KIMICHI SCHOOL WORCESTER · CURRICULUM JOURNEY

French

Proposed — see the curriculum document

How French builds, year on year, from Lower School A to Upper Seniors

Lower School A
Year 7

- Sound–symbol correspondences taught explicitly; core high-frequency vocabulary
- Present tense; self, family, home and school

MILESTONE
Can pronounce an unfamiliar word

Lower School B
Year 8

- Remaining sound–symbol correspondences; perfect and near future tenses
- Adjectives and agreement; free time, food, town and holidays

MILESTONE
Three tenses in use

Inters
Year 9

- Consolidation; imperfect introduced; opinions with justification
- Introduction to translation in both directions and to dictation

MILESTONE
GCSE options decision

Lower Seniors
Year 10

- Theme 1: People and lifestyle. Theme 2: Popular culture
- Dictation and reading aloud practised routinely; tier reviewed

MILESTONE
Foundation or Higher decided

Upper Seniors
Year 11

- Theme 3: Communication and the world around us; full grammar review
- Speaking assessment, translation drill and revision

MILESTONE
GCSE French, all four skills

WITH MUSIC
Sound–symbol work is phonics; French repertoire from Fauré to Stromae.

WITH ENGLISH
Grammar made visible, and translation as close reading.

WITH HUMANITIES
Culture, place and how other people see the world.

CONSTANT AT EVERY STAGE

Classes of no more than ten · Music at the heart · Personalised pathways · Every pupil performs · Speaking aloud from the first week

Every stage builds knowledge, skills, confidence and character — with music enriching learning all the way through.

INTENT — WHY WE TEACH IT

A modern language is the subject most often quietly dropped by small schools, and its absence closes doors — the English Baccalaureate, several university courses, most competitive apprenticeship routes. Offering French is a statement that specialist provision does not mean narrowed horizons. It also begins from zero for everybody, which matters enormously to a pupil who has been out of school and is anxious about the gaps in everything else.

WHY THE SEQUENCE RUNS THIS WAY

The reformed GCSE is built on sound–symbol correspondences — an explicit phonics framework, assessed through dictation and reading aloud. So phonics is front-loaded in Year 7 and revisited relentlessly, because everything downstream depends on it. A second tense arrives at Lower School B, which is the point at which real communication becomes possible. Inters introduces translation and dictation so that nothing about the exam format is a surprise. The two themes closest to pupils' own lives are taught first, while confidence is still being built.

WHAT IT BUILDS ON, AND WHAT IT LEADS TO

Assumes no prior French. Draws on English grammar, which becomes far more visible when learning another language. Leads to GCSE French at Foundation or Higher tier, keeps the English Baccalaureate open, and supports any post-16 route that values a language.

HOW IT IS ASSESSED

Four equally weighted papers: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Foundation and Higher tiers, with all four papers sat at the same tier. Weekly vocabulary retrieval from the published list. Sound–symbol and dictation practice weekly from Year 7. Reading aloud practised aloud from Inters so the speaking assessment format is familiar long before it counts.

ADAPTED FOR OUR PUPILS

Pupils are given the actual vocabulary list — a knowable endpoint materially reduces anxiety. Vocabulary is dual-coded with images throughout. The speaking assessment is conducted by a familiar adult, and access arrangements are explored from Inters rather than in the exam term. For pupils with hearing needs, the listening paper is discussed with the Hearing Impairment Team well in advance.

IMPACT — WHAT YOU WOULD SEE

Pupils who can pronounce an unfamiliar written word correctly, because the phonics were taught properly. Pupils who attempt the dictation rather than leaving it blank. Musicians who understand the French they are singing. A cohort in which taking a language is normal rather than exceptional.

WHAT HELPS AT HOME

Ten minutes of vocabulary most days beats an hour at the weekend — the list is finite and published, so progress is visible. Watch something in French with subtitles. Ask them to read a sentence aloud to you; they will be better at it than you expect.