

Languages at St Mary's C of E Primary School



Intent

The learning of a modern foreign language is a skill that many admire yet requires years of dedication to develop sufficient ability in both fluency and knowledge to be truly proficient in its use.

Through the immersive learning culture that St. Mary's Primary School aims to foster for its children, speaking a foreign language opens a window to new people, engages pupils' curiosity about the wider world, and ultimately can develop a greater understanding towards our common humanity. It exposes children to other cultures and customs, and empowers our children so that they can form a dialogue with people from around the world. To be bilingual is a precious gift that may enable future generations to benefit from, and links wholeheartedly with the school's ambition to be global Christians.

At the primary level, an outstanding language curriculum can develop a precious talent amongst our pupils, who may then feel inspired to pursue further study, or even a career, in the use of a modern foreign language. Knowledge of another language may also equip pupils to be able to study and work in other countries in the future, should this aspiration be fully realised.

From September 2021, St. Mary's chose to review its language curriculum. We have made the decision to make a different offer to our children - to study Spanish.

This is considered to be the fourth most widely spoken language in the world, after English, Mandarin and Hindi. By some estimates, this language is used by 534 – 537 million speakers. It is predominantly spoken as the main first language in 20 different countries (see map) and also spoken by a significant minority within many others, including the United States of America.

Therefore, as one of our 3 school curriculum drivers is to be global Christians, we should aim to be able to communicate with as many different people from around the world as possible



Spanish speaking countries

Implementation

St. Mary's Primary School's scheme of work follows a sequence of lessons taught in topic themes, as well as providing an introduction to the phonics of the language. The scheme also exposes our children to some core vocabulary and key grammar rules, which will enable them to develop some early skills in communicating using this language.

St. Mary's believes in providing this opportunity from as early a stage as possible, so has decided to introduce the teaching of Spanish from year 1 up to and including Year 6, and to provide some Spanish experience for children in the Foundation Stage, in the summer term.

As the children journey through our school, they will be provided with a progressive curriculum of knowledge and skills, (in line with the National Curriculum at KS2), which indicates that children should be offered opportunities to:

- Listen and respond to spoken language in a variety of contexts.
- Use songs and rhymes to explore patterns and sounds of language and link these to the meaning of words and spelling.
- Have the opportunity to engage in conversations
- Asking and answering questions, expressing opinions and responding to others
- Be able to speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity
- Develop accuracy in the pronunciation and intonation to a range of audiences
- Have opportunities to broaden their vocabulary and be able to use it to describe people, places, things and actions both orally and in writing.
- Understand basic Spanish grammar, how it differs from English and be able to apply it to build sentences.
- Discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in Spanish.
- Have the opportunity to learn about Spanish culture through themes, the study of Spanish festivals and cooking experiences.
- Engage pupils from an EAL background, so that they feel included in the learning process, thereby improving their self-confidence. It also enables those pupils to feel valued, in particular, those pupils who have Spanish as their first language.

Our language teaching is supported by the highly recommended language teaching specialists, Language Angels. As 2021/22 is the first year of implementation, whilst year 1 and 2 are beginning on their journey to learn Spanish, Key stage 2 teachers are exploring with the children a combination of the early content alongside with the KS2 content. This means that teachers are supporting our children in KS2 with some basic knowledge, particularly around core vocabulary and phonics, whilst also exposing pupils to the themes designed for key stage 2. The progression has been developed so that our pupils will be able to leave year 6 with sufficient knowledge as they transition to secondary education.

Lessons are sequenced progressively, to introduce and build upon new vocabulary, with planned opportunities to revisit core language and grammar. Lessons consist of presentations, which provide images and audio files, using native Spanish speakers. This enable pupils to develop accurate pronunciation, through a coherent structure of teaching.

Key vocabulary is reinforced through songs, quizzes, or True and False checks, which ensure that the children '**know and remember more**'. These retrieval activities will provide teachers with a better understanding of how pupils' acquisition of knowledge and skills is developing.

Lessons are taught weekly, using either teaching or teaching support staff. The general positive ambition amongst staff to '**have a go**' is a mark of the enthusiasm and commitment that staff show towards the teaching of language. Language Angels supports staff in this, as does the staff's previous experiences of visits to Spain, which provide children with '**lived experiences**' of the Spanish culture. Indeed, the children themselves are able to relate their own experiences of holidays there, such as one year 6 child relating how they asked for the bill, using the phrase 'La cuenta, por favor'.

In Key Stage 1, children acquire some basic skills and understanding with a strong emphasis on speaking and listening. This is further embedded throughout lower and upper Key Stage 2, whilst also providing opportunities for reading and writing. Gradually, children will progress so that their greater use of language enables them to read, or express through writing, their own ideas and opinions, reflecting a developing understanding of Spanish.

Spanish Curriculum Map Autumn 2021 – Summer 2023

Year & Cycle	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Additional Coverage
YEAR R					Nursery Rhymes	Nursery Rhymes	
YEAR 1/2 A	I'm Learning Spanish	Colours	Numbers	Fruit	Phonics Session 1 Vegetables	Phonics Session 1 Ice cream	Classroom Commands + Songs and games from earlier units to revisit vocabulary
YEAR 1/2 B	Greetings	Greetings	Seasons (KS1)	Days of the Week/ Months of the year	Phonics Session 1 Animals	Phonics Session 1 Animals	

Colour Code

2 standards of language acquisition across KS1:

- Early Language Teaching – Aimed at new starters to Spanish.
- Core vocabulary
- As we move into a new cycle in 2023/2024, cycle B to be reviewed.

Year & Cycle	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Additional Coverage
YEAR 3/4 A	I'm Learning Spanish	Phonics Session 2 Presenting Myself Feliz Navidad	Nouns My family	Nouns My Pets	Definite articles - the My home	What is the weather?	Classroom Commands + Songs and games from earlier units to revisit vocabulary
YEAR 3/4 B	I'm Learning Spanish	Colours	Numbers	Animals	Phonics Session 1 Fruit	Phonics Session 1 Vegetables	
YEAR 5/6 A	Phonics Session 2 Presenting Myself & My family	Nouns My Home Feliz Navidad	Definite articles – the In the classroom	Phonics Session 3 At the cafe	Adjectival agreement Clothes	What is the date?	Classroom Commands + Songs and games from earlier units to revisit vocabulary
YEAR 5/6 B	I'm Learning Spanish	Colours & Numbers	Animals Fruits	Phonics Session 1 Vegetables	Regular Verbs – Lesson 1 – Personal Pronouns (gender, singular & plural, formal & informal) Shapes	Seasons (KS2)	

Colour Code

There are 3 standards of language acquisition across KS2, plus 2 separate elements regarding core vocabulary and grammar:

- Early Language Teaching – Aimed at new starters to Spanish.
- Intermediate Language Teaching – Aimed at children who have begun to acquire some Spanish vocabulary.
- Progressive Language Teaching standard: move to this standard as we move into a new cycle in 2023/2024.
- Core vocabulary
- Grammar Explained

Impact

The impact of our curriculum can be identified by the extent to which pupils can express both their enthusiasm for the subject, alongside their ability to communicate using the knowledge they have acquired. Initially, they will be able to express their knowledge and subsequently skills at a basic level, until this language talent becomes more deeply embedded.

As they continue their learning journey through the school, their level of language proficiency and fluency will evolve over time, as our children become more fully immersed in the richness of the language experience. This '**mastery over time**' approach, as identified in the school policy, is one which recognises that language acquisition is most successful when it takes account of the demands on working memory; so that pupils can build upon what has come before, using the principle of small-step variation, as presented in the scheme slides. Also, the scheme supports children using clearly scaffolded vocabulary and sentence structures, so that our children can use Spanish with a greater degree of confidence and autonomy. These are best exemplified through the use of knowledge organisers for each language unit.

It should be recognised that the subject leader is knowledgeable in the language of Spanish and understands deeply how the experience of acquiring a language is undertaken. This is a process that requires considerable time, dedication and experimentation, but also enjoyment and can provide social engagement with parents, whose first language is Spanish.

This experience is something that children should be taught - that learning to learn, is a crucial learning experience in the education process and most evidently demonstrated in the acquisition of a language. The learning experience, at a metacognition level, is most fully realised, when children begin to identify this process. Learning a new language, much like any new subject matter, is not one that is instantly acquired, but should be encouraged to recognise the value in the system – (FAIL - First Attempt In Learning) - as we learn best when we learn from our mistakes – but it's FUN!

The subject leader and headteacher monitor the progress of children to ensure that language acquisition is developed across the school and that the progression of key knowledge and skills is maintained. They ensure that curriculum content takes account of age and stage of language development. The monitoring and evaluation of standards in the teaching and learning of Spanish at St. Mary's uses a mixture of the following tools, in accordance with the demands of the LIP and its calendar of school improvement. The tools may include the following:

- Regular knowledge check activities and evaluations of learning both during and at the end of topics
 - In school attainment tracking, through a mixture of teacher assessment, pupil recording and conversations with the subject lead, judged against the specified outcomes.
 - Pupil voice – pupil interviews and questionnaires.
 - Teaching and immersion in the scheme will have a positive impact on the profile of languages across the school.
 - Subject Leader monitoring – Conversations with staff including phase leaders, lesson visits, and dialogue about how they can be supported in the delivery of the curriculum.
 - Provision of CPD, to enable both teachers and teaching assistants to recognise that their leadership is both valued and supported, so that the teaching and learning of Spanish is improved, both in terms of general knowledge as well as the correct pronunciation of vocabulary, according to the rules of Castilian Spanish.
 - Governor monitoring, to enable the strategic body to form a view of how our children are developing their knowledge of the Spanish language
 - Engagement in enrichment activities to supplement the scheme.
 - Children's understanding of the Spanish culture.
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