

The Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Department is focussed around the teaching of two languages: French and Spanish. The department comprises one Head of Department with full-time teaching duties and one classroom teacher with full-time teaching duties.

The aims and objectives of the MFL department are:

* to foster pupils’ and students’ enjoyment of language learning, through a variety of teaching methods and extra-curricular studies
* to have high expectations of students’ achievement and behaviour
* to explore, develop and promote understanding and appreciation of contemporary society, culture and heritage in French- and Spanish-speaking countries
* to encourage pride in successful linguistic achievement**,** and toensure that pupils and students achieve their full potential in public examinations
* to develop each scholar’s ability to understand and communicate in the spoken and written word, and to understand more complex grammar and structures

In terms of hardware/technology, the department is resourced by whiteboards and projectors. A laptop is provided to the Head of Department. We also have access to a classroom set of iPads; one for each child.

The textbooks we use are mainly from Pearson: currently KS3 French uses the Studio range, complemented by a software programme, although complete sets of the legacy Expo series are also available. At KS4/GCSE, the Studio programme is also followed; textbooks and individual grammar and translation workbooks are provided. Students sit Edexcel exams.

For KS3 Spanish, we use both the Pearson Mira and Zoom series. Both programmes include the corresponding listening files. At KS4/GCSE, the Pearson Viva programme is followed; textbooks and individual grammar and translation workbooks are provided. Students sit Edexcel exams.

At KS5, we also follow the Edexcel exam board specification. Students use the A-level Hodder Education textbook, and have online access to the complementary Dynamic Learning software programme.

The Department also purchases an annual subscription to the comprehensive ‘Teachit’ Languages resources website.

The Department aims to use a wide a range of teaching methods in order to maximise the opportunities for students’ enjoyment and effective learning, and to ensure the development of all four skill areas. The Department believes that appropriate use of target language in the classroom leads to faster progress and that it should be used customarily by both the teacher and pupils.

In terms of grouping classes, students in Year 7 are taught as an entire group, regardless of ability, and have two lessons per week of both French and Spanish. This is the same for Year 8. In Year 9, students are then set according to ability and have three lessons per week of both languages. In Year 10 and 11, studying an MFL is compulsory, so all students must select either French or Spanish. Because French and Spanish are timetabled against each other, the language groups themselves are not set, so GCSE classes may include a wide range of abilities. Nevertheless, pupils may study both foreign languages for GCSE, and will choose the second one as a GCSE option. In the 6th Form, French and Spanish are optional.

There are opportunities for extracurricular language-learning activities for students: for example, trips to local cafes and restaurants where the target language is spoken and authentic continental food is served. Within the college, there is a Food Technology room where students have the opportunity to cook Spanish and/or French food.

At Easter this year (2018), the MFL Department ran a successful, well-subscribed trip to Andalucía in Spain for a week – over a fifth of the entire school population travelled away with us.