

Leigh on Mendip First School

Curriculum 2014



Curriculum 2014

We are now teaching from a new National Curriculum, which provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said; and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

The National Curriculum 2014 includes the following subject areas:

English, Mathematics, Science, Computing, Design and Technology, History, Geography, Music, Art, Physical Education, Religious Education, Foreign Languages and a number of cross-curricular issues. These include subjects such as Personal and Social and Health Education, as well as the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) aspects of learning.

Not all teaching can be done through project work and so a careful balance of subjects, requiring basic skill development and progression, is also included. Teachers keep careful records which ensure that children have a progression through the school. There is regular contact with parents which enables everyone to share in the progress of each individual child. We are continually striving to ensure that there is a trusting relationship between the staff and children, which will encourage the children to share their hopes and aspirations, as well as their problems.

The essential characteristics for learning for each area of learning are listed below:

ENGLISH

Essential Characteristics of Writers:

- The ability to write fluently and with interesting detail on a number of topics throughout the curriculum
- A vivid imagination which makes readers engage with and enjoy their writing
- A highly developed vocabulary and an excellent knowledge of writing techniques to extend details or description
- Well-organised and structured writing, which includes a variety of sentence structures
- Excellent transcription skills that ensure their writing is well presented and punctuated, spelled correctly and neat
- A love of writing and an appreciation of its educational, cultural and entertainment values

Essential Characteristics of Readers:

- Excellent phonic knowledge and skills
- Fluency and accuracy in reading across a wide range of contexts throughout the curriculum
- Knowledge of an extensive and rich vocabulary

- An excellent comprehension of texts
- The motivation to read for both study and for pleasure
- Extensive knowledge through the reading of a rich and varied range of texts

Essential Characteristics of Excellent Communicators:

- An exceptional talent for listening attentively so as to understand what is being said
- A rich and varied vocabulary that gives clarity and interest to conversations.
- Clear speech that can be easily understood by a range of audiences
- An excellent grasp of the rules used in English conversation, such as tenses and the grammatical structure of sentences
- A highly developed ability to tell stories that capture the interest and imagination of the audience
- A delight in initiating and joining in conversations
- Respect for others when communicating, even when views differ

Much emphasis, particularly in the early years, is placed on communication skills. We encourage children to listen carefully, talk, discuss, debate, reason and report.

Phonic work is introduced in Owl class and continues in cross-school groups throughout the school. The Phonics scheme we use is Jolly Phonics.

Independent writing is encouraged from the very beginning and a variety of situations will be used to develop different writing skills, i.e. creative, descriptive and factual writing.

Spelling, punctuation and general grammar are taught at the appropriate stages and handwriting receives regular practice.

Throughout the school we encourage a love of reading and we provide a wide range of books, both fiction and non-fiction. With your help, we want the children to use and read books confidently, both for pleasure and information. Oxford Reading Tree is the foundation scheme we use to teach reading skills. We also use other reading schemes, to supplement and enhance the range available to children, organised in stages to ensure steady progress. Children's reading ability is carefully monitored throughout the school.

MATHEMATICS

Essential Characteristics of Mathematicians:

- An understanding of the important concepts and an ability to make connections within mathematics
- A broad range of skills in using and applying mathematics
- Fluent knowledge and recall of number facts and the number system
- The ability to show initiative in solving problems in a wide range of contexts, including the new or unusual
- The ability to think independently and to persevere when faced with challenges, showing a confidence of success
- The ability to embrace the value of learning from mistakes and false starts.

- The ability to reason, generalise and make sense of solutions
- Fluency in performing written and mental calculations and mathematical techniques
- A wide range of mathematical vocabulary
- A commitment to and passion for the subject

We use a number of approaches. The mathematics scheme in use throughout the school is Pearson's 'Abacus Evolve'. However, as mathematics is all around us, we try to use everyday, practical experiences and situations to encourage mathematical understanding. We are continually developing new activities and games to extend, develop and consolidate numerical concepts. To meet with the new requirements of the National Curriculum 2014, we have been working on our progression in calculation and have developed our Calculation Policy.

SCIENCE

Essential characteristics of Science:

- The ability to think independently and raise questions about working scientifically and the knowledge and skills that it brings
- Confidence and competence in the full range of practical skills, taking the initiative in, for example, planning and carrying out scientific investigations
- Excellent scientific knowledge and understanding which is demonstrated in written and verbal explanations, solving challenging problems and reporting scientific findings
- High levels of originality, imagination or innovation in the application of skills
- The ability to undertake practical work in a variety of contexts, including fieldwork
- A passion for science and its application in past, present and future technologies

Parents will be aware that young children are extremely interested in so many things. We aim to encourage the children's natural enjoyment of exploration and develop their ability to observe, compare and classify.

Children are given practice in undertaking their own experiments and they learn to record the findings in various ways.

COMPUTING

Essential characteristics of Computing:

- Competence in coding for a variety of practical and inventive purposes, including the application of ideas within other subjects
- The ability to connect with others safely and respectfully, understanding the need to act within the law and with moral and ethical integrity
- An understanding of the connected nature of devices
- The ability to communicate ideas well by using applications and devices throughout the curriculum
- The ability to collect, organise and manipulate data effectively

The computers and tablets in school are also used by the children to support the rest of the curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Essential characteristics of Religious Education:

- An outstanding level of religious understanding and knowledge
- A thorough engagement with a range of ultimate questions about the meaning and significance of existence
- The ability to ask significant and highly reflective questions about religion and demonstrate an excellent understanding of issues related to the nature, truth and value of religion
- A strong understanding of how the beliefs, values, practices and ways of life within any religion cohere together
- Exceptional independence; the ability to think for themselves and take the initiative in, for example, asking questions, carrying out investigations, evaluating ideas and working constructively with others
- Significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity, which are shown in their responses to their learning in RE
- The ability to link the study of religion and belief to personal reflections on meaning and purpose

Each day we hold a short assembly and on alternate Fridays the Vicar joins us in our Sharing Assembly. School services are also held in the village church of St Giles.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from R.E. but should consult the Headteacher to discuss any implications.

GEOGRAPHY

Essential characteristics of Geography:

- An excellent knowledge of where places are and what they are like
- An excellent understanding of the ways in which places are interdependent and interconnected and how much human and physical environments are interrelated
- An extensive base of geographical knowledge and vocabulary
- Fluency in complex, geographical enquiry and the ability to apply questioning skills and use effective analytical and presentational techniques
- The ability to reach clear conclusions and develop a reasoned argument to explain findings
- Significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity as shown in interpretations and representations of the subject matter
- Highly developed and frequently utilised fieldwork and other geographical skills and techniques
- A passion for and commitment to the subject, and a real sense of curiosity to find out about the world and the people who live there
- The ability to express well-balanced opinions, rooted in very good knowledge and understanding about current and contemporary issues in society and the environment

HISTORY

Essential characteristics of History:

- An excellent knowledge and understanding of people, events, and contexts from a range of historical periods and of historical concepts and processes
- The ability to think critically about history and communicate ideas very confidently in styles appropriate to a range of audiences
- The ability to consistently support, evaluate and challenge their own and others' views using detailed, appropriate and accurate historical evidence derived from a range of sources
- The ability to think, reflect, debate, discuss and evaluate the past, formulating and refining questions and lines of enquiry
- A passion for history and an enthusiastic engagement in learning, which develops their sense of curiosity about the past and their understanding of how and why people interpret the past in different ways
- A respect for historical evidence and the ability to make robust and critical use of it to support their explanations and judgments
- A desire to embrace challenging activities, including opportunities to undertake high-quality research across a range of history topics

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Essential Characteristics of Physical Education:

- The ability to acquire new knowledge and skills exceptionally well and develop an in-depth understanding of PE
- The willingness to practise skills in a wide range of different activities and situations, alone, in small groups and in teams. And to apply these skills in chosen activities to achieve exceptionally high levels of performance
- High levels of physical fitness
- A healthy lifestyle, achieved by eating sensibly, avoiding smoking, drugs and alcohol and exercising regularly
- The ability to remain physically active for sustained periods of time and an understanding of the importance of this in promoting long-term health and well-being
- The ability to take the initiative and become excellent young leaders, organising and officiating, and evaluating what needs to be done to improve, and motivating and instilling excellent sporting attitudes in others
- Exceptional levels of originality, imagination and creativity in their techniques, tactics and choreography, knowledge of how to improve their own and others' performance and the ability to work independently for extended periods of time without the need for guidance or support
- A keen interest in PE. A willingness to participate eagerly in every lesson, highly positive attitudes and the ability to make informed choices about engaging fully in extra-curricular sport
- The ability to swim at least 25 metres before the end of Year 4 and knowledge of how to remain safe in and around water

Part of the learning in P.E. involves Health Education, Personal and Social Education and deals with a wide variety of matters including relationships with others, taking care of ourselves and Sex Education in its broadest sense.

P.E. lessons are held regularly in the hall and, weather permitting, on the school playground and the playing field. The children require a pair of daps, shorts, a T shirt to change into and a PE bag to keep their kit in.

Swimming lessons take place on Thursday in a heated pool at the Creative Aquatic Pool at The Lighthouse in Tytherington. Children in all groups have the opportunity to swim weekly all year. As the school has to fund the cost of the swimming lessons, we are grateful for a voluntary contribution from each child.

Please name all items of clothing. This will help us to identify ownership of lost property.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Essential Characteristics of Design and Technology:

- Significant levels of originality and the willingness to take creative risks to produce innovative ideas and prototypes
- An excellent attitude to learning and independent working
- The ability to use time efficiently and work constructively and productively with others
- The ability to carry out thorough research, show initiative and ask questions to develop an exceptionally detailed knowledge of users' needs
- The ability to act as responsible designers and makers, working ethically, using finite materials carefully and working safely
- A thorough knowledge of which tools, equipment and materials to use to make their products
- The ability to apply mathematical knowledge
- The ability to manage risks exceptionally well to manufacture products safely and hygienically
- A passion for the subject and knowledge of up-to-date technological innovations in materials, products and systems

We are very aware of living in a technological age and therefore aim to present the children, from a very early age, with problem-solving activities.

ART AND DESIGN

Essential Characteristics of Art and Design:

- The ability to use visual language skilfully and convincingly (for example, line, shape, pattern, colour, texture, form) to express emotions, interpret observations, convey insights and accentuate their individuality
- The ability to communicate fluently in visual and tactile form
- The ability to draw confidently and adventurously from observation, memory and imagination

- The ability to explore and invent marks, develop and deconstruct ideas and communicate perceptively and powerfully through purposeful drawing in 2D, 3D or digital media
- An impressive knowledge and understanding of other artists, crafters and designers
- The ability to think and act like creative practitioners by using their knowledge and understanding to inform, inspire and interpret ideas, observations and feelings
- Independence, initiative and originality which they can use to develop their creativity
- The ability to select and use materials, processes and techniques skilfully and inventively to realise intentions and capitalise on the unexpected
- The ability to reflect on, analyse and critically evaluate their own work and that of others
- A passion for and a commitment to the subject

MUSIC

Essential Characteristics of Music:

- A rapidly widening repertoire which they use to create original, imaginative, fluent and distinctive composing and performance work
- A musical understanding underpinned by high levels of aural perception, internalisation and knowledge of music, including high or rapidly developing levels of technical expertise
- Very good awareness and appreciation of different musical traditions and genres
- An excellent understanding of how musical provenance - the historical, social and cultural origins of music - contributes to the diversity of musical styles
- The ability to give precise written and verbal explanations, using musical terminology effectively, accurately and appropriately
- A passion for and commitment to a diverse range of musical activities

Music plays an important part of the life of our school. Activities include singing, percussion and elementary music reading. Children have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder. Other instrumental tuition i.e. African drumming, Samba and percussion are available through Somerset Music Service, but parents often have to bear the cost.

HOMEWORK

A small amount of homework is given in each class and we would ask parents to encourage children to complete the tasks set for them.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

We are committed to developing in children an understanding and appreciation of the natural and constructed world; locally, nationally and internationally. We encourage them to develop a sense of responsibility for looking after, and improving, the environment around them. The school has its own vegetable garden. There is a small pond in the environmental area adjacent to the playing field.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

In all aspects of school life, we aim to promote the personal and social development of children. We aim to develop an understanding of how to look after ourselves, basic life skills and interpersonal skills, including healthy lifestyles. We help children to understand, and come to terms with, growing up.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Essential characteristics of Language:

- The confidence to speak with good intonation and pronunciation
- Fluency in reading
- Fluency and imagination in writing
- A strong awareness of the culture of the countries where the language is spoken
- A passion for languages and a commitment to the subject
- The ability to use language creatively and spontaneously
- An independent study skills and the ability to draw upon a wide range of resources

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Many children experience some difficulty in learning during their school career. Some problems are easily identified and dealt with by the class teacher. Sometimes it may be necessary to give a child particular help through a specific learning programme.

The school aims to give special help to children with specific or general learning difficulties. The work set will match individual pupils' needs and abilities. A member of our teaching staff who takes responsibility for special needs education throughout the school, guides our Special Needs Classroom Assistant in the implementation of programmes. Children with particularly severe learning or behavioural difficulties may, with their parents' consent, be referred to the Educational Psychologist. We also give extra time to children who are particularly able.