



## **Theale Church of England Primary School**

### **MFL Policy**

#### **Rationale for Teaching Languages**

The world is becoming a smaller place. The study of MFL liberates children from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. At Theale we have therefore implemented the teaching of French for all children in KS 1 and 2.

Learning a language enriches the curriculum, providing excitement, enjoyment and challenge for children, helping to create enthusiastic learners and to develop positive attitudes to language learning in later life. It also provides opportunities to read age-appropriate authentic literature and learn songs in the target language. The skills, knowledge and understanding gained make a major contribution to the development of children's oracy and literacy and to their understanding of their own culture and those of others. Language also lies at the heart of ideas about individual identity and community, and learning another language can do a great deal to shape children's ideas in this critical area as well as giving them a new perspective on their own language/s.

**Language learning stimulates children's creativity:** Children enjoy taking an active part in language lessons. They join in with singing, reciting rhymes and poems, and respond to stories, imitating accurate intonation and pronunciation. They play games, take turns, make things, take the role of the teacher and experiment creatively with language.

**Language learning supports oracy and literacy:** Children spend much of their time in language lessons speaking, listening and interacting - more than in most other subjects. They take part in role-plays, conversations and question and answer work, sing songs and recite, perform to an audience and respond to a wide range of aural stimuli. This emphasis on communication, including language learning's important role in the 'education of the ear', underpins children's capabilities in oracy, which is critical to effective communication as well as a key foundation for literacy.

**Language learning supports and celebrates the international dimension:** Although it enjoys much more linguistic diversity than in the past, England remains a place where the motivation to learn another language is affected by the position of English as a widely spoken, world language. This makes it even more important that we give all children the chance to learn another language in order to gain insights into not only their own language/s and culture, but of those of others around the world.

### **Therefore, our intent for MFL is to:**

- ensure that each child from FS2 to Year 6 has the opportunity to study French as a modern foreign language, fostering their interest in the culture of France and the francophone world;
- provide a firm foundation for further language-learning, equipping children with the skills that they need in order to become life-long language learners, both for the pleasure that can be derived from doing so, and in order to equip them to study and work in other countries;
- enable pupils to understand the purpose of learning a language through authentic materials;
- help children to become aware that language has a structure, and that this structure differs from one language to another;
- develop pupils' communication skills, presented in both spoken and written words;
- teach vocabulary and linguistic structures informed by the National curriculum and the skills expressed therein: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (as well as cultural understanding);
- enable children to draw comparisons between French and English vocabulary, using their knowledge of cognates and near-cognates to decode unfamiliar texts of increasing complexity;
- teach children the basics of phonics in French to allow them to spell, read and speak with increased confidence and accuracy and improved pronunciation;
- encourage children to draw comparisons between French and English grammar, syntax and sentence structure, as a tool for developing their understanding of the French language as well as their understanding of English;
- give children opportunities to manipulate language for their own purpose and to write with increasing complexity and independence;
- enable pupils to explore their own cultural identities and those of others;
- help pupils to gain enjoyment, pride and a sense of achievement;
- give children opportunities to make, and learn from, mistakes in the target language, thereby building resilience.

### **Implementation:**

French is taught by an experienced specialist teacher with a degree in French. The specialist teacher completes her own CPD with the Association for Language Learning and the Primary Languages Network and is a member of the Thames Valley Languages Hub, who meet once a term to discuss and compare MFL teaching and learning in local primary schools. Lessons vary in length between 30 minutes per week in KS1, 50 minutes per fortnight for Years 2 and 3 and 35-60 minutes each week for UKS2. The current programme of study has been developed by the MFL specialist teacher, with reference to the National curriculum, making use of Primary Languages Network scheme, ensuring coverage of the four skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Each class in a year group covers the same topic, to meet the same objectives each half term. Year 4 and 5 are taught together on a two-year rolling long-term plan. Lessons are pitched high, we "teach to the top" and also provide extension opportunities for the more able and older pupils in each group.

The systematic teaching of the five 'pillars of progression' (to quote the Association of Language Learning) – vocabulary, phonics, grammar, cultural understanding, and songs, stories and rhymes - includes built-in opportunities for children to revisit knowledge at varying degrees of complexity at a variety of points throughout the seven years of study at primary level. Lessons are intended to be active and highly focused, with children working both as a whole class, independently and in small groups / pairs to complete tasks at their individual level. Work is differentiated in a variety of ways to accommodate children in the

same class who are all at different stages of their language-learning journeys. Activities consist of vocabulary input and practice, explicit phonics work, grammar and sentence-building activities, games, stories, songs, rhymes, role-play, beginning to write phrases and sentences, dictionary skills, learning about life in France and other francophone countries and the study of authentic target language articles from the 'Allons-y' magazine, to name but a few.

Languages other than French may be used within individual classes and topics, but French will be the main, assessed language.

### **Impact:**

Our children become competent linguists over time and are well prepared for the next stage of their education at secondary school.

### **Assessment:**

Formative and summative assessment are both used to ensure progress over time in KS2. Class books are marked regularly. A 'Puzzle it out' summative assessment is completed once a year and marked by the teacher. The assessment criteria is linked to the benchmark objectives for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 as set out by the Primary Languages Network to equate to level A1 of the Common European Framework of Reference. Language data gathered is recorded with the help of tracking documentation to demonstrate both attainment and progress over time as well as to identify gaps in knowledge in order to inform the planning of future lessons and units.

### **MFL curriculum planning**

We will carry out the curriculum planning in MFL in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The Theale MFL Programme of Study is based on the KS1 / KS2 Primary Languages Network scheme linking to the National curriculum Programme of Study for MFL.

Weekly curriculum plans are handed to the headteacher inclusive of lesson objectives for MFL drawing upon the teacher's own plans and the PLN scheme planning.

### **Equal Opportunities and Special Needs**

Every pupil will be given equal opportunity to follow the National curriculum or Foundation Stage curriculum irrespective of their ethnic or linguistic background, gender, disability or religious beliefs. Children with Special Educational Needs will have full access to the MFL curriculum which will be modified to best meet their needs. Those identified as Able, Gifted and Talented in MFL will be given opportunities to develop their skills.

### **Monitoring**

The monitoring of MFL will take the form of classroom observations, monitoring of planning, work scrutiny, interviews with children, learning walks and monitoring of displays. The subject leader, working with the headteacher is responsible for the monitoring of MFL. The headteacher will report to governors through a termly report.