
- apply vocabulary in new contexts;
- learn about Spanish-speaking countries and cultures.

Resources are selected to support the progression of the school's Spanish curriculum. These may include PowerPoints, knowledge organisers, songs, games, flashcards, visual resources, practical activities and digital resources.

Where appropriate, teachers adapt resources and activities to meet the needs of pupils in their class while maintaining the intended language-learning objective.

Teachers remain responsible for ensuring that Spanish is taught effectively and that pupils receive appropriate support and challenge.

Spanish Language Progression

Listening

Pupils develop their ability to understand spoken Spanish. They progress from recognising familiar words and phrases to understanding increasingly complex sentences and short conversations.

Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to hear accurate Spanish pronunciation and to identify familiar vocabulary within spoken language.

Speaking

Speaking is an important part of Spanish lessons at St Matthew's. Pupils are encouraged to speak Spanish regularly through repetition and oral rehearsal, songs and rhymes, games, question-and-answer activities, paired conversations, role play, presentations and classroom routines.

Teachers model pronunciation clearly and provide opportunities for pupils to practise before speaking independently. Mistakes are treated as part of the learning process and pupils are encouraged to develop confidence rather than fear of getting a word or phrase wrong.

Reading

Pupils develop their ability to recognise and understand written Spanish. They read words, phrases and sentences and gradually work towards understanding short texts. Reading activities support pupils in recognising familiar vocabulary, identifying patterns and making links between spoken and written Spanish.

Writing

Pupils gradually develop their ability to record and communicate ideas in written Spanish. They begin with individual words and familiar phrases before progressing towards sentences and short pieces of writing. Writing activities are carefully matched to pupils' prior learning so that children can apply vocabulary and grammatical structures that have been explicitly taught.

Vocabulary, Grammar and Pronunciation

Vocabulary is explicitly taught and revisited throughout the Spanish curriculum.

Children are expected to develop an increasingly broad vocabulary covering familiar themes and situations. These may include greetings, numbers, colours, family, school, hobbies, food, animals, weather, places, clothing and other appropriate contexts.

Pronunciation is explicitly modelled. Pupils hear Spanish spoken accurately and are given regular opportunities to practise individual sounds, words and phrases.

Grammar is introduced progressively and in an age-appropriate way. Pupils develop an understanding of how Spanish works and begin to recognise similarities and differences between Spanish and English.

Children are encouraged to use their knowledge of grammatical patterns to help them understand and create new language.

Cultural Understanding

Learning Spanish at St Matthew's includes developing children's understanding of the cultures and communities where Spanish is spoken.

Pupils learn that Spanish is spoken in many different countries and communities around the world. They explore age-appropriate aspects of Spanish-speaking cultures, traditions, celebrations, music, food, geography and everyday life.

Cultural learning is used to develop children's curiosity and understanding rather than presenting Spanish-speaking countries as one single culture.

Pupils are encouraged to identify similarities and differences between their own lives and those of children in Spanish-speaking communities.

This supports our Catholic ethos by encouraging respect, understanding and appreciation of people from different backgrounds and cultures.

Teaching and Learning – The St Matthew's Way

Spanish lessons follow the principles of the St Matthew's Way. Teachers establish what pupils already know, introduce precise vocabulary and the learning goal, model new language, check understanding, provide guided and independent practice, and use feedback to identify the next steps in learning.

A gradual "I do, we do, you do" approach may be used to support pupils as they move towards independence.

Lessons include a balance of:

- teacher modelling;
- whole-class repetition;
- oral rehearsal;
- paired and group work;
- games and practical activities;
- listening activities;
- reading activities;
- writing activities;
- retrieval of previously taught vocabulary;
- independent application.

Teachers provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to hear, practise and use new language before expecting them to apply it independently.

Visual prompts, sentence stems, actions, gestures and repetition are used where appropriate to support understanding and retention.

Inclusion and Adaptation

The same ambitious language-learning objectives are made accessible through responsive teaching.

Teachers adapt Spanish activities where necessary to remove barriers to learning without unnecessarily reducing the intended learning goal.

Adaptations may include:

- pre-teaching vocabulary;
- visual prompts and symbols;
- word banks;
- vocabulary mats;
- sentence stems;
- repetition and additional oral rehearsal;
- paired speaking opportunities;
- gestures and actions;
- breaking activities into manageable steps;
- additional modelling;
- reduced recording demands;
- enlarged or simplified resources;
- additional processing time;
- alternative methods of demonstrating understanding.

Pupils learning English can benefit from the similarities and differences between English and Spanish. Teachers explicitly model vocabulary and provide visual and oral support where appropriate.

Pupils with SEND are supported to participate fully in Spanish lessons. Where appropriate, teachers liaise with the SENDCO and use information from pupil profiles and individual support plans to inform adaptations.

High-attaining pupils are challenged through extended speaking and writing, independent application of vocabulary, increasingly complex sentence structures and opportunities to explain or apply grammatical patterns.

Assessment and Responsive Teaching

Assessment in Spanish is used to identify what pupils know, understand and can apply.

Teachers assess pupils through questioning, listening to pupils speak, observation, repetition and retrieval activities, vocabulary quizzes, reading activities, written tasks, practical activities, conversations and role play, and low-stakes assessment.

Teachers use assessment information to identify misconceptions, gaps in vocabulary or grammar and areas requiring further practice.

Regular retrieval of previously taught vocabulary supports pupils in retaining important language over time.

Assessment should inform teaching rather than create unnecessary workload. Teachers use what they notice about pupils' learning to adapt subsequent lessons and provide appropriate support or challenge.

Personal Development and Building the Kingdom

Learning Spanish contributes to pupils' wider personal development.

Through learning another language, pupils develop confidence, resilience, curiosity, listening skills, communication skills, respect for others, appreciation of diversity and awareness of the wider world.

Spanish provides meaningful opportunities for children to understand that there are many different languages, cultures and ways of life.

In keeping with our Catholic mission, language learning can help pupils consider how we communicate with others, how we show respect and how we contribute to a welcoming and inclusive community.

Spanish Enrichment

Where opportunities arise, Spanish is promoted beyond the timetabled lesson.

This may include Spanish-themed assemblies, language celebration days, European Languages Day, Spanish displays around school, Spanish songs and music, cultural activities, Spanish-related competitions and events, Spanish after-school clubs, and opportunities to communicate with or learn from Spanish speakers.

The school seeks opportunities for pupils to recognise that language learning is relevant beyond the classroom.

Leadership Monitoring and Review

Class teachers are responsible for supporting pupils' Spanish learning and ensuring that agreed curriculum expectations are implemented.

The MFL/Spanish subject leader provides guidance and support to staff and monitors the quality and consistency of Spanish provision across the school.

Subject leadership may include:

- reviewing curriculum planning;
- monitoring progression;
- learning walks;
- reviewing pupils' work;

- speaking to pupils about their learning;
- monitoring vocabulary and knowledge retention;
- supporting teachers with pronunciation and subject knowledge;
- providing or organising CPD;
- reviewing resources;
- identifying strengths and areas for development;
- reporting to senior leaders and governors where appropriate.

The subject leader works with staff to identify curriculum priorities and ensure that adaptations are made where assessment or monitoring identifies a need.

Where Spanish is taught by a specialist Spanish teacher/FLT, the specialist teacher works alongside class teachers to support effective curriculum delivery. Class teachers remain responsible for classroom management, SEND provision and the wider needs of their pupils.

Monitoring focuses on how well pupils develop and retain Spanish vocabulary and language structures, the consistency of pronunciation and modelling, progression across year groups, pupils' confidence in using Spanish and the effectiveness of adaptations.

Findings from monitoring inform action plans, staff development and future curriculum planning.

Working with Families

Information about Spanish learning may be shared with parents and carers through the school's usual communication systems.

Parents and carers are encouraged to support children's interest in Spanish by practising vocabulary, greetings and simple phrases at home where appropriate.

The school recognises that families may have knowledge of languages other than English and welcomes opportunities to celebrate pupils' linguistic diversity.

Where appropriate, the school may celebrate children's home languages alongside Spanish to promote respect for multilingualism and the value of language learning.

Resources

The school provides appropriate resources to support the teaching and learning of Spanish.

These may include Spanish knowledge organisers, vocabulary lists, curriculum planning, teacher-created resources, PowerPoints and interactive resources, flashcards, visual prompts, songs and rhymes, games, books and reading materials, and digital resources.

Resources are reviewed regularly to ensure that they support the school's planned progression and the needs of its pupils.

Related Guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- National Curriculum for England – Languages Programme of Study;
- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, where relevant;
- St Matthew’s SEND Policy;
- St Matthew’s Assessment Policy;
- St Matthew’s Teaching and Learning Policy;
- St Matthew’s Behaviour Policy;
- St Matthew’s Equality Policy;
- school curriculum and progression documents;
- Spanish curriculum planning and knowledge organisers.