

EUROPEAN SCHOOLS

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Syllabus in English as First Foreign Language  
Secondary School Years 1 - 3

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Approved by the Board of Governors  
at its meeting on 19 and 20 November 1985, in Brussels

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Pupils coming into the Secondary School are expected to have some previous experience in English, usually five years, so it is imperative to build on their existing knowledge. The emphasis during this early period is on the aural/oral skills. Reading and writing will, however, have been introduced in the third year. By the end of the Primary School the pupil should have attained a level of proficiency in English that will enable him, within his range of interest and experience, to communicate intelligibly and confidently in simple English.

The first three years in the Secondary School constitute a period of "observation" and it is, therefore, essential to maintain a flexibility in the materials used to cater for a wide range of ability, achievement and maturity.

Year 1                      Revision and consolidation

5 periods per week

Work in the first year consists of a comprehensive review of the basic structures and a consolidation, with a degree of formalization, of the grammatical concepts so far acquired.

The aims are:

1.     The further development of the aural/oral skills
  - (i) by systematic attention to pronunciation, stress and intonation,
  - (ii) in controlled dialogues and situations,
  - (iii) in extended use of creative language on topics related to the pupils' environment, experience and interests.
2. The progressive presentation of challenging material for the systematic training of reading and writing skills.
3. To acquire an understanding and knowledge of sentence structure and grammatical concepts in English so as to encourage an accurate use of the language.



Year 2                      Reinforcement and accumulation

4 periods per week

During the second year pupils may be expected to gain considerably in confidence, maturity and understanding so that more complex structures and concepts may be introduced.

The aims for Year 2 are essentially the same as those for Year 1, but a higher level of competence is required.

Year 3                      The turning point

In the third year pupils will, for the first time, be studying one of their compulsory subjects in English.

The aims are as for Years 1 and 2, with a further extension of the reading and writing skills. Texts and listening material should be chosen to illustrate appropriate use of language in different contexts and so stimulate the writing and oral production of more advanced composition which, nevertheless, should still be strictly controlled.

Course Content

1. On entering the Secondary School pupils should be familiar with at least the following:

The structure of a simple sentence  
Four types of sentences - statement, question, command and exclamation  
Affirmative and negative  
Noun, verb, adjective and adverb  
Personal and possessive adjectives and pronouns  
Prepositions of place and time  
Cardinal and ordinal numbers  
Number, singular and plural, countable and uncountable  
Comparative and superlative of adjectives  
Auxiliary verbs - be, have, do, can, must, may, will, shall  
The following tenses:  
Active: present simple and continuous  
Passive: present simple  
Active: past simple and continuous, present perfect  
Passive: past simple  
Active: future with "going to"  
Basic punctuation  
The use of the apostrophe  
Connectors - and, but, or, because, so, who, which, that, when, where, if etc...

For details of the everyday expressions, idioms and lexical fields covered teachers are referred to the primary syllabus.



2. By the end of Year 2 the following additional structures will have been covered:

All remaining tenses, active and passive  
All auxiliary verbs  
Three types of "if" sentences  
Reported speech  
The use of the gerund with verbs and prepositions in everyday expressions like "interested in", "keen on", "fond of", etc...

The structure of complex sentences with all essential connectors  
All further important uses of punctuation

Formalization

Pupils should also be conversant with the terminology used to describe the parts of speech, the names of tenses, the degrees of adjectives etc... and other grammatical aspects already covered in the Primary School.

3. The emphasis of the course in Year 3 will shift from the acquisition of grammatical and structural points to the use of language for specific purposes e.g.

- (i) obtaining and processing information
- (ii) expressing of reported and personal viewpoints and ideas
- (iii) recognition of the uses of appropriate language in selected contexts
- (iv) increasing competence in the oral and written manipulation of language so far acquired
- (v) extension of specialized vocabulary
- (vi) awareness of word formation, e.g. stem, prefix, suffix etc...
- (vii) use of stress and intonation to differentiate intention and meaning.