

Understanding, improving and promoting language learning

The Role of the Specialist Teachers

KEY AIM

The Specialist Teachers aim to increase teachers' confidence and capacity to deliver the recommendations of the *MFL Pedagogy Review*, in order to strengthen curriculum design and pedagogy and thus improve pupils' sense of progression in learning the language, with a view to increasing uptake at GCSE.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In November 2016, the Teaching Schools Council published the *Report of the MFL Pedagogy Review*. The report noted that only a third of pupils achieve a languages GCSE at grade C or above and that less than half of pupils even take a language GCSE. Research has shown that poor motivation in studying a language is partly due to pupils feeling that they do not know the language and feeling that they are not making progress. **Improving pedagogy is key to addressing these issues. Whilst teachers are not in a position to alter some factors that can influence MFL uptake and achievement, teachers do have the capacity to strengthen pedagogy and improve curriculum design and delivery by using research-informed approaches to language teaching. This is the role of the Specialist Teachers.**

HOW THIS WILL BE ACHIEVED

The Specialist Teachers, closely supported by guidance and resources provided by NCELP, will share across a network of schools a pedagogy that helps pupils establish, early in their course, a robust knowledge of basic vocabulary, grammar, and the sound and spelling systems (phonics). The pedagogy reinforces this knowledge via planned practice in using the knowledge during meaningful activities.

In order to achieve this, Specialist Teachers will help reduce reliance on other types of pedagogy, such as 'topic teaching' that encourages a disproportionate focus on rare vocabulary early in the course, insufficient revisiting and practice, or a dependence on rote learned phrases that pupils cannot manipulate. Such a dependence can lead pupils to realise that they cannot understand or produce basic or frequent language, and this contributes to a lack of enjoyment and a feeling that they are not making progress.

In sum, by using NCELP's guidance and resources, the Specialist Teachers will increase capacity to deliver the pedagogy recommended in the *MFL Pedagogy Review* and will provide access to research-informed principles and resources for the teachers across the network of schools.

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