



21st March 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian

Modern Foreign Languages in Year 8

I am writing to you to explain the choice your son must now make regarding his language studies in Year 8. When he returns in September, your son will continue with the Modern Foreign Language combination that he is currently studying, French/ German; German/Spanish or Spanish/French. However, if he wishes, he may choose to study Latin **or** Chinese instead of one of his current languages French, German or Spanish.

The details of both the Latin and Chinese courses are outlined overleaf, but please note the following additional information about Chinese based on our experience so far in offering Chinese from Year 8 to GCSE. Reading and writing Chinese characters require considerable motivation and boys who are not prepared to work independently honing their knowledge of Chinese characters are advised not to choose this subject. If, in our professional judgement, we do not feel that it is in your son's best interest to take up Chinese, we will advise your son that he should continue with his current language options and/or Latin.

If your son obtains a place on our Chinese course in Year 8 and then goes on to opt for Chinese at GCSE, this represents a commitment to sit his Chinese GCSE exam at the **end of Year 11** at school alongside his other GCSE subjects. If your son currently studies Chinese out of school and is planning to sit his Chinese GCSE early, he should NOT opt for Chinese at AGSB. **Due to the complexities/severe grading of the Chinese A Level course and examination, please note we do not currently offer Chinese at this level.**

We have explained this choice to your son in his MFL lessons and enclose a sheet with some information about each language, which may help him make his choice. It may also be useful for him to discuss his progress in languages with his current French/German/Spanish teacher.

Please would you discuss this with your son and circle his choice on the slip attached. Please sign and return the slip to your son's **Form Tutor** on the first day back after the Easter break on **Tuesday 23rd April 2018**. **If your choice includes Chinese or Latin, your son is requested to return his form directly to Reception as soon as possible as places on these courses are limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis.**

Once the choice is made, your son will continue with his chosen languages (French, German, Spanish, Chinese **or** Latin) until the end of Year 9, when he will then have the opportunity to continue to GCSE in these subjects. You will be aware that our school policy is that all boys must take at least one language to GCSE (French, German, Spanish, Chinese or Latin).

Linguists are highly regarded by all the professions, such as the law, medicine, accountancy, journalism, economics and programming. The most sought-after candidates for university and work will

be comfortable with large amounts of information and complex variables, who can think clearly and communicate under pressure. We are proud that the high standards we set, and the fantastic choice we offer, truly broaden our students' horizons.

Yours faithfully



Mrs H Meadowcroft
Assistant Head

CHINESE

China is an extremely important global economy and Mandarin Chinese is the fastest growing language being taught and learned in the world. As a Language College we are very excited to have the opportunity to offer Chinese within our KS3 and KS4 curriculum.

In Years 8 and 9 boys will gain a good working knowledge of Chinese in all four skills: listening, speaking (pronunciation – pinyin), Reading and Writing (including Chinese characters). In Year 8 topics covered will include greetings, home and family, food and drink, school life, time and date, jobs and professions, hobbies and travel and transport. Boys will also learn about Chinese culture, China being possibly the oldest culture in the world. At GCSE level the success rate has always been very high.

Due to the complexities/severe grading of the Chinese A Level course and examination, please note we do not currently offer Chinese at A level.

Mrs J Ding
Teacher of Chinese

FRENCH

More than 200 million people speak French on 5 continents. French is the ninth most spoken language in the world and it is the 'other' language of international relations. French is the official language of the UN, the European Union, UNESCO, NATO, the International Red Cross... and many other international groups.

The new Year 8 French course builds very successfully on what the pupils have learnt in Year 7. We will continue to develop all skill areas and study new topics and areas of grammar. Topics include Leisure, visiting Paris, where you live and talent and ambition.

The course we use is Studio 2 which has proven extremely popular with the pupils and also prepares them very well for Year 9, where pupils begin the 3 year GCSE course. Lessons are very interactive, providing lots of opportunities for learning about French culture, which pupils have the opportunity to experience first-hand in the summer term.

Pupils studying French have the opportunity to take part in the very popular Year 8 activities week trip to Paris, which is always an amazing experience. There are also numerous opportunities further up the school too such as the French exchange, work experience in France and workshops at University.

Mrs V Brennan
Head of French

GERMAN

Germany is one of the world's most important trading nations, and German is one of the main technological and scientific languages of the world. It also has many links with commerce, banking, travel and tourism, sport, entertainment and the arts. With the dominance of Germany in terms of politics and economics, being able to speak German is becoming increasingly important and will help to stand out from the crowd.

The course we use, 'Echo', gives pupils a strong grounding in language skills through familiar everyday topics and situations such as their family, home, leisure activities, school and holidays. By the time they come to choose their GCSE options they will have acquired the ability to understand and converse with native speakers, read German texts on a variety of subjects and write extended pieces independently. Throughout Years 8 and 9 students also take part in cultural projects where they learn about German culture in a fun and engaging manner.

Students taking German will have the opportunity to take part in the German Trip and German Exchange. We also offer opportunities to go to the Manchester University German Open Days and to compete in national German language competitions, such as the Oxford German Network writing competition. We have also forged strong links with the Goethe Institut and are establishing trips to the Institut in London.

Mrs R Chapman
Head of German

LATIN – YEARS 8 – 11

This is a four-year course up to the GCSE level. We follow Imperium, a recently developed course which aims to present students with a broader appreciation and knowledge of Roman culture and imperial history than traditional language-based courses. Alongside this we use the best elements of the older Cambridge Latin Course. The intentions are to bring pupils as quickly as possible to the reading of Latin literature in the original, but to present material in the wider context of Roman life and custom. This has several advantages in giving pupils the opportunity to study a culture which is European but has very alien elements – widespread slavery, the brutal amphitheatres, a highly developed political and social system which did not rely on high technology and heavy industry, and an empire which covered most of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Traces of the empire affect many aspects of our lives today (e.g. our legal system, the position of towns and routes of many roads). The opportunities for contrast with the modern world are obvious.

As well as the inherent importance of the subject in a broad curriculum, knowledge of Latin can improve the student's grasp of his own language, and of course, Latin is the ancestral tongue of the European 'Romance' languages (e.g. French, Italian and Spanish). At GCSE level the success rate has always been very high.

Mr P Ellis
Classics

SPANISH

As the third most widely spoken language with over 4 million native speakers worldwide, Spanish is a much sought after language and is becoming increasingly in demand on a global scale.

The course we use is 'Mira' for KS3; (Years 7 and 8) before commencing the GCSE course in Year 9, which lasts 3 years until the GCSE examination in Year 11. The students will have acquired language skills across the four language areas; (listening, reading, writing and speaking); and will be able to communicate quite a lot of information in Spanish. The topic areas under study include personal information, family life; home and town, leisure activities, work and education, healthy lifestyles, the environment, social and global issues and holidays. Spanish is a very popular choice for GCSE and the students have a good command of the Target Language at the end of the Year 11 course.

I am sure parents are aware of the growing importance of all Modern Languages, and the importance of having the opportunity to put into practice what has been studied in the classroom in both Spain and Latin America. Boys opting for Spanish will have the chance to take part in the Spanish Trip at the end of Year 8, and the Spanish Exchange to Barcelona in Years 10-13 inclusively. There are frequent trips to the University of Manchester offering taster days to AS and A2 students and cinema workshops at HOME cinema.

Miss L Mattison
Head of Spanish

PLEASE CHOOSE FROM OPTION A, B OR C. IF SELECTING A OR B, PLEASE CIRCLE WHICH MFL LANGUAGE YOUR SON WISHES TO CONTINUE.

Pupil name:
(PLEASE PRINT NAME)

Form

A) I would like my son to study Chinese and continue with **one** of the following:
FRENCH / GERMAN / SPANISH

B) I would like my son to study Latin and continue with **one** of the following:
FRENCH / GERMAN / SPANISH

C) I would like my son to continue with his current combination of languages: (please tick if applicable)

Parents signature:

Date: