



Mathematics & Computing College

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Ref: TJo/JM

2 May 2014

Dear Parents/Carers of Year 7 Students,

I am writing to inform you that we have made the decision to change our Modern Foreign Languages offer at Fulford School from French and German to French and Spanish. Those students currently in Year 7 will be the first part of this transition and will study Spanish instead of German from September 2014 onwards. Those students currently in Year 8 and above at the school will continue to study German, though the existing offer of Spanish as a GCSE option will remain for these students.

This curriculum change reflects a national shift in the MFL offer within schools and it is the result of careful consideration and discussion. A number of schools have chosen to abandon a dual language offer altogether during recent years; this is not a change that we have contemplated at Fulford School. It is designed to maintain a buoyant and sustainable MFL offer within the school and it coincides with the appointment of a new Curriculum Leader for MFL for September 2014.

There are several reasons that we consider this change to be appropriate. As you are probably aware, Spanish is far more widely spoken than German and it is the official language of more than 20 countries; it is also the first language of over 400 million people worldwide. There is a far greater correlation between French and Spanish and these similarities will undoubtedly be to the benefit of students' learning and language acquisition across the two subjects. Currently, a very small proportion of students opt to study both French and German at either GCSE or A Level. This change is designed to boost the number of dual linguists at the school as well as to improve take up and retention across each subject individually.

Spanish is the language taught at Key Stage 2 in one of our largest catchment primary schools and the continuity that this offers to 15-20% of our students reinforces the relevance of the decision. Examination performance nationally in Spanish at GCSE is also marginally better than in German.

There is already within school expertise in Spanish and our first GCSE cohort is currently in Year 11. Performance of these students, both in terms of coursework assessment and predicted grades, is excellent. The appointment of a Spanish specialist as Curriculum Leader for MFL, Mr Thomas-Peter, from Ripon Grammar School, offers an exciting opportunity for us to build upon these foundations.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours faithfully,

T. Johnson
Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum and Achievement)