



Blessed Robert Widmerpool Catholic
Voluntary Academy
MFL Policy

“Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils’ curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. The teaching should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and writing. It should also provide opportunities for them to communicate for practical purposes and learn new ways of thinking.” DfE National Curriculum in England, September 2013

At Blessed Robert Widmerpool (BRW) we believe that the learning of a foreign language provides a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for our pupils. It helps them to develop communication skills including key skills of speaking and listening and extends their knowledge of how language works. Learning another language gives children a new perspective on the world, encouraging them to understand their own cultures and those of others.

Foreign language learning is a compulsory part of the new Key Stage 2 National Curriculum in England as of 2014.

Blessed Robert Widmerpool recognizes and celebrates the value of this initiative and provides age-appropriate Primary Language learning opportunities for all children in Year 3-6. Key Stage 2 pupils learn French.

Aims

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 thorough discussion and asking questions, 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.

The focus of study in modern languages in the National Curriculum in England 2014 is practical communication. The teaching should provide an appropriate balance of spoken and written language and should lay the foundations for further foreign language teaching at Key Stage 3.

Pupils should 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 and 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.
- 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 words; 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.

At Blessed Robert Widmerpool, we also value the importance of intercultural understanding. Through learning a language, children will also:

- Describe the life of children in the countries where the language is spoken, identify similarities and differences in everyday life, social conventions, traditional stories and celebrations.
- Recognize how symbols, products and objects can represent the culture of a country, and how aspects of the culture of different countries become incorporated into the daily life of others.
- Recognize and mistrust stereotypes and understand and respect cultural diversity.

To thoroughly embed the cognitive development and intercultural understanding, we aim to develop in our children, language learning is integrated into everyday school life, with teachers, teaching assistants and children, using and experimenting with their knowledge of different languages whenever the opportunity arises.

A problem-solving approach is fostered, giving children opportunities to work out a language for themselves in a supportive context where risk taking and

creativity are encouraged and where there is an emphasis on having fun with the language. This approach will enhance the development of the children's 5 R's of learning, in line with the whole school ethos. IT is used where appropriate to enhance learning and teaching.

There are three main contexts in which language teaching and learning take place.

1 Weekly explicit French lesson

Children are taught specific skills, concepts and vocabulary in a weekly lesson with a language teacher specialist with the class teacher / support staff present during these sessions. The content of these sessions is reinforced by the class teacher at additional points during the week. This acts to reinforce the vocabulary and structures they have learned.

2 Languages embedded into other lessons

French will be embedded and woven throughout all aspects of the curriculum where appropriate, teachers give children opportunities to practice their foreign language in the context of lessons in other subject areas. For instance, some instructions may be given in another language in a PE lesson; or children may count in another language while carrying out a numeracy activity. This application of knowledge acts to reinforce the vocabulary and structures they have learned thus deepening their understanding.

3 'Incidental' language

Languages are part of the day-to-day life of the school. For example, teachers use the foreign language to give simple classroom instructions ('come in quietly'; 'listen'; 'look'), to ask questions ('who wants school dinner?'; 'what's today's date?') and to take the register, lead Assembly and give permission for children to leave the room. Children are encouraged to respond using the language they have learned, and sometimes teachers and pupils develop new language skills together, teachers acting as role models in the learning process.

This integrated approach is a strong model for teaching and learning, giving children opportunities to use and develop their language for communicating in stress-free real-life contexts.

Intercultural understanding

Learning French provides a basis for teaching and learning about other cultures, and this is incorporated into many areas of the curriculum including personal and social education and citizenship, geography, religious education, design and technology, music, art and dance. Efforts are made to ensure that teaching

material across the curriculum includes a 'flavor' of the countries where the focus language is spoken.

Inclusion

No child is excluded by reason of a learning difficulty, or because they have English as an additional language. Experience has indeed shown that such children can derive particular benefit from taking part in Primary Languages learning activities in which they may be less disadvantaged than in other areas of the curriculum.

Language learning activities are planned in such a way as to encourage the full and active participation of all pupils. Work is differentiated as appropriate to the needs of individual children. Pairs and groups for collaborative work may be made up in different ways, depending on the task.

Planning and resources

Primary Languages is planned following the broad guidelines set out in the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum in England Languages Program of Study (DfE 2013). The school's Scheme of Work, Primary Languages Network, ensures that there are continuity and progress in both skills and content across all classes. The specialist MFL teacher adapts the scheme of work where appropriate to ensure it fully meets the needs of all pupils. Published resources including fiction and non-fiction texts, posters, CDs, DVDs and computer software are available for use throughout the school. Resources, including work schemes, are audited regularly.

Staff development

Teachers and other staff are given opportunities and encouragement to develop their own language and language teaching skills, through supported individual study and CPD and by being present during the weekly French lesson led by the MFL Teacher.

The Subject Leader

The subject leader for Primary Languages identifies school needs and co-ordinates professional development opportunities. The subject leader will also manage MFL resources and monitor and assess development of the subject across Key Stages.

Monitoring Progress and Assessing Attainment

Assessment evidence may include observations, pupil voice, recorded speaking tasks, written work, photographs and videos. Assessment information is used to monitor progression, inform future teaching and support transition to Key Stage 3.

Links to Catholic Social Teaching:

“The mission of schools and teachers is to develop an understanding of all that is true, good and beautiful.” Pope Leo

In line with Pope Francis’ vision that education develops an understanding of ‘all that is true, good and beautiful’, the study of modern foreign languages enables pupils to encounter different cultures, deepen mutual understanding, and recognise the dignity of people across the world as members of one human family.

RE – Catholic Life and Mission and Catholic Social Teaching

- **Human Dignity, Solidarity and Subsidiarity:**
Children explore how people interact in different cultures and countries, learning to respect the dignity of all individuals. At BRW, this is developed through topics such as exploring a French town, understanding friends and family, and learning about school life.
- **Participation:**
This principle emphasises the right and responsibility of individuals and communities to actively engage in decisions that affect their lives and society. At BRW, this is explored through activities such as travelling through history in French and learning how to shop and communicate in another language and culture.
- **Stewardship:**
Stewardship highlights the importance of caring for the Earth’s resources for both present and future generations. It focuses on environmental awareness, responsible resource use, and sustainability. At BRW, this is taught through topics such as worldwide weather, climate patterns, and exploring animals around the world.
- **Distributive Justice and the Common Good:**
These teachings focus on how resources, opportunities, and responsibilities are shared fairly to benefit everyone. They encourage an understanding of inequality, global interdependence, and fairness. At BRW, these ideas are explored through themes such as school life, family, and friendships.

Through the study of French, pupils develop an appreciation of global citizenship, respect for diversity, and an understanding that all people are created in the image and likeness of God.

Links outside school

Primary Languages gives us an ideal opportunity for making links outside school. We encourage children to share their experiences of visiting or living in other countries, and from time to time we welcome visiting speakers who can talk

about life in the countries where the focus language is spoken. We make full use of ICT links via e-mail and approved sites on the Internet, to find out about life in other countries.

September 2026