

MFL in KS2
- Spanish -

Purpose of study:

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.

Aims:

The national curriculum for languages aims to ensure that all pupils:

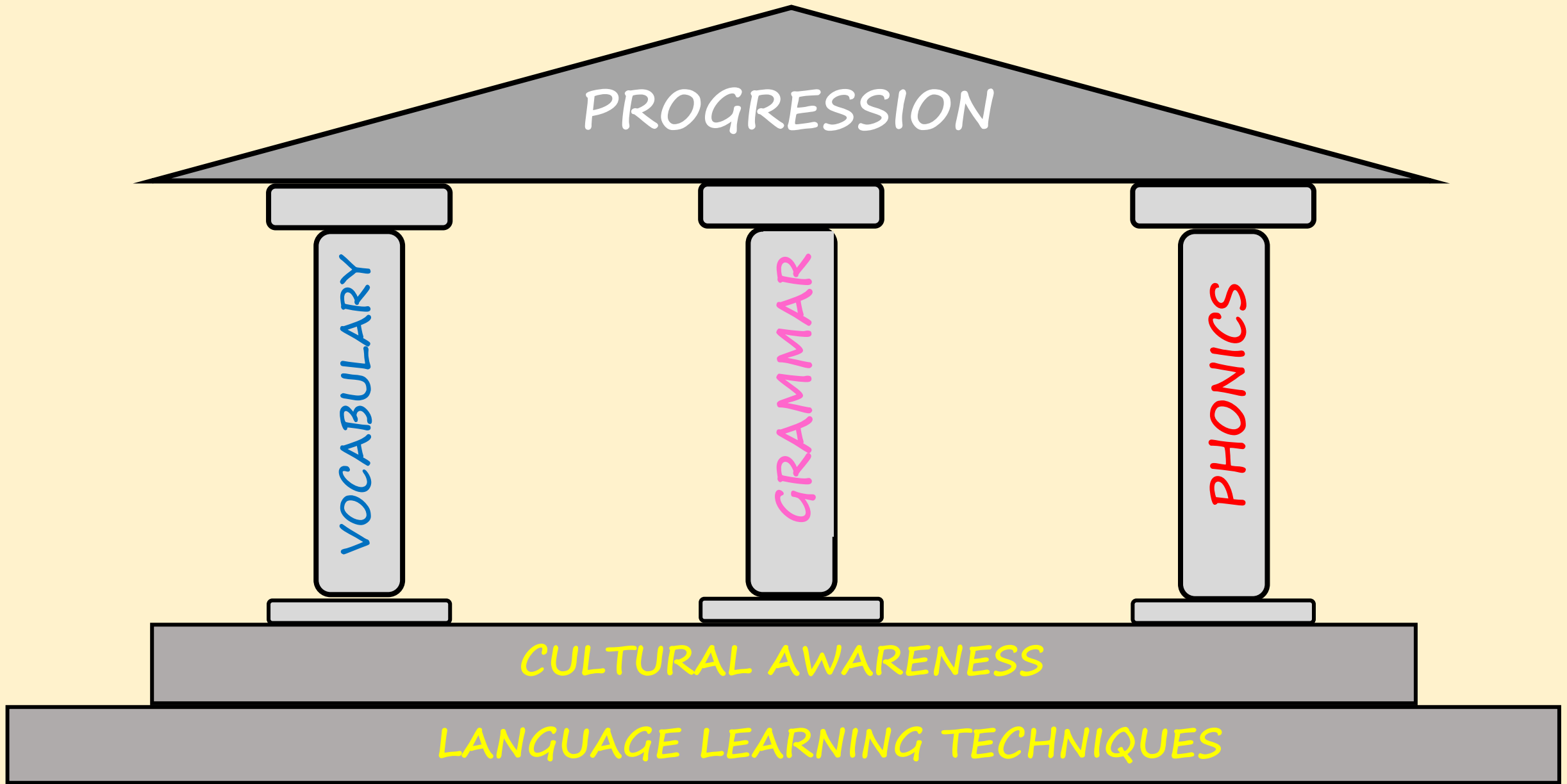
- understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources
- speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and continually improving the accuracy of their 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.

Vision for Spanish at St Mary's: a path to self-efficacy.

- The concept of *self-efficacy* is the basis of our approach. We want our pupils to be successful linguists that understand that learning a language is a long term commitment full of challenge, but also a worth-while endeavour that can bring a new dimension into their lives, full of opportunity and adventure.
- Self-efficacy links with the concept of becoming an independent learner through metacognition, developing language learning techniques and thinking skills that will be transferable onto their learning of future years.
- When the subject of learning a foreign language was first introduced at St Mary's, the pupils themselves chose Spanish as their language of preference. They clearly had an interest in this particular language and its cultural context and so they left a legacy which has continued until the present time.
- At St Marys, we perceive languages not only as a form of communication, but also as the best platform from which to discover other cultures, traditions, practices and beliefs, linking the subject to our Core Christian Values, British Values and Children's Rights (as describe by the UNCRC).
- Progression is achieved through careful sequencing of the pillars of language learning (vocabulary, grammar and phonics), using the four skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. Curriculum design takes a holistic approach that considers levels of difficulty, communicative value of structures and the concepts of recycling and interleaving.

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- St Mary's pupils have a rich multicultural and multilingual background, which reinforces the importance of learning about a whole new culture, in this case the Hispanic culture. We use this varied background to share and contrast traditions, celebrations, language characteristics and other cultural aspects.
- The geographical dimension of the subject encompasses Spain and the other 20 Hispanic countries, giving us a great opportunity to discover an ample variety of people, ethnicities and religious beliefs, which can be studied through painting, music, poems and other artistic and cultural sources.
- Exchange experiences are important to us at St Mary's; therefore, we have established a partnership with a school in Spain and have contact with them in marked occasions.



Intent: What do we teach?

- The MFL-Spanish curriculum intends to be broad, balanced and sequenced.
- The starting point is the communicative function of each topic or situation that is covered. The topics have to be well suited to accommodate the other linguistic aspects that are common to all: the ability to create dialogues, to produce questions and answers, to express opinions and preferences, to describe, to narrate, etc.
- The focus is on communication, but not at the expense of grammatical accuracy. The topics work in harmony with the different grammar points that need to be taught at various stages: for example, in Year 3, when we teach numbers and farm animals, is a perfect context to teach the formation of plural nouns; in Year 4, when we describe the colour of the hair and eyes, the pupils are introduced to the various forms of the colours, as adjectives, and later, in Year 5, when we learn about clothes and also animals, they learn the rules of adjectival formation when they are used to describe them.
- The sequential aspect of the curriculum topics is based mostly on the complexity of the structures taught and how well are they suited to interleaving them at further stages. Vocabulary can be often recycled, but even more important, the patterns of language are also often revisited (i.e. the negative form, using 'gustar' to express likes and dislikes regarding food, animals, languages, school subjects, etc, using 'to have' for various topics – age, pets, family, clothes, etc)

Intent...

- The last year of KS2 brings more complex elements of grammar, like verb conjugation, always building upon previous knowledge of verb variation when using different persons. This is known since the beginning of Year 3, when they learn this point through questions and answers, but they do not learn the basic rules until Year 6.
- Throughout the four years of Spanish there is also a strong cultural element at various points during the year, coinciding with annual celebrations (Christmas, Easter), festivals (Day of the Dead), or simple traditions (birthdays). We try to include information about not just Spain, but the other Spanish speaking countries: we learn about indigenous animals from South America, about the weather and geographical features from various Hispanic countries and different types of food, music and traditions.
- We use stories, song, rhymes and poems to enhance the learning experience and make it more authentic, engaging and memorable.
- Pupils are taught to use a variety of language learning techniques, which will help with language learning in the future, not matter which language they end up learning from KS3 onwards.

Implementation: How do we teach it?

- Spanish is taught in KS2 in lessons that are 40 minutes long and are imparted by a native, qualified teacher. These lessons are complemented with short pre-recorded videos (called 'tapas') to increase the time of exposure to the language at regular intervals in between the in-person lessons. They have various purposes: to interleave previous content; to revise the last lesson's content or to prime the pupils for what will be introduced in a subsequent lesson; to cover some cultural aspect; to practice a particular skill. These videos, which have been planned and recorded by the Subject Lead/Teacher, can be found in the School Website, where the pupils can also have access to them.
- The lesson structure is designed to support the way children learn by following a familiar structure; the following elements are consistently present in each lesson depending on the year group – greetings, say/write the date, oral work based on simple dialogues, talk about the weather, retrieval practice, etc. – and with varied support provided for the younger and/or the less confident learners.
- Spanish is taught using the principles of the E.P.I. (Extensive Processing Instruction) methodology devised by Dr Gianfranco Conti. This approach ensures that the pupils have an effective language learning experience through the use of comprehensible materials chosen by their high communicative value.
- The content is presented in chunks, which are also highly adaptable into a variety of contexts.

Implementation...

- There are macro-functions (i.e. description) which can be applied to a number of contexts or topics (i.e. talking about clothes, weather, animals, people, places, etc.). This has a high re-use value and the multiple applications imply that the structures are used repeatedly and that the students learn about the flexibility and malleability of language.
- The children learn through activities that focus primarily on **listening and reading** as modelling to give them confidence and familiarity with the vocabulary, which is introduced as chunks in the form of *sentence builders*. Their **oral and writing** skills are developed through a lot of question and answer practice as well as constant interleaving and recycling of previous material.

Process of language selection:

Communicative macro-function

- Give personal information

Micro-function

- Q&A about age

Vocabulary/Chunk

- ¿Cuántos años tienes?
How old are you?
- Tengo ____ años
I am ____ years old

Grammar

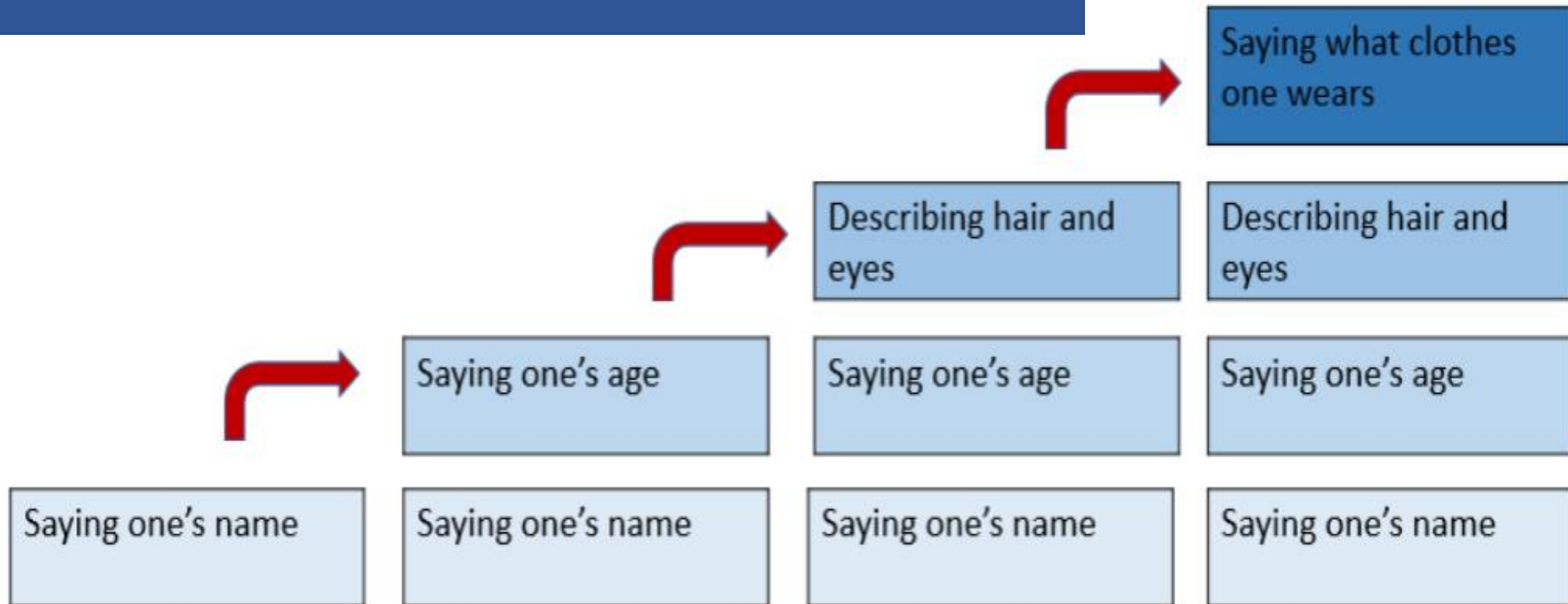
- Punctuation: ¿?
- Using 'tengo' (I have) for age, instead of 'I am'.

Phonics

- /ñ/ and diphthongs: /ua/ and /ie/

Communicative macro-functions

- Give personal information & describe people



Impact: How do we assess the learning?

- We need to ascertain that what we teach and how we teach it is having a positive impact in the children's learning; we need to know that our pupils are actually progressing in their foreign language acquisition.
- We also need to ensure that all children are working at an appropriate level of challenge, somewhere in their zone of proximal development, where they can encounter enough challenge.
- Assessment is done in a variety of ways:
 - Formative assessment → ongoing in lessons, using all skills – listening, reading for form and meaning often, writing and oral work every so often. The use of mini-whiteboards is a good resource for quick overview of the class level of understanding or retention of content.
 - Quizzes → We often use the so called 'Quick Quiz' which consists of 3 questions of different types each time, that draw on something just taught. The feedback is immediate. We tend to do this weekly and provides good information about the learning of key aspects of the lessons.
 - Summative assessment → Every term there is a more formal type of assessment, assessing various skills: listening, reading and writing in all of them, speaking, grammar and phonics whenever possible or appropriate.

Impact...

- Using tailored pre-recorded lessons and other materials produced by the Spanish teacher enables students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as well as New to English children to consolidate learning. Assessment for SEND and New to English children happens in a less formal way, using games, questions or activities that enable us to record the level of achievement.
- The formal termly assessments have graded questions, so that all children are challenged, but those who still struggle, are given some extra support sometimes and those who excel, are encouraged to try to go further in their writing and oral assessments.
- The assessment results are shared with and explained to the pupils, so that they can see how they are progressing throughout the years (there is a copy of their results in their books). These are also shared with their class teachers.
- The results inform the planning of subsequent lessons. If there are only a few students who are struggling in a specific area, these are directed to the materials set in the website for the purpose of revision and reinforcement. This also links to the aim of preparing the pupils to become independent and responsible learners.