
Curriculum Policy

Introduction

At Lower Fields Primary Academy we believe that the curriculum is a powerful tool that promotes a love of learning, a willingness to explore and the opportunity for pupils to enjoy a wide range of learning experiences. Our schemes of work reflect the content and challenge of the 2014 National Curriculum but also aim to develop children's skills for life-long learning. The curriculum is further enriched by our strong ethos based on respect for ourselves and others, equality and a sense of wonder at the world we live in. We are committed to developing the whole child. Our children will have the opportunity to be creative, physically active, academically challenged and experience learning inside and outside the classroom.

We continually review and improve the curriculum we offer to our children. The curriculum at Lower Fields is evolving according to the needs of our children, the aspirations of the staff and any relevant National developments.

The development of English and mathematical skills are our highest priority, however we ensure that all children receive a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes enquiry and creativity. Our curriculum helps to develop pupils not just academically but also encourages perseverance; co-operation and physical development. We actively promote strong values such as tolerance and respect and offer high quality Personal, Social and Health Education to prepare children positively for life in modern Britain.

A range of visits and visitors bring the curriculum alive and our regular use of the school grounds as a valuable resource adds diversity and helps to develop an interest in nature and a love of the outdoors. In the Foundation Stage, each broad topic area incorporates a number of areas of learning alongside the children's own interests. In Key Stage One and Two we work on a topic based approach. Each topic may incorporate a number of different subject areas but will be driven by one key subject from either History, Geography or Science. Good quality texts are incorporated into the topic. They may link to the rest of the topic or may sit outside the main topic. Good quality picture books are used throughout the school. In Key Stage 2 there are a mixture of picture books and longer texts used to build up reading stamina.

A carefully planned programme of themed days and weeks takes place over the school year. These encourage whole school participation and allow all children in the school to share and develop their learning through a theme. These special days or weeks are enriched with outdoor activities, creative elements and writing for a purpose.

The purchase of a wide range of handheld devices and computers has impacted on improved links with ICT and provides opportunities for children to apply their computing skills across the curriculum.

All pupils participate in regular physical activity which increases fitness and helps them to be ready for learning. Pupils have at least 2 hours of physical education during the week, in addition they have the opportunity to take part in bike riding, running, walking or dance as part of shorter bursts of physical activity. Children have the opportunity to participate in a variety of competitive sports within school and in partnership with other schools.

Music is an important part of school life at Lower Fields. Our children have the opportunity to experience good quality music lessons, listen to a wide range of music, compose, perform and sing regularly. Music is used to encourage co-operation, perseverance and teamwork as well as to develop a love of music in our children.

Pupils throughout school participate in regular acts of collective worship. Religious Education lessons cover Christianity and a wide range of other religions. Across school a variety of religious festivals are marked in many different ways e.g. visitors, themed day, assembly.

Values

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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.

We value parents and work in partnership with them to enrich the curriculum. Parents are informed about the curriculum through the website, social media, homework and assemblies.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of our school curriculum are:

- To enable all children to understand that they are all successful learners
- To enable children to understand the skills and attributes needed to be a successful learner
- To enable children to develop their own personal interests
- 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 information technology
- To enable children to be creative through art, dance, music, drama and design technology
- To enable children to be healthy individuals who enjoy sport and appreciate the importance of a healthy lifestyle
- To teach children about their developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time
- To help children to understand Britain's cultural heritage
- To enable children to be positive citizens in society and to feel like they can make a difference
- To enable children to understand and respect other cultures
- To fulfil 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 understand right from wrong, truth and fairness
- To enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem and to be able to work co-operatively with others
- To enable children to be passionate about what they believe in and to develop their own thinking
- To enable children to ask questions and take risks

Organisation and Planning

Our curriculum is planned in different ways. A long-term plan is agreed for each key stage. This indicates which topics are taught in each term. In our medium term plans, clear objectives and skills are indicated for each topic to ensure there is adequate and appropriate curriculum coverage. Outdoor learning activities, curriculum enrichment and opportunities to involve parents in their children's learning are also included in these plans.

The curriculum is planned carefully, so that there is coherence and full coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum and Early Learning Goals (EYFS) and there is planned progression in all curriculum areas. This is then monitored closely over the school year by subject managers and any training requirements, resources or adaptations will be addressed.

Children with Special Needs

The curriculum 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 their individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice in providing for children with special needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs his/her teacher makes an assessment of this need. In most instances the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe then appropriate action will be taken involving the appropriate agencies. Additional resources will be provided for children with special needs.

The Foundation Stage

The curriculum that we teach in EYFS meets the requirements set out in the revised National Curriculum at Foundation Stage. The curriculum planning focuses on the six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication - language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play and by engaging in well-planned and structured activities. Teaching in the Foundation Stage builds on the experiences and interests of the children. We do all we can to build positive relationships with parents and involve them fully in their children's learning.

During the children's first term in school, their teachers begin to assess each child. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child.

As a school, we are all 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 having a carefully planned induction process including home visits. This relationship is nurtured through Foundation Stage and onto KS1 and KS2.

The Teaching of Reading at Lower Fields Primary Academy

Aims

Reading skills are an integral part of learning throughout the curriculum, children learn to read but also learn through reading. At Lower Fields we aim to develop positive attitudes towards reading so that it is a pleasurable and meaningful activity. Pupils need to read and respond to a variety of texts whilst gaining an increased level of fluency, accuracy, independence and understanding.

Entitlement

Pupils have access to a wide range of reading opportunities that include:

- Shared reading
- Guided reading
- Independent reading

- Home/school reading books
- Reading whole texts in English lessons
- Selecting books from the school Library
- ICT texts

We have invested in a range of resources to support the teaching of reading and phonics at Lower Fields from: Songbirds, Floppy's Phonics, Project X, Oxford Reading Tree and a variety of more challenging banded books. To help children to develop a love of reading, new and classic texts enhance reading and writing lessons.

The Accelerated Reader approach runs in Years 4, 5 and 6. The popular texts and on-line quizzes allow children to develop their comprehension skills. The competitive element of the scheme encourages children to read more frequently in and out of school. Each week, the children's progress and accuracy is carefully monitored and appropriate interventions put in place to address any problems.

In Years 1 – 6 all children take part in a whole class reading lesson every day. The children access a wide variety of high quality and challenging texts across school. They study the text carefully and in detail focussing on vocabulary, comprehension skills, inference and deduction. They complete reading response activities in a reading journal. During these lessons, they have the opportunity to take part in discussions, write in response to the text and identify themes and symbolism used by the authors in the texts.

The whole school community are committed to ensuring all children have every opportunity to read frequently to an adult. Reading Champions (a wide range of school staff) and Reading Buddies (older children in school), read regularly with children who need to further develop their reading skills. They build up a good relationship with the children and promote good reading habits.

A reading challenge runs from Years 1 to 6, which involves children reading a wide selection of popular children's texts. Each half term, a prize draw is made for those children who have participated. The reading challenge texts are listed in children's diaries and on the school website.

Lower Fields is an open school for reading. Parents can visit the school library with their children before and after school to borrow or buy a wide selection of books. The school library is regularly stocked with new titles, which interest the children. It opens 2 lunchtimes a week so that children have the opportunity to change their library books or to come in and enjoy a story.