



Newport Girls' High School Curriculum Summary

Faculty: Modern Languages	Subject: French
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Our Vision

Faculty Vision

The MFL Faculty teaches French and German. We aim to create and develop enthusiastic and successful learners. Students who study languages at NGHS should be curious about the world around them and enjoy learning about how that world is shaped by languages and the people who use them. We are committed to establishing a learning environment that encourages students to feel confident about taking risks and developing informed opinions about the world around them. Students will have opportunities to independently extend their skills beyond the classroom and therefore prepare for life where they belong in a global market place. All students will be offered the opportunity to visit France or Germany and will have the opportunity to practise the language in authentic environments, and will be offered several opportunities to find out about how learning a language can be useful for their further study or careers. Fundamentally, our team want to inspire, foster and nurture a love of foreign languages and a greater respect for the cultural appreciation of the countries in which they are spoken.

Curriculum Intent

At KS3, students study a wide range of topics with the aim of providing a foundation of vocabulary and grammatical structures; alongside this they are continually learning the skills to read articulately, write with fluency and speak with confidence. We feel that KS3 should be a comfortable, yet challenging introduction to the study of Languages. We are always adapting our schemes of learning to make them relevant to the world and local environment the students come from. The passion and belief of the Faculty ensures that students enjoy their Language lessons and all make excellent progress from their starting points. Whilst we cover the National Curriculum, we believe it is important to go beyond this to instil a love of our subject and we try to use cultural realia (songs, films, literature, geographical and historical references) in many of our lessons. Our students are offered many opportunities to work creatively, for example writing comic strips, imaginative writing and speaking, puppet shows to show off their non-linguistic talents alongside the languages they learn. All Year 7 students may enter the Foreign Language Spelling Bee for either French or German or both languages, which begins at a class level and goes through school level to regional and national levels. Year 8 students may enter the United Kingdom Linguistics Olympiad in February which gives an enjoyable insight into the study of linguistics.

At KS4, we study the AQA syllabus for both French and German and students may choose to continue one or both languages. We are always looking for ways to engage with higher education to promote further study as well as ways to use Modern Foreign Languages creatively to give a genuine experience of real-world use. We have close links with outreach teams at both Oxford and Warwick Universities. We have had visiting speakers from Michelin who led an assembly exploring career opportunities using languages, and we have entered teams of students into competitions with Business Language Champions where they have worked alongside staff from GCHQ and the National Space Academy. Year 9 students may also enter the UKLO mentioned above.

At KS5, students following the AQA syllabus in both languages continue to study a wide variety of cultural and social topics as well as building on their lexical and grammatical structures, and their ability to speak spontaneously on a range of themes. As in KS3 and KS4 we expose learners regularly to works of cultural significance, particularly in the close study of a film and novel, which we begin at the end of Y12. This is regularly supplemented with online textbooks, YouTube videos, news articles, podcasts etc.

Curriculum Sequencing Rationale & Implementation

The order in which modules of language are taught are designed to create a “building blocks” approach to the knowledge and skills students need in order to build a broader understanding of how the language works and how to use it. In French the teaching of pronunciation, vocabulary building and grammar begins ab initio, despite some students having had some foreign language experience at KS2. Reading and listening for gist is taught to enable students to pick out key messages from an authentic text or from a recording. The familiarity of repeated exposure and use of language begins to embed the accuracy needed for students to write extended pieces of target language.

KS3:

The topics in the curriculum differ for each language. In French we follow Dynamo text books. Our introduction to Languages in Y7 starts from the assumption of no prior language learning. Although some students may have previously covered some of the vocabulary in the first term, every lesson will include new material, especially grammatical structures. This is followed by a more robust teaching of basic grammatical structures and syntax covering areas that students are living every day (family life, home, school, sport). In Y8 we build on the basic grammatical elements taught in Y7 and extend this to cover further skills to include past and future tenses as well as ways to extend sentences using connectives, time markers and intensifiers. For example, students in Y7 are unable to master the present tense until they are familiar with pronouns, and then cannot understand formation of the past tense in Y8 without knowledge of the present tense.

KS4:

The topics in the curriculum are the same for each language. In French we follow Studio text book, supplementing this with additional resources.

Having completed the full KS3 national curriculum by the end of Y8, students commence GCSE courses in Year 9. In the topic Healthy Living in Y9 French, students build on their learning of the partitive and other uses of ‘de’ from Y8 and use of Direct Object pronouns in early Y9 to achieve understanding of the use of the pronoun ‘en’ later in Y9. Rigorous learning of the past tense using avoir and être in Y8 is consolidated early in Y9, before moving onto learning how reflexive verbs are formed in the past. Students are shown how to build onto the perfect tense by learning the correct use of ‘depuis’ in Y10 and how to form the pluperfect in Y11. After learning the near future in French in KS3, in Y9 students will meet the simple future and the imperfect tense, which will give them the grammatical information they need to master the conditional tense in Y10 and then use it with added complexity in a “si” clause with the conditional tense in Module 5 in Y11. Similarly, vocabulary learnt in unit 5 in Y9 (On y va) can be exploited and extended in Y10, in module 4 (De la ville à la campagne).

KS5:

The topics and grammar content in the curriculum vary for each language. In both languages we use Hodder and Oxford text books and students have access to an online text book for individual practice.

All students, including those who join us for the 6th form from other establishments, will be expected to have a thorough knowledge of all the grammatical structures met by our students in KS3 and KS4. Students are given the opportunity to add more complexity to their grammatical skills in Y12 through rigorous revision and testing of all tenses met in previous years, before moving onto the past historic tense and learning the present subjunctive mood in Y12 before discovering the imperfect and perfect subjunctives in Y13. The passive voice is also explored further after having been introduced briefly in Y11.

The course also provides a detailed insight into French-speaking culture for example through the study of customs and traditions in different Francophone countries and through the study of a film ‘La Haine’ and a novel ‘un Sac de Billes’ both of which reflect important and differing aspects of French history and contemporary society.

Individual research skills are furthered through the Individual Research Project where students are encouraged to follow their own interests.

For specific information relating to the content of the curriculum in each year group, opportunities for wider personal development and enrichment and ways for parents to support their daughter in her learning within this subject, please see the Learning Overviews on our website.