

## My experience of an MFL Deep Dive in Primary.

Marie Allen, ALL Portsmouth Primary Hub

### How did I prepare?

Knowing that we were due for an inspection, I took some time to prepare. I read through the Ofsted Inspection Framework from 2019 and gave some consideration to the three Is: intent, implementation and impact. For me, the intent was the why, the what and the how, our scheme of work and our associated assessment systems. The implementation was the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the assessments. Impact, I felt was what I could prove about what children knew, remembered and understood.

One of my first jobs was to design our statement of intent. I wanted this to convey the ethos and the purpose of teaching languages but equally, clearly define our expected outcomes. I looked at a number of other statements, including 'Cave Languages' French KS2 Scheme of Work Intent <https://www.cavelanguages.co.uk/schemes-of-work> and used these to form our own statement, which follows.

Our children will:

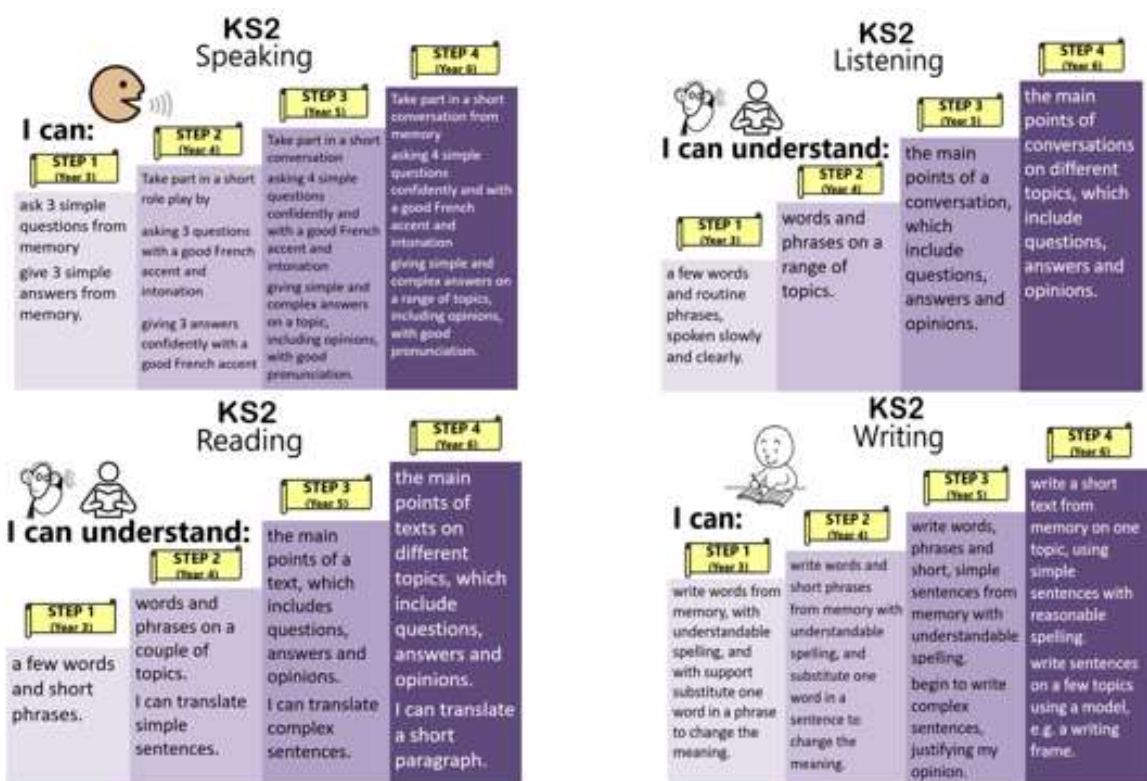
- have a solid foundation in phonics and be able to apply this knowledge when speaking, listening and reading aloud
- recognise some of the language patterns of French and how these differ from, or are similar to, English
- develop resilience as well as enjoyment in language learning through a challenging progression of learning
- develop accuracy, competency and fluency in English as well as French
- acquire language learning strategies for memorisation and retrieval, [as well as for speaking, listening, reading and writing](#)
- appreciate and be able to imitate the sound of the language at text level through songs, stories and rhymes
- be able to manipulate language in speech, or when writing sentences creatively using prior knowledge of grammar and key features
- develop the skill of how to use a bi-lingual dictionary
- have a deeper understanding of cultural differences and similarities
- have access to high quality learning, regardless of their background or status
- demonstrate substantial progress ([achieving step 4 – in graphics below - by the end of year 6](#)) in learning French, enabling a smooth transition to language learning at secondary school

We followed an adapted version of the I-languages scheme of work (<http://www.ilanguages.co.uk/>) as well as teaching phonics as a six-week block in year 3. For this we used the Take 10 phonics *en français* pack (Core et al. 2012) as a starting point to teach the vowel sounds along with a few high frequency phonemes, followed by drip feeding phonics throughout the rest of the Key Stage.

We also delivered a transition project at the end of year 6. This was a celebration of all of the skills that the children had learned and could be taken with them to their secondary school. I ensured that copies of [the statement of intent, schemes of work and assessments were](#) easily available, as well as providing [a four year overview of content covered](#).

Considering Implementation, I ensured that there was clarity about how long lessons were in each year group and that lessons take place on a weekly basis. I made sure that I was able to talk about how teachers had been, and were being, supported to teach MFL. Finally, I carried out book monitoring and recorded my observations so that, when we talked about books in different year groups, I was clear about what progress looked like in each year.

At the time we were in a transition period for recording data as a school. When I taught all of the lessons, I assessed regularly and recorded all of the data electronically for each assessment for all four skills. Class teachers had now taken responsibility for teaching language lessons and we had started using assessment grids (as we did for our other subjects). These were reviewed termly. To check on Impact of the lessons, we used 4 steps to assess attainment in the four skills (grammar is interwoven into the teaching programme). In order to create our four steps, I referred to both the KS2 Progressive Attainment Targets by Sue Cave and the 10 Steps framework for KS2 and KS3 by Rachel Hawkes.



### What did the visit entail?

The inspection began with a ninety minute conversation with our Headteacher. Following on from this, we were informed that the areas chosen for a Deep Dive would include: reading, maths, science and MFL.

I was told to meet the inspector at 9:00 and she informed me that she would be with me until 12:00. She had clearly taken the time to look at our curriculum offer for MFL on our website. As well as the questions that she asked (which I will come onto shortly), she observed two whole lessons (35 minutes in year 3 and 45 minutes in year 5); she looked at a range of books from each of the classes that she had observed and later, spoke to the children whose books she had looked at.

### **What questions were asked?**

**What gaps are there in your delivery of the National Curriculum?** As the NC for MFL does not define specific content, I felt confident here to say that I didn't feel that there were any – of course, this does not necessarily mean that children remember it all, but she was specifically asking about the delivery.

**Show me how you have mapped your MFL curriculum.** At this point, I showed her a copy of our four year overview and an example of a year group's scheme of work.

### **What barriers are there to your children being successful and how are you addressing this?**

Here, I was able to highlight two main barriers to learning. The first being children's aspirations/desire to go abroad. I could highlight ways that we were trying to combat this e.g. through events, such as French breakfasts, our bi-annual French school visit, and our annual CLIL day (organised in conjunction with the University of Portsmouth). These have all proved to be ways of engaging and inspiring children. I stressed that the school in general also encourages a lot of intercultural links (differences, similarities and celebrations).

The second barrier to learning that I identified was children's reading ability and knowledge of vocabulary. Again, I explained that we tackled this through the teaching of phonics, including our phonics block in year 3, and ensuring that we were using every possible opportunity to link skills across language e.g. cognates, near cognates and grammatical similarities and differences.

**How do you ensure that children build on previous learning?** To answer this question, I referred to two different ways that we did this. Firstly, by planning for topic words (nouns) to be used more than once, allowing children to build sentence structures rather than just learning more nouns. Secondly, that we also plan for structures to be reused and expanded e.g. children will learn names for animals and colours in year 3 as well as 'voici' and 'et'. They then go on to give simple opinions. They then apply the same opinion structure in year 4 as well as introducing 'parce que'. In year 5 they do the same with sports (+ verbs) and then again in year 6 with school subjects, continually adding words and phrases that can be used and reused.

### **My top tips!**

- Use available guidance to support you to prepare (for example: Cave Languages French KS2 SOW Intent-Implementation-Impact; Ofsted deep dive written by Clare Seccombe and shared on the LIPS Facebook group at the end of 2019 and the DfE review - Curriculum research review series: languages), it was brilliant for me.
- Be calm and clear about what you offer and how you deliver it.
- Be honest about your strengths but also your areas of development and have a plan for how you are going to tackle these.
- Don't forget to celebrate 'the extras'.