

Oak Farm Junior School

Primary Languages Policy

Mission Statement & Rationale

“A high quality languages education should foster pupils’ curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world.”
(DfE, Languages Programmes of Study)

The following statements summarise our belief in Primary Languages:

- Learning another language makes our minds stronger and more flexible.
- Pupils develop communication and literacy skills that lay the foundation for future language learning.
- Pupils develop linguistic competence, extend their knowledge of how languages work and explore the differences between the target language and English.
- Through links with the wider community in Primary Languages, pupils enrich their intercultural awareness.

Aims and objectives

- a. To raise awareness of:
 - i. aspects of mother tongue by encountering other cultures
 - ii. aspects of home culture by encountering other cultures
 - iii. the multilingual and multicultural world
 - iv. citizenship issues
 - v. the existence of languages other than English
 - vi. the need for languages as a skill for life
- b. To open children’s minds to the excitement of other languages, lives and cultures
- c. To develop:
 - i. ease of listening and understanding
 - ii. linguistic competence
 - iii. cross curricular links
 - iv. language learning skills
 - v. positive attitudes to other languages and cultures
- d. To encourage:
 - i. children’s curiosity about language
 - ii. self determination, so that children can take responsibility for their own learning / regard the teacher as a facilitator
 - iii. children to use their knowledge with growing confidence and competence to understand what they hear / read and to express themselves in speech and writing

Languages Programmes of Study

- Use of Target Language

We welcome the enhanced focus on fluency and spontaneity in the target language in the Languages Programmes of Study. We recognise its importance if pupils are to develop the necessary skills they will need for Key Stage 3 language learning. Pupils are encouraged to use the target language in lessons and beyond. Likewise, the use of the target language used by the teacher increases as pupils progress through the school.

- Teaching and learning styles and procedures

At Oak Farm Junior School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our Primary Languages lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding. Children have the opportunity to support their work with a variety of resources. We aim for a balance of whole class, small group/pair and independent learning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

The lessons are delivered by a French teacher (Languages Coordinator).

All pupils have one lesson of French per week. Each lesson lasts approximately 50-60 minutes.

- Primary Languages curriculum planning

Previously informed by the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages, the Primary Languages coordinator/French teacher devises tailor-made schemes of work drawing from the Catherine Cheater schemes of work, the QCA units, Rigolo and our own tailor-made resources. Where appropriate, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) units are carried out, e.g. 'WW2 in France' is taught alongside WW2 in Year 6 English/history/art. Pupils are taught history through the target language.

We carry out the curriculum planning in Primary Languages in three phases:

- Long-term: Giving an overview of vocabulary areas and key language that will be covered during each academic term.
- Medium/short term: Giving a more detailed plan for each lesson including objectives (based on the Languages Programmes of Study), activities and resources used for each lesson.

Lesson Content

The French lessons are to include:

- a. learning about a French-speaking country
- b. Regular phonics work to aid pronunciation (using *Physical French Phonics* and *Les Planètes Phoniques*)
- c. asking and answering questions
- d. using bilingual dictionaries
- e. teaching of basic French grammar and spelling patterns
- f. playing games and learning songs
- g. using language that has been taught in role-play situations
- h. researching and learning about life in France
- i. writing phrases and sentences

Lessons are based on four key principles of language learning: Repetition, Recognition, Recall and Real context.

- Primary Languages and Inclusion

“If we cannot predict what advantage certain children might gain from exposure to foreign language learning, neither can we predict what advantages they might lose if we deny them the chance to try.”

(From ‘Modern Foreign Languages for All’ by Hilary McColl)

We teach Primary Languages to all pupils, whatever their individual needs. In all classes children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. Languages is a highly inclusive subject, however, and despite our principal aim of developing children’s knowledge, skills, and understanding, the initial focus will be on enjoyment.

Primary Languages and Literacy

“Research has shown that multilingualism contributes to a learner’s personal fulfilment and cognitive growth. Among the gains listed are creativity and originality; divergent thinking and cognitive flexibility; problem solving; enhanced performance in literacy and numeracy...”

(Baker, 1997; Armstrong & Rogers, 1997 in Kirsch, 2008)

We feel strongly that knowledge of another language enormously aids the understanding and appreciation of one’s own language(s). To ensure this benefit is exploited to its fullest for our pupils, our French lessons include:

- Regular focus on phonics – learning and applying the phonics of the French language reiterates and builds upon pupils’ knowledge of English phonics.
- Story book(s) in the majority of lessons – exploring patterns in the language, similarities/differences in punctuation conventions, text level appreciation and context comprehension.
- Exploration of cognates and ‘false friends’ deepens pupils’ knowledge of English and leads them to question and explore the origins and developments in language.
- Songs, rhymes and games all play a role in pupils’ enjoyment of language, as well as building upon their vocabulary memory skills.
- Regular access to authentic sources (texts and listening/video clips).

Links outside school

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning Languages. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (a languages-related trip locally or to France) we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Our partnership with our French partner school is primarily for pupils in French Club. However, resources from this partnership (letters, pupils’ work, photographs, and video clips) are used to provide authentic sources for all pupils within the context of our French lessons. Whenever possible, the partnership involves the whole school. For example, when pupils from our partner school come to visit, we ensure that all pupils get to spend some time with our visitors.

Languages in the daily school routine

In our addition to our French lessons, we ensure that the diverse range of languages we have within our school is celebrated regularly. For example, class teachers may give various opportunities throughout the school week – for example, during the register. It is the responsibility of the Languages Coordinator to facilitate this, by distributing appropriate resources to class teachers. Languages are also celebrated on a large whole-school celebratory in our annual language celebration day.

French and/or other languages will be included in whole school occasions e.g. Christmas celebrations and summer concerts.

Assessment

The French teacher assesses children's work in Languages in three phases. The short-term assessments that are made as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgments about how they can improve their own work. Gradually, more self-assessment and peer-assessment and evaluation will be introduced to lessons.

The limit to lesson time is overcome by the teacher giving extra focus for assessment to five pupils per lesson. This will include making brief notes and/or grading judgements for these particular pupils. The teacher uses a document created by Brightelsmead Ltd of 'I can...' statements for the four skills for each year group on a scale of Emerging / Developing / Secure / Exceeding. This is then transferred to the system developed for foundation subjects to enable tracking of particular groups as well as individuals.

Transition to Key Stage 3

The Language Coordinator ensures that there is liaison with the MFL departments of our two most attended local secondary schools. Recent liaison has shown that the most important factor in transition is ensuring that we make secondary languages staff aware of pupils' own languages, especially where pupils are bilingual/fluent in one of the languages taught in the school.

We strive to ensure all pupils are familiar with and practised in using a bilingual dictionary; highlighted as a necessary skill by secondary teachers. Furthermore, language learning strategies are an important feature of lessons throughout the school and this is a particularly important focus in Year 6. Likewise, we give Year 6 pupils a taste of other languages they may study at secondary school. We aim that pupils will leave in Year 6 well-equipped with transferrable skills that will prepare them for whichever language they go on to learn in secondary school.

Review

This policy is reviewed regularly.

Genevieve Renaudon. February 2018.