



Modern Foreign Languages Policy

At St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School we believe that the learning of a foreign language provides a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for our pupils. It helps them to develop their ability to communicate, including key skills of speaking and listening and extends their knowledge of how language works. It provides excitement, enjoyment and challenge for children and teachers, helping to create enthusiastic learners and to develop positive attitudes to language learning throughout life.

Learning another language gives children a new perspective on the world and finds itself wholly aligned to our mission statement and Gospel Values which permeate all aspects of school life.

'...to ensure a loving and faithful learning community in which our children can become the person God created them to be. A community where we celebrate the dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual. Where we grow and learn together with joy, in the love of Jesus. In this love, we strive to be courageous stewards of creation.'

Learning another language also encourages our pupils to understand their own cultures and those of others. The natural links between languages and other areas of the curriculum can enrich the overall teaching and learning experience.

All Key Stage 2 pupils are entitled to foreign language learning in school time. We recognise the value of this initiative and will provide age-appropriate Primary Languages learning opportunities for all children in Years 3 – 6. We will also, where possible, introduce Key Stage 1 pupils to the language through classroom routines and songs. The focus language taught in our school is French.

Aims and objectives of Primary Languages education

The aims of Primary Languages teaching are to

- foster an interest in language learning by introducing children to other languages in a way that is enjoyable and accessible to all pupils;
- stimulate and encourage children's curiosity about language and creativity in experimenting with it;
- support oracy and literacy, and in particular develop speaking and listening skills;
- help children develop their awareness of cultural similarities and differences;
- lay the foundations for future language study by pupils;
- provide an added perspective on first language teaching and learning;
- give an extra dimension to teaching and learning across the curriculum.

Speaking and listening

The children will learn to

- listen carefully and recognise sounds and combinations of sounds which are similar to, or different from, those of English;
- understand and respond with increasing competence, accuracy and confidence in a range of situations;

- join in songs, rhymes, raps and stories which enable them to practise the sounds of the language in an enjoyable and non-threatening way;
- take part in conversations at an appropriate level, reacting to instructions and questions and expressing opinions and feelings;
- memorise and recite short texts, and prepare and give a talk on a familiar subject confidently and with regard to the audience.

Reading and writing

The children will learn to

- remember grapheme-phoneme correspondences and vocabulary directly taught and reinforced through word games and similar activities;
- read stories and rhymes for enjoyment and to gain awareness of the structure of the written language;
- read, copy and write independently familiar words and simple phrases in context eg classroom items, display labels, weather chart, date;
- write sentences and short texts independently and from memory.

Intercultural understanding

The children will learn to

- describe the life of children in the countries where the language is spoken;
- identify similarities and differences in everyday life, social conventions, traditional stories and celebrations;
- recognise how symbols, products and objects can represent the culture of a country, and how aspects of the culture of different countries become incorporated in the daily life of others;
- recognise and mistrust stereotypes, and understand and respect cultural diversity.

Teaching and learning Primary Languages

We endeavour to integrate language learning into everyday school life, with teachers, teaching assistants and children using and experimenting with their knowledge of different languages whenever the opportunity arises. We foster a problem-solving approach, giving children opportunities to work out language use for themselves in a supportive context where risk-taking and creativity are encouraged, and there is an emphasis on having fun with the new language. ICT is used regularly to enhance teaching and learning.

There are three main contexts in which language teaching and learning take place.

1 *Languages lessons*

Although Primary Languages cuts across the curriculum, children are taught specific skills, concepts and vocabulary in a weekly dedicated lesson with the class teacher.

2 *Languages embedded into other lessons*

Where appropriate, teachers give children opportunities to practise their foreign language in the context of lessons in other subject areas. For instance, some instructions may be given in another language; or children may count in another language while carrying out a numeracy activity. This acts to reinforce the vocabulary and structures they have learned.

3 *'Incidental' language*

Languages are part of the day to day life of the school. For example, teachers use the foreign language to give simple classroom instructions ('come in quietly'; 'listen'; 'look'), to ask questions ('who wants school dinner?'; 'what's today's date?') and to take the register. Children are encouraged to respond using the language they have learned, and sometimes teachers and pupils develop new language skills together, teachers acting as role models in the learning process.

This integrated approach is a strong model for teaching and learning, giving children opportunities to use and develop their language for communicating in stress-free real-life contexts.

Intercultural understanding

Primary Languages provides a basis for teaching and learning about other cultures, and this is incorporated into many areas of the curriculum including personal and social education and citizenship, geography, religious education, design and technology, music, art and dance. Efforts are made to ensure that teaching material across the curriculum includes a 'flavour' of the countries where the focus language is spoken.

Inclusion

Primary Languages teaching 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.

Language learning activities are planned in such a way as to encourage the full and active participation of all pupils. Work is differentiated as appropriate to the needs of individual children. Pairs and groups for collaborative work may be made up in different ways, depending on the task.

Planning and resources

Primary Languages is planned following the broad guidelines set out in the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages. The school's Scheme of Work (which is updated regularly) ensures that there is continuity and progression in both skills and content across all classes. Published resources including fiction and non-fiction texts, posters, CDs, DVDs and interactive computer software are available for use throughout the school.

Staff development

Teachers and other staff are given opportunities and encouragement to develop their own language and language teaching skills, through in-school and network workshops and local authority training. There are also opportunities to meet native speakers and in school and in their own countries through the school's International links. The subject leader for Primary Languages identifies school needs and circulates professional development opportunities.

Monitoring progress and assessing attainment

Opportunities to monitor the children's progress in Primary Languages are built into our programmes of study. Most assessment is formative and is used to support teaching and learning and inform future planning. Assessments are based on observation of children working on different oral activities and (where appropriate) written product. For reporting purposes, pupil's attainments in listening, speaking, reading and writing are given levels based on the Lancashire Key Learning documents.

Links outside school

Primary Languages gives us an ideal opportunity for making links outside school. We encourage children to share their experiences of visiting or living in other countries, and we welcome visiting speakers who are able to talk about life in the countries where the focus language is spoken. We make full use of ICT links via approved sites on the Internet, to find out about life in other countries. Our International events, in which most children take part, aim to invite local community members to participate where appropriate.