

From Intent to Excellence

Effective Primary Latin Leadership & KS2 Implementation
using the Maximum Classics course



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1. Aims of this document

This document is written for primary schools who teach Latin as an Ancient Foreign Language through the Maximum Classics scheme as their main or sole language provision. It aims provide guidance for SLT, Language Leads and class teachers to ensure the coherent planning and clear communication of intent, curriculum, standards and assessment of the subject across KS2.

2. The rationale and vision for teaching Latin as a foreign language at KS2

i. Guiding principles

Setting out clear a rationale for the teaching of Latin at KS2 is useful not only for school staff, but also for governors, parents and pupils.

Reasons for a school's choice to offer Latin to their pupils are diverse:

- it offers the opportunity to reinforce the teaching of English vocabulary and grammar
- the language lends itself to a systematic and effective style of teaching
- Latin is a logical step after phonics, reinforcing the notion of structure and pattern in language
- it provides a paradigm for language learning in KS3 and beyond, and enables the learning of other romance languages such as Spanish and French
- teaching the subject allows insights into myth and other cultural aspects that form the basis of modern Western culture

ii. School Primary Languages Policy

A school's Primary Languages policy can include the following aspects:

- Vision and rationale for primary Latin
- Teaching Aims
- Curriculum details, pedagogical approach and example resources
- Curriculum leadership and management
- Links across the curriculum and exploiting opportunities
- Assessment & record keeping
- Inclusion and home-school links

Below is an example of such a policy, digested for publication on their school website, from Story Wood Primary School (<https://www.storywood.bham.sch.uk/foreign-languages/>):

“At Story Wood we have chosen to teach Latin because of the rich opportunities that come with learning this ancient language. As well as being a fascinating language in its own right, knowledge of Latin helps to develop literacy skills. Through Latin, children develop their knowledge of spelling and vocabulary through learning Latin roots of English words and deepen their understanding of grammar. Alongside language learning, the study of Roman and Greek civilisations aids cultural literacy, encourages cultural insights and gives opportunities for wide-ranging thinking across many linked subjects (including history, philosophy, art, maths and science).

The national curriculum for languages aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources.
- Speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and continually improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation.
- Can write at varying length, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt.
- Discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in the language studied.

At Story Wood we deliver on the above aims through an intensive Latin programme [*Maximum Classics*] in year 5 and year 6. Children receive weekly Latin lessons that include both language learning and classics (study of Ancient Rome and Greece), enabling them to make substantial progress in the language. Lessons provide a balance of spoken and written language, enabling children to understand and communicate ideas, facts and feelings in speech and writing. The focus is to provide a foundation for reading comprehension and an appreciation of classical civilisation.”

3. KS2 Programme of Study requirements

National Curriculum guidance states that:

“Teaching may be of any modern or ancient foreign language and should focus on enabling pupils to make substantial progress in one language. The teaching should provide an appropriate balance of spoken and written language and should lay the foundations for further foreign language teaching at key stage 3. It should enable pupils to understand and communicate ideas, facts and feelings in speech and writing, focused on familiar and routine matters, using their knowledge of phonology, grammatical structures and vocabulary.

The focus of study in modern languages will be on practical communication. If an ancient language is chosen, the focus will be to provide a linguistic foundation for reading comprehension and an appreciation of classical civilisation. Pupils studying ancient languages may take part in simple oral exchanges, while discussion of what they read will be conducted in English. A linguistic foundation in ancient languages may support the study of modern languages at key stage 3.

Pupils should be taught to:

- listen attentively to spoken language and show understanding by joining in and responding
- explore the patterns and sounds of language through songs and rhymes and link the spelling, sound and meaning of words
- engage in conversations; ask and answer questions; express opinions and respond to those of others; seek clarification and help*
- speak in sentences, using familiar vocabulary, phrases and basic language structures*
- develop accurate pronunciation and intonation so that others understand when they are reading aloud or using familiar words and phrases*
- present ideas and information orally to a range of audiences*
- read carefully and show understanding of words, phrases and simple writing
- appreciate stories, songs, poems and rhymes in the language
- broaden their vocabulary and develop their ability to understand new words that are introduced into familiar written material, including through using a dictionary
- write phrases from memory, and adapt these to create new sentences, to express ideas clearly
- describe people, places, things and actions orally* and in writing
- understand basic grammar appropriate to the language being studied, including (where relevant): feminine, masculine and neuter forms and the conjugation of high-frequency verbs; key features and patterns of the language; how to apply these, for instance, to build sentences; and how these differ from or are similar to English

The starred (*) content above will not be applicable to ancient languages.”

4. Teaching and learning

The implementation of a clear and purposeful languages curriculum is at the heart of the subject's success. As noted by Ofsted, "in order to have a positive impact on their motivation, curriculum design should ensure that pupils feel successful in their learning [and] are clear about how to make progress." The two main courses supported by Classics for All are *Minimus* and *Maximum Classics*.

i. Curriculum overview

Maximum Classics Latin language scheme of work

Maximum Classics is a scheme and set of digital resources that teaches the Latin language in a way that enhances English literacy, both in its choice of vocabulary and grammar covered. It consists of sixteen Units, each with a particular grammar focus. It is designed to be teachable by non-specialist teachers and accessible by all abilities of student. The course was launched in 2016.

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|--|---|
| <i>first year</i> | <u>Unit 1</u> The origins of the English language, sentence construction | <u>Unit 2</u> Present tense verbs, six personal endings | <u>Unit 3</u> More present tense verbs, adverbs | <u>Unit 4</u> Subject & object nouns, masculine and feminine nouns |
| <i>second year</i> | <u>Unit 5</u> Reading simple sentences in Latin (noun, adverbs & verbs) | <u>Unit 6</u> Numerals 1-10, 100, 1000, the irregular verb 'to be' (present tense) | <u>Unit 7</u> Adjectives & agreement with noun in number, gender & case | <u>Unit 8</u> Prepositions |
| <i>third year</i> | <u>Unit 9</u> Past continuous tense | <u>Unit 10</u> Third group nouns (masculine and feminine), glossing technique | <u>Unit 11</u> Possessive noun endings | <u>Unit 12</u> Negatives, commands & conjunctions |
| <i>fourth year</i> | <u>Unit 13</u> Simple past tense | <u>Unit 14</u> Questions & answers | <u>Unit 15</u> Auxiliary verbs | <u>Unit 16</u> Reading practice, KS2-3 transfer focus |

ii. Linking language and literacy at KS2

One of the main benefits of teaching Latin as a KS2 language is its useful interplay with English grammar and vocabulary. *Maximum Classics'* introductory unit explores the history behind English's links to Latin and Ancient Greek. Vocabulary used on the course is selected to facilitate the exploration of interplay between Latin and English vocabulary and every lesson incorporates games or activities drawing on this. The course also tracks KS2 elements such as word class, tense and auxiliary verbs using the same terminology used in English SPaG teaching (highlighted on the table in yellow).

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---|--|--|---|
| <i>first year</i> | <u>Unit 1</u> <i>The origins of language</i> | <u>Unit 2</u> <i>Present tense verbs</i> | <u>Unit 3</u> <i>Verbs & adverbs</i> | <u>Unit 4</u> <i>Subject & object nouns</i> |
| <i>second year</i> | <u>Unit 5</u> <i>Simple sentences in Latin</i> | <u>Unit 6</u> <i>Numerals & 'to be'</i> | <u>Unit 7</u> <i>Adjectives & agreement</i> | <u>Unit 8</u> <i>Prepositions</i> |
| <i>third year</i> | <u>Unit 9</u> <i>Past continuous tense</i> | <u>Unit 10</u> <i>Third group nouns</i> | <u>Unit 11</u> <i>Possessive noun endings</i> | <u>Unit 12</u> <i>Negatives, commands & conjunctions</i> |
| <i>fourth year</i> | <u>Unit 13</u> <i>Simple past tense</i> | <u>Unit 14</u> <i>Questions & answers</i> | <u>Unit 15</u> <i>Auxiliary verbs</i> | <u>Unit 16</u> <i>KS2-3 transfer</i> |

iii. Cross-curricular links and opportunities to explore culture

The study of Latin and the civilisation of Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire allows students to encounter much of the foundational literature, art, science and learning of much of Western culture. The *Maximum Classics* scheme incorporates aspects of classical civilisation that complement and enrich the whole KS2 curriculum, integrating cultural aspects from across the Roman and Greek worlds in the form of dedicated cultural lessons, usually one or two per Unit. These often have a hands-on or interactive focus and are all designed to draw links between ancient and modern

culture. In addition, each Unit features a myth or historical story. From Units 1-10 these are told in a mixture of Latin and English to promote retention and recall of vocabulary, and from Unit 11 onwards – by which point the students have the necessary language skills – the text is in entirely in Latin.

| | | | | |
|--------------------|--|---|--|---|
| <i>first year</i> | <u>Unit 1</u> Story: Achilles Background: Classical culture in modern times | <u>Unit 2</u> Story: Orpheus Background: Greek gods | <u>Unit 3</u> Story: Midas Background: Mosaics, curse tablets | <u>Unit 4</u> Story: Boudica Background: Games, Roman army |
| <i>second year</i> | <u>Unit 5</u> Story: Town Mouse & Country Mouse Background: Roman food | <u>Unit 6</u> Story: Hercules Background: Greek numbers, dinosaur compounds, The Olympics | <u>Unit 7</u> Story: Trojan Horse Background: Scientific classification | <u>Unit 8</u> Story: Hannibal Background: Roman millefiore |
| <i>third year</i> | <u>Unit 9</u> Story: Echo & Narcissus Background: Aristotle & the Golden Mean, constellation myths | <u>Unit 10</u> Story: Romulus & Remus Background: Greek writing | <u>Unit 11</u> Story: Proserpina Background: Pythagoras' & triangles, reasons for myth | <u>Unit 12</u> Story: Cleopatra Background: Inscriptions |
| <i>fourth year</i> | <u>Unit 13</u> Story: Greek theatre Background: Music | <u>Unit 14</u> Story: Best & worst Roman leaders Background: Democracy, Plato | <u>Unit 15</u> Story: The Odyssey | <u>Unit 16</u> Story: Hypatia, Caesar, Pygmalion, Geese of Rome Background: influences on science, law, medicine, Shakespeare |

iv. Primary to secondary transfer & language skills co-ordination

The transfer from Primary to Secondary represents an often-missed opportunity in establishing the success of a student as a language learner. As noted in Ofsted's 2021 paper:

“Crucially, the lack of effective transition in languages from primary to secondary school means that many pupils across England ‘start again’ in Year 7. This can have a negative impact on their motivation and perspective of the subject. Some studies show that learners find it important to feel that they are making good progress, specifically in relation to transition.”

Learning Latin as a KS2 language puts students in a strong position to start KS3 as competent and confident language learners. The *Maximum Classics* courses:

- introduce the notion of different linguistic methods for conveying meaning
- explore the paradigm of inflected language
- use vocabulary that is at the foundation of romance languages such as French, Spanish and Italian
- encourage the learning, retention and manipulation of vocabulary
- explore links and relationships between languages
- introduce grammatical concepts such as the infinitive, impersonal verbs and personal endings
- situate language learning within a distinct and different culture

All of these are skills that will stand students in good stead for whichever language they learn at secondary level (and beyond).

The final unit of *Maximum Classics* is also designed to cover aspects of various KS3 subjects, to help students get a ‘head start’ across the curriculum.

5. Pupil assessment & progression assurance

i. KS2 attainment targets and assessment: statements of intent

According to guidance in the Ofsted Inspection Handbook (2019), teachers should:

“...use assessment to check pupils’ understanding in order to inform teaching, and to help pupils embed and use knowledge fluently and develop their understanding, and not simply memorise disconnected facts... .. assessment is too often carried out in a way that creates unnecessary burdens for staff and pupils. It is therefore important that leaders and teachers understand its limitations and avoid misuse and overuse.”

There is currently no government-issued documentation that describes specific levels of attainment at KS2 for any language, ancient or modern. The clearest available touchstones are the guidelines set out in the National Curriculum for Primary³. Therefore, the purpose of assessment should be to:

- ensure and evidence longitudinal progression against the chosen KS2 programme of study
- track progression of both cohorts and individual students
- identify lack of progression in order to trigger catch-up strategies

ii. Work evidence & pupil assessments: implementation and purpose

Progression in the learning of Latin can be evidenced in two main ways:

Collection of written work in a book/folder

The issuing of a Latin book or folder to each pupil gives an opportunity for students to reflect on their work and take pride in their progress. A book or folder also allows systematic recording of vocabulary, useful not only for encouraging word retention, but also useful for looking up words that have been forgotten. Books/folders also afford the opportunity for teacher to comment on written work. Books/folders can accompany the children through KS2, giving continuity in learning between academic years.

Regular summative testing

Maximum Classics offers summative assessments with a pupil test at the end of each unit, testing comprehension and recall of key grammar, vocabulary and skills from the unit in question.

Summative testing allows not only for the evidencing of progression, but also for identifying when progression is not being made, either at a class or individual level. For example, a class teacher could implement a minimum score, which, if not attained, would trigger the repetition or reinforcement of learning.

6. Subject delivery monitoring

The school's Latin language lead has responsibility for the implementation of the schemes, the quality of teaching, and levels of pupil progress and achievement. Monitoring the quality of delivery and outcomes can comprise lesson observation as well as oversight of planning and pupil output.

With a bird's-eye view across the subject, the languages lead is also well-placed to identify any CPD needs.

i. Learning walks/observations

A template for the framing of a learning walk or a lesson observation can be found in Appendix 3.

ii. Staff feedback

Staff feedback can be formal or informal and can cover aspects such as:

- how long is spent on teaching languages on average per week
- which resources are most useful
- what activities/approaches work well to engage pupils in Latin
- sharing teaching experiences with other teachers
- how Latin is having a cross-curricular impact
- engagement with cultural learning as well as language
- any further resources or training that would be useful

iii. Pupil feedback

Pupil voice, either through written feedback or interview, can also provide useful feedback on Latin language teaching. Useful questions could include:

- What do you enjoy most about learning Latin?
- What type of activities help you learn best?
- How do you think Latin helps you learn in other subject areas?
- What do you think you need to learn next?

iv. Inclusion

The Schools Inspection Handbook (2019) requires that for a grading of Outstanding:

“Pupils consistently achieve highly, particularly the most disadvantaged. Pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well.”

Historically, Latin has been saddled with the negative perceptions, that it is for higher-ability pupils, or privileged students only. The approach taken by *Maximum Classics* aims to be inclusive of all students.

SEN students

Just as in all other areas of the curriculum, for the delivery of Latin, teachers need to anticipate barriers to participation for pupils with particular SEN. Planning will minimise those barriers so that all pupils can fully take part and learn. When assessing pupils with SEN, again, planning is crucial and an altered or alternative method of assessment may be appropriate.

EAL students

Although sometimes less fluent in English, EAL students can often prove very able students of Latin, especially if their first language is a Romance one. The systematic teaching of Latin grammar and its focus on links to English vocabulary provide a clear framework for EAL students not only to learn Latin but also to enrich their understanding of the English language.

More able students

Teaching Latin as a KS2 language lends itself to the stretching of more able students. Although both *Maximum Classics* focuses on the translation of Latin into English, there are ample opportunities to extend the learning of more able students by challenging them to synthesise Latin sentences. In addition, worksheets for both courses often feature extension activities. Maximum Classics trainers address issues of differentiation throughout the CPD delivered to schools.

v. Ofsted deep-dives

As cited in the Ofsted Inspection Handbook (2019), for an Outstanding judgement in teaching:

“...the school’s curriculum intent and implementation are embedded securely and consistently across the school. It is evident from what teachers do that they have a firm and common understanding of the school’s curriculum intent and what it means for their practice. Across all parts of the school, series of lessons contribute well to delivering the curriculum intent. The work given to pupils, over time and across the school, consistently matches the aims of the curriculum. It is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment. Pupils’ work across the curriculum is consistently of a high quality.”

Progress is defined in the Ofsted Inspection Handbook (2019) as, “...the progress that pupils are making in terms of knowing more, remembering more and being able to do more.” Evidence for assessing KS2 language provision will come from a variety of sources”

“Evidence of impact should be drawn together from a combination of inspection activities. None of these on their own is sufficient to make an assessment of the impact.”

The handbook also notes that:

“...inspectors will not look at non-statutory internal progress... That does not mean that schools cannot use data if they consider it appropriate. Inspectors will, however, put more focus on the curriculum and less on schools’ generation, analysis and interpretation of data.”

7. Professional development and support

“Teachers have expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach. If they do not, they are supported to address gaps in their knowledge so that pupils are not disadvantaged by ineffective teaching... Some teachers will feel more confident than others in teaching languages. It is important that all training needs are catered for, from the beginner to the confident... from the experienced teacher to the newly qualified.”

(OFSTED Handbook (2019))

As a Classics For All grantee, a school will receive a package of both training and support. Although training will be scheduled, support can be provided at any point to address questions of existing or future provision of Latin and classics teaching. Training is co-ordinated centrally by head office, but ongoing support is provided by a school’s local CfA co-ordinator. Details of CfA’s local networks can be found at <https://classicsforall.org.uk/what-we-do/our-networks>.

There are increasingly more primary schools around the country teaching Latin at KS2 and networking with other schools can provide valuable opportunities to share learning. Classics For All’s regional hubs organise regular online and face-to-face teach-meets and all grant recipients are automatically included in invitations to local network events. CfA regional hubs also publish regular newsletters to keep schools up to date with news, events, CPD and various other opportunities for teachers and students.

Appendix: Learning walk matrix

| IMPLEMENTATION | | Y3 | Y4 | Y5 | Y6 |
|---------------------|---------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| key lesson features | clear LO | | | | |
| | recapping | | | | |
| | links to English | | | | |
| | clear input | | | | |
| | written work | | | | |
| | plenary | | | | |
| | modes of collab | | | | |
| | (cultural capital) | | | | |
| | (vocab) | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| ambient | displays | | | | |
| | reference aids (vocab/gr) | | | | |
| | TA support | | | | |
| | | | | | |

| DIFFERENTIATION, INCLUSION & PARTICIPATION | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | evidence of diff'n | | | | |
| | student ownership | | | | |
| | whole class inclusion | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| RECORDS & EVIDENCE | | | | | |
| | books/folders | | | | |
| | planning | | | | |
| | progress tests (& plans) | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| PUPIL VOICE | | | | | |
| | favourite thing | | | | |
| | what could be better | | | | |
| | one thing you've learned | | | | |
| | show book | | | | |
| | learn next? | | | | |
| | how learn vocab | | | | |
| | home learning | | | | |
| EXCELLENCE | | | | | |

Useful links

National Curriculum for Primary in England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum>

Schools Inspections Handbook (2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif>

Languages in outstanding primary schools (4 May 2021):
<https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2021/05/04/languages-in-outstanding-primary-schools/>

Including pupils with SEN and/or disabilities in primary modern foreign languages
(Training & Development Agency for Schools, 2009):
<https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/13800/1/modernforeignlanguagesmfl.pdf>

Classics For All: <https://classicsforall.org.uk>

Maximum Classics: <https://maximumclassics.com/>