New Ofsted framework and NCELP [transcript]

**Title slide/Slide 1:**My name is Rachel Hawkes. I’m working with NCELP, which stands for National Centre for Excellence for Language Pedagogy. NCELP is a pilot project working from the recommendations for language teaching from the 2016 pedagogy review. The aim of the project is to exemplify those recommendations in practice, initially at KS3.

This presentation outlines the key evidence criteria from the new Ofsted framework and sets them alongside NCELP’s curriculum principles to show their alignment.

As we known, the new Ofsted framework emphasises the importance of **curriculum** to their judgements about the quality of education in schools. Within that, they’ve outlined the three dimensions of intent, implementation and impact.

Intent is all about the design, structure and sequencing of content in the curriculum. Implementation is how the curriculum is taught, and impact is the outcome, essentially that after teaching, students know more and are able to do more.

It would make sense to listen to this presentation and also then look at NCELP‘s pedagogy rationales, the CPD materials, Y7 SOW and accompanying resources, all of which are available on the [NCELP Resource Portal](https://resources.ncelp.org/?locale=en) at <https://resources.ncelp.org>

**Slide 2:**  
I’ve structured this presentation around four key questions that I am seeing and hearing a lot this year in the schools in my trust and others that I go into.

**Slide 3:**  
The first question speaks to Ofsted new framework’s questions about curriculum design:   
Is the subject content that’s been chosen the ***most useful***  
and has the learning being ***carefully planned*** and mapped out in such a way that   
the **end points** are clearly identified.

**Slide 4:   
So, question 1: What is the subject content that we teach in languages?**  
We teach three core strands of essential knowledge: phonics, which is the set of sound-symbol correspondences that represent the relationship between how the language sounds and how it is written.   
We teach vocabulary, a chosen set of words in the language, and we teach grammar – a set of features that are the essential building blocks needed to put language together to make meaningful sentences.

The metaphor of the braid indicates that the knowledge is stronger because of the interconnections between the strands. The fact that they are closely intertwined suggests that each strand is important and affects the other. The loose ends recognise that the language learning process is always unfinished, and the knowledge is vulnerable to decay, just as the braid is prone to unravelling.

**Slide 5:**

Question 2 requires curriculum designers to address the need for appropriate **sequencing.** The content must be organised to show **logical progression** and to evidence that learning is **carefully planned**.

**Slide 6:  
So question 2: why are we teaching the knowledge, the phonics, vocabulary and grammar, in this order?**The most important answer to this is frequency. Most frequent is the most likely to be the most useful. This applies equally to phonics, vocabulary and grammar.

There are other considerations too, of course, such as the age of the learners, the context of the classroom, the importance of including open-ended activities with an element of learner choice, and also the awarding body’s vocabulary list. But frequency is by far the most significant in curriculum sequencing.

**Slide 7:**Question 3 is about implementation and asks if there is sufficient explicit teaching,  
clear presentation of information, whether learners’ understanding is checked regularly enough, and also wants to check that teachers have sufficient expert knowledge to do these things.

**Slide 8:**  
So, question 3, how do we give detailed and specific evidence that the ***teaching is clear*** and ***learners understand***?

These are a few examples we can give from the NCELP curriculum. First, the target language used in class by teacher and students is carefully planned to build on previously taught language to ensure that learners understand and can use it themselves.

Second, where the words taught cannot be unambiguously presented with images or gestures, English-Target language translations are provided, to avoid any confusion.

When new information is presented, it is pared down to succinct wording, and supported with clear examples. Plentiful practice is given much more time than presentation.  
  
When grammar is introduced, contrasting pairs of features, for example 1st and 3rd person singular verb endings, are used first in listening and reading comprehension tasks to compel learners to focus on the difference in form and meaning between the two feature. This makes the grammar more salient and memorable.   
  
Feedback in the initial listening and reading activities is given item-by-item to support understanding.

**Slide 9:**  
Question 4 targets outcomes, and not just whether learners show evidence of sufficient knowledge, but whether they retain this knowledge, if it is in their long-term memory, and can be sufficiently easily retrieved as to be applied fluently to new questions. The ‘And how do you know?’ question speaks to assessment.

**Slide 10:  
So, question 4, do learners remember more, know more and can they do more?**Here it helps to have identified end points and specific interim steps that define clearly what students should know at any given point in the curriculum.

So, in terms of vocabulary, students are taught, on average, 10 words per week, which leads to a taught vocabulary of between 360 and 400 words per year, depending on the number of teaching weeks.

Vocabulary knowledge is systematically taught and revisited at least three times per year. In addition the knowledge is tested again at the end of the year.

This countable knowledge can be tested most appropriately through achievement tests in the three core strands: phonics, vocabulary and grammar.

**Slide 11:**It’s also important to know how your languages curriculum extends beyond the classroom, and contributes to personal development.

Language learning develops cognitive and cultural agility, broadening horizons and making the learner more likely to be curious and respectful towards other cultures and communities.

Knowledge of other languages is also the key to conscious understanding of one’s own language. If you only know one language you risk taking for granted its sounds, vocabulary, structures, and consequent ways of thinking.

The outcome of language learning is cultural literacy. This knowledge builds bridges not walls, bringing deeper understanding of other peoples, as important to personal everyday life as it is to international trade and politics in our 21st century world.

**Slide 12:**A few general considerations to summarise. The evidence that students are making progress is that they know more (i.e., more vocabulary, more grammar), can remember more of it over the longer term and con do more with it.  
Just because the phonics, vocabulary and grammar are listed on the SOW and taught doesn’t in itself mean that they are known. The evidence for knowledge lies in what students can demonstrate that they know.  
The deep dive methodology is central to the new framework and will take place in 4-6 subjects in secondary and 3-5 in primary schools.

**Slide 13:**At KS2 and 3 schools are expected to follow a broad curriculum. If KS3 has been shortened to two years, it’s still expected that students will follow a broad range of subjects in Years 7 to 9. **Slide 14:**There are also expectations about KS4 that affect languages. Irrespective of where schools are at the moment, it’s expected that they will be able to demonstrate their plans towards the government’s Ebacc ambition**.**

**Slide 15:**The Ofsted framework talks about building ‘knowledge and skills’, where knowledge is what you know and know how to do, and skill is the performance built on what you know. The NCELP pillars of language knowledge are phonics, vocabulary and grammar. Within the approach, skill starts as structured, supported understanding (in listening and reading activities) and meaningful production (in speaking and writing tasks), and gradually builds to freer production, in which learners recall and manipulate a wider range of language to communicate meaning.   
  
**Slide 16:**  
There are more detailed examples of alignment between the new framework criteria and the NCELP curriculum on this link. Alternatively just use the search bar on the home page of the resource portal.