

MFL Curriculum Intent Statement

At River Bank, we want our students to have a happy and successful experience of learning a foreign language. Developing them into enthusiastic and resilient learners is at the core of all we do.

We focus on developing pupils' competences in listening, reading, speaking and writing in French. We aim to build up their independence and self-confidence over four years they learn this language for.

We intend to open students to other cultures, to foster our students' curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. We want to make them aware of the value and importance of learning a language. We aim to develop their respect for others both in our communities and around the world and we want to build up their cultural capital and widen their horizons through a range of class activities and discussions. We believe diversity should be celebrated.

We aim to ensure that our pupils:

- understand and respond to language from a variety of sources,
- speak with increasing self-esteem and spontaneity, building on the knowledge they have to ask questions and formulate the responses,
- continually improve the accuracy of their intonation and pronunciation,
- use the variety of grammatical structures they have learnt when communicating and relate to their equivalents in English where possible.

The principles underlying the design of River Bank curriculum are explained further below:

A 'balanced' French Curriculum

1. All learning content for French is taken from the National Curriculum programme of study and all statutory objectives are covered throughout KS2 (Year 3-6).
2. Teaching French follows the Primary French Project programme of study. This long-term plan is split into modules (six per academic year – one for each half term) to be covered throughout the year. Each module consists of five lessons leaving some flexibility to revisit certain topics.

A 'rigorous' French Curriculum

1. French is taught from year 3 to year 6.
2. Cultural understanding and diversity are sequenced all through the years. For example, children are taught to locate France and Paris on the map of Europe and learn about its monuments and landmarks in Year 3. They continue to build on that knowledge in Year 4 linking the places in France to the key vocabulary

(un jardin, le bois). In Year 5, pupils learn about places around town and extend that knowledge to public services like SNCF (French National Railway) and La Poste. They also expand their knowledge on Paris learning about its boroughs and revisiting sights that can be seen in each one. In Year 6, pupils learn about certain French national festivals and compare those to the ones celebrated in the UK.

3. PDRs for curriculum leaders often focus on the area for which they are leading, which helps to raise the expertise of leaders. The French subject lead's PDR focused on improving staff proficiency in delivering French lessons as well as assessing the subject with confidence.

A 'coherent' French Curriculum

1. The French curriculum follows the Primary French Project long-term plan. With each year group using this, it creates coherence throughout the school in terms of the progression of language skills, methods of delivery, visual aids being consistent and it allows the language to be built-on throughout the year as well as across the years.
2. The coherence is achieved by teaching some topic-related vocabulary and revisiting that before moving on to using new phrases that allow children to build sentences with the words they are already familiar with. The words, phrases and sentences are practiced orally before children are asked to produce a written outcome. All of this knowledge is sequenced in a way which is coherent and builds upon and revises key knowledge.

A 'Vertically Integrated' French Curriculum

1. French material taught at one point in time builds on materials taught earlier, and feeds what is to be taught. An example of this would be: in Year 4, children learn numbers (previously taught in Year 3) and names of animals before learning how to describe how many of each animal there are or where they are. In Year 5, children master the skill of telling time in small steps along with the names of places around town, before they say where they are going, at what time and for what purpose. The skill of telling time is further used in Year 6 in context of talking about a school day.
2. The topics from the Primary French Project are taught in small steps in order to reduce the cognitive load and help the children to remember more. Those topics are broken down into small sequenced lessons to ensure that the small steps can be achieved.
3. French lessons will feature a teacher turn and my turn element so that the independent tasks will closely match the teacher's input and allow the children to consolidate and apply their learning. This means that the questions will become gradually more challenging. Using the Primary French Project scheme will allow teachers' inputs to use consistent vocabulary to ensure consistency throughout the school.

An 'Appropriate' French Curriculum

1. French material is sequenced and taught from the National Curriculum on a 'year by year' basis.
2. Children are not set according to ability in French; they are taught in mixed-ability groups.
3. In French, independent learning tasks are set by the teachers using 'My Turn, Your Turn' approach, where the task is based on the main teaching part of the lesson. These tasks might start with filling in the gaps with one word, then completing a sentence with a phrase and finally asking children write independently. Any misconceptions / misunderstanding is picked up through feedback in the next section.
4. Essential knowledge is tested as part of low-stakes retrieval practice at the start of each French session.

A 'Focused' French Curriculum

1. The French long term plan comes from the Primary French Project scheme which breaks the content down further into structured medium-term plans and individual lesson plans.
2. The essential subject knowledge makes up much of the retrieval practice that takes place at the start of each session. This can be in a form of revisiting the content of the previous lesson or the lessons from the past that link to the new teaching.

A 'Relevant' French Curriculum

1. The French curriculum themes are designed to link with children's own everyday experiences and their learning environment. This includes: learning about animals/pets, talking about the weather and appropriate clothing for each type, likes and dislikes, classroom items, etc.
2. In French, children learn a lot about the cultural aspects which helps them be good citizens of the future. They learn about Paris' landmarks, national celebrations and services linked to their topics.