

Departmental Curriculum Statement 2022-23 Modern Foreign Languages

Curriculum Intent Statement

Our **MFL curriculum** aims to encourage a global awareness in our students of what lies behind a different language, enhancing the richness and the diversity of different cultures by using authentic resources as well as developing links with schools, students and industry from different countries.

Our key intent for Modern Languages at Cowley International College is to enable each student to have the experience of learning a foreign language, whereby they can achieve success in a supportive learning environment. Through the development of practical communication skills, re-enforcing positive attitudes to language learning and native speakers of the chosen language and a lasting enjoyment of the language and associated culture and traditions, we hope to enrich and broaden their horizons. We want our learners to be familiar with a wealth of knowledge, principles, vocabulary and skills in the language(s) studied and to ensure that they see language learning as not only a cultural feature, but also as part of a wider bank of knowledge to apply across the curriculum e.g. memorising, scanning texts for information, analysis of data. It also serves to enrich students' use of English and British Values, through comparison of the language and culture of another country. Additionally, for our EAL (English as an Additional Language) students and those already equipped with a knowledge of another language and cultural experience, we hope to draw from and enhance their global experiences.

Through their language acquisition, we want our learners to develop personal qualities and an awareness of themselves. Our contribution to our own and global Cultural Capital education is fundamental, where students learn about both similarities and differences globally- such as Christmas in France, festivals in Spain, typical foods and school routines in Germany- the list is endless. Consequently, they can see their own culture in the context of the wider world and be aware of the implications of the language for the individual and the local, national and international community.

Curriculum Implementation Statement

MFL teaching at Cowley is interactive, challenging and aims to enable students to become resilient, confident communicators - invaluable skills throughout their school life and beyond.

The aim of the KS3 curriculum is to introduce students to (or further develop, where KS2 MFL experience allows) a knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical structures that underpin language learning skills. These skills can also be applied to learning other foreign languages in the future, as well as supporting their English language development. Students begin with a Transition unit of work to gain confidence no matter their starting point and to raise awareness of the similarities between languages that will aid their learning. Initial and subsequent phonics training to support the development of reading aloud, and further linked to all 4 key skills, is a key strategy that we place importance on from the outset.

At KS3, all students study either French or German in Year 7, 8 and 9. Setting in Year 7 is typically based on KS2 scaled scores and CAT data (sets are generic across subjects). The option for taking Spanish is available for Year 9 students. We pride ourselves in that at Cowley, all students have the opportunity to learn a language to KS4 and beyond and we are inclusive. The core curriculum takes learners through the

fundamental basics of a language, from phonics knowledge, personal pronouns and high-frequency structures to verb conjugation and tenses, thus ensuring students can use the most common vocabulary and structures with confidence at this level. Furthermore, EAL students have produced mini podcasts in their mother tongue in order to support others, as well as to teach other interested students during language club.

At KS4, GCSE, approximately 40-47% of the cohort will continue to study a MFL, with all able to continue should they opt to do so. Learning plans are designed to build on KS3 language acquisition, with knowledge recap at the beginning of each module and then further development through targeted skills e.g. for translation or role-play. Teaching is based on a differentiated course (linked to AQA Foundation or Higher) with online access available where teachers use a wide range of strategies and resources to suit all learning styles and needs. The department holds a wide range of resources from readers, magazines, digital language subscriptions, coursebooks, to revision materials, language learning mats, mini white boards and both paper and online dictionaries.

At KS5, A Level, teachers prepare and deliver engaging and stimulating lessons using the target language as their main tool, thus enabling students to communicate at near to native level themselves over time. Knowledge of the language is deepened through the regular development of specific grammar points that complement the area of study, going beyond and into greater depth and sophistication from the language and skills learnt at GCSE, such as use of the subjunctive mood and higher-level structures. Study of foreign language films, music, YouTube videos and authentic texts such as newspaper articles from Le Monde, are all commonplace in the MFL classroom. Our Cultural Capital knowledge extends into the study of elements of architecture, music, film and literary works – an in-depth analysis of a book and film are studied, which make up one paper on the A level examination. The speaking element (Individual Research Project) of the A level paper is wholly student led, according to the AQA guidelines, thereby promoting the necessary skills required for Higher and Further Education and the world of work. Impressive past examples of the IRP have been based on: Coluche and the Restos du Coeur movement, The impact of tourism on Mont Blanc and the success of Le Mans as a cultural heritage feature for French and The German Gaming Industry, Post War Berlin, as well as Durrenmatt and his absurd theatre for German!

The Cowley MFL department houses a wealth of A Level resources from an online resource bank, novels, magazines, newspaper, films, A level grammar textbook and more. At A level, lessons are taught with frequent recourse to the cultural and political sphere of that country and the chosen coursebook includes authentic texts and listening exercises using native speakers speaking at normal speed.

Bespoke speaking and listening sessions in a small or a one-to-one group, develop fluency, spontaneity and confidence in our students and where possible native/near native speakers are invited in to Cowley to broaden their cultural experience in becoming natural linguists.

At all stages, independent study is fostered through homework tasks (both paper-based and online if appropriate) to review, practise, consolidate and extend classroom-based learning. Learning of vocabulary is a fundamental element of our MFL Retrieval programme of 'Remembering More, Knowing More' at Cowley and regular home learning of words and structures is actively encouraged.

Listening to the use of the target language for day-to-day tasks, when appropriate, is used for regular communication and all skills are balanced throughout the lessons. Use of authentic texts, video, songs provide a context for genuine relevance and understanding. Structures and grammatical teaching are carried out in context and regularly revisited throughout the learning programmes with a strong literacy focus.

The depth of coverage will equip our learners to be able to use their skills in leisure, travel or work-related situations or be able to continue to a higher level of study.

Curriculum Beyond the Classroom

The Cowley MFL department has run many trips, visits and projects to allow our learners to demonstrate their language skills in authentic situations as well as to experience the culture of the target language countries.

The Cowley MFL Department fosters very strong links with two schools in Germany which have regularly visited Cowley, and with whom we contact using videoconferencing and have linked to our local feeder primary schools. In previous years, we have organised trips to Stuttgart, Berlin, Strasbourg, Poland and Munich. Additionally, these projects are often run with cross-curricular links, such as with History and Art. When possible, forthcoming visits are planned to Paris and the Black Forest. Comenius projects have been strong, and we hope to embark on possible new future projects, possibly with Finland and Germany.

Learners are encouraged to communicate via Pen-pal links or on social media. Partnerships have been created during the regular school visits with our link schools from Germany. Our link to Stuttgart, St. Helens' twin town, is very strong and Cowley was instrumental in the recent 70th Anniversary of the partnership of the towns – again linking MFL with Art and the Performing Arts Department. In previous years, a senior teacher from Stuttgart delivered a German A level a masterclass in the German language.

Additionally, learners are given opportunity to attend 'Language Matters' events, where they can listen to and engage with visiting speakers regarding life opportunities with languages. Careers form an important part of our delivery across the age and ability range. We constantly reinforce the value of language acquisition in the modern world. With explicit delivery, through relevant topics, students learn about how proficiency in a foreign language enhances career opportunities. Additionally, career knowledge plays an important focus in weekly lessons, whereby we link MFL acquisition to suitable career opportunities and the department has an engaging display of future career paths linked to languages.

Subject Expertise

The MFL team are highly qualified linguists with a passion for language learning and a commitment to supporting students to achieve their goals, both academic and through extra-curricular activities and visits.

The department has led the Local Authority School to School MFL network to support and develop good practice across the authority, with future aspirations for Cowley to continue to lead this initiative. External CPD is regularly sought and attended, including language specific courses, as well as general pedagogy developments and AQA training.

Newly acquired knowledge is disseminated during twilight sessions and Departmental Teaching and Learning meetings, where staff work together to develop new ideas and resources. Internal CPD has held a strong focus this year on reading strategy to help support all students with their differing needs. Two members of the department have experience of being examination board markers for AQA and Edexcel which affords invaluable insight into the GCSE examination format and demands.

Continued involvement in MFL online forums, where good practice and ideas are regularly shared, maintains an up to date subject and curricular knowledge within the department. Additional links with other local secondary schools, allow for further sharing of good practise, resources and staff expertise.

All members of the department are degree level qualified in one or more language and teach at their appropriate level in each language.

Destinations

Learners arrive at Cowley International College with great variance in their language learning from KS2 and other points in their life. Therefore, throughout the year, we are represented in the Year 5 and 6 Transition Days and at the start of Year 7 we offer a Transition Module. Through these events, we hope to overcome this variability, so learners can easily move on with their language learning and eventually make informed decisions about their future destinations.

When appropriate, pupils in KS3 are given guidance on the importance of languages as a subject choice. These opportunities allow students to further raise their awareness of languages in the wider-world and possible career opportunities. MFL Assemblies and bespoke lessons about languages and careers enable students to make relevant choices, within guidelines, about their next steps. The 'Language Matters' conference is designed to provide specific outside guidance for life opportunities with MFL.

Year 10 Taster Days and Year 12 New Student Intake day are organised to ensure that learners are aware of the role that languages can play in each phase of their education. Contact is kept with past Cowley linguists, whose experiences are shared with students to show them where languages has taken them - be this into journalism, business, the tourist industry or living abroad. In Year 11, Mock interviews with specialist workers, further serve to introduce languages into the world today, as well as visits to colleges and universities.

Our curriculum content supports and delivers careers education at both KS3 and GCSE, with specific modules addressing 'future plans' and 'life beyond school' as well as guidance at KS5 for life beyond Cowley.