

## Mission, ethos and journey of Language learning and Community Languages at Bishop Challoner School

‘Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity’ Dr Rachel Hawkes.

What are aims and ethos of language learning?

At the heart of language learning, we aim to develop a cultural understanding and curiosity. Language is means of communication and understanding of people of other countries and cultures; it opens new horizons for young people to become global citizens and tolerant of their fellow human beings. Learning a language should deepen their ability to manipulate the grammar, vocabulary and phonics in a cohesive manner and foster curiosity about the cultures and other countries in which the languages are spoken. Students start learning a foreign language from reception to the secondary school. The programme of learning a language is carefully devised to allow progression from KS1 to KS2 and from KS2 to KS3, 4 and 5 progressively.

What is the Content of learning?

Students in KS1 are taught phonics through songs and stories and building of vocabulary through games and at KS2 they move on to more complex vocabulary and phonics learning. For example, at KS1 the pupils learn numbers from one to ten and use basic subtraction and addition, whilst at KS2 they use numbers for telling the time to describe basic activities, and at the start of KS3, they combine activities of sport or what they wear as uniform with telling time with ‘er’ verbs to describe a full daily routine in school. In higher KS3, they are able to manipulate grammar to use tenses to compare their daily routine at their primary, using the past tense compared to present tense in their secondary school. Students who are challenged are able to use the three tenses of present, past and future ambitions. They are enabled to express opinions and in higher levels to justify them in writing and speaking and with increased spontaneity, independence and accuracy, they are encouraged to use their knowledge of phonics, grammar and vocabulary to develop language learning strategies to decode meanings in reading and listening exercises and develop coping strategies to express themselves. Grammar and vocabulary and phonics are taught in an intrinsic combination; they are revisited during the course of their learning and embedded regularly. For example, using the past tense to describe a holiday would mean the visiting of ‘avoir’ at foundation level with singular pronouns and ‘avoir and être’ at the higher level at higher KS3. Students are encouraged to become independent in assimilation of language through correct use of phonics, grammar and vocabulary learning and move to productivity of forming sentences and manipulating grammar and eventually move to producing challenging texts and paragraphs. This method of scaffolding of knowledge is based on assimilation of language through manageable chunks, for example, the grammar is taught in the first pronouns and later we move to learning the more complex formation in plural forms of pronouns. They are encouraged to manipulate and form sentences independently based on the latest researched pedagogy conducted by York university and OFSTED Language framework.

How are lessons sequenced and progression measured and what skills are learnt?

Lessons are sequenced to allow progression at student’s individual pace and challenges built within each lesson to allow differentiation for all levels of learning. Students will be encouraged to develop

their listening, reading, writing and speaking during their learning and use authentic material to access the context of languages within a cultural understanding. The curriculum is designed to cater for a wide range of learning needs and methods, be it a visual, kinaesthetic and auditory learner.

What is on offer beyond the curriculum?

At Bishop Challoner, our students are encouraged to go beyond the curriculum whether within the classroom in attempting challenges or with extra-curricular clubs on offer such as 'Club de Francophonie'; or 'clinics' for support or for those who want to go beyond the curriculum as Gifted and Talented who go beyond their year's learning. We offer 'Community language' when their own language is celebrated as extra-curricular club. If they are supported at home, they are able to take a GCSE in their community language. We encourage a close-knit community support of sharing and celebrating our diverse nature of our intake and encourage families of other cultures to share their skills, cultural days, customs with the rest of the community.

How do we contextualise learning through cultural visits and exchanges?

Students are highly encouraged to make use of opportunities on offer for cultural visits to take part in language film workshops in BFI and visits abroad to Lille Christmas market or exchanges of cards and speaking opportunities with other schools abroad and locally in the language to contextualise and embed their learning. They are offered extra-curricular activities such as zumba or sport in their modern foreign languages. There are cross-curricular activities such as visit to the BFI cinema and workshop in French and History and carousel of art and music with languages.

How are student voice celebrated through Ambassadorial roles in the community and the wider global context?

The aim of the programme is to enable students to have ownership of their learning and become language leaders; at Bishop Challoner, our students compete and apply for Outreach Ambassadorship. This is a prestigious title that enables the students to go beyond their learning and deliver lessons to younger cohorts or deliver workshops at other schools locally, nationally and in time internationally. At Bishop Challoner, the MFL department prides itself in providing innovative ways for optimal learner success within our entirety of language learning community as well as within the wider community as global Ambassadors.