

Curriculum Overview

Year 7 – Languages 2021-2022



Rationale for Year 7 Languages

Many of our students come to us with a rich experience and knowledge of languages other than English, providing them with a natural advantage in the Languages classroom. Most students readily understand the importance of broadening their linguistic horizons and that in addition to opening many doors in their future, learning languages equips them with a wealth of skills that can be used throughout their lives. In Year 7, students will learn two languages. French, for the majority of students, will be a continuation from Primary School and Italian will be introduced *ab initio*.

As outlined in the National Curriculum for Languages at Key Stage 3, our curriculum for Year 7 will enable students to recognise and use an appropriate range of vocabulary linked to the topics studied. They will be able to engage with authentic text in the target language and respond appropriately. They will be able to listen to native speakers and understand them. They will speak confidently, using accurate pronunciation and intonation and communicate their ideas clearly in written and spoken format. They will be able to apply grammatical rules and structures to a range of contexts and discuss different cultural aspects related to French and Italian speaking countries. We also aim to develop students who have an understanding of different cultures and to foster an open mind for a global community with lessons that explore differences and similarities in customs and traditions.

The new curriculum has been developed using current research in language teaching and learning. It provides a high level of challenge as language learning is very demanding and requires resilience and perseverance; students are explicitly taught the need for continual practice to develop their skills as a linguist. Although teachers and students will strive for accuracy, mistakes are an integral part of learning a language and students are encouraged to learn from their own mistakes and the mistakes of others in a mutually respectful way.

What will students learn and why?

We have chosen to study topics that we feel are appropriate to their age, interests and maturity levels. We have also chosen to study different topics in French and Italian to avoid as much confusion as possible whilst still encouraging students to make links.

In French in terms 1 and 2, they will build on the foundations laid at Key Stage 2 by revising and consolidating key words and structures for providing personal, factual information. They will learn how to recognise question forms and respond to personal questions. They will extend their knowledge of nouns and adjectives in terms of gender and number and they will learn about agreement. In terms 3 and 4, they will learn to describe where they live and they will begin to develop their knowledge of verbs and tenses. In terms 5 and 6, they will learn to describe their family and describe themselves and others, as well as learning to talk about their routine activities and interests.

In Italian in terms 1 and 2, all students will learn key words and structures that will enable them to give personal, factual information in the context of talking about their life at school. They will learn to express justified opinions about their school subjects and teachers, compare English and Italian school systems and learn to talk about the world of work. In terms 3 and 4, they will learn how to tell the time in Italian, talk about their daily routine at school and school trips. In terms 5 and 6, they will learn to describe their uniform, express justified opinions, talk about technology at school and express problems at school.

The focus in lessons is to encourage students to feel comfortable using the target language as much as possible using sentence builders, knowledge organisers and structure strips for support. All students will also engage in cultural activities to foster an understanding of different cultures and read literary texts.

How will students learn?

To begin with there will be a focus on phonics and common letter combinations in French and Italian to enable students to master correct pronunciation and spelling. We will use a blended pedagogical method that combines introducing students to sentence builders and parallel texts for each topic. We will then support them with independent and creative writing and speaking using structure strips. This will enable students to process languages more easily and make links. Target communicative functions and key grammar are recycled and interleaved in different topics to aid retention and develop routinisation of the language. Homework tasks have also been designed to this end. In French, students will build on the foundations laid at Key Stage 2 for providing personal information and then develop their ability to talk about their daily routine activities and interests and describe themselves and others. In Italian, students will learn the basics for expressing personal information in the context of talking about their new school life. They will learn to express likes, dislikes concerning their school subjects and their teachers, and give reasons for their opinions. They will then learn to talk about their daily routine at school and describe their school and uniform. In the final stages, they will learn to talk about technology and problems at school using more complex language. In both languages, each lesson will have a skills focus, which links to the GCSE assessment objectives. Students will be encouraged to make appropriate links to other areas of the curriculum to enable bilingual and deeper learning, where the language may become a medium for constructing and applying knowledge. There will be regular opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and develop their language skills.

How will students be assessed?

Students will be assessed primarily in listening and reading at this stage of the curriculum with a focus on low-stakes assessment for learning that focuses on retrieval to help reduce student anxiety and develop confidence in speaking and writing at a later stage. These tests will take place at regular intervals within each topic. Exams will consist of a familiar format that gradually introduce GCSE-style activities in order to familiarise students with answering questions and instructions in the target language and they will address GCSE assessment objectives.

What is the aim for learners by the end of the year in comparison to the previous year?

Italian: by the end of Year 7, students will be able to use the present tense with regular and key irregular verbs. Students need to know a range of basics well, including numbers, days, months, time, opinions and reasons and can confidently talk about themselves and their school life in detail.
French: by the end of Year 7, students will be able to use the present tense with regular and key irregular verbs. Students need to know a range of basics well, including numbers, days, months, time, opinions and reasons and can confidently talk about themselves and others in detail.