

Dinting Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Policy

The school's vision statement is taken from Matthew 22 verse 39,

“Love Your Neighbour as yourself.”

Dinting School aims to create a happy, secure, stimulating and challenging learning environment, in which each child can develop to their full potential. Dinting School aims to create a family atmosphere in which Christian care is offered to all members of the school community.

Christian values are built into the ethos and teaching at Dinting School, promoting attitudes of mutual respect and responsibility.

Aims and objectives

In our school we teach a foreign language to all KS2 children as part of the normal school curriculum. We do this for several reasons. Firstly, we believe that many children enjoy learning to speak another language. Secondly, we also believe that the earlier a child is exposed to a foreign language, the faster the language in question is acquired. We also believe that 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 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 base our teaching on the guidance material in the QCA scheme of work for modern foreign languages. We have adapted this to suit the context of our school and the abilities of our children.

We use a variety of techniques to encourage the children to engage actively in the modern foreign language: these include games, role-play and songs (particularly action songs). We use commercially produced language learning programmes incorporating CD-Roms, which allow the children to listen to and imitate a native speaker. Where appropriate we use puppets and soft toys to demonstrate the foreign language. We use mime to accompany new vocabulary in the foreign language, as this teaches the language without the need for translation.

Initially we place more emphasis on listening and speaking skills than on reading and writing skills. We also use a multi-sensory and kinaesthetic approach to teaching, i.e. 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 children's confidence through constant praise for any contribution they make in the foreign language, however tentative.

Organisation

We teach French to all children in KS2.

The curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the guidance given in the revised National Curriculum and the supplementary guidance published by QCA. We apply the four attainment targets for MFL to Key Stage 2. These are:

- AT1: Listening and responding
- AT2: Speaking
- AT3: Reading and responding
- AT4: Writing

However, we do not give equal weighting to each of these skills in each unit taught. For example, in the initial stages of our teaching we place particular emphasis on speaking.

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 modern foreign language naturally contributes to the development of children's listening and speaking skills. It also develops the children's grasp of linguistic features such as rhyme, rhythm, stress and intonation 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 also play number games, which reinforce counting and calculation skills, expand understanding of date and increase knowledge about money.

Personal, social and health education and citizenship

Children benefit from learning foreign languages in many ways, not least of which are personal and social development. Those children who have difficulty in reading and writing, but who have good aural skills, will often find that they excel when speaking a foreign language. 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 modern foreign language 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 a particular language is spoken. We also give children the chance to hear stories set in a foreign culture. Each child also has the opportunity to correspond with a French child through exchange of letters. A residential visit also takes place every other year.

Geography

We help children to locate on a map or a globe the position of the different countries in which a particular foreign language is spoken and encourage them to research customs and traditions associated with that country. MFL pupils likewise learn about the climate of the countries in which the language is spoken.

Music

We teach children songs in the modern foreign language – both traditional and modern – which of course helps them to develop a sense of rhythm and an ear for melody. We also play them classical music by composers from the countries in question (e.g. Saint-Saëns, Puccini and Beethoven).

History

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

Science

Children reinforce their knowledge of parts of the body through related games, such as a French version of 'Simon Says', or 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes', or through related songs, such as the French-Canadian 'Alouette'.

PE

We teach children dances from the countries in which the foreign language is spoken, for example 'Sur le Pont d'Avignon' in the case of France.

Modern foreign languages and inclusion

At our school we teach a modern foreign language to all children, whatever their ability. A modern foreign language forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our modern foreign language teaching we provide learning opportunities which enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning a modern foreign language. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom (for example, playing a playground game in a modern foreign language), we carry out a risk

assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Resources

Resources have been purchased which will enable all teachers to deliver a structured programme of learning in the modern foreign language relevant to their year group. These include stories, songs and written activities e.g. quizzes. We hope to extend our provision of resources in future years.

Monitoring and review

Policy reviewed November 2019

This policy will be reviewed in November 2022