Hurst

Language Choices Information

Years 7 and 8

Senior Prep School

Welcome

Dear Parents

The time has come for your sons and daughters to make decisions about which languages they wish to study at Hurst next academic year. Throughout their time in the Senior Prep School, pupils will study two languages from either Latin, French or Spanish.

Each of the courses are structured to act as a precursor to the GCSE course, providing the fundamental skills and competencies required to continue with languages into the Shell year in Senior School, where the GCSE course begins. In addition, courses are designed to ignite a love of learning for the respective language and culture; a skill that will serve many pupils in later life.

To work out the combination of classes within our wider timetable that will give pupils access to their preferred languages, we will ask you to provide your son's or daughter's preferred ranking, from first to third. While we are almost always successful in doing so, it may not always be possible to accommodate everyone's top two preferences. In that case, we will endeavour to find a solution that suits as many pupils as possible.

If, after you have submitted the ranking, your son or daughter changes their mind and wants to choose a different ranking, do let us know as soon as you can. While we may not be able to guarantee the change will work, we will do everything we can to attempt to make it possible.

I hope that this booklet will provide you with the key information you need to make the right choices, but if you have any further questions, do get in touch and I will be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Graham Moir
Deputy Head (Academic)
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Staff contacts

If you would like further information on any of the subject areas mentioned in this booklet then please get in touch with the relevant person from the list below.

Subject	Name	Email address
Latin	Miss Morton	tamsin.morton@hppc.co.uk
Modern Languages: French and Spanish	Mrs Boucke	lucy.boucke@hppc.co.uk

Latin
Years 7 and 8

What is Latin and why do we study it?

Latin, once spoken by the ancient Romans, shaped many modern languages and continues to influence everyday vocabulary. Studying Latin goes beyond language, covering Roman history, culture, and its impact on fields like architecture, politics, and science. It fosters critical thinking and attention to detail – skills valued by employers – and prepares pupils for careers in law, finance, medicine, politics and more.

Course Structure

Year 7

There is no need to have studied Latin before, since the Cambridge Latin Course begins with the basics of nouns, adjectives and verbs, before introducing more advanced grammar.

Over this year, we learn about Roman houses, food, baths, theatres, gladiators and even ghost stories. It ends with the devastating eruption of Mount Vesuvius that wiped out Pompeii, but also resulted in the city becoming one of the world's most valuable and well-preserved archaeological sites.

Year 8

While studying the Cambridge Latin Course Book 2, we will consolidate and expand your knowledge of Latin. In our story, we leave behind Pompeii for battles, kings and rebellions in Roman Britain. You will learn how cruel and challenging life could be in Britain in the first century AD. The story finally moves to Egypt where we explore its relationship with Rome, as well as Egyptian culture and religion.

Teaching approach

We use a range of teaching approaches to enrich pupils' learning and knowledge of Latin and the Roman world. We work hard to bring Latin and Roman culture to life in the classroom through a variety of real life and digital mediums.

Most of the translation is from Latin to English, but there are opportunities for pupils to practise writing in Latin if they would like to. We teach pupils to pronounce the Latin during lessons for fun, but there are no speaking or listening assessments. The balance between language and culture allows for an engaging, challenging and rewarding course.

Latin trip to Italy, 2023

Pompeii, Italy

Modern Foreign Languages: French and Spanish
Years 7 and 8

In the Senior Prep School Modern Foreign Languages department, we are passionate about fostering a love of language learning in our pupils. We believe that learning a second language is not only an opportunity to learn about, and build awareness of, cultural differences but also enhances access to future education and career opportunities.

Both curricula begin with a focus on phonetic awareness to build pupils' confidence. Fluency is essential for building successful language learners, for this reason, oral and written communication are at the heart of the Senior Prep School curriculum.

For each topic, the pupils are guided through three key stages of learning: introduction through aural modelling of the language, scaffolded practice and production. The learning environment is active; pupils often work in pairs or small groups to practise the language through a range of engaging games and activities. Pupils are supported with a range of resources both in class and online and they are encouraged to complete regular, independent practice. Key structures and language are regularly revisited through the different topics so that pupils build their fluency and can manipulate the language across the different topic areas.

Years 7 and 8 are where the preparation for GCSE begins and pupils learn to answer GCSE style questions and use specific language structures essential for GCSE success. By the end of Year 8 pupils will have learnt three tenses in each language – essential to achieve a grade 7 or higher at GCSE.

The academic curriculum is supported with a range of co-curricular activities such as cooking trips, visiting theatre companies performing in the target language and cinema visits to the BRI or Institut Français. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 also have the opportunity to take part in a national Spelling Bee.

Languages Poetry Competition

French

Year 7

- School subjects and opinions
- Opinions and free time activities
- Saying who is in my family and describing them, including comparisons
- Talking about family relationships
- Saying what others and I do in our free time
- Daily routine and school day
- Weekend plans

Year 8

- Town and local area (future tense)
- My house and what I do at home
- Weekend plans
- Media, film, TV and mobile phones
- Holidays past and present

Spanish

Year 7

- Introducing myself and my family and friends
- Saying who is in my family and describing/giving opinions on people and pets
- Saying what jobs people do (present tense verbs)
- Comparing people
- Food/drink and giving opinions

Year 8

- Food and mealtimes (past tense)
- Holidays past and present
- Free time activities and weather
- Daily routine and time
- Describing my current house/my old house. Clothes

Making French pancakes

Spanish trip to Grenada, 2024

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