

Modern Foreign Languages - Spanish

Background

Spanish was introduced as a new subject, replacing French, at the start of the 2017-18 academic year. Four classes in Year 7 and Year 8 study Spanish, both as a compulsory subject. Next academic year there will be two classes in each year group of Years 9, 10 and 11 studying GCSE Spanish.

There has never been a better time to learn a modern language. The MFL department at CDS provides our students with a vibrant outlet for language discovery and learning. Our aim is to develop a life-long love of language learning in our students, to build their cultural awareness and to ensure that every student is able to reach his/her full potential. We will achieve this by delivering outstanding language lessons, which are well-structured, engaging and relevant to learners.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 & 8)

KS3 Spanish is delivered in Years 7 and 8 through three 60 minute lessons per fortnight, and homework (either learning or written) is set once a week. We follow the VIVA 1 & 2 course supplemented by an electronic and other printed resources, ensuring that a variety of activities is offered to suit every type of learner.

Students are assessed on each key language skill: listening, reading, speaking and writing. They are assessed in vocabulary, grammar and translation. By the end of KS3 we expect most students to achieve at least grade 4, while the good linguists should be reaching a grade 5 or 6. Students are rewarded with points on Behaviour Watch in line with whole School policy at KS3.

In Year 7 students are timetable with three hours per fortnight. No previous knowledge of the language is presumed although if some students are familiar with the language this is used for the benefit of the group as a whole. Students who speak a second language at home are encouraged to gain the appropriate accreditation at a later stage and are supported by the department with the preparation for the examination.

Great focus is placed in the early weeks on listening and speaking. Audio resources as well as ICT and online resources are used to enhance the skills acquired in the classroom. We believe that it is very important for students to have a good pronunciation and intonation and to understand all the grammatical structures of the language. Students will learn how to cope in real-life situations, which they may find themselves in abroad.

In Year 8 students build on what they already know and are introduced to new topics. They also learn how to talk about events in the past and in the future. They continue to work on improving listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Students are expected to continue with foreign language at GCSE and we naturally encourage that.

Key Stage 4 (Years 9, 10 & 11)

Spanish is an optional subject at KS4 and good linguists are encouraged to study the language at GCSE level via the E-Bac pathway. The time allocation for KS4 is five 60 minute lessons per fortnight.

We currently use the AQA examination board for GCSE Spanish. Students are assessed on reading, writing, listening and speaking, with each examination attracting 25% of the final grade awarded.

Students study all of the following themes on which the GCSE examinations are based:

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

Formal GCSE assessment is by examination only at the end of Year 11, but a comprehensive programme of formative and summative assessment is delivered throughout the KS4 course.

In Years 9, 10 & 11, students are timetabled with five hours per fortnight. During the three-year course students will further develop their four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and will be able to understand increasingly longer texts and spoken dialogues. Students will also be encouraged to read for pleasure in the target language.

Formal GCSE assessment is by examination only at the end of Year 11, but a comprehensive programme of formative and summative assessment is delivered throughout the KS4 course.

Facilities

The department uses language software programmes that can be accessed at home as well as school. Interactive whiteboards are in every classroom, using Promethean board software (ActivInspire) as part of our normal daily teaching.

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