

ST RICHARD'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Modern Foreign Languages Department Booklet





ST RICHARD'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT FRENCH, GERMAN & SPANISH



MEET THE DEPARTMENT:

Miss Chong – Acting Subject Leader of French

Miss Auzinger – Subject Leader of German

Mrs Scott – Subject Leader of Spanish and Teacher of French

Mrs Howis – Teacher of French

Mrs Herring – Teacher of French and Spanish

Miss Crawley – Teacher of German



OUR VISION:

Our vision is to develop a life-long love of language learning in our pupils; to increase their cultural awareness and to ensure that everyone is able to reach his/her full potential.

The department is a forward-thinking team of six specialist language teachers, each of whom teaches across the range of year groups and abilities. We continually strive to improve pupil performance in a spirit of collaboration. The three Subject Leaders have overall responsibility for their language. In particular, they are responsible for monitoring the department's progress and development and for all aspects of the curriculum.

HOW THE MFL CURRICULUM IS ORGANISED:

We are an inclusive department where nearly all pupils in Years 7 – 9 learn a language. At present, around 70% of the cohort in Years 10 and 11 learns a language. Lessons contain a variety of listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks and we strive to maximise use of the tablet technology in order to further enthuse and support pupils' progress.

The focus in our lessons is on developing the key skills that will lead to spontaneous interaction. To achieve this we value the importance of a solid grounding in grammar and look to manipulate language structures using newly-learnt vocabulary so that pupils can accurately communicate in the target language. We are always looking for opportunities to include cultural insights in order to give our pupils a rounded picture of the languages we cover.



OUTLINE OF PROGRESS THROUGH THE YEAR GROUPS:

We are proud of the fact that we offer 3 languages and that languages are an integral part of our school culture.

Upon entering **Year 7**, all pupils learn French, German and Spanish for a short carousel before expressing their language preference. Once decided which language they are studying, they continue with this language all the way through to Year 11. Pupils have 2 x 50 minute lessons per week in Year 7 and are set two homework tasks weekly; one of which is learning vocabulary.

In **Year 8**, all pupils continue with their language – French, German or Spanish – for 3 x 50 minute lessons per week. Pupils are set two homework tasks a week; one of which is learning vocabulary.

All pupils in **Year 9** continue to learn either French, German or Spanish for 3 x 50 minute lessons per week and are set two homework tasks weekly; one of which is learning vocabulary. The focus in Year 9 is on mastery of grammar and developing the necessary skills to succeed at GCSE.

In **Year 10 and Year 11**, we follow the AQA exam board and pupils have 4 x 50 minute lessons per week. The focus in lessons is on mastery of grammar and key skills which will ensure that pupils learn how to communicate accurately using increasingly more complex and authentic language.

OUR GCSE RESULTS:

In 2017, around 70% of Year 11 pupils were entered for a GCSE in either French or German. Our first Spanish GCSE cohort will sit their exam in 2019.



In French, 70% of pupils achieved an A* to C grade.

In German, 79% of pupils achieved an A* to C grade. These results are in line with or above national averages.

We also enter pupils with a home language other than English for a GCSE in their mother tongue whenever possible, usually in Year 9. In 2017, these languages included Dutch, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Italian. 100% of these pupils achieved an A* or A grade.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT OUR TEACHING AND PUPILS' LEARNING:

We are committed to supporting and motivating all learners to ensure they achieve the best possible GCSE grades. A variety of teaching and learning approaches are employed which include use of digital packages, textbooks (including Expo and Allez for French, Echo and Stimmt for German and Mira and Viva for Spanish), Google Drive, an MFL dedicated suite of tablets, flipped learning, group talk, project work, foreign film and literature study.

We are fortunate to have a wide selection of additional resources at our disposal including:

- an interactive whiteboard, target language dictionaries and Show-Me boards in each language teaching room
- Kerboodle website to access the AQA GCSE and KS3 Allez digital textbooks
- Activeteach to access the Pearson resources and Activelearn for pupils' self-assessment materials for all year groups
- Mary Glasgow subscription for all three languages
- Teachit languages subscription for all three languages
- Frenchteacher.net
- ZigZag Resources for all three languages
- i-languages modules for all three languages
- a selection of French, German and Spanish DVDs and books

DAY-TO-DAY ORGANISATION:

Languages are taught mainly in four dedicated teaching rooms. Our classrooms reflect our passion for our subject, with colourful and vibrant displays, all of which have as their main goal the communication and learning of languages.



We follow a two-week timetable which at present has no variation. There are six lessons a day of 50 minutes each with department meetings taking place termly after school during which our main focus is teaching and learning. Our classes are mainly mixed-ability with some limited setting where deemed appropriate.

We pride ourselves on a co-operative and collaborative approach to sharing resources and ideas. All members of the department actively create and share resources and Schemes of Work are evaluated and reviewed regularly throughout the school year.



PEDAGOGY:

We keep up to date with changes and developments in MFL pedagogy through social media and the regional MFL Hub. We regularly discuss the national trends in MFL teaching to keep abreast of new ways to engage our pupils.

These are our top 10 priorities to improve professional practice:

1. Use the target language as the main means of communication.
2. Embed high level questioning in every lesson.
3. Plan a variety of well-sequenced activities in every lesson, with regular mini-plenaries to check progress and understanding.
4. Get going straight away - the pupils are engaged from entering the door.
5. Have high expectations of all pupils (relative to their ability) and plan for stretch and challenge.
6. Take pupils out of their comfort zone regularly.
7. Try out new ideas and be prepared to experiment and take risks.
8. Correct pronunciation and empower pupils by talking about phonics and looking at sound/spelling patterns with an emphasis on communicating in full sentences.
9. Encourage an understanding of word families.
10. Use grammatical terminology with all classes.

TARGET GRADES, INTERVENTION AND MARKING:

At the beginning of every school year pupils are given a target based on their KS2 data and progress made previously. Class teachers need to have a clear knowledge of the targets of all the pupils in their care and care must be taken to plan lessons accordingly, ensuring that opportunities exist for pupils to work towards, achieve and even exceed their targets. It is important that a pupil's target is raised once it has been clearly achieved.

Whilst we accept that every pupil is different, we have the same expectations of high quality presentation of work and effort with regards to classwork and homework. Intervention takes place to support underperforming pupils and bring them up to speed. We believe that successful intervention lower down the school aims to reduce the need for it higher up the school. Pupils for intervention fall into two categories and intervention should meet the needs of both groups of pupils:

- Those who genuinely struggle with the work, but want to succeed.
- Those who do not work hard enough, in class and/or at home.

When giving feedback to pupils in their books, we emphasise what has been done well and what needs to be improved. It is school policy for books to be marked at least 2x/term with evidence of pupils' purple pen corrections on longer pieces of work. Pupils are also encouraged to share their work on Google Drive for teacher comments and feedback. Our department actively pursues this as a form of independent learning.

PRAISE AND REWARDS:

Pupils are rewarded with achievement points, postcards/emails/phone calls home, stickers and stamps in their books, cultural prizes like badges, lanyards, rulers and pencils. Teachers should reward generously, but appropriately, and endeavour to reward effort as well as academic achievement.

PUPIL VOICE:

It is important to us to have feedback from pupils on how they see their progress. We use this to inform our Schemes of Work and also as a way of ensuring that all pupils feel empowered to share their thoughts about their learning. We regularly use Google Forms as a survey of pupil opinion and feedback.

DEPARTMENT MONITORING:

There is a schedule for monitoring each year group and we take it in turns to drop into each other's lessons on a regular basis. The purpose of this is to ensure that we are meeting our 10 priorities to improve professional practice. It is also an opportunity to recognise each teacher's achievements, as well as discuss potential problems and ensure high standards.

TRIPS

We have a programme of annual trips which includes the following:



A residential trip to the German Christmas Market in Aachen for Year 8 pupils.

A residential trip to northern France for Year 8 and Year 9 pupils.



A residential trip to Spain for Year 9 pupils.

Other trips offered in the school, which give pupils the opportunity to practise language skills and experience the culture of a target language country, include a residential visit to Berlin co-organised with the History department and the annual ski trip to Austria.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Our extra-curricular activities include the following:

- MFL Club

Our French, German and Spanish club takes place every Wednesday lunchtime in B4, B5, and B13. This is aimed at pupils who would like to practise their language skills with fun games and activities.



- European Day of Languages

We are keen to promote understanding of different cultures within the wider school community. The European Day of Languages gives us the opportunity to enable pupils to lead lessons which celebrate their native language and cultures.



- Carnival Activities

Throughout the month of March, a number of sessions on the theme of “carnivals across the world” are held. This is a great example of cross-curricular cooperation with the Performing Arts Department. Pupils learn to play percussion instruments and how to dance the Samba. They also make carnival masks and learn about different carnivals across the world.



- Live performances

Where possible we invite theatre companies in to school to put on plays in target language.





We are looking for an enthusiastic, creative, individual who can contribute to our already engaging and inspiring team. To find out more about us and to see the whole year in action, please look at the MFL pages on the St. Richard's website and our newsletter items.