Primary Languages Policy

“Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils’ curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. The teaching should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing. It should also provide opportunities for them to communicate for practical purposes, learn new ways of thinking and read great literature in the original language. Language teaching should provide the foundation for learning further languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries,” DfE 2013.

At Southfield Primary School we believe that the learning of a foreign language provides a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for our pupils. It helps them to develop communication skills including key skills of speaking and listening, writing and extends their knowledge of how language works. Learning another language gives children a new perspective on the world, encouraging them to understand their own cultures and those of others.

All Key Stage 2 pupils are entitled to learn either a modern or ancient foreign language. The focus language taught in Southfield Primary is French. Teaching focuses focus on both spoken and written language and will aim to lay the foundations for further foreign language learning at key stage 3.

Aims and objectives of Primary Languages education
The aims of Primary Languages teaching at Southfield Primary School are to
- foster an interest in language learning by introducing children to other languages in a way that is enjoyable and accessible to all pupils
- stimulate and encourage children’s curiosity about language and creativity in experimenting with it
- support oracy and literacy
- help children develop their awareness of cultural similarities and differences
- lay the foundations for future language study by pupils
- give an extra dimension to teaching and learning across the curriculum.

Speaking and listening
The children will learn to
- listen attentively to spoken language and show understanding by joining in and responding
- engage in conversations at an appropriate level; ask and answer questions express opinions and respond to those of others; seek clarification and help
- speak in sentences, using familiar vocabulary, phrases and basic language structures
- develop accurate pronunciation and intonation so that others understand when they are reading aloud or using familiar words and phrases
- present ideas and information orally to a range of audiences
• describe people, places, things and actions orally
• understand basic grammar appropriate to the language being studied, including (where relevant): feminine, masculine and neuter forms and the conjugation of high-frequency verbs; key features and patterns of the language; how to apply these, for instance, to build sentences; and how these differ from or are similar to English
• join in songs, rhymes, raps and stories which enable them to practise the sounds of the language in an enjoyable and non-threatening way

Reading and writing
The children will learn to
• write phrases from memory, and adapt these to create new sentences, to express ideas clearly
• read carefully and show understanding of words, phrases and simple writing
• read for enjoyment; stories, songs, poems and rhymes in the language to gain awareness of the structure of the written language
• describe people, places, things and actions in writing
• explore the patterns and sounds of language through songs and rhymes and link the spelling, sound and meaning of words
• broaden their vocabulary and develop their ability to understand new words that are introduced into familiar written material, including through using a dictionary

Intercultural understanding
The children will learn to
• describe the life of children in the countries where the language is spoken;
• identify similarities and differences in everyday life, social conventions, traditional stories and celebrations
• recognise how symbols, products and objects can represent the culture of a country, and how aspects of the culture of different countries become incorporated in the daily life of others
• recognise and mistrust stereotypes, and understand and respect cultural diversity.

Teaching and learning Primary Languages
At Southfield Primary School we integrate French into everyday school life, with teachers, teaching assistants and children using and experimenting with their knowledge of French whenever the opportunity arises. We foster a problem-solving approach, giving children opportunities to work out language use for themselves in a supportive context where risk-taking and creativity are encouraged, and there is an emphasis on having fun with the new language. ICT is used where appropriate to enhance teaching and learning.

There are three main contexts in which language teaching and learning take place.

1 French Lessons
Although Primary Languages cuts across the curriculum, children are taught specific skills, concepts and vocabulary in regular dedicated French lessons with the class teacher. The content of these sessions is reinforced by the class teacher during the week. The lessons will follow the Wakefield Scheme of work.

2 French embedded into other lessons
Where appropriate, teachers give children opportunities to practise their French in the context of lessons in other subject areas. For instance, some instructions may be given in another language in a PE lesson; or children may count in another language while carrying out a numeracy activity. This acts to reinforce the vocabulary and structures they have learned.
3  ‘Incidental’ language
French is part of the day to day life of the school. For example, teachers use French to give simple classroom instructions (‘come in quietly’; ‘listen’; ‘look’), to ask questions (‘who wants school dinner?’; ‘what’s today’s date?’) and to take the register, lead Assembly and give permission for children to leave the room. Children are encouraged to respond using the language they have learned, and sometimes teachers and pupils develop new language skills together, teachers acting as role models in the learning process.

This integrated approach is a strong model for teaching and learning, giving children opportunities to use and develop their language for communicating in stress-free real-life contexts.

Intercultural understanding
Primary Languages provides a basis for teaching and learning about other cultures, and this is incorporated into many areas of the curriculum including personal and social education, geography, religious education, design and technology, music, art and dance. Efforts are made to ensure that teaching material across the curriculum includes a ‘flavour’ of the countries where the French is spoken.

Inclusion
Primary Languages teaching at Southfield Primary School is fully inclusive. No child is excluded by reason of a learning difficulty, or because they have English as an additional language. Experience has indeed shown that such children can derive particular benefit from taking part in Primary Languages learning activities in which they may be less disadvantaged than in other areas of the curriculum.

Language learning activities are planned in such a way as to encourage the full and active participation of all pupils. Work is differentiated as appropriate to the needs of individual children. Pairs and groups for collaborative work may be made up in different ways, depending on the task.

Planning and resources
Primary Languages is planned following the broad guidelines set out in the Key Stage 2 Languages Programme of Study (DfES 2013). The school’s Scheme of Work (The Wakefield Scheme, by Rachael Redfern) ensures that there is continuity and progression in both skills and content across all classes. Teachers collaborate over planning, sharing ideas for activities, resources and special events. Published resources including fiction and non-fiction texts, posters, CDs and computer software are available for use throughout the school.

Staff development
Teachers and other staff are given regular opportunities and encouragement to develop their own language and language teaching skills, through CPD courses and training. The subject leader for Primary Languages identifies school needs and co-ordinates professional development opportunities.

Monitoring progress and assessing attainment
Opportunities to monitor the children’s progress in Primary Languages are built into our termly programmes of study. Most assessment is formative and is used to support teaching and learning and inform future planning. Assessments are based on observation of children working on different oral activities and (where appropriate) written product.

Links outside school
Primary Languages gives us an ideal opportunity for making links outside school. We encourage children to share their experiences of visiting or living in other countries, and from time to time we welcome visiting speakers who are able to talk about life in the countries where the focus language is spoken. We make full use of ICT links via e-mail and approved sites on the Internet, to find out about life in other countries.