

Modern Foreign Language



Intent

At Sunningwell, our Modern Foreign Languages curriculum aims to give students an awareness and understanding of other cultures and languages primarily through the study of Spanish. The study of phonics, vocabulary and grammar encourages learners to be analytical, ask questions, identify patterns and apply methodology. Being able to speak in another language helps develop courage, confidence, tenacity and resilience. An awareness of cultural differences promotes mutual respect, understanding of other people and tolerance. Where appropriate, the learning in Spanish is linked to the wider curriculum. For example, the 'Los Planetas' unit is studied when the Science theme is Space. This reinforces and extends learning including the etymology of words to support our children's wider language development. We are mindful that some of our children have additional languages, and these are drawn upon and celebrated through topics and special times of the year, for example Christmas and Diwali. We encourage our children to understand the inter-cultural value of learning another language and hope our students will become the global citizens of tomorrow. We aspire to developing confident, motivated linguists who discover a love of language-learning.

Implementation

Through singing, action, writing, watching videos and creative activities we encourage our children to listen to, speak, and write Spanish from Year 3. Spanish is a phonetic language and phonemes are taught alongside new vocabulary, promoting independent writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills at an early stage. We cover a range of topics, including ideas relevant and motivating to the children – talking about themselves, describing animals, naming colours, etc. Other topics link to the wider curriculum, for example, learning about what school is like for children in Nicaragua. Leon in Nicaragua is one of Oxford's link cities and we study it as part of our 'Home and Away' geography topic. Videos and songs sung by native speakers enable children to hear and be receptive to the authentic language. Through Lower Key Stage 2 students progress from understanding single words and basic grammar structures (gender, plurals etc.) to more complex sentences and verb formations.

In Upper Key Stage 2 Spanish is developed further. We are mindful, however, that due to high mobility, we often have children with us for whom Spanish is a new experience. Over learning and 'revision' are woven into many lessons so that the language is reinforced and those new to Spanish can quickly build confidence to listen to, speak and write it.

Impact

Evidence of pupil progress can be found through a combination of student self-assessment, teacher observation and formal classroom tasks. Standards of formal classwork are also monitored by staff checking work kept in MFL folders. A continuous feedback loop is used during lessons so that pupils needing additional support or challenge can be readily identified. Language skills are continually revisited across a range of contexts, encouraging deeper thinking and greater knowledge retention. Phonics form a key part of every lesson, helping students to revise and consolidate what they have learned. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of core grammar structures, such as gender, conjunctions, and verbs, and have a broad range of vocabulary. Children can use technology to translate language and are starting to develop as more independent learners. They can appreciate the similarities and differences between the Spanish, English and other languages that they speak and can use this to deepen their understanding of any further languages they may wish to study in the future.