

Intent - Modern Foreign Languages

The MFL department at The Abbey is committed to developing students' confidence when communicating in another language and helping all pupils understand the value of languages in the wider world.

Our curriculum aims to build a strong foundation through the four essential skills — reading, listening, writing, and speaking — while nurturing curiosity, cultural awareness, and a positive attitude towards learning.

We have high expectations of all students and want them to enjoy lessons, feel successful, and be proud of their achievements in French or Spanish. We also aim for students to recognise how learning a language supports other areas of their learning and helps them to develop wider skills such as literacy, memory, and problem-solving.

At Key Stage 3, the curriculum is designed to offer a mixture of practical, conversational vocabulary that students can apply in real-life situations and use to talk about themselves and their experiences. They learn how to select appropriate vocabulary and structures to express ideas clearly and creatively, skills which also transfer to other subjects.

At Key Stage 4, we build upon these communication skills to help students use language with greater accuracy, fluency, and creativity, deepening their understanding of grammar and culture.

Implementation

At The Abbey School, students in KS3 study either French or Spanish. We cover a wide range of topics that give them the opportunity to use the four essential skills — listening, speaking, reading and writing. Pupils build their vocabulary and grammar knowledge step by step, engaging with the language through a variety of activities that build confidence and are inclusive to all learners. The study of a second language also strengthens literacy skills, both oral and written.

At KS4, these skills are developed further through more complex language structures, extended productive tasks, and a deeper focus on grammatical accuracy and creativity. This enables students to use the language more independently and to expand on their ideas.

Cultural understanding of French- and Spanish-speaking countries is embedded throughout our curriculum.

Lessons are structured and consistent, following a clear model that includes retrieval practice, teacher modelling, class practice, and independent work. Each topic builds on prior knowledge. The structure of lessons promotes inclusion, engagement, and confidence for all learners.

Homework is set across both key stages using www.sentencebuilders.com, giving students a weekly opportunity to practise and consolidate their language skills outside the classroom.

Impact

The ambition of the MFL department has had a clear and positive impact on our students, which can be seen in the following areas:

- Most students complete KS4 with strong results that compare well to national attainment figures.
- Students show clear progress over time, which is monitored through both formative and summative assessments.
- With support from Senior Leadership, the number of students choosing to study a language at KS4 has increased.
- As a result, the proportion of students achieving the English Baccalaureate has also increased.
- Students with SEND are well supported in Modern Languages and achieve positive outcomes at KS4.
- Student attitudes towards languages have improved, which is reflected in higher levels of engagement and participation in lessons.
- Studying a language helps students become more resilient learners and develop a stronger understanding of how language works, improving their literacy not only in the second language but also in English.
- Students develop reflective, analytical, and problem-solving skills that can be applied across other subjects.
- Trips and cultural experiences allow students to experience the language and culture first-hand, increasing their motivation and curiosity.