**French Department**  
Key Stage 3

“The limits of my language are the limits of my world.”  
*Ludwig Wittgenstein*

Nowadays, speaking more than one or two languages is a crucial asset to anyone who wants to fully take advantage of our world, full of rich and diverse cultures. If we consider how much we learn and understand from them, the benefits are immediately clear.

There are so many languages to explore and French is one of them. At Greengates, our mission is to give our students the best experience of the language and culture by developing learning in and outside the classroom.

**Aims:**

The department aims:

a) to establish a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that will prepare the students efficiently to the Cambridge IGCSE and IB diplomas;

b) to address the learning needs of every student;

c) to develop the ability to understand and use French effectively for the purposes of practical communication;

d) to develop the ability to use and understand French both imaginatively and creatively;

e) to develop an understanding of grammar;

f) to develop an awareness of the nature of language and language learning;

g) to offer insights into the culture and civilisation of the French speaking countries and communities;

h) to encourage positive attitudes to foreign language learning and to speakers of foreign languages and a positive approach to other cultures and civilisations;

i) to develop students’ understanding of themselves and their own culture;

j) to provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation;

k) to form a sound base of skills, language and attitude required for further study, work and leisure;

l) to promote skills which have a wider application such as information technology and learning skills (e.g. analysis, memorising, drawing inferences).
Course Content / Assessment

Given that vocabulary is the very basis of language learning, all courses promote the acquisition of appropriate vocabulary. Reasonable amounts to learn are regularly given to students, usually introduced orally through teacher’s pronunciation and whole class repetition games. Oral and written reinforcement subsequently occurs.

Dialogue is promoted, thereby inculcating sentence patterns rather than isolated words. These phrases and sentences can be readily adapted to new situations. When grading such work in the written form, spelling needs to be accurate.

Comprehension (reading and listening) is promoted at all levels in the French department, testing being carried out in a variety of ways. Not all require complete sentences but the extraction of the precise piece of information asked. The demonstration of comprehension rather than accuracy per se is the objective of this particular exercise.

Oral work represents an important part of class activities in Forms 1 and 2 (and still a considerable amount in the upper forms). It is seen as the key to success as mastery of the spoken language leads to mastery of the written. English is rarely used in explaining the exercises. As students become more adept at speaking, attention is paid to the various registers of the language (i.e. informal / formal).

Written work, regularly set at all levels, should be accurate in terms of grammar and spelling to earn top grades. It should be neat, organised and generally well-structured.

Grading:

The French grade on the report is composed as follows:

1) Homework, presentation, project: 35%
2) Work in class, participation: 30%
3) Test/Exam: 35%

The course uses the highly effective Explo series. It adopts a communicative and active approach to the learning of the foreign language. In addition to fully developing the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, Explo also helps students develop the following: language learning skills and language awareness; cultural awareness; the ability to learn independently; and the ability to work with others.

All students are given a copy of the Course Book.

Homework is given once a week following the school homework timetable, typically including both learning and written assignments. Revision and assessment are integral parts of the course. Explo incorporates grammar activities and the French department encourages learners to develop their reading skills through reading books. The students’ progress is monitored through the end of unit tests and the end of year exam in June that assesses the four skills and the main grammar points learnt during the year.