

# RED ROSE SCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGES POLICY

Updated: October 2017

*DfE Statutory Guidance: These are statutory programmes of study and attainment targets for languages at key stages 2 and 3 which should be taught in all maintained schools in England from September 2014.*

All policies are to be read in conjunction with the School's statement of its goals (Sec1 Chap 1), ethos (Sec1 Chap 3) and curriculum planning (Sec3 Chap 4). This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Foreign Languages taught at Red Rose School.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Learning a foreign language is liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils' curiosity and deepen 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 its speakers, both in speech and in writing. It should also provide opportunities for them to communicate for practical purpose and learn new ways of thinking.

## **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.
- use a variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt.

## **ATTAINMENT TARGETS**

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

## Key Stage 2

- Foreign language Teaching may be of any modern or ancient foreign language and should focus on enabling pupils to make substantial progress in one language.
- The teaching should provide an appropriate balance of spoken and written language and should 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 should be 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

## Key Stage 3

By the end of key stage 3, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the programme of study. Foreign language Teaching may be of any modern foreign language and should build on the foundations of language learning laid at key stage 2, whether pupils continue with the same language or take up a new one. Teaching should focus on developing the breadth and depth of pupils' competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing, based on a sound foundation of core grammar and vocabulary. It should enable pupils to understand and communicate personal and factual information that goes beyond their immediate needs and

interests, developing and justifying points of view in speech and writing, with increased spontaneity, independence and accuracy. It should provide suitable preparation for further study.

Pupils should be taught to:

Grammar and vocabulary:

- identify and use tenses or other structures which convey the present, past, and future as appropriate to the language being studied
- use and manipulate a variety of key grammatical structures and patterns, including voices and moods, as appropriate
- develop and use a wide-ranging and deepening vocabulary that goes beyond their immediate needs and interests, allowing them to give and justify opinions and take part in discussion about wider issues
- use accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Linguistic competence:

- listen to a variety of forms of spoken language to obtain information and respond appropriately
- transcribe words and short sentences that they hear with increasing accuracy
- initiate and develop conversations, coping with unfamiliar language and unexpected responses, making use of important social conventions such as formal modes of address
- express and develop ideas clearly and with increasing accuracy, both orally and in writing
- speak coherently and confidently, with increasingly accurate pronunciation and intonation
- read and show comprehension of original and adapted materials from a range of different sources, understanding the purpose, important ideas and details, and provide an accurate English translation of short, suitable material
- read literary texts in the language, to stimulate ideas, develop creative expression and expand understanding of the language and culture
- write prose using an increasingly wide range of grammar and vocabulary, write creatively to express their own ideas and opinions, and translate short written text accurately into the foreign language.

## LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE CONSIDERATIONS

When planning to introduce a foreign language in Red Rose School it is essential to consider the barriers to learning a foreign language:

### **Aims and Objectives for teaching a modern foreign language**

Action research over some 20 years has shown that, whichever language is chosen, Sp.L.D. learners will experience significant difficulties which, if not recognised and associated strategies implemented, will almost inevitably lead to actual pupil statements:

*'I can't do it', 'it's too difficult'*

or

a lack of motivation to learn due to a lack of understanding why learning another language is important:

*'I have enough problems with English – why should I compound those problems by trying to learn another language' or 'You don't understand, I need to concentrate on English....'*

All the characteristics of Sp.L.D. (below) will effect the ability of our pupils to learn a foreign language:

- **Working Memory**

One of the main characteristics of Sp.L.D. is a difficulty in the area of short term or 'working' memory.e.g. the ability to manipulate numbers and symbols such as in blending sounds and in mental mathematics. The working memory often becomes overloaded and the information fails to transfer into long term memory. Therefore, information has to be over-learned through, for example, repetition. It is also said that short term memory and concentration difficulties are mutually reinforcing. i.e. each affects the other.

- **Auditory Processing**

Auditory processing is influential in an understanding of Sp.L.D. It is important in relation to developing phonological awareness such as being able to distinguish between sounds, especially sounds that are similar, remembering these sounds and identifying them in words and also to the acquisition of language skills in general.

- **Visual Perception**

Visual perceptual difficulties affects a person's ability to break words up visually (decode) and can also cause spatial difficulties which can cause problems in some aspects of mathematics.

Some individuals with Sp.L.D. have visual disturbance when reading print and this can cause blurring, words merging and omissions of words or lines when reading. Individuals with these difficulties are often light sensitive (sometimes referred to as 'Irlen syndrome')

- **Motor Difficulties**

Some individuals with Sp.L.D. will display fine and gross motor control difficulties that can result in poor handwriting and/or clumsiness. In many cases, such clumsiness will be labeled as Dyspraxia or Developmental Co-ordination Disorder. This is an immaturity in the organisation of movement which can lead to associated problems with language, perception and thought. Some 50% of individuals with dyslexia form a sub-type who have some motor dysfunction. Many individuals with dyspraxic traits show various levels of social and emotional difficulties.

- **Organisational Skills**

Due to information processing difficulties in the areas of sequencing, short term 'working' memory and visual perception individuals may experience organisational difficulties. For example, many individuals may say: 'I have all the ideas in my head but I can't get them down on paper in a way that it makes sense.'

*"I always found the written part of it particularly hard," he says. "It's almost like a mental block when it comes to thinking what it is I need to say. I struggle with that in English, so when it comes to a foreign language, it's exacerbated."*

*"I can't imagine the spelling in my mind. Sometimes I can't even begin to formulate what letters it's made up of. I usually end up having to spell it phonetically, but obviously that doesn't always work out."*

*"If my school lessons had been taught with less reading and writing, I think I would have been able to pick up far more."*

There's not a one size fits all approach for teaching languages to Sp.L.D. pupils. You have to look for the strengths rather than worrying too much about the weaknesses. They have to be convinced that, yes, they can do it and they can be successful. So we need to think of setting different goals for Sp.L.D. pupils, in terms of what they need to achieve. Dr Margaret Crombie agrees, suggesting that the written side of language learning can be played down if the pupil is struggling.

"Let them enjoy the language. Don't take away the written word, but maybe don't assess them in it. It can be a very stressful experience if you're struggling with it and it can knock your confidence."

***Therefore, successful language learning is likely to be dependent as much on the teacher's personality and teaching methods and on the perceived relevance of the language.***

### **Choice of modern foreign language**

Some schools only offer French as an option. Unfortunately, French, like English, is a relatively opaque language. This means that it does not have clear letter-sound correspondence and has more irregularities than a language such as Spanish or Italian. Opaque languages can be very problematic for pupils with Sp.L.D.

Spanish, Italian and German, on the other hand, are much more transparent languages with clear letter-sound correspondence. This facilitates spelling and pronunciation.

***Red Rose School will use Italian.***

### **Strategies**

- An important strength is the ability to see the overall picture. It is a good idea for the teacher to provide an overall plan of the term's lessons as well as an overview of the day's lesson. Mind mapping may be a useful tool for doing this. In this way, the student can gain a better understanding of the structure of the learning and its ultimate goals.
- Multi-sensory teaching and 'learning-by-doing' techniques are particularly effective
- "Hearing it, seeing it, saying it, writing it, doing it, acting it out.
- Slowing down the language helps as well. Slow it down for the learning stage, and once they become familiar with the language, then speed it up.
- Motivation is key: introduce them to foreign cultures; to the food; the clothes; the art; have an Italian day with Italian food; games, mime, drama things and using lots of interactive ICT.
- You have to go through the obsessions and enthusiasms to get them on side
- Use flash cards (3 x 5 is a good size) to help memorise vocabulary. It will be useful to add pictures, colours and anything else that aids memory.
- Colour-coding grammatical devices will help the student to remember: In *Dyslexia and Foreign Language Learning* (2003), Elke Schneider and Margaret Crombie suggest using different shades of

the same colour to distinguish between masculine and feminine nouns and using other colours to represent different parts of speech.

- To help with remembering word order, put the words onto card, cut up the card into separate phrases, mix them up and practice putting them back together again.
- record some of the words onto an MP3 file, mobile phone or tablet so that practice at home is possible. .
- Many people find it easier to remember a word if they associate it with a visual image or picture. Try putting pictures next to the words, and the picture may be recalled faster than the actual word.

## **ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING**

Our pupils undertake AQA Unit Awards.