

Why study a language at GCSE?

“One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages opens every door along the way.”
- Frank Smith

Continuing to study a language will provide you with many opportunities in the future, as French is an official language in 29 countries across the globe and Spanish in 21 countries. Although learning a new language is challenging, it will not only provide you with the vocabulary you need to communicate in that language but will also allow you to develop many transferrable skills that are useful in many fields, such as: tolerance & cultural understanding; problem solving skills; self-management & independence; critical thinking and the confidence to communicate both verbally and in writing.

Leading universities across the UK list a GCSE in a modern foreign language as a facilitating subject, and some universities make this a prerequisite to study with them, regardless of the actual degree you wish to study. In addition, the majority of employers in the UK are either GLOBAL companies, or smaller companies who do business with foreign counterparts. 74% of employers are currently on the lookout for people with foreign language skills. Regardless of which field you plan to work in, it is very likely that your employer will be interacting with companies or employees in other countries so willingness to travel and work with people from different cultures is becoming an expectation.

What is the aim of the course?

We endeavour to provide pupils with a creative and engaging experience of learning a language, equipping them with the knowledge and skills they need to become brilliant linguists. We aim to make language lessons challenging, productive and meaningful in order to develop independent, resilient linguists who are able to communicate confidently in the Target Language; consequently, lessons are designed to promote pupils' development of skills in reading, listening, writing and speaking. Alongside developing their linguistic confidence, we also raise awareness of the wider francophone and hispanophone worlds, developing cultural awareness and understanding, with the aim of creating outward thinking global citizens.

What will I study?

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Topic 1: Me, my family and friends

- Relationships with family and friends
- Marriage/partnership

Topic 2: Technology in everyday life

- Social media
- Mobile technology

Topic 3: Free-time activities

- Music
- Cinema and TV
- Food and eating out
- Sport

Topic 4: Customs and festivals

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Topic 1: Home, town, neighbourhood and region

Topic 2: Social issues

- Charity/voluntary work
- Healthy/unhealthy living

Topic 3: Global issues

- The environment
- Poverty/homelessness

Topic 4: Travel and tourism

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

Topic 1: My studies

Topic 2: Life at school/college

Topic 3: Education post-16

Topic 4: Jobs, career choices and ambitions

Exams

There are four exams at the end of the course, in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Each exam is worth 25% of your overall grade. You are entered for the same tier (Foundation or Higher) for all four papers.

GCSE Spanish & French have a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). '9' is the highest grade you could be awarded (roughly equivalent to an 'A*+') and '1' is the lowest grade on the scale (roughly equivalent to a 'G'). A grade '4' is roughly equivalent to a grade 'C'.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Please see Miss Serrano, Miss Atherton or Miss McLear if you have any questions or would like any additional information.