

Department Title:

Mandarin

Department Vision:

The Mandarin department at Beths offers growing numbers of students a first-rate opportunity to gain a valuable set of language skills for the future. Chinese (we teach Mandarin) is offered in all year groups from 7-13, with an emphasis on maximising opportunities for cultural experiences, as well as high academic expectations in the core skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. As well as both native and non-native speaking teaching staff, students also benefit from highly-qualified visiting teachers from China each year. Our subject staff aim to nurture linguists with exceptional language skills, cultural knowledge and communicative ability.

Year 7:

In Year 7, some students may be selected (through a selection test) to enter the prestigious Mandarin Excellence Programme, a specialized DfE-supported intensive language training programme which will see them speaking conversational Mandarin by the end of the programme. This challenging programme involves four taught lessons per week and four hours of independent self-study in various forms. Students who are not selected may still study Mandarin by choosing the language as an option at the end of Year 7, joining our regular route to GCSE Mandarin.

Year 8:

The students will build their Chinese vocabulary and work hard to be able to write in characters. After completing topics of study (examples below) they will finish the year with revision, consolidation and project work. Topics include:

- Family and school life
- Hobbies and pets
- Food and likes/dislikes

Year 9:

The students will continue to build their Chinese vocabulary and will be expected to spend time both in lesson and at home carefully honing their skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Weekly vocabulary tests help students monitor their own progress in the language and it is important to revise regularly for these tests as well as other homework. Students must choose at the end of the year whether or not to continue with Mandarin up to GCSE level. In Year 9 there will be opportunities to get involved in Chinese cultural activities and trips.

Year 10:

Students are expected to work hard and do some self-study every day to make the appropriate progress for GCSE Mandarin. The course is suitable for students with a love of the language, students who are ambitious and self-disciplined, and who relish a challenge. At GCSE, students are expected to be able to tackle challenging unseen authentic texts in Chinese—advertisements, newspaper articles, podcasts, etc.—so lessons cover a wide range of topics and students are expected to support their learning with written work at home. Year 10 Mandarin students are eligible to apply for the China Study Camp which takes place in summer.

Year 11: A description of targets , skills and focus for the year group. (150 words max)

Students will continue to make rapid progress in Year 11 through communication in the target language and through working with ever more advanced texts and vocabulary. As coursework is a thing of the past, students must build their speaking and writing skills on a range of unseen topics. Students should finish the course with a wide practical vocabulary in the following themes: identity and culture, local area, holiday, travel, school life, future aspirations, study and work, and the international and global dimension. All four skills—listening, reading, writing, and speaking—are examined in formal examinations at the end of the course.

Year 11 Mandarin students are eligible to apply for the China Study Camp which takes place in summer.

Sixth Form:

Students of Chinese who wish to build a truly valuable professional and academic language skill-set should consider choosing to continue to the Cambridge Pre-U course in Mandarin at Beths. This is an A-level equivalent welcomed by universities as a school-leavers' qualification. Students build their core skills to a proficiency suited to the workplace or to a future career in or connected to China, and they also study a fascinating and stimulating range of topics on Chinese history, literature, culture and film through English. Students attain excellence in language skills as well as learning to write a critical essay and conduct academic research into sinological topics of interest to them.

Year 12 and 13 Mandarin students are eligible to apply for the China Study Camp which takes place in summer.

Assessment:

Year 7-9 are assessed on 6 key skills both half-termly and termly:

- Reading—Listening— Vocabulary— Translation— Speaking— Writing

GCSE assesses the four key skills through 4 formal examinations, each weighted at 25% of the total grade:

- Listening— Reading— Speaking—Writing

Cambridge Pre-U assesses the key language skills (plus new cultural knowledge/research skills) as follows:

Speaking: Speaking test, externally assessed by a visiting examiner, 20%

Listening, Reading and Translation: Written paper, externally assessed, 30%

Writing and Usage: Written paper, externally assessed, 25%

Chinese Culture: Written paper, externally assessed, 25%

Related Careers:

Speaking another language is always useful, and Mandarin Chinese is ever more important in work and future opportunities, including (but not at all limited to):

Business and entrepreneurship

Trade and economics

Banking and finance

Policy direction and law

Education and research

Translation and interpreting

Media and journalism

Cultural work and the arts

Further study and academia

Consulting and management

Politics and diplomacy

Hospitality and tourism