



carmel
college

Inspiring minds.
Shaping futures.

MODERN LANGUAGES

COURSE GUIDE 2017
FRENCH | SPANISH

“One language sets you in a corridor for life.
Two languages opens every door along the way.”

FRANK SMITH

French

Spanish

Exam Board EDUQAS

What will the course involve?

At Carmel, languages are popular A Level choice appealing to a variety of students who wish to follow a career in languages or supplement their other A levels with a highly regarded and respected A Level subject.

Regardless of whether you will study French or Spanish (or both), you will cover a variety of topics and will develop skills across the four disciplines of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing.

During the course, you will be exposed to written and spoken articles covering a wide spectrum of topics such as youth culture and trends, the importance of education, gender equality, the world of work and traditions and lifestyles of the countries where your language of study is spoken.

For both languages, you will, with the help of your tutor, study a text and a film which you will analyse as part of a written exam. In addition, you will have the opportunity to select a topic, linked to a country/culture of the language you are studying and complete a short research project which you will discuss during the speaking exam. Guidance on suitable topics and on how to go about this task will of course be provided by tutors.

There is a large emphasis on understanding and communication in your chosen language and skills development forms an integral part of the course. Your tutors will offer regular support sessions but will also help and encourage you to develop independent study skills such as reading texts, using specific websites and accessing resources in our language lab to enable you to develop your skills and improve across all four areas.

Throughout the course, you will complete internal assessments to assess your progress in the language including practice speaking assessments as well as essays and translations. The external examinations will take place at the end of the 2 year course.

What qualities do I need to be a good A Level language student?

All students with a proven ability in a language can access the A Level course in French or Spanish and we find that our students work hard to achieve good grades. To enjoy and achieve in your chosen language, you should:

- Have a sound basic knowledge of the language you wish to study
- Feel happy about speaking in the language of study and have the desire to improve your oral communication skills
- Have a desire to learn more about the culture of the country
- Be positive about learning new vocabulary and grammar (essential for translating!)
- Enjoy working in small groups but also have the ability to work independently
- Have a desire to become a more confident linguist
- Want to succeed!

Our students say...

The French course has given me a chance to study a different culture and has provided numerous opportunities for me to develop crucial skills.

These skills, including communication and listening are vital for my intended higher education path around Veterinary Science. I find the weekly French conversation classes very useful as students can learn to manipulate the language under the guidance of a native French speaker.

As part of the French course, I went on the French Exchange to La Roche which significantly helped with the standard of my French and my confidence overall. Learning at Carmel is not just restricted to timetabled lessons; regular tutorials are always available when you need them and tutors often make use of online resources, in particular Carmel Connect where material is often posted for us to test our understanding and push our knowledge to a higher level.



Matthew Foxcroft

St Edmund Arrowsmith, Whiston

Studying:

French, Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Critical Thinking

French Exchange trip to La Roche Sur Yon



Start a 2nd language from scratch

Do I need to have studied a language to GCSE to start A Level?

In the majority of cases, yes – but it is possible to take up a new language from scratch, provided that you have proven ability in another language. Many students have done this in the past and have achieved top grades after just two years of study. This could give you wider choices for your university study / career. If you are interested, speak to any of the language tutors who will be happy to advise you.

	2015			2016		
	A*-B	A*-C	Overall	A*-B	A*-C	Overall
French	71%	82%	100%	71%	86%	100%
Spanish	80%	97%	100%	66%	97%	100%

How will I be assessed?

Homework is set and marked with a grade and targets for improvements given regularly. There is also a weekly verb test in the first term and weekly grammar and/or vocabulary tests. This will give a good indication about your progress.

What is the Modern Languages department like?

We are friendly and supportive! Our Modern Language department has a suite of rooms comprising of teaching bases equipped with interactive boards, multi-media projectors and wireless internet connection. We also have a wide range of language resources and a digital Language Laboratory. All our resources are designed to help you to develop your language skills in a varied and exciting way.

What support will I receive?

All foreign language students attend a weekly conversation class in their chosen language(s) in order to develop their speaking skills and boost oral confidence. These sessions, which are compulsory and conducted in small groups by native speakers, form an integral part of preparation for the oral examinations. Further support in grammar and in improving reading, writing and comprehension skills is given in weekly tutorials some of which require compulsory attendance. A 'fast track', more advanced tutorial session is offered every week for more able linguists. As exams approach, we try to organise regular twilight as well as some holiday revision sessions for all students.

// Student Voice 2016 //

"I get a lot of support and the department offers many tutorials. Each lesson is different and enables me to develop my language skills."

"Each lesson is different and varies allowing me to develop my skills both in oral and written work. I get as much support as I need and I never feel scared to ask questions or for help."

"I like that I have the opportunity to speak with a native speaker in my conversation lessons as it is really helpful with my accuracy and pronunciation. I really enjoy the course and learning about another culture, the teachers are really helpful and offer all the support I need in class and one-to-one tutorials."

"A range of activities are provided to cater for everybody's learning styles which ensures that everybody is engaged during their lessons – there is a great atmosphere."

"Even though I was nervous about conversation classes initially, I am glad that I was pushed out of my comfort zone as it has improved my confidence and given me a good opportunity to succeed in my speaking exam."

Our students say...

What I enjoy the most about studying at Carmel is the **grown-up atmosphere that greets you right from the start.**

It allows you to develop as a person, gaining valuable skills such as how to be a responsible, independent young adult. I enjoy studying French as it is a social subject and you get to know your class well through the constant discussions (in French). I took part in the Exchange trip which was an amazing experience and a great opportunity to gain confidence and prepare for the oral exam. The tutors are truly passionate and motivating; they are also very helpful and caring, offering lots of tutorials. Extra resources are available if you want to push yourself further which is strongly encouraged. Weekly conversation classes with a native French tutor are extremely valuable and vital in order to gain confidence in speaking and learning more about the culture.



Patrycja Dabrowa
St Augustine's

Studying:
French, Maths, Physics

French Exchange to La Roche Sur Yon



Our students say...

I love studying at Carmel as the friendly atmosphere in classes has helped me to get to know new people and expand my friendship groups.

My favourite thing about studying Spanish is the conversation classes which we have weekly in addition to our normal classes. These classes are in groups of 4 and this gives me a lot more confidence when speaking the language. I am looking forward to the Spanish trip to Avila which is going to be beneficial as it's just a few weeks before my oral exam. I will be staying with a Spanish family who speak very little English which will be good preparation for me. During our stay we will also be visiting places such as Madrid, Segovia, Salamanca and Muralla which will be a great experience. After Carmel I would like to go to university to study Sports Science however, I would love to continue learning Spanish to open up the possibility of living in Spain in the future.



James Campbell
Rainhill High School

Studying:
Spanish, Maths, BTEC Sport



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 @CarmelCollege

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What other activities will I get involved in?

Our annual French Exchange, with a college in the Vendée area, takes place in the second term and gives students the opportunity to improve linguistic skills and build confidence in addition to making life-long friends.

The Spanish Department has organised many cultural trips to Barcelona and recently Spanish students went to Avila, near Madrid staying with a family where they experienced the Spanish way of life. This was an invaluable opportunity for students to practise their language skills which we hope to repeat in 2017.

Other activities include: language related careers advice sessions with former students and liaison officers from local universities; and an annual taster day at the University of Manchester for all students interested in studying languages at degree level.



Frequently Asked Questions

Where does a modern languages qualification lead?

Students in recent years have gone to university, studying languages by themselves or combined with other subjects, such as business, management, law, administration, ICT, engineering, international marketing and journalism. The choice is endless!

Can I study more than one language?

Yes – several students study two languages but many study just one.

Does it matter if I have only studied French, German or Spanish for just one or two years?

Not at all! When you begin the course you will find that we review a lot of the work done at GCSE and build on it.

What happens if I feel I am 'weaker' in one of the skill areas such as speaking?

This is not a problem as during the first few weeks of the course you have an opportunity to plan with your tutor what you can do to improve all your skill areas.

Remember - if you feel that you are experiencing difficulties with any part of the course there is always plenty of help on hand to support you.

What are the entry requirements for these courses?

You will need **GCSE grade B** in your chosen language(s).

Meet the Tutors

Karen Baldwin
Head of MFL/ French Tutor

Margaret Houghton
Head of French

Roser Gargallo
Subject Leader Spanish

Dominique Dorcé
French Assistant

Sandra Gonzalez-Green
Spanish Assistant

More Information

Any member of the languages staff will be delighted to answer your questions either at the Open Events or at another time convenient to you.