



Ashwell School

Curriculum Policy

Aims

At Ashwell School we seek to provide stimulating, varied and challenging learning experiences which inspire in all our children a lifelong zest for learning, so that they can become the best that they can be, academically, socially, creatively and physically. Our children are encouraged to become confident, self-motivated and independent learners who take responsibility for their own development. We value all our children as individuals, and nurture in them respect, kindness and compassion for others, in order that they can take their place as responsible local, national and global citizens. Through our ethos and curriculum we promote the fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Curriculum content

Our curriculum is built on the National Curriculum and the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (see appendix 1). 'The school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that each school plans for its pupils. The National Curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum.' (DfE 2014 National Curriculum).

The Statutory Framework for Early Years, supported by 'Development Matters', outlines seven areas of learning for children in Nursery and Reception. There are three prime areas: communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development, and four specific areas: literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design. There are eleven subjects in the National Curriculum for Key Stages One and Two: English, mathematics, science, computing, history, geography, music, art and design, design technology, physical education (PE) and languages. In addition, the curriculum includes religious education (RE) and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Although citizenship is no longer a statutory part of the national curriculum for primary schools, we consider it a very important aspect of children's education and include it as part of the personal, social, health and citizenship education programme. Details of the curriculum for each subject are in the appendices.

Curriculum planning

Much of the curriculum content is delivered through whole school or Key Stage cross-curricular termly themes. These are planned on a four year rolling programme (see appendix @), and generally include one theme based on history, one based on science and one based on geography each academic year. These themes encourage children to make connections in their learning, stimulate their curiosity and enthusiasm, and allow us to enhance learning by arranging trips, visitors and special events. They also allow us to make connections to current events, such as the Olympic Games or the General Election, and to respond to children's interests and enthusiasms.

The termly themes encompass the curriculum content which is relevant to the theme, and are counterbalanced by subject specific teaching for significant sections of the curriculum which are not connected to the theme. For example, many of the topics for writing may be connected to the theme, and link learning in English, and history, geography or science, but the technical aspects of English may be taught separately. Cross-curricular themes may provide contexts for learning in history, geography and science, art and design, music and design technology, though most of the mathematics, PE, RE and languages curriculum and some of the learning in other subjects will not be linked to themes.

Parallel and Mixed Age Classes

When a year group is split between two classes, the teachers work together closely to plan the curriculum to ensure the children receive a very similar learning experience. When a class includes two year groups, a range of strategies are used to ensure that the children's learning experience is appropriate to their needs:

- Where the curriculum is largely skills based, such as in mathematics, English, PE, art & design, music and design technology, teaching is differentiated according to the stage the child has reached, as it is in a single age class. This may involve group teaching, individual or group targets and differentiation in terms of expectations.
- In curriculum areas which are more knowledge based, such as history, geography, computing and RE, the curriculum may be planned on a two or three year rolling programme to ensure that there is coverage of the relevant content during the Key Stage. This is facilitated by the termly whole school or Key Stage themes.
- If necessary, the children can be divided into year groups for specific lessons, such as when learning French, where, for example, the Year 5 pupils who have already studied French for two years are taught separately from the Year 4 pupils who have only been studying the language for one year. This also applies to learning to play the violin in Year 3 and the recorder in Year 4 as part of class lessons, and to the sex and relationships education aspects of the PHSE curriculum.
- The legal requirement of the 2014 National Curriculum is to cover the content of the programmes of study by the end of each key stage. 'The key stage 2 programmes of study for English, mathematics and science are presented in the document as 'lower' (years 3 and 4) and 'upper' (years 5 and 6). This distinction is made as guidance for teachers and is not reflected in legislation' (2014 National Curriculum). Subjects such as science can therefore be taught either as a rolling programme over two years or as a year by year programme.

Enrichment

The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of first hand learning experiences. These include using the rich natural, built and historical local environment; frequent trips further afield to historic sites, museum and galleries, nature reserves and zoos, concert halls and theatres; welcoming a variety of visitors and performers to the school; five day residential school journeys to contrasting UK locations in years 5 and 6 and special events such as Take One Picture weeks, science weeks and book weeks. The children take part in musical and dramatic performances both in school and elsewhere, as well as sporting events. The school is linked to primary schools in Hackney, East London, and in Lilongwe, Malawi, and these connections are incorporated into the learning experience wherever possible.

Equal Opportunities

The school has high expectations of every child. The curriculum is designed to promote pupils' development in every area- academic, physical, creative and social - so that they can grow into well-rounded individuals, and achieve the highest possible standards. All pupils have access to the whole curriculum at the appropriate level and are given extra support where necessary.

Assessment and Reporting

Teachers assess children's understanding and skills continuously in order to meet their needs. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and to monitor their own progress. In the Foundation Stage, workbooks/ learning journeys are maintained to record significant developmental milestones, and ongoing assessments are made using the 'Ages and Stages' criteria outlined in 'Development Matters'. These assessments are recorded termly on the school's assessment management system. In Key Stages One and Two, summative assessments are made each term against national expectations in English, mathematics and science, and recorded electronically on the school's assessment management system. Children's attainment in other subjects is assessed annually against

national expectations. Statutory assessments take place at the end of Reception, the end of Year 1 (phonics screening), Year 2 and Year 6.

Children's progress is discussed with parents at parents' evenings in October and March, and parents receive a written report in July.

Monitoring

There is a curriculum leader for each subject area. Their responsibilities include monitoring teaching and learning using a range of methods, including reviewing assessment results, work sampling, planning scrutiny, lesson observation and interviews with staff and pupils. Subject leaders produce an annual written report for the Curriculum and Pupil Welfare Committee of the governing body, which includes an analysis of strengths and areas for development in their subject and an action plan. These reports feed into the school improvement planning process.

KO July 2015

Review due 2018-19

Appendices

Curriculum statements for:

- 1. Art & Design**
- 2. Computing**
- 3. Design and Technology**
- 4. English**
- 5. Geography**
- 6. History**
- 7. Languages**
- 8. Maths**
- 9. Music**
- 10. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Citizenship**
- 11. Physical Education**
- 12. Religious Education**
- 13. Science**
- 14. Four year rolling programme of whole school themes**