

Primary Languages

Intent, implementation and Impact of our Languages Curriculum (French)

As the National Curriculum states: "languages are an insulation from insularity which fosters curiosity and deepens understanding of the world". At WVPS we believe that a communication-based language curriculum filled with opportunities for vocabulary, grammar and phonology is most beneficial to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum for Primary Languages. This approach allows an expression of thought and ideas in French for practical purposes, letting our students develop a mindset which is curious about languages and the world. The focus on conversations and simple expression of French will help equip children to engage with further learning in KS3 and develop an interest in not only foreign languages but also their own native language.

Intent

We aim for high-quality language teaching which inspires an interest in linguistics and a wider appreciation and understanding of other cultures in the world for all pupils. Weekly lessons provide opportunities to celebrate similarities and differences between cultures but throughout the school year there are many opportunities to increase cultural capital, such as participation in the European Day of Language, cross-curricular links such as in Art and Topic and even themed lunch menus e.g., a Mexican-themed menu for cinco de mayo. Through a bespoke Scheme of Work supported by teaching staff's knowledge and experience French can be taught through songs, games and drama in order to fulfil our ambition to equip pupils with the confidence to communicate about practical matters with an increasing knowledge of phonology, grammar and vocabulary. While we also want children to develop written skills, specifically in UKS2, we are aware of how the pressures of extended writing may demotivate some children. Opportunities are given for writing in every lesson through the use of our own developed booklets with differing writing opportunities depending on the lesson's learning objective. We want children to enjoy and love learning about languages without having any fear of failure or worries about pronunciation. This worry can be shared by staff so sound files are included in lessons to model good pronunciation, and staff are regularly encouraged to use free apps such as Duolingo or podcasts like Coffeebreak French to reduce anxiety towards language learning.

Implementation

Consistent weekly teaching over the 4 years of KS2 is necessary in order for our pupils to make substantial progress by the end of Year 6. To ensure this, language learning is implemented through themed days and regular weekly teaching of 30 – 45 minutes. Lessons foster curiosity with a balance of phonology, grammatical structures and vocabulary through PowerPoints with quality visuals and images, developed by the language lead. Each lesson contains reviews of prior learning, sound files and a broad selection of participative whole-class, small group and paired activities. New language is practised through songs, poems, rhymes, games, stories, grammar, videos, sentence work, dictionary work and drama – enabling every child to access French. Our scheme of work covers the objectives listed in the Primary Languages programme of study and KS2 Framework for Languages, ensuring a logical progression of new high-frequency vocabulary practised with repeated exposure to similar language structures. In each lesson there are opportunities to cover the four strands of speaking, listening, writing and reading with topics that appeal to and are relevant to pupils. Booklets are provided for termly recording of tasks related to the language objectives of each lesson and a vocabulary grid is included to record and revisit prior learning.

Impact

The impact and measure of Languages is to ensure that children at WVPS are not only able to communicate using basic phrases and hold a short conversation but also apply their knowledge of language and its structure to new language situations e.g., knowing how to describe food can also imply they know how to describe about animals. The curriculum hopes to develop a curiosity and interest into languages when they reach KS3 and use skills learned to either continue with French or pick up a new language such as Spanish or German, which will inevitably help them for employment in the competitive labour market.