

Modern Foreign Languages

Curriculum Intent

'The limits of my language are the limits of my world.'
(Wittgenstein)

The intent of the German curriculum is to provide all students with a coherent, knowledge-rich and ambitious programme of study that enables them to communicate confidently, think linguistically, and engage critically with the wider world. German is taught from Year 9 through to Year 13, with a carefully sequenced curriculum that builds cumulatively in vocabulary, grammar, phonics and cultural understanding. This ensures that students develop secure foundations and are well prepared for GCSE and, where appropriate, A-level study.

The curriculum is designed to ensure that students know and remember core grammatical structures, high-frequency vocabulary and sound–spelling relationships, and can apply this knowledge flexibly across listening, speaking, reading and writing. Explicit teaching and regular retrieval support long-term retention, while structured opportunities for extended speaking and writing enable students to express, justify and develop ideas with increasing accuracy and independence.

Cultural capital is deliberately and systematically developed through exposure to authentic texts, media and cultural stimuli from German-speaking countries. Students explore social, historical and economic contexts, including the relationship between the UK and the German-speaking world, in order to deepen understanding, challenge stereotypes and foster curiosity. This cultural knowledge supports students in becoming informed, outward-looking citizens who appreciate the relevance of languages in a globalised society and economy.

The curriculum also aims to develop transferable learning behaviours, equipping students with strategies for vocabulary acquisition, grammatical accuracy and independent language learning that can be applied to the study of other languages and subjects. This supports progression beyond Key Stage 4 and underpins future success in A-level study and beyond.

Enrichment is an integral part of curriculum intent. Students are offered opportunities to extend their learning beyond the classroom through international visits, cross-trust collaboration within the PET/Pyramid, and a range of extracurricular activities including clubs, competitions and cultural events. These experiences are designed to raise aspirations, strengthen motivation and ensure that all students, regardless of background, have access to meaningful cultural and educational experiences.

KS3 Curriculum

The KS3 German curriculum is designed to build securely on the foundations laid in middle school and to establish the core linguistic knowledge and learning habits required for future success. Students develop a strong understanding of the fundamental principles of German grammar, word formation and phonics, enabling them to decode, pronounce and construct language with increasing accuracy and confidence.

Through carefully sequenced content, students learn to communicate meaningfully about themselves, their lives and familiar contexts in both spoken and written forms. They are explicitly taught strategies to access and respond to increasingly extended reading and listening texts, supporting comprehension and resilience when encountering unfamiliar language. Cultural understanding is embedded throughout the curriculum, with students exploring key aspects of life in German-speaking countries in order to recognise similarities and differences and develop curiosity about the wider world.

The curriculum provides structured opportunities to revisit and consolidate prior learning while progressively increasing challenge across the year. Delivered through a mastery approach, students are supported to work independently, apply knowledge in new contexts and build secure foundations in preparation for GCSE study.

KS4 Curriculum

At KS4, the German curriculum is designed to prepare students successfully for the AQA GCSE German examination while also ensuring clear progression towards A-level study. The curriculum is ambitious in scope, extending beyond the GCSE specification to include rich cultural, historical and social content that deepens understanding of the German-speaking world.

Students develop strategies to access and manipulate increasingly complex language, applying their grammatical knowledge accurately across all four skill areas. Translation to and from the target language is used deliberately to strengthen linguistic precision and deepen understanding of both German and English structures. Phonics and accurate pronunciation continue to be taught explicitly, supporting confident and spontaneous spoken communication.

The curriculum prioritises the use of complex grammar, extended writing and spontaneous speaking, ensuring that students are not limited by the specification vocabulary and can respond flexibly to unfamiliar language. By the end of KS4, students are equipped with the knowledge, confidence and transferable skills required for further language study.

KS5 Curriculum

The KS5 German curriculum prepares students for the AQA A Level German examination while equipping them with the intellectual and linguistic skills required for undergraduate study or independent language learning. The curriculum broadens and deepens students' understanding of the German-speaking world, enabling them to explore a wide range of social, political and cultural issues.

Students are taught to engage critically with a variety of authentic cultural stimuli, evaluating texts, films and other sources within their historical and social contexts. They develop a sophisticated range of vocabulary and register, alongside a secure and nuanced understanding of German grammar, allowing them to manipulate language confidently, summarise complex ideas and express informed viewpoints.

By the end of KS5, students are able to communicate fluently and accurately, articulating ideas clearly and independently beyond the requirements of the A-level specification. The curriculum aims to develop confident, reflective linguists who are well prepared for further study and active engagement with the global community.

