What are Modern Foreign Languages? ?

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) at Hasmonean High School for Girls provide students with the opportunity to develop the ability to communicate confidently in another language while gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of different cultures, societies and perspectives.

Learning a language is more than acquiring vocabulary and grammar; it is a gateway to the wider world. As highlighted by the Department for Education, *"Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures."* Through the study of Spanish and Modern Hebrew, students develop linguistic skills alongside creativity, resilience, confidence and critical thinking.

Students learn how to communicate effectively in real-life situations, express their own ideas and opinions, and understand authentic spoken and written materials. They explore the traditions, history, values and contemporary issues of French-speaking, Spanish-speaking and Hebrew-speaking communities, developing cultural awareness and global understanding.

Languages provide students with valuable skills for future study, employment and life beyond school. They are highly regarded by universities and employers and open opportunities in fields such as international business, diplomacy, journalism, education, travel and tourism, translation, finance, public relations and many more.

Why do we teach Modern Foreign Languages at Hasmonean?

At Hasmonean, we believe that language learning develops both academic excellence and essential life skills. Studying another language enables students to communicate with people from different backgrounds, understand different viewpoints and become more confident global citizens.

We teach MFL because:

- **Languages open doors to the world** - students gain access to other cultures, communities, literature, films and traditions.
- **Languages develop communication skills** - students learn to express themselves clearly, adapt their communication and listen actively.
- **Languages strengthen cognitive skills** - learning another language develops memory, problem-solving, creativity and analytical thinking.
- **Languages build confidence and resilience** - students learn to take risks, make mistakes and improve through practice.
- **Languages support future opportunities** - language skills are valued by universities and employers and can enhance career prospects.

Our curriculum aims to create lifelong language learners who appreciate the importance of communication and cultural understanding in an increasingly interconnected world.

How do we teach Modern Foreign Languages at Key Stage 3?

At Key Stage 3, students study **French, Spanish or Modern Hebrew**, developing the foundations needed for further language study.

Students develop the four key language skills:

- **Listening** – understanding spoken language from a range of contexts and developing confidence with authentic speech.
- **Speaking** – communicating ideas, opinions and experiences with increasing accuracy and fluency.
- **Reading** – understanding written texts and developing strategies to interpret meaning.
- **Writing** – producing accurate and increasingly complex written responses.

The curriculum is designed to build students' confidence and gradually increase linguistic challenge. Students learn how to:

- introduce themselves and others;
- describe family, friends, hobbies and daily life;
- discuss school, interests and future plans;
- express opinions and justify ideas;
- explore cultural traditions and celebrations;
- manipulate grammatical structures to communicate their own thoughts.

Students studying **Spanish** follow the **Claro course (Oxford University Press)**, developing vocabulary, pronunciation and grammatical understanding while exploring the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries.

Students studying **Modern Hebrew** are assessed at the start of Year 7 to identify their starting point and ensure appropriate support. They develop reading, writing, listening and speaking skills using **Yesh V'Yesh resources (Matach Israel)** and additional online materials. Students explore Israeli culture, society and heritage alongside developing linguistic accuracy.

Students studying **French** follow the **Dynamo course (Pearson)**, developing communication skills through engaging topics including personal identity, school, leisure, food, environment and future aspirations.

Assessment takes place regularly across all four skills through:

- listening assessments;
- reading comprehension;
- speaking activities;
- extended writing tasks;
- vocabulary and grammar quizzes;
- creative projects and presentations.

Students have access to online platforms to support independent learning and homework, allowing them to practise vocabulary, grammar, listening and reading beyond the classroom.

How do we teach Modern Foreign Languages at Key Stage 4? (include details of the exam board)

At Key Stage 4, students can continue their chosen language through **GCSE French, GCSE Spanish or GCSE Modern Hebrew**.

The GCSE courses are designed to develop students' ability to communicate spontaneously and confidently in a range of real-life contexts. Students build on their Key Stage 3 knowledge and develop greater independence, accuracy and complexity.

Students study three broad GCSE themes:

1. Identity and Culture

Students explore topics such as:

- relationships and family;
- personal identity;
- hobbies and interests;
- technology;
- traditions and celebrations.

2. Local, National and Global Areas of Interest

Students explore:

- local communities;
- travel and tourism;
- environmental issues;
- cultural diversity;
- global challenges.

3. Current and Future Study and Employment

Students discuss:

- education;
- careers;
- ambitions;
- future plans;
- skills and opportunities.

Students develop sophisticated language skills through:

- extended speaking responses;
- authentic listening and reading materials;
- translation skills;
- essay-style writing;
- spontaneous communication.

Exam Boards:

GCSE French and GCSE Spanish

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

Students are assessed through four externally examined papers:

- **Paper 1: Listening**
- **Paper 2: Speaking**
- **Paper 3: Reading**
- **Paper 4: Writing**

GCSE Modern Hebrew

Exam Board: AQA

Students develop their knowledge of Hebrew-speaking society alongside linguistic skills, studying themes including:

- Israeli culture and diversity;
- technology and future plans;
- society and traditions;
- contemporary issues.

Students are assessed through:

- listening;
- speaking;
- reading;
- writing;
- translation.

Regular assessment, feedback and targeted intervention ensure students understand how to improve and make progress towards their individual goals.

How do we teach Modern Foreign Languages at Key Stage 5? (include details of the exam board)

At Key Stage 5, students can continue their language studies through **A Level Spanish or A Level Modern Hebrew**.

A-level languages allow students to develop advanced linguistic skills while exploring complex cultural, social, historical and political issues.

A Level Spanish

Exam Board: AQA (7692)

Students study four key themes:

Aspects of Hispanic Society

- modern and traditional values;
- cyberspace;

- equality of the sexes.

Multiculturalism in Hispanic Society

- immigration;
- racism;
- integration.

Artistic Culture in the Hispanic World

- modern-day idols;
- regional identity;
- cultural heritage.

Aspects of Political Life in the Hispanic World

- youth and citizenship;
- monarchies, republics and dictatorships;
- popular movements.

Students also study:

- one film;
- one literary text;
- an Independent Research Project based on an area of personal interest linked to the Hispanic world.

Assessment:

- **Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation**
- **Paper 2: Writing on a film and literary text**
- **Paper 3: Speaking examination including Independent Research Project**

A Level Modern Hebrew

Exam Board: AQA (7687)

Students develop advanced Hebrew language skills while exploring Israeli society, history and culture.

Students study topics including:

- Israeli communities and diversity;
- Jewish and Israeli history;
- Israeli leaders;
- technology and social change;
- equality and social issues;
- Israeli politics;

- literature and film.

Students complete an Independent Research Project exploring a topic connected to Hebrew-speaking society.

Assessment:

- **Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Writing (including translation)**
- **Paper 2: Writing on literature and film**
- **Paper 3: Speaking, including discussion of themes and Independent Research Project**

Our Impact

Through studying Modern Foreign Languages at Hasmonean, students develop:

- confidence in communication;
- cultural understanding and respect;
- independence as learners;
- resilience and problem-solving skills;
- the ability to analyse and evaluate ideas;
- preparation for further study and employment.

Our aim is to inspire students not only to achieve highly in examinations, but to become enthusiastic and confident users of languages who understand their value in the wider world.