

Curriculum Overview

Year 8 – Languages 2021-2022



Rationale for Year 8 Languages

In Year 8, students will continue learning French and Italian. They will consolidate their learning in Year 7 and extend their knowledge of the languages by studying new topic areas. As outlined in the National Curriculum for Languages at Key Stage 3, our curriculum for Year 8 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.

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 all students will learn key words and structures that will enable them to describe their school, technology they use at school, school rules and problems at school. In terms 3 and 4 they will learn to talk about their daily routine at school, they will learn to describe their teachers and they will learn to talk about their jobs and future plans. In terms 5 and 6, they will learn to talk about their free time activities and interests and after-school clubs and school trips.

In Italian in terms 1 and 2, they will learn to describe members of their family and talk about jobs that they do around the house. They will also focus on the skill of describing pictures on familiar topics. In terms 3 and 4, they will learn to talk about their free-time activities and interests, months, seasons and weather. They will also learn to talk about trips. In terms 5 and 6, they will learn to talk about where they live and understand and give directions. They will also learn to ask for information in a tourist office and describe their house.

In both French and Italian, they will develop their knowledge of grammar by extending their knowledge of gender and number of nouns and adjectives. They will continue to identify patterns in grammar and extend their knowledge of verbs and tenses including more complex language, such as modal verbs and some idiomatic language. 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?

There will continue to be a focus on phonics and common letter combinations 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 Italian, they will learn to talk about their family life. They will also focus on the skill of describing pictures on familiar topics, which they need to begin to develop in preparation for study at GCSE. They will learn to talk about their free-time activities, interests and trips. They will also learn to extend their ideas by including information about when they do these things in terms of time, weather and seasons. In the final stage, they will learn to talk about where they live and understand and give directions. They will also ask for information in a tourist office and describe their house. In French students will learn to describe their school, the technology they use at school, school rules and problems at school using more complex language. Secondly, they will learn to talk about their daily routine at school, they will learn to describe their teachers and they will learn to describe their after-school clubs. In the final stage, they will learn to talk about their jobs and future plans and school trips and holidays using more complex structures to refer to future time. Each lesson will have at least one skills focus, which links to the GCSE assessment objectives. There will be regular opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and develop their language skills. 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.

How will students be assessed?

Assessments in Year 8 will build on learning in Year 7, while increasing the level of linguistic and cognitive demand. They will also continue to develop the skills and language required for general conversation, picture description and role-play activities. The assessments will consist of a familiar format that gradually introduces 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 8, students will be able to use the present and perfect tenses with regular and some irregular verbs. They will also be able to refer to future time. Students need to know a range of basics well including days, months, weather, opinions and reasons and can confidently talk about themselves and their family in detail.

French: By the end of Year 8, students will be able to use the present and perfect tenses with regular and some irregular verbs. They will also be able to refer to future time. Students need to know a range of basics well including numbers, days, time, opinions and reasons and can confidently talk about themselves and their school in detail.