

Spanish Department Curriculum Intention Statement (2023-24)

Intent

As a Spanish department we pride ourselves in taking a student-centred approach to teaching and learning with an emphasis on developing cultural capital and spontaneous speech in the target language within an up-to-date and relevant context. Spanish staff use this approach with all year groups so students can see the importance of language learning and the associated transferable skills.

The Spanish Curriculum is designed to encourage students to:

- develop their ability to communicate confidently and coherently with native speakers in speech and writing, conveying what they want to say with increasing accuracy;
- express and develop thoughts and ideas spontaneously and fluently;
- listen to and understand clearly articulated, standard speech at near normal speed;
- deepen their knowledge about how language works and enrich their vocabulary in order for them to increase their independent use and understanding of extended language in a wide range of contexts;
- acquire new knowledge, skills and ways of thinking through the ability to understand and respond to a rich range of authentic spoken and written material, adapted and abridged, as appropriate, including literary texts;
- develop awareness and understanding of the culture and identity of the countries and communities where the language is spoken;
- be encouraged to make appropriate links to other areas of the curriculum to enable bilingual and deeper learning, where the language may become a medium for constructing and applying knowledge;
- develop language-learning skills both for immediate use and to prepare them for further language study and use in school, higher education or employment;
- develop language strategies, including repair strategies.

We have recently reviewed the KS3, KS4 and KS5 curriculums to ensure that key skills including phonics and grammatical understanding are embedded from Year 7.

Implementation

The pedagogy for our MFL provision is informed by key research in MFL teaching, aiming to build students' self-efficacy. After trialling the grammar-led NCELP approach, we decided to revert back to a Key Stage 3 **topic based curriculum** with explicit grammar instruction.

We use Conti's **self-efficacy** model based on motivation theory and produce all of our own texts and listening files for **comprehensible input** so that students feel successful accessing extended material.

We explicitly teach grammar, vocabulary and phonics.

Having used previous Key Stage 3 models, we have adapted our curriculum to cover less topics so that students can focus on **the transferable linguistic** functions and be more **proficient** with

language production. Spaced practice for grammar and retrieval are planned into the curriculum. We use low-stakes testing and **retrieval practice** to support retention.

Our curriculum is planned with SEND students in mind. All tasks are **challenging** yet adaptation and scaffolding are planned into lessons to help all students achieve in Spanish. Knowledge organisers with key vocabulary are used for homework and teaching to reduce the **cognitive load** for all students, allowing them to grasp more complex matters.

All students access a full curriculum – no students are removed from the Spanish timetable for intervention.

Our curriculum goes beyond the National Curriculum as students have further opportunity for **enrichment and cultural capital**. This is planned into the schemes of work and events, competitions and cross-curricular work.

At GCSE, students cover five key themes, each broken down into topics and sub-topics. The five themes are: Identity and culture; Local area, holiday and travel; School; Future aspirations, study and work and International and global dimension. All themes and topics are studied in the context of both the students' home country and that of countries and communities where Spanish is spoken. The Year 10 curriculum builds on the foundations of each student's KS3 understanding and focuses on Themes 1, 2 and 3. In Year 11, Themes 4 and 5 are covered and other themes are revisited with a focus on more complex language and tasks. This reinforces the information and allows a logical progression from simple to complicated ideas. Exam technique and practice form an important part of the curriculum delivery to ensure that Key Stage 4 students feel successful.

The A Level course is linear and students cover four themes. Students also have the opportunity to study a film, Spanish literature and to broaden their understanding of the Hispanic world through their own independent research project. Speaking in the target language is a frequent feature of A Level learning.

Throughout MFL teaching, there is a strong emphasis on developing students' literacy and subject-specific vocabulary in each scheme of work. Students are provided with knowledge organisers or booklets at the start of each unit or topic. Across the key stages, we focus on the understanding of core language, which is commonly used words or phrases that tell students how they should answer a question. Opportunity for cross-contextual knowledge to be applied is maximised wherever possible in order to support knowledge retention.

Students' enthusiasm of the subject is stimulated through Enrichment activities and external trips. These can take place by means of trips and visits, house competitions, assemblies and through Session

3. Session 3 also allows for targeted intervention.

Impact

As a result of teaching topics at a greater depth in KS3 and having a stronger focus on grammatical skills, students are better equipped to manipulate language in order to express themselves. Not only has this led to an improvement in KS4 outcomes, but a greater number of students find learning languages a positive, motivational experience as a result of improved self-efficacy. The A Level course offered in Sixth Form has grown in popularity with internal and external students. In addition, as a result of language learning, our students become competent linguists which give them transferable skills to learn other languages.

Catch-up

With regards to gaps in learning, the curriculum and schemes of work have been amended to ensure that all relevant content is covered. Identification of what students do and do not need to know has been carried out by following subject guidance and updates. Baseline assessments have been carried out to assess the impact of the pandemic and schemes of work have been amended accordingly.

Boys' attainment and engagement continues to be a challenge in MFL teaching, not only at Sandwell Academy but also nationally, as mentioned in the Ofsted Research Review. For exam groups, Session 3 are to be utilised to support disengaged students in a smaller group setting. We will also make use of our additional member of staff to deliver targeted intervention during sessions. Methods are in place to identify those needing targeted support and acted upon including dedicated time for data analysis, action planning and intervention planning.

To support knowledge retention, students have regular low-stakes vocabulary tests, carried out in booklets which are then used to inform additional differentiated planning.

Questioning is embedded into all lessons to assess students' understanding and misconceptions, and has been added to the departmental CPD agenda to enhance staff subject knowledge.

Where the pandemic has had an impact on teaching methods and access to specialist equipment, lessons will be planned and delivered ensuring that sufficient time is given for students across KS3-5 to practise their listening and speaking skills, as these were the skills most affected last academic year.

In addition to a focus on skills, students will also receive frequent feedback ensuring that next steps and model answers are explicit. Staff will also take advantage of the opportunity to plan additional enrichment, visitors and trips to enhance students' cultural opportunities where appropriate.