Plumbland CE School

Modern Foreign Languages Policy

**Aims and objectives**

In our school we teach French to our Junior children. We believe that children enjoy learning to speak another language. We also believe the earlier a child is exposed to a foreign language, the faster the language in question is acquired. We also believe it is a good idea to introduce a new language to children when they are at primary school, as they tend to be less self conscious about speaking aloud at this stage of their development. It is widely believed that the early acquisition of a foreign language facilitates the learning of other foreign languages later in life.

The main objective of teaching a modern foreign language (MFL) in primary school is to promote the early development of a child’s linguistic competence. We also want to:

* Foster an interest in learning other languages;
* Introduce young children to another language in a way that is enjoyable;
* Make young children aware that language has structure, and that the structure differs from one language to another;
* Help children develop their awareness of cultural differences in other countries;
* Develop their speaking and listening skills;
* Lay the foundations for future study.

**Teaching and learning style**

We use a variety of techniques to encourage the children to engage activity in foreign language: these include games, role play and songs. We frequently use mime to accompany new vocabulary in the foreign language, as this teaches the language without the need for translation.

We emphasise the listening and speaking skills over the reading and writing skills. We also use a multi sensory and kinaesthetic approach to teaching ie. We try to introduce a physical element into some of the games, as we believe that this serves to reinforce memory.

We make the lessons as entertaining and enjoyable as possible, as we realise that this approach serves to develop a positive attitude in the children to the learning of modern foreign languages. We build the children’s confidence through constant praise for any contribution they make in the foreign language, however tentative.

**The curriculum**

We teach a foreign language to children in Key Stage two for one hour every week.

We teach the children to know and understand how to:

* Ask and answer questions;
* Use correct pronunciation and intonation;
* Memorise words;
* Interpret meaning;
* Understand basic grammar;
* Use dictionaries;
* Work in pairs, and groups to communicate in the other language;
* Look at life in another culture.

**The contribution of modern foreign languages to teaching in other curriculum areas**

**English**

The learning of a MFL naturally contributes to the development of our children’s listening and speaking skills. It also develops the children’s grasp of linguistic features such as rhyme, rhythm, stress and intonation, helps them understand the concept of register and emphasises the importance of knowing the role of different word types in sentence structure.

**Mathematics**

Children reinforce their time telling skills by playing time-related games in the foreign language. We play number games too that reinforce their counting and calculation skills, expand their understanding of date and increase their knowledge about money.

**Personal, social and health education and citizenship**

One of the main benefits to the children of learning a MFL at Primary school level is a social one. Those children who have difficulty in reading and writing, but who have good aural skills will often find that they excel at speaking in foreign languages. This success breeds confidence, which in turn increases self esteem and gives them a more positive attitude to school in general.

**Spiritual, moral social and cultural education**

By teaching a MFL we contribute to the children’s cultural education. They learn that many societies are multilingual. We teach them about festivals and customs related to the countries in which the language is spoken. We also give them the chance to hear stories set in the foreign culture.

**Geography**

We ask the children to do research on the different countries in which the particular foreign language is spoken (after they have first found them on a map or a globe). MFL pupils likewise learn about the climate of the countries in which the language is spoken.

**Music**

We teach children songs in the MFL-both traditional and modern-which of course helps them to develop a sense of rhyme and an ear for melody.

**History**

We teach children about significant historical figures and events in the history of the countries whose language we are studying.

**Science**

Children reinforce their knowledge of parts of the body through related games, such as a French version of ‘Simon says’ or ‘heads, shoulders, knees and toes’ etc.

**MFL and Computing**

The children will have access to websites which will enable them to play games in French eg. French bingo. They will also be able to record themselves in role play situations using web cams.

**MFL and inclusion**

At our school we teach a MFL to all children, whatever their ability. The MFL forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our MFL teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and respond to each child’s different needs.

**Assessment for Learning**

We assess the children in order to ensure that they make good progress in the subject. We do this informally in the lessons and also by asking the children questions, finding out what they have learnt.

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