

Curriculum III Spanish

Ambition

- The subject sentence is the quest of mastery: "The department celebrated acceptance through providing intercultural opportunities and championing linguistic proficiency"
- We consider that the boundaries between powerful knowledge and cultural capital are not always easy to demarcate when learning another language. In terms of language acquisition, we believe that students should be taught phonics and verb conjugation explicitly from Year 7, although we do supplement with lexicogrammar.
- Students acquire the four key assessment skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, but sitting within these lie the ability to comprehend, infer meaning to extract information, communicate spontaneously and with accurate pronunciation and intonation, vocabulary acquisition, the ability to apply grammar accurately and translation both into and out of Spanish. Students gain a wealth of cultural insights into the Spanish-speaking world: examples of these include holidaying, festivals, eating out, shopping, comic strips and the Spanish education system, all with the aim of making students educated citizens of the world (broadening minds, widening horizons).
- Careers links are made explicit via a 10-minute Careers Spotlight in Weeks 6 and 12 in Years 7-11. Future aspirations, study and work is studied explicitly in Year 11 Cycle 1. We welcome Leeds Loves ambassadors to the Academy every year to underscore the importance and benefits of learning another language as well as other visitors.
- The curriculum makes reference to different faiths and festivals in Year 7 Cycle 2 and Year 10 Cycle 3. Students study where they live in Year 8 Cycle 1 and the advantages and disadvantages of living in a city in Year 10 Cycle 2, in addition to what they would do to change their city. It also references LBGT role models in listening and reading.
- In reflecting today's Hispanic world, the curriculum includes voices of a variety of different races, as well as spotlights as part of Black History Month. We are constantly reviewing our response to Race in the Curriculum and adapting our SOW and LTP in accordance to this.
- Year 9 PenPal system allows students to communicate with students in Spanish speaking countries. Developing their ability to manipulate and adapt their own language whilst fostering their autonomy in learning.
- French GCSE offered to Year 8 students, unfortunately due staffing shortage we were not able to run. However, we now run co-curricular French to students in Year 9 to offer up the opportunity to learn another foreign language with a strong emphasis on culture.
- Students have the opportunity to listen to guest speakers; in recent years this has included ambassadors from Panama and university professors. They have the opportunity to attend an A Level taster lesson at Dixons Sixth Form and this is currently being developed to include a visit to Ambiente tapas restaurant, Leeds.
- Examples of where the curriculum links with the PDS curriculum across Years 7-11 include festivals, food and drink, travel, events, music, environmental issues and being charitable (World); being a Muslim at Christmas, Eid / Ramadan, where you live / types of housing (Community), mobile phones and social media, shopping online, illness and injury and vices (Safety), exploring self, identity, relationships, role models and healthy lifestyles (Who Am I?) and future aspirations, study and work (KCSIE 18).
- All Year 7 and 8 students take part in the DTA Spelling Bee and DTA Translation Bee competition, both of these are our flagship events to support the House system. These develop into Dixons, regional and national competitions across Years 7-9.

Rationale

- Students study 3 lessons of Spanish per week. As a general rule, in lesson 1, students begin a vocabulary test on prior learning as part of retrieval practice. In lesson 2, students commence with a Review Now activity which revisits a prior piece of key learning or common misconception. In lesson 3, students complete a short Application Question as part of our drive to increase the quality and frequency of extended writing in Spanish. Beyond this, staff have the autonomy to teach however they wish, although our marking points and assessments are aligned.
- By the end of Year 8, the fundamental milestones are that students can express themselves in past, present and future tenses (but are also exposed to key verbs in the conditional and imperfect); that they can understand, ask and answer a range of simple questions; that they can retain key topic-specific vocabulary
- In the GCSE course, students study 8 modules across 8 cycles; these cover the 5 big topics in the exam specification. Local area, holiday and travel, School, and Identity and Culture are taught across Years 9 and 10. Future aspirations, study and work and International and global dimension are taught in Year 11. In terms of overlap, School is taught in Year 7 as well as Year 9 in order to pay reference to an important point in students' lives in the former and to develop age appropriate school problems and issues in the latter. We deem it appropriate to include description of people, cities and food / restaurant dialogues at multiple points in the curriculum, but do not repeat holidays given the social disadvantage of many students in the area. This does not include retrieval practice, which is covered routinely via Do Now and Revision activities in all year groups.



- We do not formally assess every skill, every cycle, which some Dixons Academies choose to do. We prefer to spend greater focus on two out of four assessment skills in Cycles 1 and 2 which we find produces higher-quality work, a clearer understanding of the big picture and frees up teaching time to teach to the wider domain.
- Students study the Pearson Edexcel examination board. The principal reasons that this board has been chosen is for having five big topics which are easier to plan, explain and signpost to students rather than the three very broad topics at AQA. Furthermore, students receive 4 bullet points in Question 2 Higher Writing as opposed to just 2 bullet points at AQA.

Concepts

- Review Now and Application Questions are sequenced to encourage spaced repetition and allow students to build on what has been taught before. The latter also consolidates the selected language of most common frequency (Tortillas sheet) and extended writing.
- There are three main areas to homework. In Weeks 1-3 of every cycle, the homework is Verb Grid. We consider the conjugation of these verbs in key past / present / future tenses to be language of the most common frequency and importance, so this is covered three times every cycle in all year groups. Secondly, the majority of homework in Weeks 4-13 is based on key vocabulary and phrases from selected sections of the curated Knowledge Organiser for that cycle. That Week 4's homework is based around what was taught in Week 1 allows for intelligent sequencing and retrieval practice. Do Now activities and weekly DIRT following the lesson 1 vocabulary test support this further. Finally, once or twice each cycle, students have review week homework which revisit a number of sections of the current or previous Knowledge Organiser to allow retrieval practice over a longer time lag.
- Students complete Retrieval Practice in Morning Meeting and as part of their Trinity Test in Years 7-10. These questions draw upon revisiting previously taught language and structures, as well as key lexicogrammar, both into and out of Spanish.
- In Year 11, further retrieval practice of Year 9 and 10 vocabulary is developed on a sliding scale of low stakes to higher stakes. This is in addition to 25 minute whole year group revision lectures delivered by the Head of Department which revisit the key knowledge, false friends, powerful knowledge, cultural capital and exam rubric needed for academic success.
- Students begin to prepare topic booklet answers for speaking and writing in Year 10 Cycle 2, once the critical mass of language and structures has been taught. This allows students to develop further on their work completed in Year 9. Yet we also believe in some new, content in Year 11 that is age-specific and relevant (e.g. Future aspirations, study and work).
- We use Reading Reconsidered strategies such as Control The Game and Close Reading as part of a wide range of techniques to promote reading fluency, and work with the iBase to continually review our reading offer. Mathematically fluency is promoted in Spanish in ways such as the teaching of numbers, telling the time, the 24 hour clock for transport, dealing with prices, shopping transactions and using large numbers, years and percentages for statistics.
- We are developing the use of Tangled Translation into schemes to drive up efficacy of recall from long-term memory in translation.

Implementation

- Subject leadership – Alvena Hawley-Boutonnet (ABO) Head of department i/c years 9-11, co-lead A Level provision at Dixons Sixth Form, RQT mentor, Year 6-7 transition Michael Crolla (MCR) Trust Assistant Principal - Research & Development, co-lead A Level provision at Dixons Sixth Form, Year 11-12 transition ; James Stogden - Assistant Head of Department- i/c Years 7-8, remote provision, NQT mentor, SCITT mentor, lead on PenPal and conjugation booklet; Elena Salas-Ramirez (ERa) - Primary Lead i/c Years 3-6 at Dixons Music Primary, Lucy (Lal) - RQT teacher (PKo)- NQT teacher
- Subject knowledge specialisms – MCR - higher level grammar, northern Spain, 20th Century Spanish History; ABo - differentiation, southern Spain, film and social issues; JSt - contemporary Spain, differentiation; ERa - primary education, translation; LAl - linguistics. Group 4 and 5 pedagogy; PKo - career changer. The impact of NCELP training in the last two years has seen phonics embedded into our Years 7 and 8 Schemes of Work as well as a new grammar point being taught every two weeks. We are continuing to develop the inclusion of vocabulary of the most common frequency. Training from Bradford Research School resulted in an overhaul of our Knowledge Organisers to facilitate improved opportunities for retrieval practice and developing schema. Research into Conti and Smith regarding lexicogrammar, alongside two visits to Dixons Trinity Chapelton, resulted in the introduction of Review Now and Application Questions from August 2020.
- We ensure that the most important documents are as accessible as possible for all students (Verb Grid, judicious use of colour on Knowledge Organisers) but use strategies such as writing frames, transcripts and Foundation textbooks where necessary, typically in Group 4. Double Staffing is geared around, but not exclusive to, Group 4 and can extend to disadvantaged students. Here, we favour the Hub and temporary Breakout models but often use Tutorial and semi-permanent Breakout models if deemed more appropriate. We support students who have excelled at Spanish at Primary via fast track double staffing in Year 7 where feasible. We use strategies such as targeted questioning, Morning Mastery and priority marking to drive up performance of disadvantaged students if necessary.
- In terms of progression across key stages, a topic such as school would focus primarily on justified opinions and reasons in Year 7, but with frontloaded tenses via the Verb Grid so that students can express, say, the conditional to express what they would like to study. By Year 9, this develops into using the imperfect to compare experiences when younger, adding comparatives and superlatives as part of justified opinions and reasons. Furthermore, the optional higher level Verb Grid offers further frontloading for students who are thriving before these concepts are taught explicitly later on in the course (e.g. compound tenses, subjunctives). The themes discussed are also more age appropriate, such as problems in school and the Spanish education system.



- In terms of assessment, students complete Reading and Writing assessments in Cycle 1, Speaking and Listening assessments in Cycle 2 and all four skill areas in Cycle 3. Whilst ensuring that each skill area is summatively assessed twice per year, with equal weighting as per GCSE, this frees up time to both analyse skill areas in depth at the relative time but also to teach to the wider domain and include wider, relevant cultural content. Prior to this, in speaking and writing, teachers provide formative feedback on a piece of work (pink sheet) upon receipt of which students complete Extended DIRT. In Years 7 and 8 Cycle 3, students complete a common Dixons Assessment to compare standards across Dixons schools. The majority of assessments include interleaved content. Whilst not covering the entire content, Year 10 Cycle 3 mirrors the final GCSE as closely as possible and a full mock takes place in Year 11 Cycle 2.
- All year 7-11 LTPs and SOWs have been adapted to ensure that the full breadth of the curriculum has been covered due to lockdowns and online provisions. This content is interleaved strategically into our LTPs and SOWs to ensure that we are revisiting content. We have observed that going back to basics with verbs and vocabulary is key. We are addressing this by reinforcing grammatical concepts and high-frequency vocabulary through interleaving and review nouns in lessons. Strategies such as the verb conjugation booklet have been created in order to reinforce the basics.
- Students who have long periods of absence have work set on the online platform Activelearn. This complements the textbook and content taught in lesson. Reading, listening, vocabulary and grammar exercises are set based on the content taught in lesson. Work packs have been created which complement each module taught in KS3 and KS4, which are sent in the post to absent students alongside the online platform.

