



St. Joseph's Catholic High School



Living, Loving and Learning through Christ

Curriculum Intent

Department: MFL

We aim to deliver the Mission Statement of the school by:

- The MFL department curriculum aims to enhance students' lives in the study of languages by fulfilling the St Joseph's Mission statement, *Living, loving, learning through Christ*. We strive to make language learning engaging, inspire a love of languages and a thirst for knowledge in our students, developing them as independent and enquiring learners.
- In line with the MFL National curriculum programmes of study, we aim to provide a high-quality education that fosters pupils' curiosity and deepens their understanding of the world. We endeavor to ensure that students understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources, and they speak and write with increasing length, accuracy, complexity and confidence for different purposes and audiences. We aim to build on the limited and varying foundations of language learning laid at KS2 and provide suitable preparation for further study by delivering a well sequenced, rich curriculum taught by well trained and well supported teachers who impart the same content but have the autonomy to choose how they teach.
- In the spine of our curriculum, we have Pearson's textbooks, which have been chosen for their sound and logical grammar scaffolding and for meaningful ready access to listening materials. Following the textbooks provides a coherent sequence that ultimately leads to the knowledge and skills required to do well in the French and Spanish GCSE examinations. However, our curriculum goes well beyond what is printed on the pages with a rigorous approach to grammar and a wide range of activities which provide the breadth and depth that textbooks alone can't afford.
- We use and encourage a variety of online learning platforms chosen for their ability to consolidate and build on students' knowledge. These platforms capitalize on pupil's love for technology and technology-based learning allowing pupils to make progress at their own pace, providing not only differentiation, but also extension for those students who consider languages for further study and a career. Platforms such as SentenceBuilders, Languages Gym, ActiveLearn and Seneca Learning are used in MFL timetabled lessons and as homework, and have been chosen for their ability to allocate specific tasks to individual students, their content and the range of skills practiced. They provide instant feedback to the student, and the teacher can see detailed individual progress, in this way providing meaningful classwork and home learning while safeguarding staff's workload and wellbeing. Platforms such as Blooket or Memrise have been chosen for their contribution to vocabulary building and retrieval in a more contemporary manner, while other platforms such as Study Spanish, TeachVid and Lyrics Training are ideal for independent learning and extension.
- Further to preparing students to do well in examinations, we give students the tools to be able to communicate with foreign speakers of French or Spanish, from basic transactions applicable to day-to-day life when traveling to target language countries, to more formal conventions required in these countries' business world. We develop students' literacy skills by enabling and guiding them to make links to their native language and improving their own knowledge and use of English in the learning of the foreign language. We also expose them to foreign language presence in the world of work by raising awareness of foreign entities within UK industry, so they understand the relevance of language learning beyond travel, translation and teaching thus improving their employability and social mobility.
- Beyond teaching the language as a means of communication, we deliver culture-rich lessons with the aim of spurring students' curiosity and desire to find out more about countries, places, traditions and people they



St. Joseph's Catholic High School



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knew little about before studying the target language at SJCHS. This exposure directly hones the JPP values of being curious, compassionate and grateful as students become curious of other cultures but also compassionate and grateful when they learn about young people and life in less developed Spanish speaking countries. Equally, the inclusion of target language culture unavoidably implies cross curricular links to geography and history and makes our students wiser -another of the JPP values- increasing their cultural capital towards becoming educated and discerning citizens.

To achieve our Mission Statement, our curriculum:

- Provides opportunities to revisit and recycle topics that students find more challenging such as telling the time. Core vocabulary and structures are embedded by interleaving them into new topics. Basic grammar knowledge is secured with a combination of block learning such as drilling a particular grammar element over a period of two or three lessons and interleaving by applying it in a range of topics.
- Allows to build on learning in a logical sequence. Students arrive with limited knowledge of MFL acquired at KS2 and some students can recall a few short lists of familiar vocabulary such as numbers, pets or colors but have not been given the skills to manipulate language and put words into sentences. In year 7, great emphasis is placed on the recognition of the infinitive form of the verb and the concept of conjugation, alongside concepts of gender and agreement. The year 7 curriculum allows for frequent practice of these, for example talking about school, giving free time opinions or describing the local area. Students focus on the use of the present tense and mastering this before learning the near future in the summer term of year 7. In year 8, the present tense is revised, and the preterit (Spanish) is introduced. Topics such as holiday or visiting a target language city provide opportunities to use the past tense in context. In year 8, grammar complexity is built upon with more challenging concepts such as reflexive verbs. Delivery of topics is designed to create opportunities for students to combine the three timeframes learnt to this point. For lower ability sets, year 9 topics provide a platform for revisiting and reviewing prior grammar in different contexts, while more able classes are introduced to additional tenses such as the past imperfect, the simple future or conditional.
- By the end of KS3, students have a grasp of basic grammar which allows them to identify and use tenses and structures which convey present, past and future and they can express interests and justify opinions. They have the vocabulary base and linguistic competence to cope with transactions such as ordering food, shopping or a visit to the doctor while in a target language country and they can obtain information and respond appropriately to passages of target language text or speech.
- At KS4, all KS3 topics and grammar are re-taught giving students the opportunity to consolidate learning while building on previous knowledge. Most topics are broadly similar but new vocabulary and grammar structures give students a wider range of language to understand and express more convincing and developed opinions and points of view. We also introduce a new topic of global areas of interest which enables students to talk about more consequential matters such as natural disasters and mass musical and sporting events.
- The MFL curriculum provides opportunities to develop literacy and reading skills. For literacy, for example, we make links between the foreign language and English to help decode meaning. In doing so, we frequently expose students to more formal English vocabulary with Latin routes which they may not have seen or used before. A GCSE example of this is “año sabático/année sabbatique” links to “sabbatical” which the teacher or a knowing student is likely to have to explain to others to then link to “gap year” in the curriculum context of young people’s future plans. Other literacy opportunities across both key stages include reinforcement of English grammar rules and spelling in contrast to the target language such as reminders of capitalization for



St. Joseph's Catholic High School



Living, Loving and Learning through Christ

days of week, months and languages in contrast with the target language rules of only capitalising these if they are found at the start of a sentence in the target language.

- We develop reading skills by providing texts for different purposes from tourist information leaflets to authentic literature such as poems or passages from well-known literature works and song lyrics from a variety of artists from Spanish speaking countries. Pupils read these for gist and detail. They learn to understand the purpose of the text, the important ideas and details, and they are able to provide an accurate translation of short, suitable material.
- Students' writing is developed using an increasing wide range of grammar and vocabulary. Students write blogs, emails, letters and similar texts where they express their own ideas and opinions, with a focus not only on the content, but also on the quality of the language that they produce. They also learn to translate short written texts accurately.
- The curriculum incorporates a substantial number of speaking activities so to build confidence and promote oracy skills. The frequency and number of speaking activities has been increased to reflect the lack of these during periods of lockdown and restrictions over earlier academic years. Students practice and prepare to initiate, partake and develop coherent conversations with an emphasis on the use of full and extended sentences and an appropriate register.
- At KS4, great stress is placed on students' ability to develop and justify opinions in a range of topics, and we work to improve spontaneity and the range of grammar complexity and tenses. We encourage and support students to become logical, independent and resilient. In doing so, we give students the necessary tools and suitable preparation to continue the study of MFL at KS5 and beyond and provide transferable skills that will help pupils to cope with everyday life in their future endeavors.
- We promote meta-cognitive strategies by placing emphasis on questioning, rather than the more conventional explicit presentation of grammar principles. This allows students to elicit grammar rules and decode meaning, increasing resilience and independence and making learning more memorable.
- Staff are knowledgeable of student's SEN plans and IHCP plans and use these to design their sitting plans and inform their planning so these students can be better supported. Learning is scaffolded for SEN students and differentiated resources are provided whether for an individual student or lower ability classes with the aim of making learning accessible and providing opportunities to succeed. We endeavor to provide an environment where students are willing to try and take risks, and errors are seen as an opportunity for development and reinforcement of previous learning.
- Our curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of all our pupils with adaptive teaching. We are in the process of developing a bespoke KS3 curriculum for our set 5 classes which develops key literacy skills and increases cultural capital alongside the curriculum topics. Our goal is to ensure all students, regardless of starting point or learning needs, make good progress and that their MFL experience, beyond the language knowledge itself; contributes to students' overall preparation for a successful life ahead.
- Progress is assessed with a combination of formative and summative assessments. Formative assessment is ongoing and allows progress to be made through learning in lessons and homework. This allows teachers to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and target gaps and areas of further improvement.
- A meaningful productive skills task is set at least once per half term. These tasks are deep marked and formal feedback with What Went Well and Even Better If is given. The feedback is followed up with a Raise your Grade activity. At KS3 RyG activities often include looking at common errors, identifying and addressing misconceptions, and developing a model answer. At KS4 students are expected to complete their individual RyG following their feedback.
- All spoken and written work is marked separately in two areas: content and communication, and quality of language. This particularly supports students with additional learning needs because success can be achieved and celebrated without the need for accuracy.



St. Joseph's Catholic High School



Living, Loving and Learning through Christ

- Summative assessment takes place in the form of vocabulary learning tests carried out weekly for all year groups. Vocabulary learning tests provide formal retrieval practice. Summative end of unit assessments take place at the end of every unit of work. At KS3, we aim to assess one receptive and one productive skill at the end of each unit to ensure that all four skills are assessed. This includes the speaking skill which is assessed twice per academic year. At KS4, in addition to end of unit assessments, students complete at least two sets of mock examinations: one in year 10 and another in year 11. Speaking at KS4 is assessed formatively in lessons with the exception of mock examinations.
- We aim to deliver lessons and sequences of learning following Rosenshine's principles of instruction so students can make the best possible progress. Teaching in the department typically includes dual coding, scaffolding of learning and challenging tasks, modelling of pronunciation and model sentence structures and paragraphs, lots of questioning to aid and assess understanding, guided and independent practice and frequent reviews of learning.
- In the department, all meetings start with good practice sharing and less experienced teachers are encouraged to try activities and methods, proven to support progress while contributing to the enjoyment and motivation of students. The department has an open-door policy and a culture of working together and resource sharing. The head of department checks that all teachers are following the curriculum and content is being delivered in sufficient depth and a timely manner.
- Our curriculum is delivered by specialist teachers with a wealth of knowledge. They are either native speakers or with native level language skills.