

French at Ramsbury School

Learning French is for everyone at Ramsbury School and provides opportunities for the actor, the singer and the problem solver to acquire new skills and communicate in a different language. We are reaching out beyond our borders and understanding that French is spoken in many countries across the world and that there are similarities and differences in our cultures.

Intent

At Ramsbury School, we tailor the language curriculum to our pupils. Many of our pupils are used to travelling abroad and are exposed to different languages. We ensure that children respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources and are able to speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity; finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through asking questions, and improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation.

Implementation

Children are introduced to French from the moment they join the school in half-hourly weekly lessons. All children quickly become confident in singing, speaking and responding in the language. They readily join in with songs, rhymes and games and become accustomed to the routine of the lesson which constantly reinforces and practises language learned across the years. Lessons are active, fun and inclusive and are planned to play to the strengths of all children whether singing, performing or being language detectives with grammar. Year 2 experience a 'diabolo menthe' at the end of their topic on drinks in a café; Year 3 order breakfast in French; Year 4 create their own pizzas; Year 5 enjoy following a recipe for 'Bûche de Noël' and then eating it and Year 6 enjoy cheese tasting! We have whole school themed language days which have included a celebration of Bastille Day which ended in a rousing rendition of 'La Marseillaise'! All children have access to Babelzone, an interactive language learning site, allowing children to read stories, play games and further their knowledge at home.

Children are beginning to write at varying lengths, for different purposes and audiences, increasingly applying the variety of grammatical structures that they have learned. Children are encouraged to be investigative linguists, looking for cognates and words that they can link to their English vocabulary. Years 5 and 6 use French dictionaries, giving them ownership of their own learning and fostering a curiosity for foreign languages and a deeper understanding of the world. The teaching of French provides an appropriate balance of spoken and written language and lays the foundations for further foreign language teaching at KS3.

We have links with a primary school in Guadeloupe and Peyrehorade, South West France and children exchange letters using the structures and vocabulary they have been focussing on during the topic. Children gain a glimpse into life in a French school and draw cultural comparisons between themselves and children from a different country. One of the teachers has visited our school and a reciprocal visit is with a view to establishing closer links.

Impact

Our MFL curriculum ensures that children develop their knowledge of where different languages, but with most emphasis on French, are spoken in the world. By ensuring an emphasis on oracy, speaking and listening, children are more confident to start learning any language at Key Stage 3. They have a breadth of knowledge of cultural differences and customs and have an understanding of how the basics of the language work. They will have a wide vocabulary built from the songs, stories and topics they have enjoyed and as they progress in their learning, they can apply this vocabulary in increasingly sophisticated sentences, both spoken and written. Most importantly, they will understand that learning a language is fun.

The Curriculum Leader for French is Mme Jane Hanscomb.

