



Languages

Subject Policy

Date: September 2025

Due for review: September 2027

Meet our languages lead

It is an absolute privilege to lead and teach languages across our three Key Stage 2 classes. Pupils from years 3-6 receive an hour of languages learning per week across the entire year. This significant commitment to the curriculum is based on a firm belief that learning languages prepares pupils to participate in a rapidly changing world in which work and other activities are often carried out in languages other than English. The rise of international commerce means that pupils need to be equipped with the skills needed by the international workplace.

The teaching and learning of a new language also has significant benefits for the children's developing knowledge of their own language as their understanding of word class and grammatical structures expands.



At West Rainton Primary School, the languages curriculum is predominantly centred around French. Alongside English, French is the only language spoken on all continents of the world. It is also the second most widely-taught language across the world after English. In an ever-growing technological world, French is also the third most common language used online after English and German. Learning French gives children a good foundation from which to learn other Latin-based languages such as Spanish, Italian and Portuguese as well as a deeper understanding of the roots of English. Through close relationships with our local secondary schools, we also know that the knowledge and skills we instil in French, give our children a springboard to success in the subject. Learning a foreign language is a great leveller for children, and one of the few subjects where everyone is learning together at a similar rate and pace. This gives it a different social dynamic in the classroom and fosters confidence and self-belief to attempt something new and exciting regardless of prior ability. Most importantly of all, French is also great fun!

As the subject lead, and teacher, I draw on my own background of French and German learning which I took at secondary level, receiving an A in French at GCSE level. I have thoroughly enjoyed revisiting my language learning through extensive professional development with the Local Authority and I also ensure I put it into practise through regular trips to Europe. My passion for learning about other cultures and traditions is something I ensure is transferred to learners. I want all of my learners to know that the world is an exciting place full of opportunities and that they are generation of global citizens for whom it has never been more open and accessible.

The choice of which languages to teach is secondary to the lifelong language learning skills that the pupils will be encouraged to develop. Skills that they will be able access in the future will help them to learn new languages or to improve their competence in an existing language. As we have been teaching languages in this way for eight years now, we have seen this ourselves as we've recently expanded our curriculum to cover at least one unit per term in either German, Spanish or Italian. Increased capability in the use of languages promotes initiative, confidence and independent learning and encourages diversity within society.

Mrs Alison McDonough

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of learning a language in primary school are:

- To foster an interest in learning other languages;
- To introduce young children to another language in a way that is enjoyable and fun;
- To make young children aware that language has a structure, and that the structure differs from one language to another;
- To help children develop their awareness of cultural differences in other countries;
- To develop their speaking and listening skills;
- To lay the foundations for future study.

How languages fits into our overarching curriculum key drivers:



Aiming high

We want our pupils to be inspired by our provision, and to ignite strong aspirations and high expectations of themselves and their future. Promotion of strong attendance is fundamental in this. Through the use of visits, visitors and enriching experiences, we will build knowledge and understanding of career possibilities as well as a hunger to embrace new and exciting opportunities. We will ensure we plan regular opportunities for children to develop self-belief and to see the benefits of taking risks and overcoming challenge. Our pupils will be supported to light up future pathways to fulfilling lives of employment choices, prosperity and future happiness. **In languages, this is achieved by the thrilling experience of learning a language other than your own. This engaging subject naturally enriches our lives by broadening our knowledge, skills and cultural capital. In lessons, we look at how valuable to our skillset, acquiring one or more additional languages can be, talking about the careers where languages could be a significant asset.**



Skills for learning and life

We want pupils to leave our school with a bank of knowledge and a skillset specific to each individual subject, whilst also making transferable connections across other areas of learning and life. Fundamental to this, is a curriculum rich in core skills of language, vocabulary, communication, literacy and numeracy. Our pupils will be taught to be inquisitive, follow a line of enquiry to reach answers, and to recall and present their learning in a vibrant range of ways. Opportunities to develop resilience, organisation, leadership, teamwork, adaptability, patience and initiative are all interwoven into our subjects and wider school life in order for our children to adjust to new learning situations. **Through speaking, listening, singing, reading and writing in other languages, children make connections within and between languages, including English, which greater increases their fluency and transferable knowledge. Languages allows children to present their work in a range of exciting ways such as in verbal responses, songs, games, role-play and traditional written methods. By developing their communication skills in a new language, they are also consolidating skills, etymology and vocabulary in their first language.**



Growing healthily

Equally as important to us is the development of the whole child. Feeling safe, happy and valued is a fundamental right of all pupils. Our inclusive-rich ethos provides the backdrop to our personal development and wellbeing provision which is skilfully interwoven into all that we do. All pupils are supported to develop a strong understanding of the importance of good physical and mental health, whilst also learning a whole range of factors and influences that can have a negative impact on us. Making, nurturing and maintaining healthy relationships, both on and offline, equips children with the strength and security to recognise what they want and need in life. We believe a strong understanding of e-safety forms a crucial part of being a healthy, well-rounded 21st century global citizen. Languages is a fun subject! It is taught in an engaging and exciting way, with a vibrant range of activities that invariably make children happy. The fact they can communicate in a range of other languages gives them a sense of pride and accomplishment, not to mention the confidence they head off to secondary languages lessons with. Many of the activities children experience during languages lessons allow them to form positive relationships with a range of different people as they model appropriate conversation techniques.



Knowledge of the world

When our pupils leave us at the end of Y6, we want them to feel so proud of themselves as people that they have the personal strength and self-confidence to find their place as positive global citizens. Through our carefully-planned provision, our pupils will experience a diverse and inclusive-rich experience that allows them to bank cultural capital as well as developing a secure understanding of the importance of equality. As well as a secure knowledge of British values, our pupils will have their minds and horizons broadened through diverse social, moral, spiritual and cultural experiences. Pupils will be regularly encouraged to revisit and extend their world-view, fostering tolerance, sensitivity and empathy to interact positively with others. The cultural capital gained in primary languages lessons is hugely significant. For many pupils, this is their first experience of the world outside of their own, and their view is extended by gaining the skills to communicate in other languages, as well as widening their cultural knowledge of other places and people in the world.

Implementation

KS2 children have 1 hour of modern foreign language learning per week, in order to ensure progression and skills development. The lessons are taught by the languages co-ordinator as part of PPA cover ensuring they have the same teacher throughout to help with their progression in this subject. Regular discussion between the subject co-ordinator and class teacher takes place to ensure subject coverage and ability is understood by all involved with the children in order to maximise links in other subjects across the curriculum.

The curriculum

French is the main foreign language that is taught in our school. In 2019 we began introducing basic skills in taster units in other languages including German, Italian and Spanish. The curriculum that is followed is based on the guidance given in the revised National Curriculum, using the Durham county scheme of work as a basis for a bespoke West Rainton curriculum!

The children are taught to know and understand how to:

- Ask and answer questions;
- Use correct pronunciation and intonation, mastering the phonics of French;

- Memorise words;
- Interpret meaning;
- Understand basic grammar;
- Use dictionaries;
- Work in pairs and groups, and communicate in **French**/German/Spanish;
- Look at life in another culture

During Language sessions children are given the opportunity to work as a class, as individuals and as part of a group. The choice of class organisation is determined by the learning task. By its nature, languages learning will involve lots of interaction with visual, auditory and kinaesthetic prompts.

Roles and responsibilities

The language subject leader will:

- Manage the implementation of the school policy, updating the policy and scheme of work on a regular basis and in line with new initiatives.
- Order, update and allocate resources.
- Identify needs and arrange training so that all KS2 staff are confident in supporting, teaching and assessing languages (French).
- Take an overview of the whole school planning to ensure that there is continuity between year groups and that progression is taking place.
- Support staff in developing pupils' capability.
- Attend appropriate courses.
- Report to the governors

Class teacher will:

- Facilitate the learning of languages (mainly French)
- Liaise with colleagues within their key stage on curriculum coverage alongside the co-ordinator.
- Assess the work and progress of pupils alongside the subject co-ordinator.

Resources

All French resources are currently stored in the subject leader file on the computer network. Extra resources including music cds are stored in a designated languages resource cupboard.

Inclusion

All KS2 pupils shall have the opportunity to develop languages capability. The school promotes equal opportunities and fairness of distribution of languages resources. Children with other languages at home are encouraged to use them for educational benefit and parents are offered advice about what is appropriate. Efforts are made to ensure that languages used at home are highlighted in the classroom once a teacher has been notified. Groupings for languages will generally follow the same pattern as for all lessons. It is appropriate to match pairs of equal ability, and it is also appropriate to plan to have peer tutors for some lessons where the objectives allow for further stretch and challenge for the most able.

Introducing another language to pupils with SEND can be an opportunity to introduce a subject where pupils have no prior struggles or sense of failing. Instead it focuses on giving learners opportunities to:

- Respond to aspects of cultural understanding through sensory investigation
- Respond to songs, rhymes and greetings in a foreign language
- Be aware of similarities and differences in peoples, countries and cultures
- Make connections in their learning with other curriculum subjects
- Lay the foundations for lifelong languages learning

Starting from scratch in another language, often with simpler spelling and grammar rules (particularly in the case of German) can often lead to improvement in the child's first language skills. Because we are often revisiting topics from early years' learning such as numbers, colours, days of the week, family, foods, transport, countries and the weather, this often gives pupils with SEND a further opportunity to strengthen understanding of concepts they wouldn't regularly revisit otherwise.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Most assessment is formative and is used to support teaching and learning and inform future planning. The languages teacher assesses the children's progress in the target language based on their achievement of the learning objectives in lessons. The teacher is provided with an assessment 'tick' chart to help with this in the beginning of each unit booklet. The frequent written work produced, is marked in line with the school policy on marking.

In line with a local secondary school's assessment method, which identifies 20 'keys' to secondary language success, we've developed our own primary level system of 6 keys. These are knowledge and use of:

First year: conjunctions, opinions and adjectives;

Second year: key verbs;

Third and fourth year: negatives and qualifiers.



These 6 keys are introduced gradually to the children who begin to identify their own use of them very early on. A specific set of stamps in feedback indicate where each key is evidenced independently. It is also a powerful tool to show children how these 'keys' remain the same no matter which language we are studying, helping them to achieve greater fluency in language acquisition.

The subject co-ordinator, alongside the class teacher is to ensure that their classes progress on the language objectives are recorded each term, on sonar, our online data system.

In the back of the children's books, each unit comes with a 'functional language' sticker which ensures children revisit and master core vocabulary and grammar rules no matter what their topic area. Children also regularly revisit French phonemes in the same style as they were used to for their learning of English phonics in Read Write Inc sessions.

Monitoring

Monitoring is carried out by the languages coordinator, in the following ways:

- Interviews with staff and pupils
- Planning scrutinies
- Work sampling
- Lesson visits (where the subject is taught by anyone other than the subject co-ordinator)
- Looking at class and individual progress on internal data system- sonar.
- Reporting to and receiving challenge from school governors
- There is a lead governor for languages- Mr Simon Scott- who meets regularly with the subject lead in school to discuss implementation and monitor impact.