

Curriculum Policy

Introduction:

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning, personal growth and development at Firfield Primary School. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities, outdoor learning opportunities and enrichment opportunities that the school organises in order to enrich the experiences of the children and build cultural capital. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave.

Vision and Values:

Our school vision is to empower everyone to be brilliant every day, releasing their inner superhero so that they can flourish and thrive.

The governors, staff and children at Firfield Primary School want all members of the Firfield Family to grow and nurture the following values...

Kind

Honest

Resilient

Inclusive

Our school curriculum at Firfield Primary School is underpinned by the vision and values that we hold dear. At Firfield, we place powerful knowledge at the very heart of our curriculum. We want to teach our children the very best of what has been thought and said.

The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objectives of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to be ready for the next stage of their education and to lead fulfilling lives in an ever-changing world.

At Firfield, our curriculum focuses on ensuring all children know more and remember more. The knowledge content is carefully chosen by subject leads and organised in a coherent way, ensuring it builds from unit to unit, and year to year. Our approach ensures that children are challenged deeply to process taught knowledge in order for them to form good long-term memory of the memory and to allow them to make connections with new and existing learning. We believe that a knowledge-rich curriculum is an entitlement for every child, regardless of background. Subject content is crucial to this approach - the content provides the engagement and plants the seeds for a lifetime of learning. We place high value on the

strength of individual subjects and the unique disciplinary skills and knowledge of each subject. As such, the subjects are taught as stand alone. However, where they mutually benefit each subject, cross-curricular links are forged. For example, in Year 2 the children study Northern Europe and the Romans in History before learning about settlements in Geography in Year 3 and the Anglo Saxons in History. This foundational knowledge from Geography will support the children in better understanding the invasion of the UK by Anglo-Saxons because of the void left by the collapse of Roman Britain.

Curriculum Intent:

At Firfield, our inclusive and ambitious curriculum is driven by the need to prepare our children for lifelong learning. We want to create a rich learning environment where our children are given the essential skills and knowledge to fully embody our 5 curriculum drivers. We offer a knowledge rich and vibrant curriculum which is ambitious for all learners through high-quality sequential and subject-specific learning. We place rich knowledge at the centre of our curriculum so that children can build rich schemas of knowledge as they progress through the school. Our curriculum encompasses not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but goes beyond the experiences of the classroom to ensure that our children are exposed to the richest and most varied opportunities that we can provide.

At Firfield, we build cultural capital to prepare children with the essential knowledge and skills for their future. It is purposeful, relevant and aspirational to provide opportunities and experiences to equip and prepare children to live and succeed in an unknown and ever-changing future world.

Curriculum Implementation:

Teachers use our curriculum drivers to ensure our curriculum is specified, sequenced and taught to be remembered. Reading, Phonics, Writing and Mathematical understanding are the bedrock of our curriculum so that our children can successfully access other subjects now and as they move through life. Subject leaders have thoroughly planned their subject to ensure that key knowledge is taught to be remembered. Staff have strong subject knowledge due to excellent subject leadership and continual professional development. Our assessment processes ensure that all children are supported and challenged appropriately.

At Firfield, rather than trying to teach every subject across a two-week timetable, we block our curriculum to ensure that teachers and pupils can fully immerse themselves within the subject for a set period of time before moving onto another subject. This also allows to consolidate their learning in long-term memory and acts as a way to encourage the children to retrieve information on the forgetting curve.

Curriculum Impact:

Our knowledge rich curriculum places our pupils at the centre and allows them to build schema by creating connections in their knowledge, skills and understanding which they can

use across all subjects. We intend that our children will be fully prepared for the next stage of their learning and ready to contribute positively to society as a whole as confident world citizens in an ever-changing world.

When our pupils leave Year 6, they will be ready for the next stage of their education as world citizens, healthy advocates, ambitious thinkers, resilient individuals, and have creative and curious minds.

Assessment

In the foundation subjects, we take the view that the 'Curriculum is the progression model'. That is to say that as the children are learning the curriculum then they are making good progress. This is because the curriculum has been designed in such a way that, for example, in order to be able to fully learn and understand Year 5 Geography, they will need to have learnt Year 4 Geography. Similarly, if the children are able to fully access and understand the Year 6 unit of work on the First World War, then they will have had to have learnt about the importance of the Industrial Revolution and the effect of the Transatlantic Slave Trade upon Britain. In order to check that children are keeping up with the curriculum and whether or not it has been successfully implemented, we make assessment opportunities through the following means:

1) Recaps and mini quizzes at the start of lessons

This supports the act of consolidating knowledge in long term memory and acts as a way for teachers to check the understanding of key curriculum content.

2) End of unit quizzes

These multiple choice quizzes check the children's retention of key knowledge. Designed with the inclusion of plausible 'distractors', the quizzes aim to identify key pupil misconceptions.

3) End of unit assessments

These allow children to apply their knowledge to answer an authentic subject related question and they encourage children to develop their disciplinary knowledge, synthesising their learning and answering a question in the style of a subject specialist. The outcomes of these assessments support teachers and subject leaders in better understanding how well the children are learning the intended curriculum and what adaptations that might need to be made to the curriculum delivery over the short, medium and long term.

Organisation and planning

Our Curriculum Overviews and rationale demonstrate a clear rationale for ensuring curriculum coherence within our individual subjects. In addition to curriculum sequencing

and coherence, consideration when constructing our overviews is given to the following ideas:

- The substantive knowledge and concepts that we want children to learn. For example, we want to ensure that children gain a thorough grounding in the role of monarchy in History, which is why it is encountered in multiple units of work, beginning in EFYS in their 'Kings and Queens' topic, developing in Year One when they learn about different Kings, Queens and Leaders and ending after further consolidation throughout the school in Year 6 when they learn about the impact of the First and Second World Wars on society and the monarchy.
- The disciplinary knowledge or how the work of subject specialists results in the construction of knowledge. Eg. understanding the roles of what artists, historians and geographers.
- Sufficient depth of study so that children don't just gain superficial understanding of topics, but also:
- Sufficient breadth of study so that children, for example in Geography, gain a thorough understanding of the physical geography of the different continents of the world
- The inclusion of significant people, places, artists, designers, scientists etc so that children understand the role of individuals in each subject
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development (SMSC)

Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for every pupil. They plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard. They have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so in consultation with the child's parents. If a child has a special educational need or disability, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs.

The role of the subject leader

The role of the subject leader is to:

- provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject;
- support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject;
- monitor pupil progress in that subject area;
- provide efficient resource management for the subject.
- provide challenge to enhance their subject

The school gives subject leaders non-contact time, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role. It is the role of each subject leader to keep up to date with

developments in their subject, at both national and local level. They review the way the subject is taught in the school and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each subject leader reviews the curriculum plans for their subject, ensures that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum, learning intentions are clear and that progression is planned into schemes of work and seen within books. All subject leaders work hard to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the needs of all learners including those with special educational needs.

At Firfield Primary we believe in celebrating achievement, no matter how small. Children's work and achievements are acknowledged regularly through the school newsletters, displays in classrooms and shared areas along with our weekly achievement assemblies.

Foundation Stage

Our foundation stage curriculum is guided by the EYFS Statutory Framework. We have used the practice and theories embedded in early years practice as a springboard for developing a whole school approach to teaching and learning within the curriculum. All topics covered by foundation link progressively with those taught across school. As we plan for strong curriculum sequencing throughout the school, it provides a solid platform for the children's learning in Key Stages 1 and 2. For example, in All About Me in Reception, the children are taught the difference between past and present and use photographs to talk about their family trees. This knowledge and understanding supports the children in better accessing our Year 1 unit entitled 'Discovering History'. Although in the EYFS children are not taught in discrete subject areas, we have identified relevant links for our Key Stage 1 and 2 curricula to ensure coherence. It is the combined roles of the EYFS lead, Curriculum Lead and Subject leaders to be constantly adapting and refining our curricula with coherence, sequencing, scope and rigour in mind.

Additional Needs

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children have an equal access to the curriculum and are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. (See Additional Needs Policy)

Responsibilities and Roles

The Headteacher has the overall responsibility for the quality of provision provided for the pupils and the outcome in terms of both attainment and progress.

The Curriculum Leader, the Deputy Headteacher, maintains an overview of Firfield's curriculum and works in partnership with the Headteacher and Subject Leaders in developing the Curriculum and the individual subjects incorporated into it.

Monitoring and evaluating tasks are designed in line with the SIP. Regular meetings take place between the Curriculum Leader and subject leaders to ensure consistency of approach, to provide CPD and support and to discuss areas for development within individual subjects.

Subject Leaders ensure that all the aspects of the National Curriculum content are covered and identify areas for further development and support. Subject leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subject through learning walks, book scrutinies and pupil voice. They will provide feedback to governors, the Headteacher and staff to celebrate strengths and identify aspects for improvement. Subject Leaders also produce annual action plans for their subjects, analyse the standards within their subject, provide or signpost staff towards training and resources and engage in developmental work / research projects with external colleagues.

As mentioned previously, Class Teachers have responsibility for ensuring the subjects are effectively delivered in line with our Teaching and Learning Policy, including the need to adapt material for those with SEND.

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