

# Our French Curriculum

Newcomen Primary School



“If you want people to understand you, you speak their language.”  
— African Proverb



NEWCOMEN

*scientia potentia est*

# National Curriculum Purpose of Study

Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education fosters pupils' curiosity and deepens their understanding of the world. The teaching should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to speakers, both in spoken and in written language. It should also provide opportunities for them to communicate for practical purposes, learn new ways of thinking and read great literature in the original language. Language teaching should provide the foundation for learning further languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries.

## Aims

The national curriculum for languages aims to ensure that all pupils:

- understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources
- speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and continually improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation
- can write at varying length, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt
- discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in the language studied



## Subject Content Key Stage 2 (DfE)

Teaching may be of any modern or ancient foreign language and should focus on enabling pupils to make substantial progress in one language. [At Newcomen Primary School, we have chosen the modern foreign language, French.] The teaching should provide an appropriate balance of spoken and written language and lay the foundations

for further foreign language teaching at key stage 3. It should enable pupils to understand and communicate ideas, facts and feelings in speech and writing, focused on familiar and routine matters, using their knowledge of phonology, grammatical structures and vocabulary.

The focus of study in modern languages will be on practical communication. Pupils are taught to:



- listen attentively to spoken language and show understanding by joining in and responding

- explore the patterns and sounds of language through songs and rhymes and link the spelling, sound and meaning of words

- engage in conversations; ask and answer questions; express opinions and respond to those of others; seek clarification and help

- speak in sentences, using familiar vocabulary, phrases and basic language structures

- develop accurate pronunciation and intonation so that others understand when they are reading aloud or using familiar words and phrases

- present ideas and information orally to a range of audiences

- read carefully and show understanding of words, phrases and simple writing

- appreciate stories, songs, poems and rhymes in the language

- broaden their vocabulary and develop their ability to understand new words that are introduced into familiar written material, including through using a dictionary

- write phrases from memory, and adapt these to create new sentences, to express ideas clearly

- describe people, places, things and actions orally and in writing

- understand basic grammar appropriate to the language being studied, including (where relevant): feminine and masculine forms and the conjugation of high-frequency verbs; key features and patterns of the language; how to apply these, for instance, to build sentences; and how these differ from or are similar to English.



# Intent

At Newcomen Primary School, we prioritise listening and speaking skills across the curriculum. Vocabulary enrichment is at the heart of all subjects that we teach and French is no different. In the same way that children learn their native tongue by first listening to the language spoken to and around them, research shows that the acquisition of modern foreign languages is best supported by first focusing on listening activities. Children are then able to copy and practise the words and phrases they hear in these activities and reflect on their accuracy to then begin the development of their speaking skills. This sequence of skills is clearly mapped out in the French programme, *Kapow Primary French*, which we have invested in for our school and the medium-term planning that we have developed.

*Kapow Primary French* is a comprehensive scheme of work that covers all of the National Curriculum learning objectives through twenty-three carefully designed units. One of the key features of *Kapow Primary French* is the provision of interactive audio files that contain recordings of native French speakers modelling all the words and phrases discretely as well as in dialogue form. These allow non-native teachers of all levels to deliver lessons that accurately replicate authentic French accents for the children to understand and aspire to themselves.

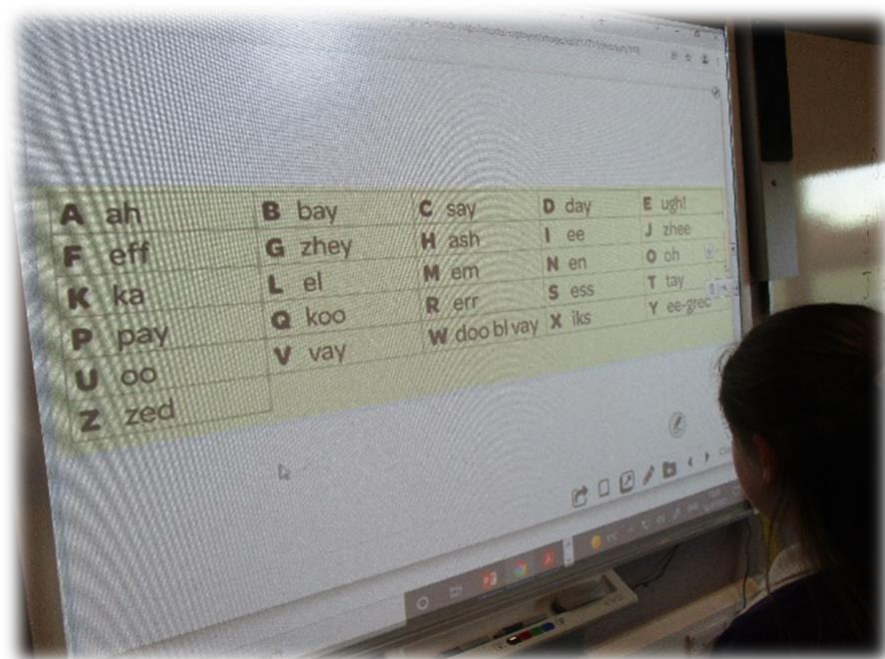
## Early Years and Key Stage 1

In Early Years and Key Stage 1, Modern Foreign Languages is not a statutory requirement. However, there are opportunities in other areas of the curriculum for us to sow the seeds of interest in French so that when children begin their studies in earnest in Key Stage 2, they have the confidence and enthusiasm to engage fully. We ambitiously exploit all cross-curricular opportunities by linking areas such as Communication and Early Reading, Me in my World, Geography and Relationships Education to French and the Francophone world. For example, we use daily routines such as: taking the register to introduce French greetings, snack time to learn French manners, lunch time to practise French foods, role play to explore the country of France and story time to broaden the children's knowledge of other French speaking countries.

## Cultural Capital

Children will develop an understanding about French cultures, races and backgrounds around the world; they will learn about and further develop cultural capital by learning about the lives and experiences of others through the *Kapow Primary French* lessons and supplementary activities that are used during the school week. In doing so, children will develop a respectful compassion for all whilst also becoming self-aware individuals, who are proud of their unique heritage. As Richard Riley explained, 'we have strong evidence

today that studying a foreign language has a ripple effect, helping to improve student performance in other subjects.' As such, we believe that studying French will have an amplifying effect on the children's progress in all areas of the curriculum and therefore on the vital knowledge that children need to become skilled members of the community and educated citizens.



# Implementation

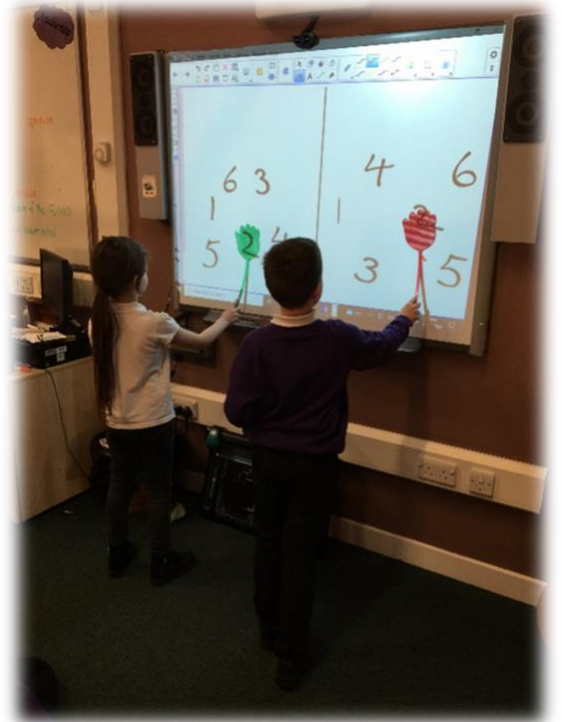
French lessons take place weekly in Key Stage 2. They comprise a review of previous learning, teaching of the new material, practice of these words and phrases and application of this new learning within conversations that build upon previous content. These four sections of the lesson are all delivered within the *Kapow Primary French* interactive scheme of work. They are embedded progressively in the 'attention grabber, main event, differentiation and wrapping up' parts of each lesson, which enables teachers to maintain consistency and progression. This also crucially frees teachers from time spent planning and preparing lessons so that they can instead commit their energy to delivering the material, assessing the impact on the children's learning and reflecting on how to improve this cycle of teaching and learning.

In addition to these stand-alone lessons, we also use short-burst activities throughout the week to bring French into the real world of meaningful interactions. Teachers use a Daily Routine Script to incorporate French into taking the register and having lunch. Children greet staff in French and are encouraged to ask questions about the language and culture of the countries where French is spoken. These supplementary activities are laid out in the 'during the week' section of *Kapow Primary French* and all bring the language to life by giving it a purpose beyond the lesson itself. The reason to use French becomes one of real communication and this increases the children's intrinsic motivation to deliberately practise the language.

## Inclusion

Newcomen Primary School is committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve their full potential. Barriers to learning are quickly identified and the school is committed to closing any gaps in achievement. Each child is unique and within every school there will always be a number of children, who for a variety of reasons, are classed as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). The school identifies children with a suspected Special Education Need early so that interventions are swift and immediate.

All children receive quality-first teaching and activities are differentiated appropriately. Every teacher at Newcomen is a teacher of every child in our school, including those with SEND. The needs of children with English as an additional language are met through targeted support in the classroom and additional 1-1 focused support.



# Staff Development

All staff receive training on how to deliver the new *Kapow Primary French* scheme of work. This is routinely revisited during the year. *Kapow Primary French* provides the basis of French teaching at Newcomen and was chosen through extensive research into a range of authentic, high-quality schemes of work. Newcomen chose the scheme, in part, for its relative ease of use by teachers with very little French speaking experience. However, it is fully recognised that the delivery of French requires a certain level of confidence and expertise and, as such, appropriate on-going support is provided by the Headteacher and the MFL Leader, who have BAs in modern foreign languages and a PGCE specialising in French. We are extremely fortunate to have several other staff members, who are also experts in both French and other modern foreign languages. The MFL Leader also shares the French curriculum and new scheme of work with the Governing Body. We share our expertise across school with staff who have strengths in MFL exploiting these skills to support delivery of the subject to all children. Opportunities for the MFL Leader to observe and support the teaching of French in other classes are built into the whole school curriculum development plan.

# Impact

Our curriculum will ensure that all children develop French listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. During their four years of French in Key Stage 2, children will learn:

- French greetings with puppets
- French adjectives of colour, size and shape
- French playground games – numbers and age
- In a French classroom
- French transport
- A circle of life in French
- Portraits – describing in French
- Clothes – getting dressed in France
- French numbers, calendars and birthdays
- French weather and the water cycle
- French food – Miam, miam!
- French and the Eurovision Song Contest



- French monster pets
- Space exploration – in French
- Shopping in France
- French speaking world
- Verbs in a French week
- Meet my French family
- French sport and the Olympics
- French football champions
- In my French house
- Planning a French holiday
- Visiting a town in France



Through these topics and lessons, children at Newcomen will learn about the country of France, the grammar and acquisition of the language and language learning skills. This will empower them to make cross-curricular links to the geography of French speaking countries, to deepen their understanding of English grammar by means of comparison and to move forwards into secondary school with all of the tools required to confidently continue their study of modern foreign languages to the very highest level. In this way, learning French will develop pupils' understanding of others, tolerance and unity and empower them to engage in a celebration of language itself. It will help children to see that, although two people may speak different languages and live in different countries, they are ultimately similar in many different ways. As the philosopher Roger Bacon once explained, "This understanding is of great significance to our children on their learning journey as 'knowledge of languages is the doorway to wisdom.'"

