

Riverside Primary School

**Modern Foreign  
Languages  
Policy**

September 2022

*Updated*



# Rationale

At Riverside Primary School we are keen to promote the study of a foreign language because of its increasing importance in the modern world. This has been recognised in the National Languages Strategy 'Languages for All, Languages for Life' where there is the commitment to give every child between the ages of 7 and 11 the entitlement to learn a new language. There is also increasing recognition that enriching the curriculum and releasing children's creative energy through sport, drama, music and languages reinforces their understanding of the basics and helps them enjoy a broader, more balanced curriculum. Ofsted cites the best primary schools as those already providing this breadth alongside the building blocks of literacy and numeracy.

In the United Kingdom it tends to be ignored that 60-70% of the world's population is bilingual, in the sense that they have acquired a functional use of two or more languages. In many countries outside the U.K. major attempts are being made to introduce languages to young learners and in Europe most children learn a foreign language at primary school. In some European countries children are ready to start a third language by the age of 11.

At primary age children are still very malleable and receptive to learning a language and it is proven that a young child's brain is uniquely well adapted for language learning, especially in the first 10 years of life. We are discovering, in this country, that we underestimate what our children can achieve and language learning is now being put firmly on the agenda in all phases of education and training. There is now an entitlement to language learning for pupils at Key Stage 2 and the DFES want primary schools to 'embed language learning into the curriculum.

The development of ICT, email and internet mean not only that there are fewer international barriers, but also that they provide the means to learn a language and communicate it in a more innovative way.

The experience of learning and using a foreign language makes its unique contribution to the whole curriculum by taking children out of the familiar environment which is pervaded by English and allowing them to explore the life-style and culture of another land through the medium of its language. This in turn provides a satisfying, enjoyable and intellectually challenging experience for children in coping with a different linguistic medium.

Learning a foreign language makes an important contribution to learning in general. As well as teaching the meaning of words and sentences (an awareness of language), it promotes social interaction and fosters sympathetic attitudes towards the culture and people of a foreign country, by adjusting to different social conventions. Such attitudes help to promote goodwill and to counter insularity and prejudice.

Opportunities are promoted through children developing their skills of communication by listening, speaking, reading and writing. The study of a language involves practise of observational and study skills and committing to memory of useful material for subsequent recall. Use of role play can also develop creative and imaginative expertise as well as empathy and understanding.

Finally, effective foreign language learning equips children with a skill which is advantageous to high school education, adult life and work. Success in industry and commerce depends increasingly on our willingness and ability to communicate with potential customers in their own language. With the greater mobility of the work force within the European community it is very likely that children will later need to use a foreign language in employment. Others will use it for reading, travel, recreation and personal contacts, either at home or abroad.

## **Why start languages in the primary school? (CILT 2004)**

The Government's strategy for languages recognises that language learning has an important part to play in general education at primary level.

Foreign language learning supports general language and literacy development and the development of generic language learning skills.

It introduces children to the sounds and structures of a new language at an age when they are receptive to this, and stimulates their curiosity and imitative abilities.

It develops knowledge of other countries and promotes positive attitudes towards other cultures and speakers of other languages.

An early start can provide a strong and motivating basis for further learning in Key Stage 3

## Aims

- To enable children to understand and communicate in another language.
- To develop enthusiasm for language learning.
- To develop language skills and language learning skills.
- To give the children confidence in interacting with others.
- To increase the children's European awareness.
- To awaken an interest in foreign cultures and life-styles.
- To develop the children's understanding of themselves and their culture.
- To encourage tolerance and a willingness to work co-operatively.
- To give a sound start for further development at Key Stage 3 and beyond.
- To continually review and modify the curriculum in the light of current research.

## Guidelines to Practice

### Classroom Organisation

At Riverside Primary School, children will be taught languages by Class teachers

The children will be taught as a whole class with additional frequent opportunities given to practise language skills, in smaller groups, in pairs and individually.

Some speaking and listening activities inevitably produce high noise levels and lots of movement.

The games and activities planned should determine how the room is used. Tables may sometimes be pushed back so that the children have more space to move around.

### Teaching and Learning Styles

Appropriate language methodology for young language learners will include many different kinds of teaching and learning including:

Direct teaching, through whole-class and small-group sessions;

Active learning to engage motivation;

Use of games, songs and activities requiring a physical response to maximise enjoyment;

Opportunities for pupils to apply their learning, either on their own, e.g. reading or writing independently, or with others, e.g. working in pairs or small groups, or communicating with people in other countries, with varying degrees of support;

Opportunities for pupils to reflect on and reinforce their own learning, e.g. learning by heart or revising work.

Equipment like digit cards, number fans, number squares and dice will be used when teaching the vocabulary of number.

There will be a lot of active learning including the use of games, songs, dance, rhymes, story-telling and role play.

French will be taught following the North Tyneside scheme of work.

To deliver the curriculum effectively, and to try and encourage use of the target language, a wide range of equipment will be used including IWB, DVD, television and video, CD player, computer, digital camera, flashcards and games.

Class teachers should look for opportunities to integrate language learning with other subjects and consolidate learning in daily contexts, such as greeting the children, giving praise, taking the register and classroom instructions.

## **Quality of Teaching**

The teaching should be purposeful and include clear objectives for each lesson.

The activities should be varied and used to promote learning of the content.

There should be an efficient use of time and a good pace set to make sure sufficient ground is covered.

There should be a range of specialist resources including recorded material and authentic texts.

There should be opportunities to practise language skills as a class, in smaller groups, pairs and individually.

There should be opportunities for working with adults and peers as well as good evidence of sound differentiation.

## **Quality of Learning**

The curriculum planning should ensure progression through the key stage and increased knowledge should be more evident in Year 5/6 where children should have a larger vocabulary and a wider range of expression and should be more able to use the structures learnt to create their own language.

Children should be given sufficient opportunity to master new language adequately.

Successful strategies for consolidating learning should be constantly looked for to make sure that gains in learning are sufficient, given children's age, ability and time available.

The use of the target language should be developed and children should be encouraged to speak the language spontaneously as well as when expressly required.

The children should use the vocabulary and phrases they have learned for basic communication but should also be encouraged to apply their knowledge in new situations and should be given frequent opportunities to create their own language.

## **Differentiation / Targeting**

The initial stages of languages teaching should stress building confidence and positive attitudes to language learning. It should aim to help all young beginners, regardless of ability, to learn to communicate successfully with a minimum command of language, using a small set of basic structures. In Key Stage 2 speaking and listening activities should be more demanding and different levels of questioning should be evident. Reading and writing should be clearly differentiated. At the end of each topic challenging tasks should be set in all four skills which provide opportunities for the children to create their own language.

Language teaching should offer varied activities which are challenging and of immediate interest and should encourage repetition without boredom to consolidate what has been taught. All children should feel positive achievement in what they can do in the language.

Target language inevitably stretches high ability children. The quick pace of a language lesson should help keep motivation high.

Initial writing tasks are copy writing which all ability children can attempt and succeed in. More able children should be encouraged to use the language structures and vocabulary taught to create their own language.

There should be extension material available for high achievers who complete tasks quickly.

Extra support should be given to lower ability children when necessary.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

There should be a mixture of formative and summative assessment to ensure progress throughout Key Stage 2.

Self - assessment sheets and regular short tests should be used to encourage and motivate children and to keep as a record of achievement to date of the language covered. They should be used whenever the teacher feels that children will benefit from reflecting on how much they have learned, both during and at the end of the term's work.

Assessment for learning strategies used in Literacy should also be adapted and used in language lessons, where appropriate, e.g. the evaluation of work against success criteria.

Children will be assessed for their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in French, related to the topic covered.

All children from Year 3 – Year 6 will receive a written report on their progress in French as part of their annual report to parents in the Summer Term.

## **Equal Opportunities**

In Modern foreign language lessons we want children of all races and backgrounds to enjoy working cooperatively together.

Access and achievement for all groups should be promoted, in line with the school's policy on Equal Opportunities, as we want every child to reach their full potential.

High and low achievers should be monitored to make sure the work is suitable, and sensitivity should be shown to the needs of particular groups of children. Children who have had support should have this indicated in their book.

Equal demands should be made on each gender, ethnic and ability group in oral work, particularly in answering questions.

Stereotyping should be avoided and appropriate terminology and grouping arrangements used.

The curriculum content should promote genuine access for all pupils and prepare them for the reality of an ethnically and culturally diverse society.

There should also be equality of access for all children to key resources.

## **Racial Equality**

The content of the languages curriculum should reflect an ethnically and culturally diverse society. This should be in line with the school's Single Equality Scheme.

A wide range of resources should be used to promote racial equality and cultural diversity and to challenge racial discrimination.

The children should be made aware of all the different countries in the world where the language is spoken and appreciate the many different cultures involved.

Tasks should be set which challenge prejudices and stereotypes.

All children should have genuine access to the languages curriculum and equal access to key learning resources.

There should be appropriate provision for helping bilingual pupils to fully access the language curriculum.

## **Special Educational Needs**

Studying a foreign language should help children with special learning difficulties to develop their general language skills, increase their social skills, and encourage their awareness of other people, places and cultures. It is hoped that children will feel positive achievement in what they can do in a language which will help develop their confidence and self-esteem.

A study by N.C.C. and CILT has shown that levels 1-3 do not pose particular problems even for children with educational difficulties. Strategies cited in the report which have helped children with S.E.N. achieve success should be used including:

- varied and clear illustrative materials
- clear practical tasks designed to build confidence
- repetition (whole class, group, pair)

The target language will be used sensitively with low ability children, but as a means of challenging exceptionally able children. Higher level questioning will be used with more able children and there will be an expectation that they will reuse language learned in different contexts.

There will be appropriate expectations of children with S.E.N. and positive and constructive attitudes to learning difficulties.

## Continuity and Progression

A languages curriculum should reflect continuity and progression across the Key Stage(s).

The schemes of work should enable teachers to guide children's progression in line with the KS2 Framework for Languages in the three core strands:

listening, speaking (O: Oracy), reading and writing skills (L: Literacy);

The North Tyneside scheme of work takes into account that in Key Stage 2 children will have knowledge of English, including grammatical awareness and knowledge of some grammatical terms. The schemes of work therefore consolidate and build on this work where appropriate. Children should be encouraged to increase their knowledge of how language works and to explore differences and similarities between the new language and English or another language.

The importance of ensuring the children's continuity of learning when they transfer to secondary school should be recognised and information will be passed onto the secondary school during transition meetings.

## Links with other Subjects

Learning a language should be planned as an integral part of the whole curriculum, adding a new dimension, rather than as a 'bolt-on' extra as it can contribute to the learning of other subjects and, children can also develop their skills and understanding of their language through their work in other curriculum areas. Where there is a natural link the language should be included in a cross curricular approach. The following links with other subjects probably currently exist:

**English:** knowledge about language, development of speaking and listening skills, knowledge and understanding of grammar and sentence construction. Opportunities to compare other languages with English are exploited through use of the new alphabet, phonemes, rhyming patterns, sound/spelling links, dictionary work, formation of structures (such as singular/plural, gender, negatives, question forms, position of adjectives, imperatives), intonation, dialogues, poetry, different text types e.g. fiction, non-fiction

**Maths:** numbers and counting in other languages e.g. addition and subtraction facts, the decimal system, the date, telling the time, money and currency, prices and costs, distance and speed, surveys, data collection and analysis

**Science:** environmental factors in different countries, comparisons between school environment and other countries through email/videoconferencing links and the use of internet, work on parts of the body and life cycles

**ICT:** e-mail contacts with schools abroad, materials from the internet and satellite television, video and audio, presentation of work and data, videoconferencing, word-processing.

**Geography:** children can locate the country or countries where the language/ languages they know are spoken; they can make comparisons and develop a greater awareness of similarities and differences in relation to climate, language and culture.

**History:** cultural and language activity linked to specific periods of history e.g. learning about e.g. the Romans, the Aztecs and other historical figures.

**Music:** learning songs in the language and performing them on French/ Spanish/ German Day, rhyme and rhythm in songs and in words and phrases, comparing English examples with those of other cultures (e.g. Sur le pont d'Avignon/ London Bridge is falling down) famous singers, musicians and composers from other countries.

**Technology:** designing and making things e.g. bookmarks, birthday cards,

**Art:** e.g. line drawings used in display work. Learning about the artists of other countries and their paintings

**P.E:** using classroom language to manage activities, physical responses to instructions in the language being learnt, games and dances from other countries.

**R.E:** international or multicultural work, celebration of festivals, storytelling, calendars, customs;

**PSHE:** knowledge of other countries and cultures, sensitivity to difference, consideration of 'otherness', the multilingual society. Learning respect for themselves and for others through learning to appreciate the cultural diversity within a multicultural society

## **Involvement of Parents, Guardians and Community**

Information about the languages curriculum is available to parents and guardians on request.

## The Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages Overview of the Learning Objectives

The Learning Objectives comprise of three clearly progressive core strands of teaching and learning over the four years of KS2:

Oracy (Speaking and Listening) (O)  
Literacy (Reading and Writing) (L)  
Intercultural Understanding (IU)

In addition, two cross-cutting strands are included:

Knowledge about Language (KAL)  
Language Learning Strategies (LLS)

These are of great importance in themselves as important tools for learning, providing a basis for children's future development as language learners.

See the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages, pages 7, 8 and 9 for further details.

### Oracy: Listening and responding

Children should be taught how to listen carefully and discriminate sounds, identify meaning and develop auditory awareness. Teachers should use the following activities:

- respond on hearing a certain word(s), structures or phrases, e.g. put up hands, hold up an object, picture or word card, stand up;
- listen and respond to songs, poems or stories, and listen for certain details, information, repeated words or rhyming words;
- play games that require concentration on listening, such as 'Simon says', 'bingo' or 'true or false';
- respond to what they hear by performing an action or answering a question;
- pick out specific details from longer passages of familiar language, e.g. name, place, cost;
- listen to audio, videotape or CD-ROM and note down information;
- listen to and attempt to retain a sequence of numbers, letters or words which children then repeat, e.g. Je vais à Paris, elle va à Lille, il va à Nantes.

**Oracy: Speaking** The focus should be on correct pronunciation and intonation. Activities might include:

- reinforcement activities using visual aids (see 'Teaching and Learning Styles')
- joining in with songs, poems and rhymes and then learning them by heart
- integrating previously learnt language with newly learnt language;
- manipulating language, *e.g. using vocabulary and structures for a range of purposes and in a range of different contexts, changing the person of verbs, using plurals, forming negatives and questions;*
- taking part in pair and group work, *e.g. finding out and exchanging information, devising sketches and role plays;*
- recording onto video- or audiotape, *e.g. poems, songs, information about school, town, sketches, presentations;*

- preparing for a presentation/assembly.

## Literacy: Reading and responding

Techniques used and developed during children's work in literacy should be used. Activities should include:

- replacing visual cues gradually with text cues;
- reading new words by sounding out and blending their separate parts;
- sounding out syllables in words to help memory;
- grouping similar sounds together;
- playing word games, e.g. word and picture dominoes, matching pairs; sorting and dictionary work;
- shared reading of short fiction and non-fiction texts including different text types e.g. newspaper reports

## Literacy: Writing

Activities might include:

- finger writing in the air;
- writing new words by combining the spelling patterns of their sounds;
- communicating real messages by writing and sending e-mails;
- writing down personal information as it is learnt to create a pen portrait;
- making labels and posters;
- acrostic poetry, shape poetry;
- creating and extending sentences using familiar language;
- using a familiar structure as a framework for creative writing;

## Practising new language

At the **practice** stage of a lesson the use of enjoyable activities, including games, rhymes and songs, will enable children to repeat new language in a motivating way. Eventually children will apply the language in a new context by adapting it and adding to it.

The teacher will use some of the following games:

Guessing games, e.g. *I'm thinking of a word beginning with the letter C, I'm thinking of an animal with three syllables/ that begins with a vowel/that rhymes with mon.* Choose a word, clap the number of syllables in it, then children guess the word.

- Begin to say/write words and children guess the ending, e.g. *éle ...phant,*
- Chain games, e.g. *Je m'appelle LUCY et j'aime les LAPINS*
- Action games such as the 'Mexican wave' or 'Simon says' (*'Jacques a dit'*)
- Children seated in a circle are given one of four fruit names, e.g. *banane, pomme, fraise, orange.* When their name is announced they must change places. When the teacher says *'salade de fruits'*, they all change places.
- Listening games: children point, touch, tick, mime, move or write to show their understanding. This can be a group response game. Each group has a set of the same items and it is the first group to respond correctly by holding up the item or pointing that gains a point. Listen to stories and poems and sing songs that incorporate some of the new language.
- Use mini flashcards for pair and group work, e.g. *memory games.*
- Games using cue cards: pictorial or text cards are distributed to pairs of children to encourage information exchange, e.g. *asking for and giving directions.*
- Information games: children exchange information in order to complete a task, e.g. *one child has a shopping list and a limited budget and the other has a price list.*
- Role play ranging from the structured reading of a given dialogue using pictures or word cards to a free interpretation by children of a given situation.

- Partner game: children need to find a partner who has either the same or complementary items on a card, *e.g. Tom/Jerry, questions and answers, two halves of a word or phrase.*
- Surveys of most popular pets, favourite colours/foods: once children have interviewed each other they collate and present their findings.
- Number games: teacher throws a beanbag and says a number, the child who catches it gives the consecutive number, the preceding one or even the inversion of it, *e.g. 12 -> 21, 34 -> 43.* Children form groups according to the number given by the teacher. Children stand when the teacher says an even number; sit when the number is odd.
- Bingo: use numbers or structures/any other vocabulary.
- Picture dictation: children draw what the teacher describes.
- Matching pairs games, snap, dominoes, happy families combining picture with text and eventually only text to practise not only items of vocabulary but also rhyming sounds, *e.g. trois - moi, deux - peux* or sentences, *e.g. elle porte un petit ... chapeau rouge, il a une grande ... maison blanche*
- Rhyming games, *e.g. blanc - Rouen, vert - Nevers, gris - Paris,*
- Games against the clock, *e.g. how quickly can all the children introduce themselves.*
- Spelling games: using the new alphabet, teacher/child starts spelling a word and the class must guess what it is; name the second/third/last letter in words; battleships; hangman.
- Children, holding letter cards, spell out known words in front of the class by positioning themselves in the correct order facing the class.
- Dictionary games: children hold up picture or word cards and arrange themselves in dictionary order.
- Writing in the air: teacher writes and children guess the word.
- Tracing on the backs of partners: starting with letters and numbers, progressing to words.
- Text flashcards can replace or complement picture flashcards and can also be used for spelling games. Phrases can be jumbled up and re-ordered.

## Production

End-of-unit activities may include some of the following activities:

- performances, *e.g. assembly to parents, seasonal songs and poems;*
- wall displays and collages, *e.g. food in France, festivals;*
- recorded sketches and dialogues;
- powerpoint presentations and booklets
- writing a letter, email or description

## ICT

ICT should be built into the planning. Pupils enjoy learning French through this medium and some of the software available serves to reinforce specific vocabulary or structures being learned. ICT can help children's learning in MFL by

- making it possible to draft and redraft work using a word processor, documenting and evaluating ideas electronically;
- extending the possibilities for communication with children in other countries and cultures, such as by the use of email and a webcam;
- using audio, video/ DVD, satellite television and CD-ROMs to provide a diversity of learning experiences;
- providing sources of authentic and up-to-date reading materials through the use of the internet;

## A Rationale For Using Songs

Children benefit from frequent interaction with the sounds of the language. This helps them to educate their ear into recognising the new sounds and patterns of the language they are learning. Songs and rhymes are a rich source of material for this process.

#### Songs

- provide another route towards learning.
- support sensitivity to the language through rhythm
- contribute to good intonation and pronunciation
- are made to be repeated
- can help to fix in the memory
- can have a cultural dimension
- encourage active participation
- can take familiar language into a new context can be enjoyable for children and teacher
- require performance and audience
- provide immediate gratification
- singing songs in the foreign language engages both sides of the brain at the same time; language in the left side and music in the right. Tasks that involve whole brain activity ensure that the learning is embedded in the limbic system.

Review and update – September 2023