

Languages Policy



“Our school is a place where we all come together as one community to learn, have fun and make lasting friendships all under God’s love and care”

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Rationale:

A high quality languages education should foster children's curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. At St Lawrence, we are committed to ensuring that competence in another language enables children to interpret, create and exchange meaning within and across cultures. It also helps children develop skills that will open further opportunities later in life. The teaching of Italian in EYFS, KS1 and KS2 provides an appropriate balance of spoken and written language and, at KS2, lays the foundations for further foreign language teaching at KS3.

Aims and objectives

The National Curriculum for Languages aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources.
- Are able to speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and that they are continually improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation.
- Can write at varying length, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt.
- Discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in the language studied.

Implementation

Our main objectives in the teaching of Italian are to promote the development of linguistic competence and confidence in speaking and writing as well as an understanding and awareness of the world and other cultures. Children are introduced to Italian from the EYFS and receive a weekly lesson delivered by our specialist Italian-speaking teacher. This enables the children to develop early language acquisition skills that facilitate their understanding of the patterns of language and how these differ from, or are similar to, English.

Lessons across the Key Stages support the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing:

- Children are taught to listen attentively to spoken language and respond, joining in with songs, rhymes and games.
- They are given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the sounds and written form of Italian.
- They can begin to understand a new language and communicate in it.
- They will learn about different countries and their people.
- They will be able to use their knowledge of the foreign language with growing confidence, both to understand what they hear and read, and to express themselves in speech and writing.

- Children will acquire, through all of the above, a secure basis for further study at Key Stage 3 and beyond.

Teaching and learning

We recognise that language learning in its broadest sense has three core strands:

- Learning to communicate (with the emphasis on oracy, i.e. listening, speaking and interacting).
- Learning about language (reading and writing in the foreign language and learning about the writing system, spelling and structure of the language).
- Learning about and comparing different cultures (intercultural understanding).

We will encourage pupils to apply knowledge already learnt about their own language to their learning of the new language. We aim to equip pupils with strategies for language learning that they can use in the future when studying other foreign languages. We base our teaching on the National Curriculum programme of study. We use a variety of techniques to encourage children to engage actively in learning Italian: these include games, role-play, songs and rhymes (particularly action songs). We may use videos, sound recordings and songs to demonstrate the language and for the pupils to hear more than one voice speaking the language. We frequently use mime to accompany new vocabulary in the foreign language. This can support children in understanding and using new language without relying solely on translation.

We teach the four key skills of language – listening, speaking, reading and writing. We also use a multi-sensory and kinesthetic approach to teaching to reinforce memory. We aim to make lessons entertaining and enjoyable in order to develop a positive attitude to the learning of languages. We build children's confidence through constant praise for any contribution that they make in Italian, however tentative.

We allow for differentiation by:

- Using peer support
- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- Providing resources of different complexities, matched to the ability of the child
- Providing speaking and writing frames to scaffold responses
- Using a range of questioning

Languages and inclusion

We teach Italian to all children, whatever their ability. Languages forms part of the school curriculum to provide a broad and balanced education for all children. Through our Languages teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with particular gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning a new language.

The contribution of Languages to teaching in other curriculum areas

Learning another language presents opportunities for the reinforcement of knowledge, skills and understanding developed in other curriculum areas.

English - The learning of a modern foreign language naturally contributes to the development of our children's listening and speaking skills. It also develops the children's grasp of linguistic features such as rhyme, rhythm, stress and intonation, supports the understanding of various aspects of grammar and emphasises the importance of knowing the role of different word types in sentence structure.

Mathematics - Children reinforce their time-telling skills by playing time-related games in Italian. In addition, we play number games that reinforce counting and calculation skills, expand their understanding of date and increase their knowledge about money.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship - One of the main benefits to the children of learning a modern foreign language at primary school level is a social one. Learning a language provides opportunities for children to develop confidence, communication skills and positive attitudes towards learning. This success breeds confidence, which in turn increases self-esteem and gives them a more positive attitude to school in general.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education - By teaching a modern foreign language, we contribute to the children's cultural education. They learn that many societies are multi-lingual. We teach them about festivals and customs related to the countries in which the language is spoken. We also give them the chance to hear stories set in the foreign culture.

Geography - We ask the children to carry out research on the different countries in which the particular foreign language is spoken after they have first found them on a map or a globe. In Languages lessons, children will learn about the climate of the countries in which the language is spoken.

Music - We teach children songs in the modern foreign language – both traditional and modern – which in turn helps them develop a sense of rhythm and an ear for melody.

History - We teach children about traditional Italian festivals and compare them to ours.

Science - Children reinforce their knowledge of parts of the body through related games. They also learn about animals and typical Italian food.

Art & DT - Children use a variety of Art & DT skills to present their knowledge and understanding and learn about Italian artists.

PE - Children respond physically to instructions given by the teacher in the language being learnt.

Assessment

Children's progress in Italian is assessed through ongoing formative assessment during lessons. The Italian teacher uses a combination of:

- Making informal judgements during lessons and through the work pupils produce, in relation to the expectations set out in the National Curriculum Languages programme of study.
- Observing children's participation and progress during lessons, particularly in listening and speaking activities.
- Assessing children's classwork and written work to monitor progress in reading and writing.
- Using questioning and discussion to check children's understanding and ability to use the language.
- Providing opportunities for children to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through speaking, listening, reading and writing activities.
- Providing verbal feedback during lessons to encourage and support progress.

Ongoing assessment is used to identify children's strengths, address misconceptions and adapt teaching to support progress.

Monitoring and Review:

The coordination of the Languages curriculum is the responsibility of the Languages subject leader, who also:

- Supports the Italian teacher by keeping them informed about current developments in Languages and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject.
- Discusses progress with SLT and evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in Languages, indicating areas for further improvement.
- Reviews evidence of the children's work and the Italian teacher's planning.