



Washington Academy

Enriching Lives, Inspiring Ambitions

Dear Parent/Carer,

Curriculum change at Key Stage 3

As you will know, Washington Academy has the highest expectations for all its students. Our staff, and all the staff at Consilium Academies, work hard to ensure that our students achieve well and are ready for the next step in their learning journey. I am writing to inform you about a change to the curriculum offer in modern foreign languages (MFL) at Key Stage 3 that will take place after the Christmas holidays, and how we intend to support your child in moving forward.

Following a curriculum decision, we are no longer offering Spanish as a GCSE course; the MFL GCSE course moving forward will be French. We therefore are going to change the language taught to all classes at Key Stage 3 to French. This affects your child, who is currently learning Spanish as their MFL. The change will come into effect after the Christmas holidays.

Please know this decision has not been taken lightly, but it is one we believe will benefit our students in the long-term. The decision has been made to consider the language specialisms of our staff and the continuity of learning from the primary phase as our feeder primary schools deliver French. It has also been made as we align with the curriculum norms of the Consilium Academies Trust. French is delivered Trust-wide, and there is a strong collaborative network which is being used to share best practice and improve the quality of teaching for all of our students.

Many of the skills that your child has learned in Spanish so far will be transferable to their French lessons, including the use of sentence builders, identifying cognates, and knowledge of grammatical structures. Moreover, your child will quickly recognise how similar Spanish and French are, and this will help them pick up new vocabulary much more quickly. The head of our MFL department and senior leaders in the school have taken time and thought carefully about the design of a transition curriculum for students to aid the move from Spanish to French. We would please ask you to encourage your child to approach this with a positive mindset; they are not starting from the beginning again. They have a wealth of knowledge from Spanish lessons to apply to this new challenge, and the full support of staff in the MFL department.

As a school, we believe that language learning is essential in helping students to navigate difference and become tolerant citizens in a globalised world. We are fully committed to making this change as smooth as possible for your child, so they can benefit from this valuable opportunity in the curriculum.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Victoria Carter

Headteacher