

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. 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 cover page of an AQA GCSE French exam paper. It includes the AQA logo, a section for candidates to write their name and center number, and the title 'GCSE FRENCH F Foundation Tier Paper 3 Reading'. It also specifies the date 'Tuesday 23 May 2010', the time 'Morning', and the duration 'Time allowed: 45 minutes'. There are instructions for candidates, a list of materials to bring, and a barcode at the bottom.

What exam board do you use?

We use AQA at present.

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

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/french-8652>

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