



Our Vision for Modern Foreign Languages

“The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.”

– Ludwig Wittgenstein

At Gotham Primary School, we recognise that we educate future global citizens for whom effective, high-quality teaching of a modern foreign language is essential to equip them with the skills necessary to thrive in a diverse nation and global society. One of the most rewarding aspects of the human experience is our ability to connect with others; to communicate with someone in their language is an incredible gift, both in personal connection and also in broadening professional opportunities in a global market. Through creative and challenging French lessons, we will ensure children leave Gotham with a firm foundation to study French and other languages in further detail.

This subject has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and life-long learning, fostering respect for others whose language, culture and everyday life may differ from their own in line with British Values.¹ We agree that foreign language study is a “liberation from insularity” and seek to enhance pupils’ curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world.² As well as offering opportunities to enhance their vocabulary, we will encourage children to develop their sense of identity and belonging as a citizen in a diverse national and global society.

The skills taught will empower our children to become resilient, ambitious and open-minded learners. We recognise that Modern Foreign Languages can enrich the learning of other subjects. Most obviously, as “he who knows no foreign languages knows nothing of his own” (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe), our teaching of vocabulary and grammatical terms will support and enhance our teaching of English at Gotham. Mathematics is also integrated within the teaching of numbers to enable our children to make links and embed their learning in long-term memory, and French will be integrated wherever possible in other curriculum areas. Investigating French cognates supplements our teaching of History and Geography, enhancing the links our children make between Historical changes in Britain and the vocabulary these events left behind.

Our curriculum follows our whole school approach of metacognition and self-regulation, providing opportunities for children to ‘have a go’, make mistakes and evaluate independently. By exposing children to French sentences and vocabulary, we strive to nurture pupils to become “comfortable being uncomfortable” with new unknown concepts, empowering them with confidence to retrieve prior learning, make links and solve problems independently. Autonomous learners who speak more than one language have improved memory, and we

¹ Department of Education, British Values <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-promoting-british-values-in-schools-published#:~:text=All%20have%20a%20duty%20to,'Prevent'%20strategy%20in%202011>

² DfE National Curriculum, p. 9 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4>

seek to take advantage of opportunities to develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills and enhanced concentration across the curriculum and in life skills.³

We equip children with the tools to activate their prior knowledge, plan, monitor and evaluate. Children reflect on their own work and the work of others,

“being the best we can be together.”

National Curriculum of Modern Foreign Languages (French)

Purpose of study

The aim of French teaching at Gotham should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing. As well as practical communication skills, pupils will learn new ways of thinking and recognise linguistic and cultural similarities and differences. We provide the foundation for learning further languages at secondary school and beyond, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries.

The national curriculum for languages aims to ensure that all pupils:

- understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources
- speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and continually improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation
- can write at varying length, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt
- discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in the language studied.

In Key Stage Two, pupils will be taught to:

- listen attentively to spoken language and show understanding by joining in and responding
- explore the patterns and sounds of language through songs and rhymes and link the spelling, sound and meaning of words
- engage in conversations; ask and answer questions; express opinions and respond to those of others; seek clarification and help
- speak in sentences, using familiar vocabulary, phrases and basic language structures
- develop accurate pronunciation and intonation so that others understand when they are reading aloud or using familiar words and phrases
- present ideas and information orally to a range of audiences
- read carefully and show understanding of words, phrases and simple writing
- appreciate stories, songs, poems and rhymes in the language
- broaden their vocabulary and develop their ability to understand new words that are introduced into familiar written material, including through using a dictionary

³ Eunju Yang, ‘Bilinguals’ Working Memory (WM) Advantage and Their Dual Language Practices’ “bilingual children outperformed monolinguals and maintained their outperformance in all tasks with heavier memory load tasks. The result suggested that bilingual children have more efficient information management skills than monolingual children.” 18 Jul 2017 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5532599/>

- write phrases from memory, and adapt these to create new sentences, to express ideas clearly
- describe people, places, things and actions orally and in writing
- understand basic grammar appropriate to the language being studied, including (where relevant): feminine, masculine and neuter forms and the conjugation of high-frequency verbs; key features and patterns of the language; how to apply these, for instance, to build sentences; and how these differ from or are similar to English.

References

- “All have a duty to ‘actively promote’ the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values were first set out by the government in the ‘Prevent’ strategy in 2011.” <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-promoting-british-values-in-schools-published#:~:text=All%20have%20a%20duty%20to,'Prevent'%20strategy%20in%202011.>
- DfE National Curriculum Framework, July 2013
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4>
- Eunju Yang, ‘Bilinguals’ Working Memory (WM) Advantage and Their Dual Language Practices’ 18 Jul 2017
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