

## Netherleigh and Rossefield School

# MFL Policy

September 2016

### 1 Aims and Objectives

- 1.1** In our school, we support the view that learning a modern foreign language is an entitlement for all pupils during their time in school. We are therefore committed to the principle that learning another language is appropriate for all children, whatever their ability or special needs. We will also seek to develop our curriculum so that teaching a foreign language is a normal part of it. We will do this for the following 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 that language is acquired, and one advantage of introducing a new language at primary school is that children tend to be less self-conscious about speaking aloud at this stage of their development. Further, it is widely accepted the early acquisition of a foreign language facilitates the learning of other foreign languages later in life.
- 1.2** Our main objective in teaching a modern foreign language at primary school is to promote the early development of linguistic competence. We believe that, to accomplish this, we should help children to do all of the following:
- familiarise themselves with the sounds and written form of a modern foreign language;
  - develop particular language learning skills;
  - begin to understand a new language, and communicate in it;
  - make comparisons between languages;
  - learn about different countries and their people, and work with materials from different countries and communities, thus increasing their awareness of other cultures;
  - develop a positive attitude towards the learning of foreign languages in general;
  - use their knowledge of the foreign language with growing confidence, both to understand what they hear and read, and to express themselves in speech and in writing;
  - acquire through all of the above, a sound basis for further study at Key Stage 3 and beyond.

## **2 Teaching and Learning**

**2.1** We recognise that language learning in its broadest sense has three core strands:

- Learning to communicate (with the emphasis on oracy, i.e. listening, speaking and interacting);
- Learning about language (using literacy, i.e. reading and writing in the foreign language, to learn about the writing system, spelling and structure of the language);
- Learning about and comparing different cultures (inter-cultural understanding)

We also recognise that children should be encouraged to apply knowledge already learnt about their own language to their learning of the new language. We aim to equip pupils with strategies for language learning that they can use in the future when studying another foreign language.

**2.2** Our school's commitment to high quality MFL teaching is underlined by our employment of a specialist French teacher, who teaches a weekly French lesson to all children in Years 2-6.

**2.3** We base the teaching on Primary Curriculum (2014) for MFL at Key Stage 2. We have adapted this to the context of our school and the abilities of our children.

**2.4** We use a variety of techniques to encourage the children to engage actively in learning a 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, and we also invite native speakers into the classroom and listen to recordings, in order to expose the children to more than one voice in the foreign language. We frequently use mime to accompany new vocabulary in the foreign language, as this teaches the language without the need for translation.

**2.5** We believe that a language is best learnt when there is an equal emphasis on listening and speaking, and on reading and writing skills.

**2.6** We make the lessons as entertaining and enjoyable as possible, as we realise that this approach serves to develop a positive attitude in the children to the learning of modern foreign languages. We build children's confidence through constant praise for any contribution that they make in the foreign language, however tentative.

**2.7** We allow for differentiation by:

- Using peer support – we partner pupils of disparate ability;
- Setting common tasks which are open-ended, and can have a variety of responses;
- Providing resources of different complexities, matched to the ability of the child.

**2.8** We assess the children's progress in formally during lessons, evaluating progress against the following four targets:

- Listening and responding;
- Speaking;
- Reading and responding;
- Writing.

### **3 Organisation**

**3.1** We teach a foreign language to children from Year 2 up to Year 6. We introduce the subject in Year 2, which are taught by a specialist language teacher.

### **4 The Curriculum**

**4.1** French is the modern foreign language that is taught in our school. The curriculum that we follow is based on the guidance given in the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages.

**4.2** We teach the children to know and understand to:

- Ask and answer questions;
- Use correct pronunciation and intonation;
- Memorise words;
- Interpret meaning;
- Understand basic grammar;
- Work in pairs and groups to communicate in the other language;
- Look at life in another culture.

### **5 The Contribution of MFL to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas.**

**5.1 English:** The learning of a modern foreign language naturally contributes to the development of our children's listening and speaking skills. It also develops the children's grasp of linguistic features such as rhyme, rhythm, stress and intonation, helps them understand the concept of register (as required for the French tu/vous distinction), and emphasises the importance of knowing the role in different word types in sentence structure.

**5.2 Mathematics:** Children reinforce their time-telling skills by playing time-related games in the foreign language. We play number games, too, that, reinforce the counting and calculation skills, expand their understanding of date, and increase their knowledge of money.

- 5.3 PSHEE & C:** One of the main benefits to the children of learning a modern foreign language at primary school level is a social one. Those children who have difficulty in reading and writing, but who have good aural skills, will often find that they excel at speaking in foreign languages. This success breeds confidence, which, in turn, increases self-esteem and gives them a more positive attitude to school in general.
- 5.4 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education:** By teaching a modern foreign language, we contribute to the children's cultural education. They learn that many societies are multi-lingual. We teach them about festivals and customs related to the countries in which the language is spoken. We also give them the chance to hear stories set in the foreign culture.
- 5.5 Geography:** We ask the children to conduct research on the different countries in which the particular foreign language is spoken after they have first found them on a map or a globe. In MFL lessons, children will learn about the climate of the countries in which the language is spoken.
- 5.6 Music:** We teach children songs in the Modern Foreign Language – both traditional and modern – which, of course, helps them develop a sense of rhythm and an ear for melody. We also play them classical music by composers from the relevant countries. For example, Saint-Saens' Carnival of the Animals in the case of France.
- 5.7 History:** We teach children about significant historical figures and events in the history of the countries whose language we are studying.
- 5.8 Science:** Children reinforce their knowledge of body parts through related games, such as a French version of "Simon Says", or "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes", or through related songs, such as the French-Canadian Alouette.

## **6 Modern Foreign Languages and Inclusion.**

- 6.1** At our school, we teach a Modern Foreign Language to our children from Year 2 upwards, whatever their ability. A Modern Foreign Language forms part of the school Curriculum policy and provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Modern Foreign Language teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all children 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.
- 6.2** 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 children's needs.
- 6.3** Through high quality, differentiated teaching, 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 trip to a

museum, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

## **7 Assessment and Recording**

- 7.1** We assess children's work in MFL by making judgements as we observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the specialist MFL teacher marks the work, and comments as necessary. At the end of a unit of work, s/he makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil in relation to the Primary Curriculum level of attainment.
- 7.2** Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own and each other's work.

## **8 Monitoring and Review**

- 8.1** It is the responsibility of the Senior Management and MFL subject leader to monitor the standards of children's work and the quality of planning and teaching in MFL. This may also involve supporting colleagues in their knowledge and understanding, keeping up to date with developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school, as well as reviewing strengths and weaknesses, and indicating areas for development.