



Knowledge and skills: Introduction

At Polehampton, we first considered the concept of knowing more, doing more and remembering more. Therefore, from our research, we have a shared and consistent understanding of different types of knowledge. Each subject will have a different ratio of distribution for these types of knowledge, and the types of knowledge can (and most often do) intersect.

1. Knowledge refers to the body of facts, information, understanding, principles and concepts etc. of a subject. In other words, this could be referred to as the main component knowledge that pupils might learn (e.g. vocabulary and phrases, fundamental rules of grammar and cultural knowledge), as well as the understanding that pupils may develop about how they learn a language (aka disciplinary knowledge). Finally, we may also consider how a language continues to be revised and developed. Pupils need to know information in some form in every subject, even in practical subjects, because there will be an element of theory behind the skill that can be shown/displayed.

2. Skills refers to the techniques required to complete a procedure or task. It is the 'know how' of the processes required in a subject (e.g. being able to pronounce phonetic sounds in French accurately). Skills are often incremental and require regular practice. It is about being able to know how to actually demonstrate that skill or procedure. Teaching focuses on functional communication, **listening and speaking** (engaging in conversations, responding to spoken language, and developing pronunciation and fluency), as well as **reading and writing** (recognising words and phrases in context, forming simple sentences, and developing writing skills).



Polehampton's Infographic on Knowledge and Skills

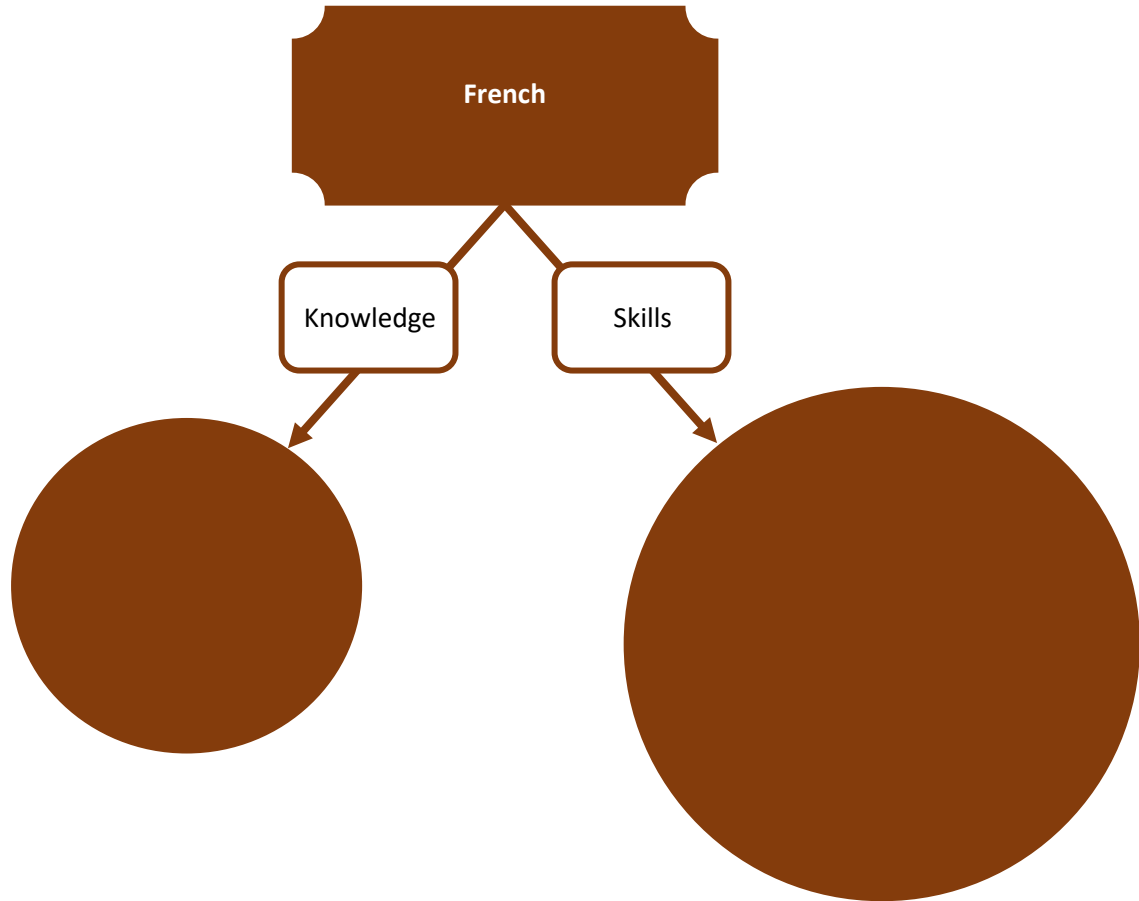
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Knowledge distribution

We recognise that different subjects have different weightings of knowledge and skills. The infographic below highlights what we consider to be the ratio of each form of knowledge within this subject:



Our vision

French at Polehampton provides pupils with strong foundations for an enjoyment of language learning. With a focus on practical communication, our approach places a strong emphasis on speaking and listening, while reading, writing, and grammar are introduced progressively and reinforced through regular retrieval practice to support understanding and long-term retention.

We have selected French as our Languages subject because it is the language most frequently taught at our feeder secondary schools.

We aim to instil a love of language learning and develop pupils' confidence to communicate in French for practical purposes, both in spoken and written forms. Learning French also strengthens pupils' understanding of the English language, supports the development of transferable linguistic skills, and provides a foundation for learning additional languages in the future. By broadening their cultural awareness and communication abilities, we equip pupils with valuable skills that can enhance future study and open opportunities to engage with the wider world.

Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1, we lay strong foundations for language learning, preparing

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pupils for French in KS2. A language-rich environment fosters listening and speaking skills through storytelling, songs and role-play, helping children distinguish sounds and develop verbal confidence. Phonics teaching enhances sound discrimination, supporting accurate pronunciation in French.

Through structured conversations, pupils expand their vocabulary and understanding of sentence structure, building early grammatical awareness. Cultural exposure through stories, songs and celebrations nurtures curiosity about other languages.

Interactive and play-based learning encourages risk-taking in speech, developing a positive attitude towards language learning. These essential skills in communication, phonics, vocabulary, and cultural awareness ensure that by KS2, pupils are ready to embrace French with confidence, enthusiasm and the ability to make meaningful language connections.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 (KS2), pupils have regular lessons which develop the core skills required to speak, read and write French. In addition, children are given exposure to French-speaking cultures, traditions and customs to provide context and motivation for language learning. This includes French songs, exploring French festivals and learning a little of the geography of the country, e.g. its major cities and landmarks.

The curriculum

At Polehampton, we follow the National Curriculum for all our subjects. However, we have chosen Kapow to match our ambitions for the subject. To ensure the National Curriculum is covered effectively, there is an edited version of the National Curriculum which has notes to highlight where in our Milestones a statement or section is covered within our strategic documents and planning.

Schemes of work

We aim to provide pupils with a firm foundation of language learning. In French, we use a scheme called Kapow to support the subject in Years 3 to 6. However, we have chosen units carefully to match our ambitions for the subject. We have also reviewed the Kapow progression of knowledge and skills documents to ensure that this strategic planning is appropriate for our school community and links with our curriculum vision (and the National Curriculum).

We have chosen to use the condensed curriculum, focussing on the essential skills and knowledge of the subject, taught in 3 units across the year with a special day dedicated to the teaching and learning of a further topic in the summer term.

Units are taught using blocking, with one covered every term (usually, one unit takes approximately 1 half term, but this is flexible). This allows time to go into depth in a unit, but having one unit per term ensures the time between units does not adversely affect the ability to build on prior skills and knowledge.

Concepts

Each subject has concepts which run through every unit and year group. These concepts allow consistency of focus and progression within each concept from unit to unit and year to year. Our key concepts are as follows:

Phonics	Vocabulary	Grammar	Language Comprehension (reading & listening)	Language Production (speaking & writing)
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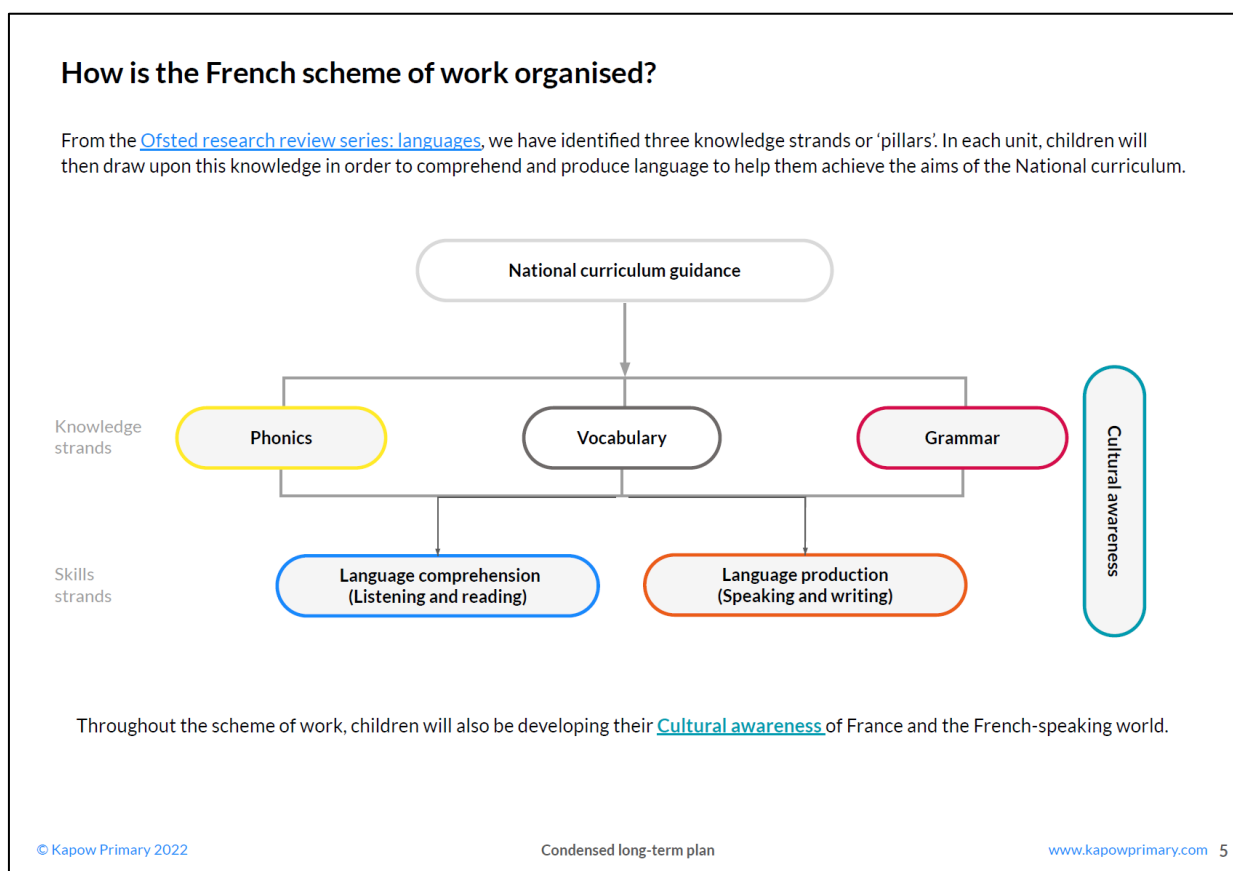
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Within Kapow, there are 3 knowledge strands (phonics, vocabulary and grammar) which are delivered through two skills strands: language comprehension (listening and reading) and language production (speaking and writing). Through the accrual of knowledge and the development of skills, our curriculum aims to support children to do the following:

- Understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources.
- Discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in the language studied.
- 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 pronunciation and intonation.
- Write at varying lengths, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures.



Taken from Kapow's LTP document

The Kapow scheme focuses on the three building blocks of a language system: phonics, vocabulary and grammar and the ideal sequence to teach them to ensure gradual progression and an understanding of the interplay between these elements. The Ofsted research review series: languages refers to these elements as the '3 pillars of progression':

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Our knowledge strands - **Phonics**, **Vocabulary** and **Grammar**

The Kapow Primary French scheme aims to provide pupils with a firm foundation of language learning. For this reason, we have planned when to teach the three building blocks of a language system: phonics, vocabulary and grammar and the ideal sequence to teach them to ensure gradual progression and an understanding of the interplay between these elements. The Ofsted research review series: languages refers to these elements as the '3 pillars of progression':

Phonics	Vocabulary	Grammar
<p>A comprehensive French phonics programme has been embedded into the Kapow Primary French scheme ensuring the explicit teaching of critical phonemes focuses on both pronunciation and the sound-spelling link.</p> <p>Our 'Mouth mechanics' pupil videos, which native speakers present, support this learning by including an in-depth look at the shape of the mouth when creating each phoneme.</p>	<p>As the Ofsted research review recommended, the Kapow Primary French scheme systematically introduces the most commonly used words, especially simple and common verbs. It then provides opportunities for students to revisit previously-learned vocabulary in different contexts.</p> <p>This approach allows the children to commit these key words to their long-term memory. Many topic words are also introduced in order to provide a variety of meaningful contexts; however, less attention is given to memorizing these. Our lessons are designed to ensure that each time new vocabulary is introduced, the pupils have an opportunity to use it in language comprehension and production activities.</p>	<p>Developing grammatical understanding through a carefully planned progression of key structures is the bedrock of the Kapow Primary French scheme.</p> <p>Grammar is explicitly taught and systematically revisited to ensure that basic structures are committed to memory before more complex ones are introduced. Lessons are organized to allow opportunities to practise grammar structures across modalities (speaking, writing, reading and listening) and carefully scaffolded activities enable children to manipulate the words and grammar themselves and begin to use new language creatively.</p>

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Condensed long-term plan

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Taken from Kapow's LTP document

Language detective skills

We believe that 'language detective skills' are crucial to developing engaged and independent language learners who are able to grow their skills in the other five strands and transfer these skills to learn further languages.

It involves the following:

- Recognising learnt vocabulary when listening or reading
- Spotting cognates (words which have the same origin or are in some way similar) and near-cognates
- Using context and their own knowledge of the world to predict the meaning of unknown words
- Considering word order to anticipate the meaning of words.

Skills are developed in a progressive way so that by Year 6 pupils are able to use these strategies to confidently grapple with unknown spoken and written language and search for meaning. The development of these skills, also helps pupils improve their understanding of the English language and its grammar conventions.

Building on and revisiting learning

Our units rely on a 'spiral curriculum' model, which ensure we can revisit concepts and cumulatively build knowledge and skills.

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A spiral curriculum

The scheme of work has been designed as a spiral curriculum with the following key principles in mind:

- ✓ **Cyclical:** Pupils return to the key knowledge and skills again and again during their time in primary school.
- ✓ **Increasing depth:** Each time a skill is revisited it is covered with greater complexity.
- ✓ **Prior knowledge:** Prior knowledge is utilised so pupils can build upon previous foundations, rather than starting again.



Taken from Kapow's LTP document

How we plan our units

The Kapow scheme offers engaging, curriculum-aligned resources that foster a development of curiosity, skill development and critical thinking in pupils.

Prior to beginning a unit, class teachers will review all the documentation mentioned in this vision document as well as the lesson plans and online resources, in order to understand the direction of the units and lessons. It also ensures that teachers have time to address any subject knowledge gaps they have themselves, or seek support. As part of this professional development support, teachers use the teacher knowledge videos that are provided within the Kapow units to enrich and refine subject knowledge ahead of lessons.

Because of the comprehensive nature of the planning on Kapow, teachers are not expected to produce individual written plans for each lesson. However, teachers are expected to ensure that the teaching resources produced for the lesson are comprehensive and well-planned, as well as being adapted where necessary to suit the needs of the cohort.

This could take the form of the following:

- Using the pre-prepared presentations on Kapow (extra slides can be added to the deck if needed).
- If teachers prefer, they can create their own PowerPoint, ensuring the key information from the Kapow lesson is covered and add any additional slides they feel are necessary.

The most important aspect for us, as a school, is ensuring that teachers feel prepared to (and, therefore, deliver) high-quality lessons to pupils which support our vision of developing knowledge and skills over time. It also enables teachers to consider how these lessons will fit in to the wider picture of a child's learning journey.

Vocabulary development and knowledge organisers

Kapow's progression of knowledge and skills document outlines, within the 'vocabulary' strand (which is also one of our concepts), the vocabulary needed for each year group. Kapow's unit plans outline the key vocabulary for that lesson or unit.

A knowledge organiser, in line with our school's format, is shared with pupils from the beginning of the unit and referred to throughout lessons to help embed key concepts and vocabulary.

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Cross curricular links

It is important to understand how subjects can work with each other, so there are specific links to other subjects where relevant. However, it is important to note that this does not detract from the focus we have on teaching each unit as part of a discrete subject.

Milestones and assessment opportunities

Our milestone objectives and assessment opportunities ensure that there is clear progression and we know how to assess those types of knowledge and outcomes within a unit. Children's speaking and listening work will be assessed as well as work in books.

When assessing progress, we use a range of methods and opportunities:

Formative assessment

Teachers use AFL strategies on an ongoing basis so that misconceptions can be identified and addressed at the earliest point. It is used to assess pupils' knowledge. Pupils are regularly given the opportunity for self or peer assessment, which will then be used to inform planning, preparation, adaptations and address misconceptions within that lesson, or for the next lesson.

We use retrieval practice, knowledge organisers and other methods to ensure that pupils are prepared for their subject and focus on the right objectives during lessons. Subject-specific vocabulary is taught and we aim to deepen understanding through questioning.

Summative assessment: Milestones and assessment opportunities

Our milestone objectives and Kapow assessment opportunities ensure that there is clear progression and we know how to assess those types of knowledge and outcomes within a unit. These milestones are derived from the National Curriculum to ensure that staff know the key component knowledge and skills required for pupils to experience progress and success. These are mapped out for coverage and breadth in a separate document.

Measuring impact

We measure the effectiveness of our curriculum in the following ways:

- Pupil data tracking (Sonar and other internal tracking methods)
- Work scrutiny
- Monitoring of lessons and planning (including from SLT, governors and external validation, e.g. TKAT)
- Pupil conferencing.

When evaluating our curriculum, we also ask ourselves the following questions:

Do we provide a high-quality curriculum and inspires pupils?

- To what extent do our children show independence, resilience and high aspirations in the subject?
- To what extent does our curriculum provide new experiences and challenges?
- To what extent do the children engage with high quality resources?

Do we ensure pupils know more, do more and remember more?

- To what extent do children retain the knowledge learnt?
- To what extent does the curriculum build over time?
- To what extent do children make progress against milestones over time?

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Does our curriculum allow oracy development and the opportunity for pupils to collaborate?

- To what extent does our curriculum use/teach high quality language?
- To what extent does the curriculum provide opportunities to work collaboratively?
- To what extent does the curriculum support children with oracy skills?

Is our curriculum inclusive?

- How well is learning broken down, explained and scaffolded/adapted appropriately in the subject?
- How well are assessment forms used to inform planning in the subject?
- To what extent does the curriculum meet the needs of all learners including SEND/ EAL etc?

Do we help our pupils become better people in the wider world and prepare them for life in Modern Britain?

- To what extent does the curriculum allow children to take responsibility for their learning?
- To what extent does our curriculum allow for diversity?
- To what extent does the curriculum offer opportunities to present work in creative ways?
- To what extent does the curriculum offer opportunities to discuss content and/or questions and consider them in an open forum?
- To what extent does offer opportunities to utilise the skills of the wider community?

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