

# WHITEHILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

"...putting children first..."



## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE POLICY

Date reviewed: May 2021

Reviewed by: Natalie James

Ratified by *Governors*: May 2021

## Rationale

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
- Develop respect and understanding of diversity.

Our aims:

- To provide a balance of spoken and written language.
- To allow children to understand and communicate ideas, facts and feelings.
- To allow children to use and apply their knowledge of grammar, phonics and vocabulary.

Expected outcomes – we want to help children to:

- Understand and respond to spoken and written language.
- Speak with increasing confidence and fluency.
- Write at varying length.
- Know about and celebrate different cultures.

“The teaching of languages to early learners is now widely recognised as a significant contributory factor in improving literacy, building self-confidence and broadening cultural horizons. More and more primary schools are introducing French (and indeed other languages) onto the curriculum and are beginning to see benefits in terms of gains in listening and speaking skills, appreciation of other cultures and enthusiasm for new forms of learning.

The principles of learning and teaching embedded in Excellence and Enjoyment include several which we would emphasise at the outset of teaching languages:

- Ensure that every child succeeds
- Build on what the learners already know
- Make learning vivid and real
- Make learning an enjoyable and challenging experience

We should want to add in respect of learning French:

- Do a lot with a little
- Celebrate each learning outcome
- Small steps lead to big changes

There are two underlying principles behind this new publication:

- We want children to enjoy their early years of learning French and to value the sights and sounds of France, the rhythm of the language and the real pleasure that can be gained from contact with the written word.
- We want children to make real and measurable progress in their learning through the innovative activities, the challenging tasks and the desire to understand more and more as they listen to, speak and read French.”

Extract from the introduction to the Catherine Cheater Year 3 Scheme of Work

## **Key Stage 1 and Foundation Stage**

Whilst not a compulsory subject, teachers have been given a range of songs, stories and activities to use within their classes. This encourages the children to listen to and begin to familiarise themselves with the differences and similarities of a foreign language.

## **Key Stage 2**

### **Resources**

The school continues to use the Catherine Cheater scheme of work. The scheme indicates suggested resources, including CDs, DVDs of songs, stories and finger rhymes, as well as resources already in school that can be used for practical activities. The CD provided with the scheme of work includes sound files for all the language needed so the teacher can check his/her pronunciation.

We have several sets of the stories recommended in the scheme of work as well as CDs containing PowerPoint versions of the pictures (with and without the text) with sound files of native speakers reading the stories. Each year group has a set of texts within their classroom, both fiction and non-fiction for the children to choose as free readers. Each year group also has sets of bilingual dictionaries for the children to use. The school library is also building up its collection of MFL texts.

### **Time allocation**

Yr 3 – 30 minute lessons per week  
Yr 4 – 35 minute lesson per week  
Yr 5 & 6 – 40 minute lesson per week

Each year group aspires to also deliver 5-10 minute mini-sessions throughout the week designed to reinforce and integrate language into the daily life of the school, referred to as 'parcels'.

### **Assessment, recording and reporting**

We celebrate children's success in many ways: verbally at the end of each lesson, with digital photos of the children and displays, with year group 'French days'.

The children self assess in the form of 'can do' statements three times a year, after each block of ten lessons. These include the aspects of language learning: speaking, listening, sentences building and grammar and well as cultural identity. All of which correspond to National Curriculum expectations.

The children build up a profile of their language learning. This folder is a record of their work in Key Stage 2. As well as dictionary work, grammar activities, self assessments and creative 'parcel' work, each year group has dictated pieces and free writing. These are as follows:

Year 3 - free writing/dictation based on individual words or phrases.  
Year 4 - free writing/dictation of at least one sentence  
Year 5 - free writing/dictation of at least 2 sentences showing a build up of grammatical structure and short listening comprehensions

Year 6 - free writing/dictation which may include a conversation with questions and answers, short listening comprehensions and reading comprehensions (answered in English).

We report to parents once a year in the same way as for other subjects.

### **Inclusion**

A fundamental principle of Whitehills Primary School is that language learning is for all children and is inclusive in approach. This is also built into the scheme of work, with great emphasis on encouraging pupils to participate, allowing them to speak out loud in French individually when they feel confident enough, rather than feeling a failure because they are not ready to do so. The majority of the oral, spoken language practice is done *en masse*.

### **Equal opportunities**

Each pupil will have the opportunity to progress through the curriculum at a level and rate appropriate to their needs. Inevitably, difficulties will arise from time to time, as pupils do not access new information at the same rate; furthermore, an individual may achieve at different levels within the various areas of MFL such as reading, writing and speaking and listening. In the context of the classroom, it is the teacher's responsibility to match the need to relevant activities.

### **Special Educational Needs**

We recognise that all children have an entitlement to MFL and work is differentiated accordingly.

Although we teach French to "year group expectations" we recognise that some children will be working above or below these expectations. We ensure that we use assessment to inform the next step for each child. The Catherine Cheater scheme of work provides experiences in learning a language that are relevant to all the pupils. It is not intended that every child will cover every example of work, but that the breadth of activities will challenge all pupils.

Action may include:

- i. Additional support of a Teaching Assistant, e.g. in scribing or re-wording questions or keeping a child 'on task';
- ii. Emphasis on oral or practical work and paired/partner work;
- iii. Provision of extension materials for the gifted child;
- iv. Specialist support e.g. teacher of the deaf or visually impaired, English as a second language specialist.
- v. Coloured backgrounds (evident on whiteboards), coloured photocopies/paper.
- vi. Use of scaffolded learning materials such as cue cards

Pupils who are currently achieving more highly in MFL are likely to show some of the following characteristics.

- Hear sounds accurately and mimic precisely with minimum repetition.
- Strive to deduce meaning, using the language they know to make sense of new vocabulary.

- Have a strong desire to put language together themselves by applying learnt principles to new situations, transforming phrases and using them in different context, often with humour.
- Show creativity and imagination when using languages, often extending the boundaries rather than imitating and responding.
- Have a natural feel for languages by being willing to take risks, knowing swiftly the relationship between sound and spelling.
- Pick up new language structures quickly, displaying outstanding powers of retention.
- Make connections and classify words and structures to help them learn more efficiently.
- Seek solutions and ask further questions
- Have an insight into their preferred learning style, be clear about the tasks they are performing and be able to work without supervision, making effective use of reference material.
- Show an interest in the cultural features of the language being taught, wish to explore the history and traditions further and want to share this knowledge with peers

### **The contribution of MFL to teaching in other curriculum areas**

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, and emphasises the importance of knowing the role of different word types in sentence structure.

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

Personal, social and health education and citizenship - 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.

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.

Geography- We ask the children to do 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). MFL pupils likewise learn about the climate of the countries in which the language is spoken.

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. The children are also exposed to some traditional and more modern French artists and songs.

### **Staff Development**

The subject leader for MFL identifies the school needs and co-ordinates professional development opportunities.

### **Arrangements for Review**

This policy has been produced by the headteacher and agreed by staff and governors and is a reflection of the shared values of the staff. It will be implemented during the Summer Term of 2021. It replaces the previous policy.

This policy will be reviewed in May 2021.

Dated policy reviewed:  
Reviewed by: Natalie James