

Subject sentence – What do we do?

The French curriculum empowers students with the tools for lifelong language learning through the teaching of phonics, vocabulary and grammar, and develops an appreciation of the culture of the countries where French is spoken.

What skills and cultural capital do students gain in French?

The curriculum exposes students to differing cultures and it challenges the misconception that British people don't need languages. Students learn how widely spoken French is as both a first and second language. They explore the similarities and differences between life in the UK and life in France, for example through learning about the French school system and how key festivals are celebrated in France and French speaking countries.

How is the French curriculum designed?

In line with the recommendations of the 2016 pedagogy review, our MFL curriculum is built around the core principles of knowledge of **phonics, vocabulary and grammar**. In Years 7 and 8, we follow NCELP SOLs. In years 9, 10 and 11, we apply NCELP pedagogy and principles to our SOLs which are in line with the AQA GCSE course.

What content do you cover and how is this delivered over time?

We teach grammar-led lessons, where grammar points are introduced in a logical sequence, based upon their complexity and frequency. We begin with common irregular verbs in Year 7 Term 1, then introduce the concepts of gender, adjective agreements, regular verb patterns in the present tense and prepositions.

We select vocabulary from the most frequently used 2000 words in French. The vocabulary is chosen for its usefulness in terms of frequency, but also how well it can illustrate the main grammar point of the lesson. Lessons are front-loaded with phonics, vocabulary and grammar instruction, and knowledge is deepened through meaningful practice in different modes and modalities. For phonics instruction, new Sound Symbol Correspondences (SSCs) are introduced each lesson. The French phonics system is deep and complex, so new SSCs are introduced throughout Year 7 and 8, then revisited in more challenging tasks in Year 9.

How do we support Literacy in the French Curriculum?

Knowledge organiser and/or online platforms are used to pre-teach and to consolidate vocabulary knowledge. Teachers model how to use this vocabulary and check for understanding. Students practise it through choral repetition and then independent practice and recall. Students read longer texts containing higher level grammar and vocabulary. Teachers model written tasks, before giving students the opportunity to practise independently. Teachers provide structure strips and prompts to scaffold extended writing tasks.

How do you use spaced practice / retrieval practice?

Retrieval practice is a feature of every lessons through the Do Now activities to secure the retention of core knowledge. Grammar, phonics, and vocabulary knowledge are systematically revisited throughout the curriculum so that knowledge is thoroughly embedded and students are able to use it in a range of contexts. Homework is a set of words to learn each week. The words are revisited in lessons and tested in the Do Now.

How do you sequence the curriculum so that new knowledge and skills builds on what has been taught before?

The curriculum is designed so that when a grammar feature is revisited, students' knowledge deepens. For example, students are introduced the perfect tense in Year 8 Cycle 1, again in Year 8 Cycle 3, and then knowledge is deepened with the perfect tense with être in Year 9 Cycle 1, and with reflexives in Y10 Cycle 1.

What is the future of the French curriculum?

Our French curriculum is evolving. From September 2023, we will introduce a new Y9 NCELP Scheme of Learning, and in September 2024 we will introduce a new Y10 Scheme of Learning, which will start to prepare students for the new French GCSE, with first teaching from September 2024 and first examination in summer 2026.



Key knowledge



Phonics



Vocabulary



Grammar



Listening



Speaking



Reading



Writing