

Modern Foreign Language

Curriculum Intent

'You can never understand one language until you understand at least two.'
(Geoffrey Willans)

At Green Ridge, we know that learning another language opens doors to many other aspects of learning for our pupils. At Green Ridge, we firmly support the following statement as part of the National Curriculum (2014) about the importance of language teaching:

'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.'

Which language do children study and when?

As an academy, we have selected **German** as the Modern Foreign Language to study formally when children begin Key Stage 2 (Year 3). However, informally, children may begin to acquire basic language and vocabulary within Key Stage 1.

Why do we choose German?

German is an **easy language to learn**.

- German and English belong to the same language family tree and so is easy for English speakers to acquire. Unlike French, Italian and Spanish, which are Romance languages, both English and German belong to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family. Some German words and expressions are still used regularly in English, such as *angst*, *kindergarten* and *kitsch*.
- English was later influenced by French, Greek and Latin. However, if you strip English back to basics, the language most resembles German. Look at words such as *Bruder* (brother), *Wasser* (water) and *Freund* (friend). If you're an English speaker learning German, you're at an advantage.

German is a very **popular language world-wide**.

- With an estimated 175-200 million speakers worldwide and its own population of about 80 million, German is the eleventh most widely spoken language in the world. Some 95 million people speak German as a first language, meaning there are around as many speakers of German as a second language as there are native speakers. German is the native language of Germany, Austria and a large proportion of Switzerland. As a result, German has the largest number of native speakers within the EU. That's why, along with English and French, German is an official language of the European Union.

German makes **wide and purposeful links across the curriculum**.

- German is the language of Goethe, Kafka, Mozart, Bach and Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Schumann and Wagner, all of which pupils will come across at some point during their education. Incidentally, some 80,000 new books are published in Germany

each year. Only a small percentage of these are translated into other languages. All these books are only accessible to those who have a fluent grasp of German.

German helps pupils to **better understand their own language and grammar in English**.

- German is fairly technical in its grammar and sentence structure, which although can appear complex initially with its rules and conventions, supports pupils to have a better understanding of their own language and grammar structures, such as the past tense and place of the verb within a sentence.

German **will prepare our pupils for their adult lives** and travelling abroad.

- There are many other European countries where German is widely spoken, especially in Eastern Europe. As a result, for pupils growing up and travelling, German will be a language well used.

German will help **support our pupils' cultural understanding**.

- Learning German provides pupils with an insight into a different way of life, and the hopes and dreams of people in German speaking countries, broadening their horizons.

German will **prepare pupils for the world of work and business** and widen their opportunities into adulthood.

- Knowledge of German will increase pupils' job opportunities as they turn into adults with German and foreign companies in their own country and abroad. Proficiency in German will help them to function productively for an employer with global business connections. Tourists from German-speaking countries travel wide and far, and often appreciate being looked after by German-speaking staff and tour guides.

In summary...

German is a foreign language which **paves the way for further study within Key Stage 3** as a popular language offered for GCSE and A-Level, and also **supports pupils in learning more about their own language and its history**, whilst at the same time giving them opportunities to make purposeful links across the curriculum and through different subjects. In addition to the National Curriculum programme of study for Key Stage 2, in order to prepare children for the next stage of their language study in Key Stage 3, at Green Ridge, we want the children to leave us with:

- With basic conversational German skills so that they can participate in a generic conversation, on a familiar topic and ask and answer questions;
- An understanding of the German alphabet and sounds (phonics) so that pupils can read the language appropriately;
- An ability to write words in German and form basic sentences which are grammatically accurate;
- With an appreciation for stories, songs, poems and rhymes in the language;
- An understanding of German history, the countries make-up and how it came to be; and
- A cultural understanding of Germany and its native speaking countries.

Above all, it is important that the emphasis within Key Stage 2 is on the **practical application** of the German language.