

Policy for MFL

Rationale for teaching languages at primary level:

Learning a language enriches the curriculum. It provides excitement, enjoyment and challenge for children and teachers, helping to create enthusiastic learners and to develop positive attitudes to 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 major contribution to the development of children's oracy and literacy and to their understanding of their own culture/s and those of others. Language also lies at the heart of ideas about individual identity and community, and learning another language can do a great deal to shape 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 language.

Language learning supports oracy and literacy

Children spend much of their time in language lessons speaking, listening and interacting - more than in most other subjects. As stated, they take part in many different activities which demand use of oral and aural skills. This emphasis on communication underpins children's capabilities in oracy, which will lead to more effective and responsive communicators. Equally important in language learning is their increasing knowledge about languages; comparing, phonemes, graphemes, spelling patterns, word order etc can only reinforce what they are being taught in Literacy.

Language learning leads to gains across the curriculum

Children approach a broad range of learning activities in a new and challenging context; these relate to mother tongue literacy, to mathematics and other subject areas such as geography, music and citizenship. This can lead to deep learning and significant gains in their general understanding as they recycle and reinterpret existing knowledge. Through the conscious development of language learning they are also learning how to learn.

Language learning supports and celebrates the international dimension

English has for a long time been a universal language and this has, in the past, made British people complacent and reluctant to learn another language. However, in an ever growing global economy it is becoming increasingly important that we give all children the chance to learn a language. Not only will this improve their future prospects but it will allow them to gain insights into their own lives and those of others around the world. They need the chance to make contact with people in other countries and cultures and to reflect upon their own cultural identities and those of other people.

In sum, language learning offers opportunities for children to:

- gain enjoyment, pride and a sense of achievement;
- express themselves creatively and imaginatively in another language;
- apply and develop their knowledge of languages and language learning;
- explore and apply strategies to improve their learning;
- explore their own cultural identities and those of others.

Aims and Objectives:

The main aim of language teaching is to develop children's linguistic competence. The teaching of language should offer opportunities to:

- become increasingly familiar with the sounds and written form of a new language
- develop linguistic skills, knowledge about learning and language-learning skills
- understand and communicate in a new language
- make comparisons between a foreign language and English or another language
- increase their cultural awareness by learning about different countries and their people, and working with materials from those countries and communities.
- develop positive attitudes towards language learning
- use their knowledge with growing confidence and competence to understand what they hear and read, and to express themselves in speech and in writing
- form a sound basis for further study and beyond.

Role of MFL in the Curriculum:

- MFL is to be taught, wherever possible, by the class teacher in order to ensure that the children have regular exposure to their target language.
- Teachers should aim for a 30 minute lesson each week with regular 5 to 10 minute sessions throughout the rest of the week.
- If possible, everyday commands should be made in the target language; sit down; line up; what day is it; what is the weather like; simple maths problems; cut, stick, colour, fold etc.
- Relevant vocabulary should be displayed throughout the unit of work and be built upon.
- Where possible, MFL should be interlinked with other areas of the curriculum to give it relevance to the children's learning.
- Wherever possible links with ICT should be made. (Recording and reviewing their work using only positive feedback, creating sound files, power points, video-conferencing etc gives real purpose to their language learning)

Inclusion:

All children should be given the opportunity to enjoy and achieve in their language learning. Activities should offer the children a chance to:

- learn in a range of teaching styles encouraging movement and active learning
- respond to tasks in a variety of ways and free from inhibition.
- work collaboratively and cooperatively with others work in an environment free from intimidation (Correction of errors is necessary but should be gentle and positive.)
- become actively involved in their work (ie. physical response to sounds and activities that involve active participation by all in a non-threatening way.)
- listen to and respect contributions made by others.

All lessons should:

- help children to develop a positive attitude to linguistic and cultural diversity within the school and the community. They should also recognise and challenge stereotypes.
- be primarily fun and unthreatening yet follow structured progression
- have real purpose. Language should be used in ways that the children may encounter
- be adapted at planning level, based on the needs of the children. Gifted and talented children should be given the opportunity to extend their skills beyond those of the rest of the class.

Children should be:

- encouraged to participate through enthusiasm and lots of praise and to progress at their own pace.
- be encouraged to practise and perform. Allow them opportunities to perform to others (eg. each other, parents, other classes, the headteacher and governors).

Links outside the classroom:

There are many in a real, relevant and exciting ways that language learning can be enhanced.

- Create links with schools abroad. This offers amazing opportunities to practise their language skills and to learn first hand about other cultures.
- Links with secondary schools should ideally be made in order to aid transition. Experience and expertise should be shared in order to ensure that the skills the children have built aren't ignored or wasted.

Progression:

KS2 has 5 main strands to follow, as set out in the Framework for Languages

- oracy
- literacy
- intercultural understanding
- knowledge about language
- language learning strategies.

The school long term plan is set out as below.

	Term 1 and 2	Term 3 and 4	Term 5 and 6
Year 3	I'm learning French Colours and numbers	Shapes Animals	Fruit Songs and rhymes
Year 4	Presenting myself The family	Petit Chaperon Rouge In class (classroom objects)	The date At the cafe
Year 5	Do you have a pet? What is the weather?	Clothes At home	The Olympic Games Goldilocks and the Three Bears
Year 6	At school Me in the world	The Second World War The weekend (pastimes)	Eating and moving (healthy living) Habitats

(All year groups to integrate Christmas, Easter and other festivals when appropriate.)

As with any subject, progression is vital in order for the children to feel that they are getting somewhere. Feeding them a diet of lists of nouns, repeating the same activities year after year will lead to boredom and disinterestedness. Therefore, grammar and literacy have a large role to play in the progression of language learning. These should not be dry rote learning of verb constructions and spelling tests but a build up of skills introduced in simple and exciting ways.

See schemes of work.

Assessment:

Assessment should be informal and non-threatening. End of unit self assessment should be made in peer group pairs and through teacher-pupil dialogue and stuck in their French books at the end of the unit.

Resources:

All resources are available on the Language Angels site.
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