



The Billericay School
A specialist maths and computing school

Modern Foreign Languages

'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.'

Nelson Mandela

In the Billericay School Modern Languages Department we are passionate about the importance of learning languages. We know how vital language skills are for young people in today's competitive international job market, but we also believe that the insight into another culture and the deeper understanding of their own language that students achieve is immensely valuable. We aim to teach students not only to communicate confidently, but also to understand the underlying structures of language so that they develop transferable skills.

All students at the Billericay School study one or more languages at Key Stage 3 and almost all continue to study at least one language at Key Stage 4. The Modern Languages Department teaches French and German from Year 7 and Mandarin Chinese is offered from Year 9. Where students are able to speak another language already, we also aim to help them achieve the appropriate qualifications, and we support iGCSE English for students for whom English is their second language. We currently have students preparing examinations in Italian, Polish, Hebrew, Urdu and Dutch. Our GCSE results are excellent and we have a healthy take-up for all three languages at A Level and Chinese Pre-U.



Students on the German Exchange find their way around Europapark

Our friendly and experienced team of ten staff works in a dedicated suite of modern classrooms in D Block, all equipped with teacher computers, interactive whiteboards and sound systems, together with appropriate teaching software. All classrooms have full sets of textbooks, dictionaries and MWBs. There is a separate office space with a computer for each member of staff and the support of a part time administrator.

We have an extensive range of shared resources tailor-made to support our courses and our high quality IT provision means that both students and staff can access these from home.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Our aim is to encourage all our students to enjoy languages and to have fun while developing their skills, so the Modern Languages Department offers an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. There are lunchtime clubs and Sixth form revision and conversation groups. We also run various competitions and creative projects throughout the year, such as the German scrapbook project and caption competition, the French creative writing contest and the hotly contested Year 8 Spelling Bee. The Year 7 Fête de la Musique in the summer is a highlight of our calendar. Local primary school pupils attend the Fête to act as judges, while local secondary schools are invited to our annual French Café quiz. Our annual German exchange with the town of Reutlingen has now been running for over 40 years and we also offer regular exchanges and trips to France. We encourage students to develop confidence by participating in speaking competitions such as the regional 'Have Your Say' Competition and we put on plays in French in collaboration with the Drama department. For example, students from Year 7 to Year 13 cooperated to perform 'Les Choristes' in a hugely successful production which toured local primary schools. Recently we were also able to host a very successful visit by students and staff from one of our two partner schools in China, which tied in with our Chinese penfriend programme and with our Collaborative Classrooms project.

"Not only does learning a language open opportunities in the future, but it also teaches you more about your own language."

Year 11 Student at Billericay School

