



Policy on Curriculum

(see also Teaching and Learning, SEN & MAT policies)

Introduction

Our school's curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning, and personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum and the revised Programmes of Study for English, Maths and Digital Competency, but also the various extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the children's experience. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum' – what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We want children to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and cooperate with others while at the same time developing their knowledge and skills, in order to achieve their true potential.

We endorse the aspirations concerning the curriculum that are set out in the Foundation Phase for Wales and Curriculum 2008, and we seek the highest standards of attainment for all our children. We also value the breadth of the curriculum that we provide. We aim to foster creativity in our children, and to help them become independent learners. Above all, we believe in making learning fun and inclusive with the aim of enabling all pupils to reach their full potential in each area of the curriculum.

The “Successful Futures” document (Donaldson Report) provides each school with an opportunity to develop a curriculum which is particular to that establishment. We are working closely with Pioneer schools in RCT and the wider Central South area to embed learning experiences which interest our children and are relevant to their lives. We place a great deal of emphasis on the key skills and upon the development of pedagogy. We will continue to update subject policies and schemes in line with the work of our partner schools. In readiness for this, we have established Faculties (Language, STEM, Wellbeing and Creative/Cultural) with the aim of ensuring that we teach the skills throughout a broad and balanced curriculum. Subject leaders have been placed within this system and responsibilities shared. Each faculty is under the leadership of a senior teacher and an action plan is produced, reviewed and evaluated each year.

Values

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear at our school as specified in our vision and our aims and ethos statement. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives.

These are the main values of our school, upon which we have based our curriculum:

- We value children's uniqueness, we listen to the views of individual children, and we promote respect for diverse cultures.
- We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.
- We value the importance of each person in our community, and we organise our curriculum to promote inclusion, cooperation and understanding among all members of our community.
- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each child in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We want to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all our pupils.
- We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements regarding inclusion.
- We value our environment, and we want to teach our pupils, through our curriculum, how we should take care of the world, not only for ourselves, but also for future generations.

Aims and objectives

The aims of our school curriculum are:

- to enable all children to learn, and develop their skills, to the best of their ability;
- to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- to teach children the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and digital competency;
- to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking;
- to teach children about the developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time;
- to help children understand Wales' cultural heritage and its language;
- to appreciate and value the contribution made by all ethnic groups in our multi-cultural society;
- to enable children to be positive citizens, both locally and globally;
- to fulfil all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education;
- to teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to distinguish right from wrong;
- to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- to enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to live and work cooperatively with others.

Organisation and planning

We plan our curriculum into four phases (Nursery/Reception; FPh1/2; Y3/Y4 and Y5/6). We agree a long-term plan for each key stage based on seven separate documents;

1. Programme of Study for English (2015)
2. Programme of Study for Maths (2015)
3. CSC agreed syllabus for Welsh Second Language
4. ICT scheme/Digital Competency (Gareth Morgan 2015)
5. Agreed Science Scheme of Work 2011 (to be revised 2016)
6. Cornerstones Cymru 2015
7. Agreed Curriculum for Religious Education (RCT SACRE)

This indicates which topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. We review this long-term plan on an annual basis and speak with the children about which topics interest them. We use a two year rolling programme to ensure complete coverage of the curriculum by all classes, including the split class in each phase. Planning also ensures that Nursery to FP2 classes complete all areas of learning within the Foundation Phase and that Y3 to Y6 classes complete all areas of Curriculum 2008 and subsequent WAG documents.

Planning for English and Maths are in line with the National Programmes of Study for English and Maths.

Through our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies for each topic. As we have adopted the Programmes of Study for English and Maths for our school, we take our medium-term planning directly from the guidance documents. We also use the national schemes of work for much of our medium-term planning in the foundation subjects. Extensive use is made of the subject skills ladders and the skills framework to ensure that the curriculum is broad, structured, progressive and helps pupils to use literacy and numeracy skills across all aspects of the curriculum.

Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson.

In all phases we use themes to deliver the curriculum. These are based on science, history or geography topics in Key Stage 2 and Knowledge and Understanding at Foundation Phase.

Long term topic plans are available in school and in planning files are reviewed annually.

The curriculum and inclusion

The curriculum in our school is designed to be accessed by all children who attend the school, whether mainstream or within our Local Authority Resource Bases (LRBs). If we think it necessary to modify some children's access to the curriculum, in order to meet their needs, then we do this only after their parents or carers have been consulted and in line with their IEP.

If children have special needs, our school does all it can to meet the individual needs, and we comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice. If a child displays signs of having special needs, then his/her teacher makes an assessment of this need. In most instances, the teacher is able to provide the resources and educational opportunities that meet the child's needs, within normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe, we consider the use of support groups and we may involve the appropriate external agencies in making an assessment. We always provide additional resources and support for children with special needs.

The school provides an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each of the children who are on the special needs register. This sets out the nature of the special need, and outlines how the school will aim to address it. The IEP also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals. (See ALN policy)

Some children in our school have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all groups of children within our school. The school complies fully with the requirements of the amended Disability Discrimination Act that came into effect from 2005. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled children. Teaching and learning are appropriately modified for children with disabilities. For example, they may be given additional time to complete certain activities, or the teaching materials may be adapted. (See Equality and Access policy document)

Some children show exceptional ability in one or more areas of the curriculum. Where this happens we place the child on our More Able and Talented (MAT) register and ensure that activities are differentiated accordingly, for example by linking with the local secondary school or small group sessions . (See MAT policy)

The Foundation Phase

The curriculum that we teach from Nursery to FP2 meets the requirements set out in the Foundation Phase Documents for Wales. Our curriculum planning focuses on all of the Areas of Learning, as set out in these documents, and on developing children's skills and experiences. (See Foundation Phase policy for more details)

Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play, and by engaging in well planned and structured activities. Teaching in all Foundation Phase classes builds on the experiences of the children in their pre-school learning. We do all we can to build positive partnerships with the various pre-school providers in the area.

On entry to the school in Nursery or later, the teacher will assess the skills development of each child, and record this using our Incerts assessment package. This must be done within the first six weeks in school. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child and enables us to track each child until they leave us in Y6.

We are well aware that all children need the support of both the parents/carers and the teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents/carers of each child, by keeping them informed about how the children are being taught, and how well each child is progressing.

Key Stage Two

Children in Key Stage Two (Years 3 to 6) follow Curriculum 2008 and are taught through thematic learning. Emphasis is placed on the subject skills necessary to meet the requirements of each of the subject orders and the agreed syllabus for Religious Education. Specific published schemes are used for Maths, Music and Personal Social Education. For all other subjects, work is planned termly and ensures coverage and progression in each subject area.

Key skills

The following skills have been deemed 'key skills' in the revised National Curriculum:

Information Technology;
Thinking;

In our curriculum planning, we emphasise these skills, so that the children's progress in all of these areas can be identified and monitored. Teachers in all subject areas seek to contribute to a child's progress in these skills, because we believe that all children need to make good progress in these areas if they are to develop their true potential.

The role of the faculty leader and responsible teacher

The role is to, within the Faculty System:

provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject;
support and advise colleagues on issues related to the subject;
monitor pupils' progress in that subject area;
provide efficient resource management for the subject.

The school gives faculty leaders non-contact time on a regular basis, so that they can carry out their duties. It is the role of each leader to keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local levels. They review the way in which the subject is taught in the school, and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each leader reviews the curriculum plans for the subjects, ensures that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum, and sees that progression is planned into schemes of work. At the end of each year a report is produced which uses all information and data to plan for future development. This forms part of the School Self Evaluation Report (SER).

Monitoring and review

Our governing body's curriculum committee is responsible for monitoring the way in which the school curriculum is implemented. This committee reviews each subject area during its bi-annual cycle of review and development.

There is a named governor assigned to each of the seven areas of learning, including: literacy, numeracy and ICT. These governors liaise with the respective faculty leaders, and monitor closely the way in which these subjects are taught. There is also a named governor assigned to special needs, who liaises with the SEN coordinator, and monitors the ways in which special needs are addressed.

The Headteacher and Deputy are responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the curriculum. The headteacher monitors lesson planning on a termly basis for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the National Curriculum, and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives.

Faculty leaders monitor the way in which their subject is taught throughout the school. They examine long-term and medium-term planning, and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. They also talk to learners and carry out Learning Walks. Subject leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.