



# Curriculum Policy

*...Our aim is to include, engage and challenge individuals within a stimulating learning environment to prepare them as responsible global citizens...*

AVA/Berryfields Vision Statement 2013

## **Aims of the Curriculum**

- To support the school's vision and aims and to deliver the programmes of study of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and National Curriculum, meeting the individual needs of each pupil.
- To equip children with learning skills that empower them to become self-motivated, life-long learners who take risks and strive for their best achievement, able to work both independently and collaboratively.
- To instil excellent oracy and literacy skills and to develop other key skills, enabling pupils to make excellent progress in reading and language acquisition, and to acquire knowledge and understanding which equips them for future stages of education and employment.
- To promote fundamental British Values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; enabling pupils to take responsibility for their actions and to take pride in all they do.
- To developing a thirst for new knowledge and skills, allowing creativity to thrive.

## **Principles of the Curriculum**

Although the school serves its pupils and the community in a variety of ways, its core purpose is to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum through outstanding teaching and learning. We strive to ensure our curriculum is accessible to all by making it exciting, inspiring, relevant and purposeful. All children receive a consistent experience that leads to their making excellent progress.

We celebrate children's individual achievements, strengths and success and have high aspirations so that all children can achieve.

Our curriculum has a firm Christian and moral ethos, where views and ideas are respected and valued. We work together so that we become active members of the community and citizens of the world, understanding how we relate to the world around us.

Where possible and appropriate, the curriculum is planned using cross-curricular topics or themes. However it is flexible and responsive to children's ideas and interests; local and world issues and news events; and issues and events occurring in school.

Our curriculum provides children with a range of learning experiences through the following:

- A strong emphasis on stories and story telling
- The use of WOW experiences to help motivate and engage children
- Opportunities to create, make or cook and perform, in school and beyond
- Opportunities to take independent or group responsibility, such as looking after a plant or running an enterprise
- The use of new and multimedia resources
- The use of visits and visitors for day and residential visits, specialist workshops or activities and by linking to external and community events
- Opportunities to work independently and collaboratively in mixed ability and ability groups
- Opportunities for parents to come into school to both celebrate children success and to support learning
- Special curriculum days or weeks, involving vertical grouping, exchange of teachers (within the primary school and from the secondary phase) and inter-school competitions
- Use of outdoor learning



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## Curriculum Organisation

In Nursery and Reception the curriculum is organised according to the *7 Areas of Learning and Development* of the *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)*: developing the *prime areas* of *communication and language*, *physical development* and *personal, social and emotional development* which underpin the *specific areas* of *literacy*, *mathematics*, *understanding the world* and *expressive arts and design*. Learning is organised through themes and topics that are shared across the two year groups. Largely active and play-based, pupils experience a range of adult or child initiated activities throughout the day including daily phonics and number work.

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, systematic, synthetic phonics sessions take place daily, using the (OUP) *Read, Write, Inc* scheme. Phonics groups are set by ability and also include guided reading and opportunities to apply their growing phonic awareness in writing. Guided reading takes place in Nursery when the children are ready to work in this way, usually in the Spring term of the N2 year and children who are ready to do so may start having short phonics sessions in the Spring or Summer term to begin to learn the first set of sounds.

In Key Stage 1 (and particularly Year 1) pupils experience a similar environment to that of the Early Years Foundation Stage, but with increasing formality as they progress towards the end of Year 2. Once pupils have completed the Early Years Foundations Stage they follow the programmes of study from the *National Curriculum* and the *Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education*. Pupils participate in daily phonics lessons and daily guided reading sessions, which are set by ability and are additional to daily literacy and mathematics lessons.

Similarly in Key Stage 2, literacy and mathematics are taught daily in addition to daily phonics, spelling and grammar lessons and guided reading. Additionally pupils learn Spanish and swimming is included in the KS2 curriculum and pupils have the opportunity to attend a residential visit in Years 4 and 6.

In both Key Stage 1 and 2 most other subjects are delivered through an overall theme or topic each term and teachers track the coverage of the programmes of study for each subject over the course of each year and key stage to ensure they are fully covered. Topics often begin with a 'wow' starter and/or are enriched by educational visits or workshops in school. Children have 2 physical education lessons each week with 1 lesson sometimes taught by a visiting coach or specialist PE teacher from the secondary part of the Academy.

Learning in literacy is largely based on story-telling (where pupils develop their language skills by hearing and re-telling stories, before doing writing of their own. Where appropriate, this is linked to an overall theme or topic which links other subjects (science, history, geography, music, art and design technology) together to help make learning engaging and relevant and to promote the development of key skills across the whole curriculum. Children listen to and read class stories and have opportunities to read a range of fiction and non-fiction books in class.

Computing is taught through lessons in the school's ICT suite or through the use of a whole class set of laptops and IT skills are further developed in other curriculum areas in the classroom.

The curriculum is enhanced through the use of a variety of different media or modes of learning such as: art, music, collaboration, research, real-life application or enterprise, media, drama, themed days or weeks (sometimes including vertical grouping), inter-school competition and outdoor learning.

Parents and other family members are involved as much as possible, through the use of home learning activities and through open events when parents or grandparents join us in school for inter-generational learning and collaboration.



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## **Independent learning**

The curriculum aims to encourage children to be independent learners so that they can acquire knowledge by their own efforts and can therefore develop the skills of enquiry and critical evaluation. We encourage and enable our students to become self-directed in their learning experiences and to have more autonomy and control over their learning. This involves children:

- Finding and collecting information
- Making decisions about what to study and when
- Leading their own learning
- Carrying out their own investigations or projects
- Learning at their own pace
- Completing homework
- Using known knowledge in other contexts
- Becoming self-motivated
- Becoming life-long learners

We encourage independent learning by:

- Giving pupils choices so they can reflect on their own interests and preferences
- Encouraging group work so that learners can learn from each other
- Collaborate with pupils to set shared learning goals
- Involve pupils in lesson planning
- Encourage pupils to reflect on their learning
- Encourage self and peer editing before work is handed in
- Creating a learning environment which supports independent learning
- Encourage pupils to use equipment when needed
- Encouraging children to take risks
- Giving opportunities for children to share their knowledge
- Children choosing their own challenge
- Children understanding how and what they need to do to improve their work

## **Assessment and Interventions**

Pupils will be set clear learning objectives and sharp, measurable success criteria within each lesson or sequence of lessons. This enables staff and pupils to evaluate their own and each other's learning and set targets for future improvement. This daily, 'formative' assessment is used to plan next steps for pupils to ensure they make maximum progress.

The school closely measures attainment and progress at key points in each school year and across a child's school career. Using Early Years Foundations Stage or National Curriculum outcomes and phonics tests. Teachers compare pupils' attainment and progress with national expectations, against their own prior attainment and against different groups within the school. This information is used to set targets for groups and individuals and to identify where additional support is needed.

Having identified those who are under-achieving or who are at risk of doing so, the school strives to ensure that gaps in skills, knowledge and understanding are identified and closed, through the use of a variety of targeted interventions delivered by both teachers and teaching assistants.



# Curriculum Policy

## **Inclusion**

Our pupils are entitled to a curriculum delivered through a variety of appropriate teaching and learning styles which create conditions for effective learning. This will include provision for pupils with specific needs, whether they require support or extension work for the more able, as well as those for whom English is not their first language.

- Set suitable learning challenges
- Respond to pupils diverse learning needs
- Overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

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