

## 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.

[8 Reasons to Choose a Language at GCSE and A level | School Guide Blog](#)

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.

[Why Should I Study Languages?](#)

[How learning a new language changes your brain | Cambridge English](#)

[GCSE and A-Level German - why German is a great career choice for students –](#)

[Jobs that use Modern Languages - Careers - BBC Bitesize](#)



- 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. The speaking exam contains a role-play, a photo to describe and follow up questions and a reading aloud section with a focus on pronunciation. 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 5 simple sentences about a photo, writing a text of 50 words in French / German and then writing a text of approximately 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 the front cover of an AQA GCSE French exam paper. At the top left is the AQA logo. Below it, there are fields for 'Centre Number' and 'Candidate Number'. The title 'GCSE FRENCH' is prominently displayed, with a large 'F' to the right. Below the title, it specifies 'Foundation Tier Paper 3 Reading'. The date 'Tuesday 25 May 2010' and 'Morning' session are listed, along with 'Time allowed: 45 minutes'. A 'Mark Scheme' table is visible on the right side of the page, with columns for 'Question' and 'Mark'. At the bottom, there is a barcode and the reference number '8658/RF'.

## What exam board do you use?

We use AQA at present.

Here is a link to the GCSE French and German specifications on :

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

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



### Here are some websites that may also help:

- [Why languages matter | Modern Languages | Pearson UK](#)
- 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://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>
- [The economic value to the UK of speaking other languages | RAND](#)