

Curriculum Policy



The Valley Community School

Reviewed: Autumn 2016

Reviewed by: P Sewell

To be reviewed: Autumn 2017

Attached committee: Curriculum

The Valley Community School

Our Vision Statement

“A world class centre of outstanding learning”

To achieve this we:

- are embracing the principles of lifelong learning, best use of new technology and “visible learning”
- are developing an international understanding of our place in the world
- are developing leaders and critical thinkers of tomorrow
- are meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014

School Mission Statement

“Together we’re better”

Our guiding principles are:

- we work closely with our community
- we broaden our pupils’ perspectives
- we teach understanding and respect for others
- we value everyone’s abilities and support each other

The Valley Community School

Meeting requirements:

Since September 2014 the school has been meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 in core specific year groups. All other years have been meeting the requirements of National Curriculum 2014 since September 2015.

Assessment:

Within key foundation subjects, assessment will be twofold and based not only on key learning milestones, as set out within the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) and also the mastery of expectations specific to each year group, as exemplified within the National Curriculum and its subsidiary guidance.

The school feels strongly that there is a need to develop both global citizenship and, where possible, teach the fundamental principles of British Citizenship. This encompasses;

a sense of fair play
tolerance
duty and remembrance
respect
values
ethics
belonging
contributing to and supporting all our local communities
perseverance.

In upper key stage 2, a sense of "Britishness" is embodied in the strong links between the school and the Pre-Duke of Edinburgh-Adventure Service Challenge (ASC) projects, which help pupils see their role in the community, where the curriculum overlaps in these areas opportunities are seized.

The Valley Community School Curriculum Policy

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 (2014), but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience 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 knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

Values

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear at our school. 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.

Our school is in full agreement with the values statement included in the introduction to The National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers in England. These are the main values of our school, upon which we have based 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.
- 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 equal opportunities for all the children in our school.
- We value our environment, and 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.

Aims and objectives

The aims of our school creative curriculum are:

To enable all pupils to become active independent learners, developing lifelong learning skills.

To continue to give equal value to the abilities and achievements of each individual. To provide a stimulating, engaging, practical curriculum, leading to memorable learning experiences.

Wave approach to teaching

The school has adopted a 'Wave' approach to teaching which meets the needs of individual and groups of children:

Wave 1:

This is high quality class teaching where differentiation meets the needs of particular groups within the class setting.

Wave 2:

These are specific interventions with groups of children to address particular needs and are time limited and reviewed.

Wave 3:

These are individual support programs for children with specific needs.

Children with special needs

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school.

If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs as set out in our SEND / GT Policies.

The school provides Individual Educational Plan (IEP) where appropriate or via wave 3 interventions. This outlines how the school will address the need. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals.

The Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum guides teaching and learning in reception and nursery. Our curriculum planning focuses on Development Matters and on children's skills and experiences, at the appropriate level.

During the children's first term in the Nursery and Reception classes, their key worker makes a baseline assessment to record the skills of each child. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning and target setting for each child.

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

Key skills

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

- communication;
- application of number;
- information technology;
- working with others;
- improving own learning and performance;
- Problem-solving.

Our school believes that all children need to make good progress in these skill areas in order to develop to their true potential.

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.

The school gives subject leaders non-contact time, to 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 and that there is progression in the subject.

Monitoring and review

Our governing body's curriculum committee is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented.

We have named governors for literacy, numeracy, ICT and Special Needs. Governors are also linked to specific cohorts and attend some of the progress meetings arranged during the assessment periods. The governors liaise with the subject leaders of these areas, and monitor closely the way the school teaches these subjects.

The head teacher is responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the curriculum. The Co-ordinator and senior leadership team monitors the plans for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the National Curriculum, and those lessons have appropriate learning objectives and clear differentiation.

Subject leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school through book scrutiny, lesson observation and pupil voice and they have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

Organisation and planning

The Valley Community School uses the National Curriculum 2014 and the Agreed Bolton Syllabus as a vehicle for implementing a structured curriculum, which has continuity and progression at its core. It provides the reason and purpose for curriculum development.

The National Curriculum secures for all pupils, irrespective of social background, culture, race, gender, differences in ability and disabilities, an entitlement to a number of areas of learning and to develop knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes necessary for their self-fulfilment and development as active and responsible citizens.

The Structure of the National Curriculum

For each subject and for each key stage, programmes of study set out what pupils should be taught, and attainment targets set out the expected standard of pupil's performance.

The curriculum at The Valley Community School takes into account the following general teaching requirements that apply across the programmes of study: -

Setting suitable learning challenges.

Providing full access to all pupils.

Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs.

Setting tasks to meet the needs of SEN pupils and to challenge higher ability and gifted and talented pupils.

Overcoming barriers to learning and setting realistic targets for pupils.

Taking account of pupil's backgrounds, heritage and language needs.

Making cross-curricular links especially in English, Maths and ICT.

Developing the School Curriculum

The curriculum is responsive to changes in society and the economy, and changes in national initiatives. Staff at the Valley Community School, individually and collectively, have to reappraise their teaching in response to the changing needs of their pupils and the impact of economic, social and cultural change. Staff have worked together to make the curriculum more creative and link subjects in a cross curricular way. In doing so Medium Term planning has moved away from the QCA schemes of work for individual subjects. The curriculum cannot remain static and is subject to annual review and more frequently when results of assessment indicate this is necessary.

Medium Term Curriculum Planning

The Medium Term Plans at the Valley School show how the Long Term Plans are put into action for each term. The medium term plans for the International Primary Curriculum have been adopted and adapted by staff in line with the six themes taught through the year in each year group. Objectives and suggested activities are recorded for each theme. The themes and medium term plans are located in each classroom and all plans are hyperlinked to a long term plan on the T drive. Children are assessed at the start of a theme and asked what they would like to learn about in the topic.

The Valley Community School uses the following documents in its Medium Term Planning.

ENGLISH – National Curriculum (2014)

MATHEMATICS – National Curriculum (2014)

SCIENCE – National Curriculum (2014)

COMPUTING – National Curriculum, LEA 'I can statements'.

RE – Bolton's Revised Agreed Syllabus.

HISTORY - National Curriculum (2014).

GEOGRAPHY – National Curriculum (2014).

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY – National Curriculum (2014).

ART – National Curriculum (2014).

PE – National Curriculum (2014).Based upon the Val Sabin scheme.

MUSIC – National Curriculum (2014).

P.H.S.E. and Citizenship- National Curriculum, Bolton guidelines, Adventure Service Challenge program and Aspects of the 'SEALS' program.

The skills checklist which has been developed from the National Curriculum ensures curriculum coverage and progression through school.

The Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception), follow the Development Matters Guidelines which cover all areas of the curriculum under the six areas of learning.

Letters and Sounds are used within Communication, Language and Literacy strand, in Nursery and continues through Foundation stage, Key Stage One and into Key Stage Two.

Short Term Curriculum Planning

In the Valley School short term plans are produced weekly and refer to single lessons or cross curricular lessons. Wherever possible short term plans are cross curricular and linked to half-termly age related themes. English, Mathematics, PE, Music and RE are taught as discrete subjects. From time to time specific whole school themes may be planned as in Road Safety or Book Weeks.

The format of the plan is the same for most subjects from Year 2 to 6 with the exception of English, Mathematics, Music, RE and PE which have an individual planning formats. Computing is taught as a separate skills based lesson. Plans reflect the levels of ability of the pupils and are differentiated to challenge all pupils and cater for different learning styles. Plans are shared with support staff and evaluated after lessons.

The Reception and Nursery classes produce plans, which reflect the six areas of learning from the EYFS framework (2014) and supported by the early years outcomes and objectives, taking account of child initiated and guided learning opportunities.

All plans are completed on the computer and hard copies of plans are kept in Planning Files within each classroom.

Planning is also hyperlinked to a long term plan which is located on the T drive. This allows all staff to access planning for any class within school and from home via remote access.

The Purpose of Short Term Plans

Short term plans cover the day-to-day management of teaching in the classroom. What are we learning today? What are the learning objectives and the activities that support that learning? What work is to be done by the pupils, including those with special needs, higher ability or gifted and talented and when? Who will I support?

What are the Teaching Assistants going to do and when? What ICT is to be used in teaching and learning? What cross curricular learning will take place? How will learning be recorded?

Short term plans fit alongside the timetable and indicate differentiated learning objectives, activities, and the organisation of pupils, staff and resources. Subjects including ICT are integrated where applicable, and ICT is increasingly used to teach or support subjects.

Details of assessment and evaluations are part of the Short Term Plan and are used when appropriate to inform future planning.

Good Short Term Plans are not just for accountability but highlight the positive contribution teachers are making to the teaching and learning which is taking place.

Guidance on Completion of Short Term IPC Plans

Using the IPC plan out the work for your class ensuring the requirements of the National Curriculum are being met (coordinators have given guidance on where stand alone lessons may be needed to ensure coverage).

Make sure you assess children's prior knowledge and build upon this.

Ensure the entry point experience with the children is well planned and relevant.

Plan and organise the exit point reporting to parents.

Ensure that 70% of all lessons are appropriately differentiated.

Assess and record progress and attainment using the assessment tool on the IPC and the SPTO subject specific section on the school tracker.

Ensure, where appropriate, links to particular writing genres in English are used. Update displays of children's work.

Make sure that the ITC opportunities to develop skills and knowledge are fully taken advantage of.

Appendix 1

The overview of the approach of IPC

The Learning Goals are the foundation on which the International Primary Curriculum is built.

The Learning Goals define what children might be expected to know, what they might be able to do and the understandings they might develop as they move through school. Well written learning goals guide teaching and learning and help to focus assessment and evaluation. We believe that the IPC Learning Goals are equal to or exceed those of any curriculum in the world.

The subject goals

The subject goals cover the knowledge (the facts and information children might learn), the skills (those practical abilities children need to be able to do) and the understandings (the deeper awareness of key concepts which develops over time). There are subject Learning Goals for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Information Technology, Design Technology, History, Geography, Music, Physical Education, Art and Society.

Some examples of IPC subject goals are:

- Know the basic structure elements of word structure
- Be able to recognise and use nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs
- Know about the main events, dates and characteristics of the past societies they have studied
- Be able to gather information from simple sources
- Understand that the past can be considered in terms of different time periods
- Know how a number of musicians – including some from their home country and the host country – combine musical elements within a structure
- Be able to compose musical pieces combining musical elements within a structure
- Understand that musicians use music to express emotions and experiences

The personal goals

The personal goals refer to those individual qualities and dispositions we believe children will find essential in the 21st century. They help to develop those qualities that will enable children to be at ease with the continually changing context of their lives. There are personal goals for enquiry, resilience, morality, communication, thoughtfulness, cooperation, respect and adaptability.

As an example of some of the IPC Learning Goals for Adaptability, children, through their study of the IPC will learn to:

- Know about a range of views, cultures and traditions
- Be able to consider and respect the views, cultures and traditions of other people
- Be able to cope with unfamiliar situations
- Be able to approach tasks with confidence
- Be able to suggest and explore new roles, ideas, and strategies
- Be able to move between conventional and more fluid forms of thinking
- Be able to be at ease with themselves in a variety of situations

The international goals

The International Primary Curriculum is unique in defining learning goals that help young children begin the move towards an increasingly sophisticated national and international perspective.

The IPC's view of an international perspective is based upon:

- A knowledge and understanding of one's own national culture. International is both inter and national
- An awareness and understanding of the independence of and the interdependence between peoples

- An awareness and understanding of the independence of and interdependence between countries
- An awareness and understanding of the essential similarities between the peoples and countries of the world
- A developing ability to be at ease with others who are different from ourselves

Knowledge, skills and understanding

All the IPC learning goals include the development of knowledge, skills and understanding; an essential combination to ensure the most effective learning experience. The learning tasks within each IPC unit guide teachers through the process of helping children develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.

