



MFL Curriculum Intent at Shaftesbury School

At Shaftesbury School, we aim for Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) to provide a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for pupils, equipping them with key knowledge and understanding necessary to be global citizens in the modern world.

The intent of our curriculum is to be broad, balanced and ambitious. Students at KS3 will finish Year 9 with a firm grounding of the basics and by the end of Year 11, students will have developed confidence and grammatical knowledge which enables them to react to real life situations and engage in conversations. By this stage, it is our intent that students will have also developed a love and appreciation of the differences between their own culture and the cultures of the countries/languages that they have studied.

Shaftesbury School BEST Ethos

At Shaftesbury School, everything we do is rooted in our Christian ethos, as well as through our motto: 'being the best you can be'. Our planned curriculum is planned around these four pillars and below are identified the opportunities that students have to demonstrate them being the best that they can be.

Belonging

In MFL our classrooms are warm, welcoming environments so that students belong to a class where they feel comfortable to learn and make mistakes, appreciating that they are part of the learning process.

We aim to run engaging trips abroad, with the goal of allowing students to feel proud to represent Shaftesbury school and their respective classes in new environments, helping them to broaden their social skills with peers as well as meeting new people. This helps them to experience new cultures, understand diversity and appreciate what it means to be French/Spanish/English.

Empathy

Students learn about the differences between life in the UK and the target country through explicit teaching of culture woven into the curriculum. There are opportunities to discuss and even experience elements of these differences, such as differences in schooling, government, fashion, music and customs.

Students are explicitly taught that it is ok to be curious and ask questions appropriately, with the aim of deepening and extending both their understanding and appreciation, showing empathy to the multicultural world that we live in.

Service

There are opportunities for the students to represent what it means to be a language student at Shaftesbury school at the transition day and through various open evenings. Students demonstrate service by supporting younger pupils and visitors, sharing their language skills and cultural knowledge, and acting as positive ambassadors for the school community.

Students demonstrate service within lessons by supporting their peers during paired and group work. They help each other to develop confidence in speaking, share strategies for learning vocabulary and grammar, and encourage others to take risks with language. In doing so, students contribute to a positive and supportive learning environment where everyone can succeed.

Thrive

Students thrive thanks to a bespoke curriculum which aims to increase their confidence in interacting with people in both their native and target language.

The MFL learning environment is supportive and every lesson is set up with the aim of allowing students to thrive. Students know that it is entirely possible to be a successful MFL student without having the perfect vocabulary or grammar knowledge, but rather that it is about trying to communicate to the best of their ability to thrive in new situations. This is supported by the running of trips that give our students opportunities to use their knowledge abroad and thrive in a new and challenging environment.

Implementation

In Years 7 and 8, students study both French and Spanish, spending half an academic year learning each language. At Shaftesbury School, we believe that language learning should broaden students' horizons and open as many future opportunities as possible. By introducing students to both languages, we aim to develop confident dual linguists, enabling them to make informed choices about their language study as they progress through the curriculum.

Our current Year 9 cohort continues to follow the previous curriculum model, studying a single language throughout the year.

From Years 7 to 9, students build a secure foundation in the core components of language learning, including phonics, vocabulary acquisition, grammar and communication skills. These key elements underpin success in both French and Spanish and prepare students for the demands of GCSE study.

Throughout Key Stage 3, students explore a range of engaging and relevant topics, including school, family, holidays, future aspirations, jobs, and health and wellbeing. They progressively develop their understanding and application of the past, present and future tenses, recognising that secure control of these grammatical structures is essential for effective communication and GCSE success.

At Key Stage 4, students follow the Edexcel GCSE specification. They develop and are assessed in the four key language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Building on the foundations established at Key Stage 3, students revisit familiar themes in greater depth while also exploring wider social, cultural and global issues within the French- and Spanish-speaking world. This broadens their cultural understanding, encourages curiosity about different communities and traditions, and equips them with the linguistic knowledge and cultural awareness to become confident, informed global citizens.

Curriculum Overview						
Half Term	1A	1B	2A	2B	3A	3B
Year 7	Introduction to French - Phonics - Family - Where you live - Personality	Introduction to French - Numbers - Birthdays - Ages - Countries	Hobbies - Giving opinions - The present tense	Introduction to Spanish - Phonics - Family - Where you live - Personality - Numbers - Countries	School - Present tense - Telling the time	My local area - Asking questions - Giving directions - Modal verbs
Year 8	Free time - The present tense - Key verbs	A trip to Paris - Asking questions - The past tense	Where I live - The conditional tense - Prepositions - The near future tense	Holidays - The past tense - Key verbs	Free time - The present tense - Opinions - Comparatives	Food and Drink - Opinions - Negatives - The near future
Year 9	Jobs - Adjective agreement - Near future tense Health and wellbeing - The imperative - The near future	Health and wellbeing - Direct object pronouns - Reflexive verbs Jobs - Masculine & feminine - Irregular verbs	Mid-year Assessments & culture	Our world - Giving opinions - The imperfect tense Holidays - Asking questions - The conditional tense	A trip to Madrid - Superlatives - Comparatives - The near future tense Our world - Expressions with avoir - 'si' clauses	Starting the legacy GCSE: Free-time - Recap of basics - The past tense Starting the legacy GCSE: Family and Friends - Revision of basics - The near future
Year 10 (2026-2027)	Free Time - Revisiting the three tenses - Key GCSE linguist skills	Family & Friends - Reflexive verbs - Adjectives - Direct object pronouns - Describing people	School - Comparative adjectives - Imperfect tense - Irregular past tense	Health and wellbeing - Modal verbs - The near future - Mixing tenses	Holidays - Revision for PPE - Speaking prep - Booking a holiday	Our planet - Combining tenses - The Geography of France - Environmental

Impact:

At Key Stage Three, students will develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required to communicate effectively in a foreign language and develop an appreciation of the culture and perspectives of the communities where it is spoken.

Students will:

- Develop a love of language learning.
- Acquire a broad vocabulary across a range of relevant topics.
- Develop a strong understanding of key grammatical structures, including the present, past and future time frames.
- Communicate simply and effectively, with increasing confidence in both spoken and written forms.
- Develop their ability to listen to and understand spoken language and identify key information.
- Read and understand a range of texts, using context and prior knowledge to support understanding.
- Express and justify opinions, moving from simple sentences towards more complex responses.
- Develop effective strategies for learning and retaining vocabulary.
- Understand the benefits of learning a foreign language.
- Develop the knowledge, confidence and skills needed to progress successfully to Key Stage Four.

At Key Stage Four, students will build upon their KS3 foundations to become confident and spontaneous communicators, while developing the knowledge and skills required to succeed at GCSE and beyond.

Students will:

- Develop a broad and secure vocabulary across the GCSE themes, enabling them to communicate increasingly complex ideas and opinions.
- Develop a thorough understanding of grammar, including accurate use of a range of tenses and structures.
- Communicate with increasing spontaneity and confidence, responding to unfamiliar questions and sustaining conversations.
- Express, explain and justify opinions, providing appropriate reasons and examples.
- Produce extended spoken and written responses, adapting language to different contexts and purposes.
- Understand increasingly challenging spoken and written language, including unfamiliar vocabulary and authentic texts.
- Develop effective translation skills, demonstrating a secure understanding of vocabulary, grammar and meaning.
- Become independent and reflective learners, responding to feedback and identifying ways to improve their accuracy.
- Develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of the culture, history and perspectives of target-language communities.
- Understand the value of languages, including opportunities for further study, employment, travel and international communication.
- Be equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to achieve their full potential at GCSE and continue developing their language skills beyond Key Stage Four.