



## **Deanshanger Primary School**

### **Curriculum Policy**

#### **Introduction**

In order to meet our aims and objectives, our curriculum is designed not only to fulfil statutory requirements, but also to enthuse our children with a deep and lifelong love of learning.

From September 2017 Ofsted inspectors will be asking schools to provide a detailed and in-depth explanation of how and why their curriculum is designed as it is. Ofsted has shifted the inspection focus to curriculum in response to some schools who are offering a very narrow curriculum because of the pressure to raise standards in the core subjects.

Our curriculum will help our children to:

- communicate effectively – orally, in writing, through the use of mathematics and through the expressive arts;
- develop a wide range of academic and personal skills that will equip them for a fulfilling and successful life now and in the future;
- explore and understand the world we live in and the people we share it with;
- develop an appreciation of the interdependence of individuals, groups and nations – and how everyone can be a useful member of the various communities we inhabit;
- develop personal, moral, cultural and spiritual values, including respect for others;
- prepare for the opportunities and responsibilities of life in a changing world;
- learn how to learn, and to regard learning as an enjoyable and lifelong activity;
- develop a wide range of interests inside and outside school
- appreciate the need for a healthy lifestyle;
- set personal standards of achievement, and targets which aspire towards excellence and personal success.

To achieve these aims, our curriculum is planned to be:

- Broad - so that it provides a wide range of knowledge, skills and experiences;
- Balanced - so that each subject has sufficient time to contribute effectively to learning;
- Relevant - so that learning can link to the pupil's experience and to applications in the community and world at large;
- Coherent - so that topics can be linked to make the whole learning experience more meaningful;
- Progressive - so that what is taught builds in a systematic way upon what has already been learned;
- Differentiated - so that what is taught and the tasks that are set are matched to the aptitude and ability of each pupil;
- Accessible - so that there is equality of opportunity for all.

#### **Rationale**

Our approach to curriculum planning is deeply rooted in our chosen curriculum, the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), this works alongside the national curriculum. The IPC provides a creative context for cross curriculum learning include 'wow' experiences that engage the children in the learning process. It may be a visiting expert, an off-site trip or extended role-play at the start of a

unit, a presentation in a celebration assembly or large-scale construction to work towards at the end. The Arts are core to our IPC delivery, in line with our Arts Mark journey, alongside all subject areas.

Whilst many areas of learning will fit well within creative contexts, there will be a number of topics that do not link naturally – and no attempt will be made to establish tenuous links that do nothing to enhance the quality of learning. Instead, these areas will be taught in a different, effective manner – possibly as a single-subject block spread lasting a week, or as a weekly session spread over a term. Teachers have the flexibility to organise learning in ways which will optimise children's progress.

Pupils learn in a wide variety of ways. During the school week, teachers will use a range of teaching strategies in their classrooms. These may include -

- whole class teaching
- group teaching
- working independently

The particular strategy used will depend upon the teacher's judgement of how best to achieve the learning objectives for that lesson, and what learning style best meets the needs of the child. Teaching Assistants work alongside class teachers, assisting in the differentiation of lessons to meet individuals' needs.

To further meet the needs of children of different abilities within each class, teachers will organise the children into various groups and set suitably differentiated work for some activities. KS2 pupils are sometimes organised into inter-class ability sets for English and mathematics.

### **Further notes on English and maths**

In addition to developing literacy in context, there is also the need to secure the fundamental skills of reading and writing – and these will generally be taught in a structured manner.

Pupils in FS and KS1 will have regular phonics lessons.

Pupils in KS1 and KS2 will have regular lessons on spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Pupils in KS1 and KS2 will have a single-subject maths lesson most days based on the Abacus maths scheme. The skills learnt can then be applied within the creative context being followed in class.

Aside from the systematic teaching of fundamental skills, there is considerable flexibility in the timing and content of English lessons. Some weeks, most of the English to be covered will be included in cross-curricular work, eliminating the traditional boundaries between subjects. At such times there will be little need for separate extended English lessons which are not linked to the creative context. In other weeks, there will be a focus on the development of skills that do not easily link to the creative context – and at such times daily English lessons (with or without ability groupings) can operate, and this may be the most effective way of working with certain cohorts (and is certainly the normal approach in Year 6 when working towards SATs).

A similar strategy applies to maths – although there is more need for a separate maths lesson on the majority of days. Nevertheless, many aspects of maths can be effectively developed within cross-curricular themes – such as data handling linked to science investigations, symmetry linked to art, etc. There should also be a flexible approach to ability-grouping for maths, as some children who have difficulty with number may be very able in measuring and spatial work.

## Organisation and Planning

Our curriculum planning has just three main components:

### **A whole-year plan for each year group**

This is comprised of six separate plans, one for each term. They indicate the cross-curricular topics to be taught in each term, and the curriculum content defined in terms of National Curriculum subjects. Copies of these plans are filed in staff network files – Planning.

Teachers often supplement these plans with ‘term planners’ which map out in more detail the coverage in each week.

### **Termly plans for cross-curricular subjects:**

These form the core of the working creative contexts. Copies are stored on the school network for subjects other than English and maths.

### **Weekly detailed plans for English and maths**

These give clear guidance on the learning objectives, success criteria and teaching strategies (including differentiation) for each lesson. They are built collectively with both teachers in the year group. The plans are often compiled from the resource bank of planning which is stored on the school network, as well as from various on-line resources. Copies of these plans are filed in date order in each classroom.

These plans are ‘working copies’, and teachers annotate these during and after lessons. The plans are stored in each classroom, with English and maths plans in a separate binder. These form an important archive for tracking provision.

## Assessment

The rigorous use of assessment is central to the effective delivery of the curriculum. Please see our separate assessment policy for details.

## Accountability:

**Subject leaders** will monitor their subject strand by:

- checking there is full NC coverage of their subject by looking at ‘creative context’ plans and planning files;
- monitoring the quality of teaching and learning by undertaking book and planning scrutinies, learning walks, analysis of assessment data, etc.
- ensuring there is continuity, progression and challenge by looking at certain aspects of the subject and how they progress from one year to another – achieved through scrutiny of planning and work sampling;
- analysing in detail performance data (in association with the assessment co-ordinator for core subjects) to ascertain pupil achievement and progress, and establish reasons for high or low attainment, and to advise on future developments.

**Key Stage/Phase leaders** will monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their KS by:

- analysing medium term planning, timetables and time-lines with Year Group teams and subject leaders to check for adequate coverage of all curriculum areas across the Key Stage in line with our ‘weekly expectations’ document;

- by undertaking work scrutinies and leading moderation meetings, ensuring that learning is being achieved effectively through a combination of creative contexts and separate subject teaching;
- acting as a critical friend to year group teams, supporting them in the development of a more flexible and innovative approach to planning and delivery;
- observing teaching and giving feedback.

**The Assessment Co-ordinator** will receive, collate and analyse pupil performance data. Analyses will be shared with subject leaders and the leadership team.

**The Leadership Team** will:

- receive reports from all of the above, and develop plans to share best practice and address areas still in need of development;
- take an overview of whether the needs of all pupils are being addressed;
- keep this policy under review in the light of developing in-school practice and the wider knowledge base.

**Governors** will:

- receive reports from subject leaders, the SENCo and the head teacher – thus enabling them to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning, and whether the school provides good value;
- make visits to the school so they can see the curriculum in action, and thus make informed decisions on organisational and budgetary issues. Visits may be general or from link governors focusing on their subject area.
- Provide written reports to governors based on all their school visits. These will be shared and referenced at governor meetings.