

# Curriculum Policy for Blackwell First School



# A Policy for the Curriculum

## Our vision

**At Blackwell we aim to educate the whole child and to ensure children are happy, healthy and fulfill their potential in terms of the development of skills for life, social and moral values and academic success.**

## INTRODUCTION

The 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 (taught during a long morning session), but also the range of extra curricular activities that the school organises outside of the school teaching day (free of charge to families) in order to enrich the experiences of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing skills, dispositions and knowledge, so that they achieve well.

## VALUES

Our school is underpinned by the values that we prioritise at our school. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objectives of educating children in the skills, dispositions, knowledge and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives.

Our school agrees with the value statements of Curriculum 2014. These are the main aims of our school upon which we base our curriculum:

- we value the way in which all children are unique and our curriculum promotes **respect** for the views of each individual child, as well as for people of all 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. We organise our curriculum so that we promote **co-operation and understanding** between all members of our community, the wider UK community and the global 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 aim to enable each person to be successful and we provide **equality of opportunity** for all the children in our school. We actively teach the children about the United Nations, British Values and the 'Rights of the child' and

- we value our environment. We aim, through our curriculum, to teach **respect for our world** and how we should care for it for future generations as well as our own.

## CURRICULUM PRINCIPLES

We aim to provide a curriculum that is:

- BROAD – so that it introduces learners to a wide range of skills, experiences, concepts and knowledge and promotes moral, social, cultural, intellectual and physical development;
- BALANCED – so that each area of the curriculum is experienced in sufficient time and detail to enable the experience to be meaningful;
- RELEVANT – so that all elements contribute to children's lives at present and in preparation for the future;
- COHERENT – so that different elements of the curriculum are connected and the links are clear to learners;
- DIFFERENTIATED – so that what is taught and how it is taught is matched to learners' abilities and aptitudes;
- CONTINUOUS – so that pupils make progress in their learning and
- PARTICIPATORY – so that the children, staff, parents, other schools and the wider community work in partnership to actively participate in enhancing the curriculum and pupils are actively involved in the learning process and develop skills for lifelong learning.

## AIMS

We aim to provide a curriculum that:

- creates a community of **lifelong learners** by using relevant, meaningful, interesting contexts for pupils to learn and develop a wide range of skills – core skills developed are: **co-operation, resilience, problem solving, love of learning through asking and answering questions**
- is coherent and ensures a full and rounded entitlement to effective learning opportunities and **enjoyment of learning** for all our pupils
- nurtures the development of each child by helping them acquire **basic skills** and by **stimulating interest** in wider fields such as the arts, sciences, sport, the community and the environment

- values the uniqueness of every child, encouraging them to discover their **particular strengths** and become motivated to achieve the highest standards
- enables children to become **independent learners** having the capacity to think reflectively, critically and creatively, using a wide range of sources and evidence
- supports children in decision making and risk taking through the development of **problem solving skills**
- ensures children have opportunities to **work collaboratively** and share their ideas in a manner that recognizes that making mistakes is part of the learning process
- promotes **good working habits** among children, encouraging an enquiring mind, self discipline and pride in their learning

## ORGANISATION AND PLANNING

For our youngest children in the Foundation Stage (Forest School Nursery and Reception Class) learning is planned through an inter-disciplinary topic approach and delivered through structured play. (See Early Years policy) Our definition of play is defined as:

**A self chosen activity that develops key skills such as thinking, investigation, decision making, creativity, emotional development and language development that can challenge, practise, extend and help to make sense of the world.**

Work is planned following the areas of learning as detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Document so that children work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals and beyond when moving to Key Stage 1.

Assessment on entry to Nursery and Reception is an essential element to ascertain each child's starting place for future learning and progress. A baseline is completed at the beginning of the year, throughout the year and at the end of the Reception year. This is based on Development Matters bands and the Early Learning Goals. Each child is carefully assessed using: observations, activities and feedback from all adults associated with the child.

The transfer from Reception to Year 1 is planned for carefully. (See Early Years policy) Reception staff members prepare the children for the developing demands of the Key stage 1 curriculum and Year 1 staff adapt the delivery of the curriculum so that it enables children to access it at their level through continuous provision based around curriculum areas

and progress from a more play based to a less play based but creative and practical curriculum towards the end of Year 1.

In Key stages 1 and 2 pupils follow the National Curriculum 2014. Mathematics and English are taught using Assessment for Learning (AfL) with reference to the National Curriculum. Some subjects (such as Art, Music and PE) use separate schemes adapted for our school curriculum (such as Suffolk scheme for Art and a Music curriculum planned for by our specialist music teacher). Specific time is devoted to the development of Pupils' personal, social and health education (including citizenship and philosophy for children).

To ensure that our curriculum supports teaching and learning, good curriculum planning is essential, taking into account cross curricular links. Each class has a Long term plan outlining topics to be taught throughout the year. Whole school topics are a feature of our curriculum, enabling a cross school planned approach and whole school events. Topics designed for both KS1 and 2 are designed and tailored to encompass learning objectives from the relevant key stage. Learning will often focus on a particular aspect of the curriculum with a project focus (particularly KS1 and 2) for a few weeks however there is a balance over the year or key stage.

In our Medium term plans we provide broad learning objectives for different areas of the curriculum. For Literacy and Numeracy our own Blackwell plans supplement our Medium term planning. Suffolk Art scheme and our own personalised skill based curriculum for all subjects is adapted to support teaching in Foundation subjects.

Our Short term plans set out the learning objectives, success criteria and lesson elements for individual lessons. In our curriculum planning we teach basic skills alongside the key skills of:

- **communication;**
- **application of number;**
- **resilience;**
- **working with others;**
- **improving own learning and performance;**
- **problem solving;**
- **developing a love of learning and**
- **thinking skills (information processing, reasoning, enquiry, creative thinking and evaluation).**

**We focus particularly on Independent Learning with the following skills: Analysis; Enquiry; Create; Evaluate; Communicate; Plan and Review own**

**learning as well as these Independent Learning dispositions: Motivation; Resilience; Curiosity; Reflectiveness; Risk taking; Confidence; Open mindedness; Self awareness and Co-operative behaviour.**

All subject areas contribute to a child's development in these skills and dispositions. Our school believes that all children need to make good progress in these areas in order to develop well. Our curriculum development prioritises these skills and dispositions as elements of the curriculum which will equip children as citizens of the future.

#### EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

It is important to us that our curriculum meets the needs of all of our children. The curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children then we do so only after consultation with parents. If a child has a Special Need then we do all we can to meet the need. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice. Similar processes are employed when Gifted and Talented children are identified and to ensure that gender equality is promoted at all times. We also ensure that our broad and balanced curriculum ensures that radical and extremist views are not supported and are countered by a curriculum nurturing Human Rights and Equality of Opportunity.

#### HOME SCHOOL LIAISON

We are well aware that all children need the support of home and school to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the adults caring for each child in our school by keeping them informed about the way in which the children are being taught, how well each child is progressing and how parents can support their child's progress. We have termly reports, newsletters that focus on teaching and learning and our homework aids parents in understanding what experiences and learning the children participate in in school. Our reading links also support home reading with a considerable amount of suggested support ideas. We also place additional, ongoing information on the school website.

#### MONITORING AND REVIEW

Our governing body is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented. Designated members of the governing body review curriculum issues as part of the governors monitoring and evaluation procedures.

We have governors who monitor all aspects of the school, including curriculum, literacy, numeracy, SMSC, pupil attitudes to learning and special needs. The governors liaise with identified staff to monitor closely the way the school teaches these subjects and how effective these methods are.

The headteacher/curriculum co-ordinator is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. She monitors the medium term plans ensuring that all classes are taught the requirements of the National Curriculum and that the school achieves its aim of offering a broadly, balanced relevant curriculum. Short term planning is monitored by the headteacher and Senior Leadership Team during lesson observations as part of the monitoring of teaching and learning. Progress and tracking are monitored by all teachers, the SLT and Head teacher.

Subject leaders and the curriculum co-ordinator monitor the way that subjects are taught throughout the school. They examine all aspects of planning to ensure that learning is continuous, supports progression and that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Subject leaders also have the responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.