

# ST. BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## MFL Curriculum



*Learn to Love, Love to Learn*

Miss Grant 2020/2021



## Intent

St Bernadette's is a Catholic School and we are committed to the Catholic faith, recognising and valuing every individual as special and unique, created in the image and likeness of God. We are a beacon of hope in our community and we live by the motto Learn to love, love to learn.

Children have a natural desire and confidence to explore other countries, cultures and languages. At Saint Bernadette's Primary School, we believe that learning a foreign language and being able to communicate effectively are a necessary part of living in a multicultural society, essential ingredients to broadening our children's horizons. Our vision is:

- To equip all our young learners with a basic foundation of French so they have a knowledge of the core structures and language that is essential in order to converse with others.
- To create confident and resilient linguists who are able to apply their skills of communication and language in all areas of their lives and future as 'global citizens'.
- To reinforce the knowledge, skills and understanding developed in English, especially with regards to the SPaG curriculum, where children gain awareness that language has a structure and that the structure differs from one language to another.



## Implementation

Classes at St Bernadette's have access to a broad, vibrant and ambitious foreign languages curriculum that will inspire and excite all our pupils. Clear, progressive and sequenced lessons are delivered in KS2 for forty minutes every two weeks by French specialist teachers, who have a passion for speaking and teaching the francophone language. Our bespoke MFL curriculum is based on the guidance given in the revised National Curriculum and has been designed and resourced by a linguist and teacher. It is continuously updated and reviewed annually, creating a dynamic programme of study in line with the needs of our children. Through both independent and collaborative work, our pupils will progressively acquire, use and apply a growing bank of vocabulary, language skills and grammatical knowledge organised around a wide range of engaging and relevant topics and themes. They will build blocks of language into more complex and fluent language which is meaningful and has a real purpose e.g. recreate a Parisian bistro to buy and taste typical French foods, prepare and organise the French mascot's birthday party, design and play the 'Monster Guess Who' board game. Each class in each year group is taught three units of work during the academic year, allowing time for a deeper understanding of each topic, and each teaching unit is divided into 6 fully planned lessons. Units are progressive within themselves as subsequent classes within a topic build on the language and knowledge taught in previous lessons: each class seen as a brick in the ever-growing bridge of language learning.

Language lessons place a strong emphasis on developing the speaking and listening skills of the children: expressing their ideas and thoughts as they interact and communicate with others orally is at the heart of our MFL curriculum. Oracy disciplines will be embedded and further developed as they move through KS2, indeed auditory discrimination and pronunciation is refined, and communication of language structures is more complex and manipulated with greater accuracy and autonomy. It is with this confidence in speaking and listening that simple reading skills are gently introduced to the children in Year 4, should they be ready for them. In order to ignite curiosity and challenge, we use a high ratio of target language in the classroom



as teachers model work and give instructions in French. Pupils need to be resilient language learners; within an open language learning environment, the children are always encouraged to 'have a go' at communicating in French without the worry of making mistakes – the emphasis is put on how to move on or improve upon errors.

As a knowledge engaged curriculum, we believe that knowledge underpins and enables the application of skills; both are entwined. Throughout their journey of language learning, the children at Saint Bernadette's, recycle, revise and consolidate previously learnt language in variety of contexts, leading overtime to mastery. Our MFL lessons explicitly develop memory strategies as the ability to retain and recall new words, with speed and over a long period of time, is central to language learning. In order to aid the internalising and autonomising of language, core vocabulary (including verbs) has been carefully selected for each unit of work, where their frequency and transferable nature have been a vital consideration. A further rationale to our curriculum design is based on the interplay between long-term learning and learning styles: visual, auditory and kinesthetic (VAK) approaches in the teaching of French will not only increase our children's learning power and lead to an independent and successful understanding and retention of the target language, but also ensure the lessons are delivered in fun and engaging way. In this context, we endeavour to use resources that offer immediacy, authenticity and excitement to the MFL learning experience: films, songs, puppets, props board games and stories are all commonplace our language lessons. Grammatical structures and syntax are explicitly taught as correct terminology and links to English grammatical structures form an integral element of each unit of work. This approach enables pupils to use and apply their learning in a variety of contexts, laying down solid foundations for future language learning, as we equip our children to study and work in other countries.



Through collaboration, support and modelling good practise, we aim to inspire all MFL practitioners -no matter what stage of career journey. Language up-skilling forms part of the CPD of each member of the MFL team as teachers independently improve their own language competence and expertise through the use of apps such as Duolingo. For new or non-specialist teacher, in-house training, team teaching and regular meetings about the curriculum and teaching methodology of French is common practise. In addition, feedback from termly meetings at language hubs and the sharing new initiatives is yet another way the department ensures excellent teaching practice is achieved, which will ultimately enhance our young children's experience of language learning.

At Saint Bernadette's our MFL curriculum goes beyond what is taught in lessons. The children in Year 6 benefit from an educational visit to Paris, which being cross-curricular in nature, offers an experience which is not only linguistic, but which supports and promotes many other areas of the curriculum. 'La semaine a la française', which is organised for UPKS2, not only brings the language alive with dynamic, collaborative and creative activities but also provides an important insight into the culture of Francophone countries and communities across the globe. With this, children not only broaden their language skills but also foster the idea of respect, cultural openness and tolerance. Indeed, as we celebrate national feast days, foreign language assemblies and International Week we see how our language learning philosophy to promote and enhance our children's cultural capital, is so strongly linked to a whole school premise.

Primary languages teaching at St Bernadette's School is fully inclusive. No child is excluded by reason of a learning difficulty, or because they have English as an additional language. Experience has indeed shown that such children can derive particular benefit from taking part in primary languages learning activities in which



they may be less disadvantaged than in other areas of the curriculum. The use of Language Ambassadors and opportunities to attend language clubs are accessible to all children with the aim of broadening their linguistic and cultural horizons and celebrating individual talents and abilities so that each child fulfils his or her potential.

### **Impact**

By nurturing a linguistic curiosity and organising a bespoke MFL curriculum that drives and guarantees progressive learning and challenge, our children feel confident and inspired to speak and listen to French. Pupils across all year groups, of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well in French and as such are motivated, engaged and enjoying their language lessons. By the end of Year 6, they will know more and remember more about their foreign language. All pupils will gain greater independence in their use of key grammar and linguistic concepts and will readily transfer these skills as they build the foundations of their language. As such, they will begin to manipulate and adapt some core language structures in order to communicate accurately, speak and understand a series of sentences and ask and answer questions with increasing spontaneity. They will also begin their journey into developing some basic reading strategies in the target language.

The formative assessment data from key questioning and ongoing observation of in-class activities, such as role-plays, interactive language games, collaborative investigation work, will aid the MFL teachers monitor the pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills to inform planning so that it is suitable for supporting and challenging the pupils at every stage of their progress. We track pupils' performance against end of year expectations, and we are able to record, analyse and access this data easily. Tracking progression allows the MFL team to monitor school, class and individual progress as well as target the next steps in learning.



Progress of learning will be evident in various forms. In the children's books, knowledge organisers will be kept as a record of the new language and grammatical knowledge they have acquired from unit to unit and from year to year and will also encourage independence as they facilitate retrieval and application of their learning. Books will also contain grammar exercises and reading tasks which will record their individual progression in other literacy skills of the language. Videos of the children's reactions and responses to spoken language will evidence their progression in oracy and a selection of these will be stored in the school's shared drive.

Pupils are aware and able to reflect on their own learning goals and progression as they complete self-assessment grids at the end of each unit of work. Feedback from the student's mid-year questionnaire and termly meeting with the Language Ambassadors ensure all pupils' needs are addressed and by having a 'voice' they continue to embrace a love for languages and important life-long language learning skills.