

TDMS Curriculum overview Modern Languages (French):

Key Stage 2 (Upper Years)

- At TDMS we wholeheartedly believe in the value of learning a language and this is promoted for students from the start of their journey learning French with us in year six. We speak to students about the communication skills they gain as they find and gain confidence in using their voice through the medium of another language. We also talk about the value of uncovering cultures apart from their own, using their newly acquired linguistic capabilities in order to find out more about festivals, film, places and food in another country, amongst other things.
- Students gain a secure grounding in French in year six, where from September they learn how to describe their family and pets, free time, use colours and give and justify opinions. Then, we turn to project-based work, as students watch and discuss the film 'une vie de chat' (A Cat In Paris) to see the vocabulary they have learnt in proper use and find out more about the setting of Paris. Throughout the year students have opportunities to retrieve and use their language skills in creative ways, enjoying their programme of study as this allows them to excel in their learning of languages further on in the school.

Key skills/content requirements at GCSE

- Learning a language at TDMS for GCSE centres on the three crucial pillars for communication: vocabulary, phonics and grammar. These are ingrained into all our lessons and sequences of learning, so that we can be sure that students have learnt the required information for success at GCSE and beyond. As experts in our subject, we are also keen to foster a love of learning languages, through interactive activities and exploring cultural opportunities too.
- Whilst we focus on vocabulary, phonics and grammar skills, we also consider fully the assessment requirements at GCSE, where students take exams at the end of year eleven in speaking, listening, reading and writing. As such, our lessons incorporate practice of both receptive and productive skills and responding to written and spoken pieces. There is a new specification for GCSE languages, with first assessments in 2026, and language teaching staff regularly review the exam board requirements here and so have included tasks such as reading aloud, dictation, translation and extended writing in our sequences of learning. We also provide opportunities in and across lesson for meaningful feedback, including from assessments, so as to progress students' learning as they see themselves improving all the time.

Curriculum Overview

- The National Curriculum states that 'learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity' and the languages department at TDMS is keen to live up to that. We know that students who feel a sense of achievement in learning a language are more self-confident and have greater prospects available to them later in life. Although we are pleased to offer great expertise in French, we are keen that as teachers of languages we are giving students the skills to learn any language later in life, whether they need it to further their professional or personal goals.
- Through Key Stage Three and Key Stage Four, we use a carefully planned, spiral curriculum so that our students have regular chances to consolidate and use previous learning, enabling them to really be secure in the essential vocabulary, phonics and grammar of the French language by the end of year eleven. We plan backwards to ensure that students are given plenty of exposure to a variety of engaging, useful topic areas throughout Key Stage Three and Key Stage Four. Altogether this gives students a great platform for further study, including A level French as offered at TDMS.
- In lesson, students will see language learning broken down into manageable chunks, so that they are never overwhelmed and take part in a sequence of learning on particular vocabulary and grammar before moving on to the next sub-topic. We look to show the value of the language by using the different modes of speaking, listening, reading and writing in each lesson, with learning scaffolded so that all our students have that feeling that they 'can do French'. We stretch the most able through challenge options which are made clear in all our activities. We use the visualiser both to showcase expert student work and to complete tasks together as a class, so that teachers and students are always active participants in their learning. In addition, we know that students who feel that they can speak the language are most likely to feel confident, and as such we plan engaging games and activities each lesson that are always based on using as much of the target language as possible.
- We are keen that our students' language learning journey does not end in the classroom. In the same way that learning a language should open doors later in life, we see no reason why that cannot start at school itself. As such, the department runs popular residential trips abroad in Key Stage 3, for example to Paris, Normandy and Strasbourg. We also look to ensure that all our students experience events showcasing the real value of learning a language each year. For instance, we offer language tasters, a culture day, pen pals, event days combining languages and business, workshops involving employers, talks from professionals working in football with French, and the opportunity to see the travelling French theatre.
- The sequencing of the curriculum is agreed between the schools of the Four Stones Multi Academy Trust, with active input from teachers at TDMS to support students that we teach.

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Portable knowledge (indicative, not an exhaustive list)
Year 7	All about me My Family	School Free time	Where I live	Introducing yourself Likes and dislikes Justifying opinions with adjectives Using -er verbs The near future tense
Year 8	Holidays Festivals and Celebrations	Leisure and Technology Home and Daily Routine	World of Work & Future Plans	Perfect tense Asking and Answering questions Using -ir and -re verbs Negatives Modal verbs
Year 9	Bridging: The KS3 crash course to consolidate what students need as a platform for future study Hobbies and Leisure Activities	Identity, Family and Friendship	School Healthy Living	Using tenses together Using reflexive verbs Imperfect tense Using comparative adjectives Simple future tense
Year 10	Healthy Living	Holidays	Where I live	Conditional tense Using 'si' clauses Using a range of tenses Superlatives Present Participle
Year 11	Future Plans and Careers	The Environment Revision of Thematic Contexts for GCSE	Practice Papers and Exam Skills	Verbs with prepositions Describing a photo Role-play of different circumstances Read aloud Dictation Speaking, listening, reading, writing and translation skills

GCSE External assessment:

We follow Edexcel GCSE French <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/french-2024.html>

Paper 1: Speaking in French (25%)

Read aloud, Role Play, Picture description and Conversation.

Paper 2: Listening and understanding in French (25%)

Comprehension and Dictation

Paper 3: Reading and understanding in French (25%)

Comprehension and Translation into English

Paper 4: Writing in French (25%)

Picture description (foundation only), 50 words task (foundation only), 90 words task, 150 words task (higher only), Translation into French

SMSC:

Spiritual development

- Students learn about different religious festivals in the target language country, which allows them to share their thoughts in a safe space where teachers can steer the discussion. We also treat the question of identity when we look at family and friendships, this topic includes vocabulary to describe different religions.

Moral development

- By learning a language, students encounter lots of situations in everyday personal and professional life, using their newly acquired vocabulary to find out more information or give their own opinions. This enables students to practise forming viewpoints own they may need later in life in a controlled setting first. We also encourage students to give and justify opinions on a range of topics, allowing them to become confident in sharing their reasoning about what is important to them.

Social development

- Learning a language is all about communication, an inherently social skill! We encourage our students to find their voice in the languages classroom with increasing self-confidence, so that they are not afraid to use it when it matters. We also look at several real-life 'transactional' settings, where students may use their languages skills practically. This enables students to acquire the registers they need to use in a variety of different social settings, benefitting their English languages skills too.

Cultural development

- Languages and the cultures they inhabit are inextricably linked, which makes the language classroom a great place to discover more about cultures beyond students' own settings. Students will find out about places, food, music, film and festivals in France and other Francophone countries, using these as a backdrop for practising their communication skills. We also encourage students to pursue language learning later on, for example at A level, where learning a language is a gateway into several different subject areas surrounding the countries where the language is spoken. For example, students can discover more about French history, society, geography, film, literature, businesses, politics and much, much more.