



Languages at  
Hutchesons'  
Grammar School

It is our aim at Hutchesons' to expose the children to a variety of languages from the very start of their education. The Scottish government has recently encouraged all primary schools to adopt a 1 + 2 approach to language learning. This means that as well as their mother tongue, children learn two foreign languages. At Hutchesons' we have been teaching several languages in the primary school for many years. The skills-based course we use has been devised by language specialists.

The core languages taught are Latin, French, German, Spanish and Portuguese. Other languages are introduced depending on the requirements of the pupils and the expertise of the staff. Currently we have on the staff native speakers of Russian, Dutch and Gaelic. We have parents who visit on occasion and have enjoyed lessons on Mandarin and Dutch. The Secondary staff come over too to deliver lessons on their specialist subject in a foreign language. This ensures that the study of languages at Hutchesons' offers cross-curricular education.

We equip children with the skills to make the links between different languages. This allows them to understand how language evolves and also helps them to express themselves more clearly in English. By the end of their primary education, they will have been exposed to a variety of languages and therefore can make an informed decision about which they wish to study at the secondary school. They will be able to use the skills acquired at Kingarth Street and be receptive to whichever language they choose.

As well as being exposed to the languages of different countries, the children will learn of different cultures: food, dance, fairy tales, nursery rhymes etc. As far as possible, the teaching of languages, ancient and modern, will fit in with the curriculum. There is a thread of Empire, starting with the Romans in Primary 3, and ending with the British Empire and its legacy in Primary 7.

In **Primary 1**, we foster an interest in language. Children begin to understand that language is a code which we all use. They learn to use certain skills to decipher the meaning of unknown words.

In **Primary 2**, through the Katie Morag topic, the children study Scots. They also learn a little Gaelic.

In **Primary 3**, the children learn Latin to complement the Roman topic.

In **Primary 4**, the topic is Castles and the Norman Invasion and so the children study French. By this stage, they are making links between languages and beginning to understand how language develops.

In **Primary 5**, the children study Spanish and Portuguese. They look at the history of the Spanish and Portuguese explorers to link in with the pirate topic.

In **Primary 6**, the children have one period a week of Latin and two each of German and French.

In **Primary 7**, the children have one period of Latin and a term each of French, German and Spanish, to consolidate their learning and to reinforce the links between different languages: It also helps them to make an informed decision about which of the three modern languages they wish to study along with Latin in S1 and S2 at Beaton Road.