

## Options MFL (French and German) Frequently asked questions.

- **How do I remove myself from green pathway?**

This is done by consultation with Mrs Summers on an individual basis, however, change of pathways is rarely done.

- **How were pupils selected for green pathway?**

Pupils who were making good progress in French / German, with a good ATL and BFL in MFL lessons were selected for green pathway. Pupils were chosen after assessment point 1 earlier in the year.

- **My son / daughter is not making as much progress in French / German as another subject and that concerns me.**

As MFL staff normally mention at parents evening, **progress works slightly differently in languages as we have a different starting point.** Most pupils start knowing nothing or just a few numbers or greetings in September whereas pupils have already studied Mathematics/ English / History at primary school and therefore their grades in those subjects are often higher in KS3. **By year 11 most pupils who work well find that their grade for French or German is similar to other subjects.** In KS3, we teach the basics, the building blocks of the language and then we build on this in years 10 and 11.

- **What are the benefits of taking a language?**



In the options booklet, the MFL page has lots of reasons, but do also look at the website below.

- <http://www.whystudylanguages.ac.uk/ks3/gcse/>
- <http://www.whystudylanguages.ac.uk/ks3/videos/>

If your son / daughter is considering going to university later, the Russell group of universities (Birmingham university belongs to this group) really value languages – this is also mentioned in the options booklet.



- Can you explain the examinations briefly?

The exams all take place in year 11 at the end of the course. **There are four examinations:**

**Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking.**

There are 2 different tiers –Foundation and Higher. Teachers decide which tier to enter the pupils for after the mock examinations. A pupil must do all 4 exams at the same level e.g., all foundation / all higher. The speaking exam is with the subject teacher and is recorded and sent to the exam board to be marked. There are three parts to the speaking exam – a role-play, a photo-card to describe and a conversation. Teachers prepare pupils for the speaking exam thoroughly and there is a mock speaking exam, normally in October of year 11.

- What do the exam papers look like?

Usually, we do a foundation listening and reading exam as our final year 9 assessment, so that pupils get a taste of the style of the examinations before year 10.

The foundation-writing exam includes writing four simple sentences about a photo, writing a text of 40 words in French / German and then writing a text of 90 words in French / German.

Then there are a few sentences to translate from English into French / German.

The higher-writing exam has a choice of two 90-word tasks to do, a choice of two 150- word tasks and then a short paragraph to translate from English into French / German.

We teach the writing and the speaking using a learning mat with key verbs on.

The image shows a sample of an AQA exam paper for GCSE French, Foundation Tier, Paper 3, Reading. The paper includes the AQA logo, a header with fields for Centre Number and Candidate Number, and the title 'GCSE FRENCH Foundation Tier Paper 3 Reading'. It specifies the date as Tuesday 15 May 2012, Morning, and a time allowed of 45 minutes. The paper contains instructions for candidates, a list of questions, and a table for marking. The marking table has columns for Question Number, Mark, and Total. The total mark for the paper is 40.

Question Number	Mark	Total
1	1	
2	1	
3	1	
4	1	
5	1	
6	1	
7	1	
8	1	
9	1	
10	1	
11	1	
12	1	
13	1	
14	1	
15	1	
16	1	
17	1	
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26	1	
27	1	
28	1	
29	1	
30	1	
31	1	
32	1	
33	1	
34	1	
35	1	
36	1	
37	1	
38	1	
39	1	
40	1	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>40</b>

**What exam board do you use?**

We use AQA.

Here is a link to the GCSE French and German specifications online.

[AQA | Languages | GCSE | French](#)

[AQA | Languages | GCSE | German](#)



Here are some websites that may also help:

- <http://www.whystudylanguages.ac.uk/ks3/gcse/>
- <http://www.whystudylanguages.ac.uk/ks3/videos/>
- A video created by the Goethe Institute about the benefits of studying German  
<https://youtu.be/rwpxS8ixHAY>
- A video on the University of Birmingham website in French (there are English subtitles)
- <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/sections/lfa/about/french.aspx>

Further reading:

- <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/magazine/life-around-world/importance-languages>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/learn/>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/aug/28/just-speaking-english-wont-get-us-very-far-in-the-world>