

Urmston Grammar School

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11th May 2023

RE: Modern Foreign Languages - Curriculum Changes

Dear Year 7 Parents and Carers,

The teaching of Modern Foreign Languages is a real strength in the curriculum at Urmston Grammar School. We have been commended by the Department of Education for being in the 1% of state secondary schools where all students study a language up to GCSE. In addition to the knowledge and understanding developed by studying either French or German, we are confident languages equip our students with a broad skillset and the cultural capital needed to become successful global citizens. As a school we continuously review our curriculum to ensure it best suits the needs of our students. It is for this reason I am writing to inform you of some changes to our Modern Foreign Languages curriculum which will have implications for your son/daughter in Year 7.

Current MFL Curriculum

At present all students in Year 7 study either French or German before pursuing both these languages in Year 8. When students progress to Year 9 they follow one of two pathways. Some students return to studying the one language they have been taught since Year 7. Other students continue as dual-linguists, studying both French and German throughout Year 9. When considering their GCSE options, all students automatically take their main language studied since Year 7 as their GCSE language. Those who continued as dual-linguists in Year 9 then also have the option to select their second language as one of their GCSE options.

Changes to MFL Curriculum

We are phasing in changes to our curriculum so that all students will only study **one** Modern Foreign Language. Current Year 7 students and those joining each Year 7 cohort in the foreseeable future will study either French or German and this will be their sole language studied through to Year 11. This means students will no longer study both French and German in Year 8 or pursue a dual-language route into GCSE. We are however continuing with our commitment that all students will study a Modern Foreign Language up to GCSE level.

There are a number of reasons for making this change. Currently the number of students opting to study both French and German at GCSE is extremely low. The national picture of limited school funding means staffing an additional GCSE class for a very limited number of dual-language students is becoming unviable. Additionally, when uptake of two languages at GCSE is so low, moving to a model whereby every student studies just one language from Year 7 through to Year 11 will mean

Urmston Grammar School - Headteacher: Mrs R S Wall
pride, participation, empathy

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significantly more teaching time can be committed to that language which is in the best interests of the vast majority of our students. We appreciate some Year 7 students may be disappointed that they will no longer be starting an additional language in Year 8 however we are confident this change will help students in making greater progress and ultimately securing even stronger outcomes at GCSE.

The details of these changes will shortly be explained to Year 7 students by their MFL teacher who should be able answer any initial queries.

Many thanks for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Kennedy-Fowler'.

Mr T Kennedy-Fowler
Deputy Headteacher