

Modern Foreign Languages

At St. Andrew's School, all pupils learn two modern foreign languages: French and German. The subjects are taught by a team of four specialist linguists, either in the Modern Languages Department (senior classes) or in form rooms (younger pupils). The two main ML classrooms are both ICT networked and equipped with state-of-the-art interactive whiteboards. The digital satellite television system gives access to French and German language TV and radio stations.

Textbook courses are used throughout the senior school (ages 9 – 13), in both French and German. In addition to the textbooks, these multi-media courses incorporate individual pupil workbooks, listening material on CD and an extensive integrated ICT package. Use is made across the whole age range of supplementary programmes on video/DVD and of software and websites which allow further practice of relevant topics, grammar and vocabulary.

For our younger pupils, the emphasis is very much on language learning being fun. Lessons are mostly oral/aural based in the early stages, with the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) gradually becoming more balanced as the children progress through the school. There is an annual trip to France for the 2nd Form (Year 4, ages 8 – 9), and there have been occasional trips to Germany, too. Pupils correspond with European e-mail penfriends in both French and German.

French is begun in the final year of the Pre-Prep (Year 2), at the age of 6. There is plenty of listening, speaking, singing and acting in the first three years, with limited use of books. The two timetabled lessons of French per week for the younger children increase to three per week in Years 5 – 8. French is taught in sets from Year 5 onwards. More able pupils are catered for with appropriate materials, and weaker children are given necessary support. Intending scholars receive an additional lesson each week in their final two years.

German is taught to all pupils in Years 5 – 8. Children in each year group receive three lessons per week of German, and the subject is setted from Year 6 onwards. As with French, there is differentiation in our teaching of German across the full range of abilities.

Results in both French and German at Common Entrance and Scholarship examinations (for entrance to senior schools) have been consistently excellent over the years, and many pupils go on to take both languages (and others!) at GCSE and beyond.

