

KS4

We live in a global society and we want our students to be able to embrace all the opportunities open to them. At Blatchington Mill we are passionate about the benefits learning a language can bring. We strongly believe in languages as a skill for life and something students should enjoy and find rewarding. Our objective is to enable students of all abilities to develop their Spanish and French language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.

What does the KS4 languages curriculum look like?

The KS4 curriculum builds on the vocabulary, grammar and cultural knowledge established in KS3. In addition students learn vocabulary that will allow them to express their opinions on topical issues, for example, climate change. The curriculum also equips students to communicate in everyday practical situations such as ordering food in a restaurant.

Lessons will include activities to help students develop their confidence in listening, reading, speaking and writing in Spanish and French across a range of topics and in different contexts. Regular short, focused tasks will embed subject knowledge and strategies for success.

High-frequency vocabulary and verbs are taught and revisited throughout the course in addition to more topic-specific vocabulary.

We know from experience that in order to strengthen language learning students need to learn as much vocabulary as possible. ***In order to access the top grades 7-9 in a language GCSE, students must learn a minimum of 2000 words by the end of Year 11. In fact, research has shown that learning vocabulary effectively can have as much as a 50% difference on students' outcomes at GCSE!***

In Year 10 the students will study two broad themes which are broken down into subtopics. For most of the subtopics we will start by reviewing vocabulary and grammar covered in KS3 before introducing more complex language and structures to develop the quality and fluency of language produced. This is achieved by using carefully selected texts and listening passages (including past papers) to practice new vocabulary and giving explicit short grammar explanations with focussed listening and reading tasks to familiarize students with grammatical concepts before they are asked to produce them in structured speaking and writing activities. Regular feedback is given in the presentation stages of vocabulary and grammar teaching and exemplar answers will be modelled with students before they produce independent responses to a series of questions related to the sub topic.

Theme 1 - Identity and culture

Family and friends, technology, free time, customs and festivals

In family and friends we revisit the key verbs of 'to have' and 'to be' to describe family members, as well as introducing reflexive verbs to talk about family relationships. We build on students' knowledge of the future tense from KS3 and introduce more future and conditional expressions to talk about future marriage and relationships.

In technology we review topic specific vocabulary from KS3 to talk about personal use of technology and we use different listening and reading texts to introduce vocabulary to enable students to talk about the risks and dangers associated with technology. We revisit using infinitives to describe how we use technology and we practice present tense conjugation to enable students to manipulate key verbs to talk about how others use technology.

In freetime we revisit and develop giving opinions in the context of food, sport and leisure activities and we ensure students can use the perfect tense to talk about past completed actions with confidence. We also cover the topic of eating out which gives us the opportunity to teach transactional language needed to order food and resolve problems when eating out at a restaurant.

Customs and festivals is a new topic for students. Students learn to describe common festivals as well as developing their cultural knowledge of festivals specific to French or Spanish culture. Students develop their knowledge of the perfect tense in different forms as well as using the imperfect tense to describe past events.

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

In year 10 students study 2 of the 4 Theme 2 subtopics, Home town and social issues.

In Home town students revisit vocabulary to describe their house and town. They focus on correct adjective agreement and placement as well as use of infinitive structures and past, present and future tenses to refer to activities they can do in town. We introduce the conditional tense to enable students to describe their ideal house or town and the improvements they would like to make.

In social issues students review food and sport vocabulary from Theme 1 freetime in the context of healthy lifestyle. We introduce a wider variety of future expressions to talk about possible lifestyle improvements and we use topic specific health related vocabulary to justify their choices. The subtopic also includes a unit on charities which is new for students. Once we have introduced the vocabulary students reflect on how they can support different charities. Students can use a combination of past, present (including present participle) and future tenses in their responses, providing a useful review of key grammar concepts covered in year 10.

Language skills developed at KS4

Grammar development and progression

In Year 10 we review the foundations of grammar learnt at KS3 to ensure that all start with the same building blocks. This will include an audit of high frequency verbs in the present tense, expressing future intentions, describing past activities and expressing opinions. These essential grammatical concepts will be revisited in different contexts throughout the GCSE course to ensure all students are confident in their use, however as students progress through year 10 they will also encounter a wider variety of present tenses (present continuous, use of the present participle), past tenses (preterite, perfect and imperfect), future tenses (near future, simple future and conditional) and more complex ways of expressing and justifying opinions (comparisons, superlatives, object pronouns, different negative structures). Examples of topic specific sentences using the grammar points studied will be

given to model how students could demonstrate their developing grammatical knowledge in their own work.

Comprehension skills

In KS3 students practice understanding key details in short passages of written and spoken language by using their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. As students progress through year 10 they are exposed to passages of different lengths from a variety of sources including authentic texts. We model how to use knowledge of synonyms and word families as we work through different listening and reading tasks in class to develop students' ability to infer meaning and recognise distractors.

Spontaneity

Students will have regular opportunities to take part in structured conversation tasks using familiar questions and sentences they have prepared in class as a starting point. They are then encouraged to extend their responses by giving opinions and reasons, including examples of more complex language and different tenses. This helps to build student confidence and fluency.

Year 10 Assessment timeline

Autumn 1 assessment (end Oct/early Nov) - writing, grammar, listening and reading (family and technology topics)

Students are tested on their knowledge of family and technology sub topics. The listening and reading papers are composed of questions from past GCSE papers relating to subtopics of family and technology. The writing paper will include a vocab and grammar test, a short translation into French, a short description of a photo and a short structured GCSE essay in which they will be required to use past and future tenses as well as give opinions.

Spring 2 assessment (end March/early Apr) - speaking photo card (could be on any topic studied so far: family, technology, free time, customs and festivals)

Students practice photo card speaking activities during Spring term - the photos are related to one of the sub topics studied, they practice describing a photo and preparing answers to 2 questions on the same sub topic which are printed on the card. They can refer to the notes they make in the speaking assessment which will also include 2 unprepared questions to test spontaneity.

Summer 1 mock (end Apr/early May) - writing, listening and reading (could be any topics from theme 1)

Students are tested on their knowledge of Theme 1 subtopics. The listening and reading papers are composed of questions from past GCSE papers relating to Theme 1. The writing paper will include a short translation into French, a short description of a photo and a choice of 2 short structured GCSE essay questions in which students will be required to use past and future tenses as well as give opinions.

Summer 2 assessment (mid June) - general conversation on questions prepared

Students prepare and practise a bank of conversation questions on each sub topic throughout year 10. In the general conversation assessment they will have a conversation of approximately 5 minutes in length, led by their teacher based on 2 of the sub topics covered. During the conversation, students will be asked questions from the bank of questions prepared as well as follow up questions to elicit more information. They should demonstrate use of opinions, past and future tenses and give some longer, more developed answers as well as asking their teacher a related question.