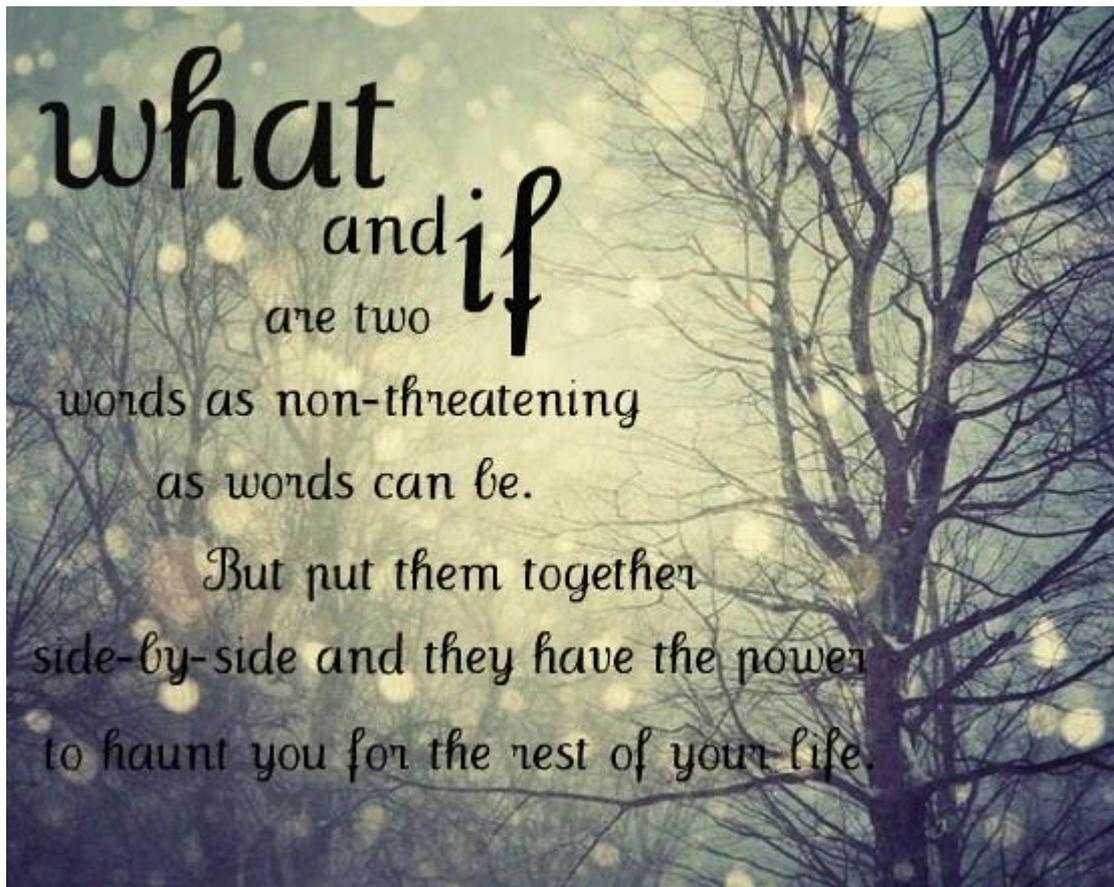


Oxton St Saviour's CE (Aided) Primary School



Curriculum Design

INTRODUCTION

This guidance document is intended for all stakeholders at Oxton St Saviour's CE (Aided) Primary School who would like to find out more about the curriculum that our school is following and how it is designed and structured.

SECTION ONE

Characteristics and Context of Our School

Within our school we have a mix of children from diverse backgrounds. There are 248 children on roll, with relatively low numbers of:

- free school meals
- special educational needs
- English as an additional language

Our numbers, and the population of the school, remain relatively static.

Classes and Groups

Our school places children in groups in various ways for different purposes. In KS2 children are placed into classes representing each year group and are taught in mixed ability sets for mathematics and English. This method of teaching caters effectively for differences between attainment of children and addresses the large class sizes which are 35 or over in KS2.

The school feels that, on occasions, ability grouping ensures children receive teaching that is well matched to their needs. At other times, children split into mixed ability groups or are allowed to form their own groups. They are also organised in other ways to help broaden their experience of working with children outside their friendship or ability groups. Occasionally, lessons are taught in single-sex groups. We identify groups or individuals, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, who need additional or different lessons and activities, because their abilities or aptitudes are out of the ordinary.

Due to the school's standard number being 35 we have one vertically grouped class of Year One/Year Two pupils. All other classes are comprised of one year group only. The school is confident that such groupings support the children's academic development. The integrity of each year group and key stage band is maintained by ensuring that the children in each year group and band regularly undertake activities and school visits together.

SECTION TWO:

Flexibility Within the Curriculum

Our school has welcomed the considerable freedom to determine the character and distinctive nature of the curriculum which was brought about by the 2014 curriculum and we are looking at innovative and creative ways of using this flexibility.

What the law requires

All maintained schools are required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children which:

- promotes their spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development;
- prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Our school's curriculum reflects the structure of the 2014 national curriculum and we have also customised this basic entitlement to learning to create our own distinctive and unique curriculum.

Our school also has a daily act of collective worship. As a voluntary aided establishment we teach religious education according to the syllabus suggested by Chester Diocese.

SECTION THREE:

Designing our Curriculum

Values and Aims

Our aims are as follows:

We aim to provide a high standard of education by supporting, motivating and inspiring children.

We make it a priority to promote children's independence and confidence. We encourage them to act as responsible members of both the school community and the wider community demonstrating core British values in all that they do. Within this context, everyone is expected to show respect and tolerance for others, regardless of gender, race, sexuality, religion or culture. We support our aims in different ways through lessons, visits, extra-curricular activities, fund raising, community initiatives and assemblies, as well as other events.

Our school focuses on promoting well-being, resilience, good manners and self-esteem, believing these to be essential life skills in a quickly developing and challenging world. It values the feelings, interests and views of all members of the school community, and supports an ethos of openness between staff and pupils. As part of personal, social and health education (PSHE), teachers discuss well-being, resilience, good manners and self-esteem with their classes.

Curriculum Priorities and Emphasis

Our Curriculum Vision Statement:

‘We aim to deliver a creative curriculum which inspires independent and collaborative learning and stimulates curiosity in our children, making relevant links between different areas of learning whilst delivering skills and knowledge in a thorough, consistent and balanced way within school and beyond the classroom.’

Our school’s main priority, which links closely with well- being and self- esteem, is to offer a broad and balanced curriculum and to teach the programmes of study in each national curriculum subject which makes use of the indoor and outdoor areas of the site and cultural and educational experiences within the community, across Wirral and further afield in Merseyside and Cheshire.

We believe that our children need to become secure and confident learners in these subjects if they are to make good progress in their education. At the same time, rich and varied activities and experiences in the rest of the curriculum are also crucial to children’s motivation and progress.

We emphasise the teaching of IT, literacy and numeracy and these are taught each morning with skills being re-emphasised through lessons in other subjects in the afternoon. We believe that these basic skills will support children’s ability to compete in the working world in the future.

The Kinds of Learning That Are Important to Our Children

Our school is striving to increase progress in English and mathematics while continuing to offer a broad and balanced curriculum which can be appreciated both within and outside the classroom. Our planning provides a variety of opportunities for children to apply and develop their literacy and mathematical skills across the curriculum, particularly through history, science and design and technology. Projects and visits relating to these subjects motivate the children, and will help them to make faster progress in the core curriculum.

The school believes that children’s well- being, concentration and energy-levels improve when they are taking more exercise, so in addition to their one and a half hours of timetabled PE per week, all children are offered a broad range of extra- curricular sporting activities both in term time and during the holidays. Each lunch time an Active sports supervisor provides the children with a range of active play. Y5 Sport Leaders support the younger children in their games.

The school gained Forest School status three years ago and is implementing a rolling programme of outdoor activities linked with the elements of water, earth, air and fire.

Adding to the National Curriculum – Breadth and Balance

We teach a broad and balanced curriculum for EYFS, Key Stages 1 and Key Stage 2 which includes the following subjects:

English geography, mathematics history, science information & communication technology (ICT), art and design music, design and technology (D&T) physical education (PE) and religious education (RE)

We have also gained accreditation as a Forest School and hold the Green Eco flag. As a consequence, we also provide outdoor learning experiences for our children.

Our school strives to go beyond statutory requirements and add to the curriculum. We make use of the flexibilities available to us to enhance our curriculum. Additional opportunities and experiences that enhance learning in national curriculum subjects include visits to theatres, museums and galleries, residential trips, inter-school sports competitions and opportunities to work with local artists.

Additional subjects or aspects of subjects, such as a modern foreign language, PSHE and citizenship; extra – curricula clubs and activities based on interest and need, such as French, Spanish, Mad Science, ICT, sports and homework clubs are usually held before school, in the lunch break or after school.

We believe in involving children in decision-making about the day-to-day running of the school. Children have a key role in drawing up and reviewing the school's Code of Conduct and in setting behaviour sanctions. They take part in the democratic process of voting for sports ambassadors and school council representatives. Our children sit on a local community panel looking at issues such as anti-bullying.

What We Add to the Curriculum Outside Taught Time

Our school takes part in a broad range of competitive sports played against other local schools. We have found that this is having an impact on its games lessons in PE, as children are eager to share the skills and strategies they have learned. One of our main priorities is to promote children's overall health and fitness. In addition to the one and a half hours of timetabled PE each week, after-school sports activities are organised for four days each week. These activities vary each term and include netball, athletics, tag rugby, fencing rounders and gymnastics clubs. The clubs are well attended and help to maintain children's fitness, boost their self-confidence and encourage their interest in a wide range of sports. They also involve most children in two hours or more of physical activity at school each week.

Our school also offers science, IT and language clubs on a weekly basis. We feel strongly that this provision is meeting a variety of interests and providing opportunities for children to be challenged and to enjoy themselves. Ideas for classes often come from the children or from parents and, after several requests, the school recently extended its music provision. The school now invites in to school specialist music teachers so that all children who are interested in learning to play a musical instrument can do so.

Organising and Labelling the Curriculum

The coherence of our curriculum has been strengthened by combining aspects of one subject with those of another. Through topic planning, our school is able to combine related or complementary aspects of each programme of study from two or three subjects to plan a single unit of work or topic. Learning objectives for each individual subject continue to be covered over the course of this sequence of work.

Our members of staff plan units of work that package together some aspects of art and design, dance, drama and music as 'the arts', and some aspects of science, design and technology and ICT as 'science and technology'. In addition, some aspects of history, geography and PSHE have been brought together as topics. English, mathematics, PE and RE are always taught as separate subjects, but explicit links are made with the blocks of work in other subjects so that children's skills, knowledge and understanding can be applied in a range of contexts. The school feels that this dual approach ensures that children have a rich and varied learning experience, and are able to make connections across subjects.

The 'Rainbow Continuum' is used to ensure progression of skills, knowledge and understanding.

Distributing the Curriculum Across the Key Stage

Each class and each phase (F2, KS1, Lower KS2 and Upper KS2) have constructed long term plans to outline when subjects, units of work or topics are to be taught: daily, weekly, half-termly, and termly. These are further developed in Curriculum Booklets which are made available to parents on our school website (Curriculum Page).

Having organised the curriculum, our teaching staff decide how it will be distributed. Some subjects need to be taught regularly, for example, English and mathematics are taught daily so that children's progress is continuous and sustained across the key stages. PE is also taught each week to develop children's physical skills and promote their fitness and health.

Other subjects are not necessarily taught every week, every half term or even every term. For example, a subject might be taught in every other term across Key Stage 2.

Schemes Used Within School

1/ Teaching Phonics and Reading in EYFS, KS1 and KS2

All children in Reception are taught synthetic phonics in order to help them read and write. We use schemes including 'Letters and Sounds' and 'Jolly Phonics' to help us do this. This work is reinforced through all activities including handwriting. At the end of Year One all children are tested on their basic knowledge of phonics (initial sounds and blends) children continue to work on elements of phonics until they are proficient through the rest of KS1 and KS2. Children who do not achieve the national standard in the Year One Phonics test will be re-tested at the end of Year Two. Children use a wide variety of scheme books to support their reading - the main one being 'Oxford Reading Tree'. Children are encouraged to read widely from a range of 'free reading' genre to develop their vocabulary and love of the written word.

2/ Teaching Mathematics in KS1 and KS2

Children in Years One to Three undertake the 'Singapore' mathematics methodology through a scheme called 'Maths – No Problem'. In Years Four to Six a complementary scheme called 'White Rose' is used. Both schemes focus upon teaching to mastery – developing children's higher order thinking skills.

3/ Teaching Writing in KS1 and KS2

All children, from EYFS to Year Six, develop their writing skills through high quality literature following a programme called 'The Power of Reading'. The aim of this programme is to develop high quality writing whilst fostering a love of fiction and non-fiction.

4/ Teaching Grammar and Punctuation in KS1 and KS2

The 'Babcock' grammar scheme is used to develop children's grammatical awareness and their ability to effectively structure writing across the curriculum.

Curriculum Inclusion and Differentiation

All our children are provided with relevant learning experiences and suitably challenging work. When planning, teachers set high expectations and provide opportunities for all children to achieve, including boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children with disabilities, children from all

social and cultural backgrounds and children of different ethnic groups including those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

The school has an up to date Accessibility Plan which details how the curriculum will be adapted for children with different abilities and needs. As an inclusive school we ensure that all areas of the school are accessible to all children and all activities – both within and outside the school gates are accessible. The school differentiates tasks to allow accessibility and further enhance children's higher order thinking skills.

Whilst our school aims to cover the age-related programmes of study for each subject, we decide upon adaptations to the curriculum in order to meet particular needs and abilities. We do this through differentiation and through special timetabling arrangements. If children do not follow the normal timetable for the class, for example when they are withdrawn for additional support in literacy or mathematics, specialist instrumental tuition or for additional or different interventions we ensure that they do not consistently miss out on one part of the curriculum. It is important to us that all our children continue to receive a broad and balanced curriculum.

While still teaching from the age-related programmes of study, our teachers extend the breadth and depth of children's learning by providing a wider variety of opportunities. For example, they will focus on developing higher order thinking skills and promoting greater independence and reflection.

How We Adapt the Curriculum to Meet Different Needs of Children

For less able children, the school pays for external support teachers to visit school to support with music, reading, writing, spelling (including phonics), mathematics and speech and language.

We use specialist teachers to support children who are learning English as an additional language. These teachers plan alongside the class teacher and adapt lessons and resources so that EAL children can learn in ways that support their language development,

The more able children undertake a broad range of challenge activities. This differentiation allows the school to accelerate and extend children's learning within each subject. At Key Stage 2, as well as providing for gifted and talented children through timetabled lessons, the more able are offered alternative homework and G&T opportunities within the locality.

Curriculum Continuity

Children of all abilities can falter in their learning when they move from one phase of education to the next, or between key stages. They may be faced with an unfamiliar environment and new styles of teaching and learning. We support continuity and progression across these stages through careful curriculum planning and timetabling arrangements.

F2 to KS1

The school has created three outdoor areas to support the learning of children moving from F2 to Year One. These are used effectively to ensure that a sudden halt to continuous provision does not occur for those children who still require it. We further support the transition from the foundation stage into Key Stage 1 by gradually establishing more formal timetables and routines and through some joint planning by Reception and Year 1 teachers.

Year 1 and reception teachers focus on ensuring continuity in children's learning by planning topics together and introducing reception children to some of the routines of the Year 1 class. Some topics are also linked between the years, so that the children can be encouraged to remember and build on their learning in the foundation stage.

KS1 to KS2

The curriculum design in KS1 and KS2 is intentionally similar in style to ensure that progression from one stage to the next is smooth. Both Key Stages use the Rainbow Curriculum and plan lessons in a very similar format.

KS2 to KS3

The primary to secondary transition, from a small group of familiar class teachers to numerous new teachers for different subjects, is particularly difficult for some children. As a school we attach great importance to preparing our children for the transition. We work with many of our partner secondary schools in a variety of ways to help children settle down quickly in their new environment and make a confident start to the key stage 3 curriculum.

Secondary teachers come in to school to meet with the children and will make links to work that the children will meet in year 7. The children become familiar with some aspects of the next key stage and have the opportunity to ask questions about secondary school. Y6 teachers attend training at one of our local secondary schools to support more able children with secondary strategies for learning. For children who find the transition more challenging the school works with their secondary colleagues to arrange a longer sequenced transition process.

SECTION FOUR

Timetabling the Curriculum

Building the Timetable

When constructing our timetable, we have made decisions about the total time available for teaching – the number of weeks in the year and the length of the school day. Constraints are taken into account, particularly the number and availability of staff, as well as accommodation available.

The Number of Terms

The school runs three terms a year and is confident that this best supports the children's learning. It can see no benefits of altering this status quo in the immediate future. The current disadvantages of changes would be that the school opening times would not reflect those of the secondary school thus, potentially, creating more issues with unauthorised holidays.

The Number of Teaching Hours in the Week

In line with DFS requirements, our school provides a minimum of 21 hours of teaching time each week for children in Key Stage 1 and a minimum of 23.5 hours of teaching time each week for children in Key Stage 2, exclusive of registration, collective worship, breaks and lunch.

The school starts its day at 9:00am and finishes at 3:30pm (Refer to the School Prospectus on website for more detail).

Lesson Length

Lesson length varies according to the age of the children, the content of the lesson and the type of activity. Our teachers are familiar with the demands of other subjects and will know that the optimum lesson length may vary from subject to subject. Subjects that involve practical work may sometimes need extended periods of time if children are to achieve something worthwhile in each lesson. For example, in design and technology, children need time to get out and tidy away equipment. In PE, children may need time to set up and put away apparatus, as well as time to change their clothes. For some activities, for example those which involve sustained writing, children may need to concentrate without interruption if they are to complete a piece of work within the lesson. Class teachers provide the Head teacher with a weekly timetable at the beginning of each half term detailing length of lessons and subjects being taught.

The Time Allocated to Each Subject

Good teaching and learning depend on sensible time allocations and the effective use of time. Too much time may produce too leisurely a pace of learning; too little time will make it impossible for a teacher to cover the programme of study effectively. Different subjects require different amounts of time. There are no statutory time allocations for national curriculum subjects.

In our school, mathematics and English are taught each morning with skills learnt being reinforced in the afternoon lessons. All other subjects are taught for approximately one hour per week. This time may be placed together in a block within or between half terms to support our values and aims and to meet the requirements of children, topic titles and lesson preparation.

Our school devotes two hours a week to Forest School activities in KS1 because it believes that the geography and science involved together with access to open air learning, promotes fundamentally important skills that support children's learning across the curriculum. For example, thinking skills such as enquiry, reasoning and evaluation are important aspects of science and can be used in many other areas of the children's work. This prioritising still allows the school to cover the programmes of study for other subjects.

When We Teach Each Subject

The type and sequence of lessons across the school day and week are planned so that children's interest and motivation is sustained. We ensure that there should be a balance between activities with a practical or physical element and those that are mainly pencil-and-paper based. In addition, the balance between activities that children do as part of a whole class, a group or individually are considered within lessons and across the day.

We also take into account the time of day at which particular subjects are taught. For example, we teach both literacy and mathematics lessons in the morning session from Year 1 through to Year 6. This pattern gives a clear focus to the morning's timetable, and helps children become accustomed to particular routines.

Years 1 to 6 have one 20 minute lesson and two one-hour lessons in the morning.

KS1 then have one one-hour lesson and one 55-minute lesson in the afternoon.

KS2 have two one hour lessons and a 40 minute lesson in the afternoon.

Working with this structure, class teachers can decide on their own timetable, using the following principles agreed by all staff:

1. There must be daily one-hour lessons of literacy and mathematics.
2. Most of the literacy and mathematics lessons must be in the morning.
3. There must also be two one-hour lessons for science each week.
4. PE must be taught every week and on at least two occasions.
5. Afternoon lessons can be combined to create a single longer lesson.

The Organisation of Intervention for English and Mathematics:

Intervention is provided for children who would benefit from additional support in English and/or mathematics. The overall aim is to help children do as well as possible by the end of each year and achieve in line with age related expectations and higher. The ultimate aim is to ensure that children enter their next key stage confident and well prepared for the next stage of their education.

There are three general ways the school timetables intervention programmes and booster support:

- as focused support during English and mathematics lessons.
- Through withdrawal from lessons.
- In extra classes outside taught time, particularly at key stage 2. These classes might take place before school, in the lunch break, or after school.

Where intervention programmes occur during taught time and children are withdrawn from other national curriculum subjects, our school we make careful decisions about staffing and timetabling to ensure that all children continue to receive a broad and balanced curriculum.

Examples of Interventions provided by our school (this is not an exhaustive list – intervention is taught on a needs basis only):

- In Year 1 children are withdrawn during the spring and summer terms for Early Literacy Support sessions. This means they can still take part in the range of literacy activities planned for the class. The school also ensures that they do not miss out on PE, because it considers sport to be a priority.
- Springboard mathematics groups for KS2 children identified as struggling with basic number operations. They receive additional teaching in the afternoon sessions each week. The timetabling of these lessons varies, so that the children do not miss out on any one area of the curriculum.
- Year 6 booster classes are taught in the spring and summer term after school from 3:45pm to 4:15pm. Drinks and biscuits are offered during these classes, as they take place when children's energy levels can be low. The refreshments have also proved to be an incentive for the children to attend.
- The school will support children performing below expectations in English and mathematics as timetabled additional 'catch up' sessions for particular groups throughout the year.
- Nesy spelling support from SENCO
- Orrets Meadow Intervention for literacy (SLA)
- Mission Maths, ELS, spelling and phonic support are offered in KS1.

The Effective Use of Resources

Our school has some flexibility in deciding how we deploy staff and resources in order to meet children's needs and to deliver the curriculum. We also have to consider how resourcing might affect the structure of the timetable.

Careful timetabling of resources such as specific rooms, IT equipment, teaching assistants and artefacts maximises the use of our resources.

Our school timetables slots for all classes in the hall and with laptops, group rooms and IT equipment so that they are put to maximum use throughout the school day. Some slots, particularly at the beginning and end of the morning and afternoon sessions, are left free to allow individuals and small groups from different classes to receive targeted support. For example, to support our school's commitment to music a group room is used solely for this purpose each afternoon. Skills of staff are also shared so that teachers with particular subject strengths are used within groups of classes to support teaching.

SECTION FIVE

Location of Documents

Long term plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website• Teachers' planning files
Medium term plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff shared drive• Teachers' planning files
Short term plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers' planning files
Pupil data and details of groupings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Target Tracker• Teachers' planning files
Curriculum Booklets for each term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website• Teachers' planning files

Review of Curriculum Design

Our curriculum design is regularly reviewed as a response to parent questionnaires, subject leader and senior leader meetings, discussions with children and governor meetings. It is also informed by good practice and DfE guidelines.

Mr A Ramsden
Head teacher