

Hempstalls Concept Curriculum – A Journey

Intent

Our aim is to provide our children with an engaging, exciting and empowering curriculum which prepares and equips them with the knowledge, skills and understanding for life in modern Britain and the twenty first century. At Hempstalls along with other schools within our Trust the curriculum is designed to recognise children’s prior learning, provide first hand experiences, allowing children to develop interpersonal skills, build resilience and become creative, critical and highly motivated thinkers.

The power of a Conceptual Lens

At Hempstalls we have adapted basic curriculum materials from the National Curriculum around the use of a concept lens. Using these lenses to organise and prioritise information allowing teachers to chart a pathway for a child’s thinking. The conceptual lens uses an idea or concept to bring about focus and depth to a programme of study ensuring that knowledge is both relevant and at a deeper level.

Creativity and creative thinking is also another extremely important element of our curriculum. Curiosity are key components of what and how we teach at Hempstalls. We want our children to reflect critically on information and to see alternative points of view looking for patterns and connections. Our curriculum is three dimensional, focussing on concepts, knowledge and skills, not just skills and knowledge.

Concept Lens across the school

Year	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Cubs			
Nursery			
Reception			
Year 1			
Year 2			
Year 3			
Year 4			

Year 5			
Year 6			

Knowledge

The structure of knowledge within the curriculum is delivered through micro concepts, the content may differ but the discipline follows the same structure. The topic will not transfer but the concept will.

We believe children are motivated when they are enjoying the topics and the delivery of new knowledge, where there is a purpose and emotional connections are made. The school has launch days, which immerse the children in the topic and provide opportunities to find out what the children know. We have parent learning linked to the topic where parents work with children in lessons and in the evening, bringing the learning to everyone. To finish the topic we have a fabulous finish which brings all the learning together and reflects on the knowledge the children have acquired. The learning comes to life in the classroom, in the outdoor environment and is evidenced within the Expert books, and the Weaving Magic Books.

Implementation

Below is the journey and the pathway that our curriculum makes.

The Journey of our Concept Curriculum

All of our topics each term follow the pathway below:

Launch Lesson

Based on activities to engage and inspire children and to immerse them in the topic.

Opportunity to place the topic in chronological order

Assessment of prior knowledge and understanding, review of previous learning to include previous concepts

Background to the topic



Baseline Assessment prior learning/knowledge and understanding (to assess children's prior knowledge and understanding of the topic and to match this against knowledge organisers and skills. This will include the use of specific language and vocabulary. This is achieved through observations from the class teacher and simple quizzes)



Set **Learning Challenge** for the end of the topic (this is an opportunity to assess the child's level of knowledge and understanding. Also an opportunity to demonstrate problem solving skills, thinking skills and creative thinking skills in a collaborative situation)



Series of blocked lessons

Deliver new knowledge, skills and vocabulary (knowledge organisers clearly show the content and technical vocabulary to be taught alongside the skills and new knowledge)



Learning Environment to reflect topic/subject area (the environment is used as a stimulus for new learning and demonstrates the children's understanding of the new knowledge, vocabulary and skills taught)



Final delivery of Learning Challenge (this will provide an opportunity to make an overall judgement on the child's acquisition of new knowledge and their level of understanding)



Parent Workshop/Assembly (family learning)



Assessment/Celebration of Learning - Fabulous Finish

The Hempstalls' Curriculum is based on one topic per term. Here are the topics for 2019.

Year	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Cubs			
Nursery			
Reception			
Year 1			
Year 2			

Year 3			
Year 4			
Year 5			
Year 6			

The enhanced curriculum

As part of our curriculum we are always looking for ways to further engage children and enhance their opportunities. We want every child to have the chance to access enriching experiences, through a variety of ways. We plan for our lessons and extra-curricular activities to be broad and enriching.

Below are a number of enrichment activities that always form part of our curriculum and so are compulsory:

Everybody Writes Day/Creativity: these days happen once every term, whereby the whole school engages in a themed approach to writing. This was done primarily to make writing enjoyable and exciting for a number of reticent writer. However, they have become an established method of how Hempstalls enhance the writing process with real-life experiences encouraging children to be successful writers.

Marvellous Maths Day: this is a focus maths day which happens once a term. It commences with a problem to solve or a 'prove it' question, again the whole school are involved in this activity from Early Years to Year 6. These days have certainly raised the profile of maths and it provides excellent opportunities for our children to put their maths skills, knowledge and fluency into practice.

Curriculum Creativity Days: these days could involve a number of subject areas with a particular theme. Each day is planned out to ensure that key skills are taught and new knowledge is identified. This is across a week per term.

Whole-school enrichment weeks: these are specialised weeks based on a subject or a theme, for example, science or RE week. In addition, many SMSC subjects lend themselves to these weeks, themes such as anti-bullying or staying safe are all very important areas. In Years 5 and 6, each year we hold an Enterprise Week, which always involves the children visiting local universities to help raise aspirations and spending time realising different careers. It is a chance for children to work on their teamwork skills outside of the classroom. The children have the

opportunity to develop their independence and prepare themselves even more for secondary school life. In relation to timing, this takes place across one week per term.

Royal Shakespeare Company: Hempstalls is a well-established Shakespeare Associate School and works with the New Vic which have a long standing relationship with the RSC, which has a profound impact on all of our children. As part of the project Trust staff have been involved in a research project which looked at the highly positive impact of the RSC involvement on children's language, reading, communication and writing. The work of William Shakespeare is reflected in our curriculum, as a different play is studied each year across the entire school. It is yet another example of how a partnership can further develop communities of outstanding practice and impact on the lives of all children. All of our children at Hempstalls will visit a theatre and watch a play in their life time with us. Hempstalls will study Shakespeare as part of the curriculum in the Spring Term.

Art and Culture is also an extremely important element of our school enrichment offer. We want our children to appreciate the many facets of art and to have a secure knowledge base. We ensure that the majority of our children from Nursery age up to Year 6 have the opportunity to make termly visits to the surrounding community and beyond. We also take advantage of free museums, galleries and exhibitions and regularly arrange visits for our children.

Curriculum Enrichment: as part of our curriculum topics relevant trips are organised or special visitors are invited into the school. These wider experiences help to enrich our children's lives and challenge them to aspire to be people who leave a mark on the world. We expect that all of our children at some point in their school life are involved in a community project, whether it is helping to litter pick in the community, singing and performing for local groups and care homes, visiting the elderly members of the community or working and studying alongside key stage 3 and 4 students at local high schools. This includes regular visits to the local high schools. Hempstalls has incredibly strong links with the high schools developing transitional work, visits and regular training taking place between the staff. This supports the transition from Primary School to Secondary School. The children in Year 5 have the opportunity to attend taster sessions in a number of subject areas. They also visit the High School with teachers and undertake a series of activities in Year 6. Visits to colleges and universities are also arranged to raise aspirations amongst our children.

Forest School: The ethos of the Forest School concept which is based on respect and a right that children have to the outdoors and the natural world is fundamental to our school. Forest School practice allows children and staff to step out of the shadow and limitation of 'planned activities' and venture into the realms of the unplanned, unexpected and unlimited. This provides children with the opportunity to direct their

own learning further supports our desire as a school to build resilience, risk and opportunities to problem solve. Forest School is timetabled every week.

Family Learning: we value strong partnerships with parents and carers. There are many opportunities for families to learn about school life and learning throughout the year. We hold curriculum workshops where families learn about how their children are taught “Come and Watch me Learn” are extremely popular events where parents take part in learning and visit classrooms to see lessons being taught for themselves! Other activities include Phonics Workshops in Foundation Stage and KS1,

Drama and Music: All of our children perform in numerous ways across Hempstalls either in end of year whole school productions or part of an extra-curricular club. We think this is important as it helps to build confidence and self-belief. Children have the opportunity to learn musical instruments and there is the expectation that during an academic year all children will be able to play a musical instrument in a school performance.

PE Enrichment and Outdoor Education: PE is yet another area where as a school we want to enhance the experiences that our children receive. Therefore, all of our children, as part of their PE programme, experience a wide number of sporting activities. This is in addition to a range of usual sporting activities. Residential visits to Outdoor Education Centres are also an important element of whole school enrichment, these take place throughout our schools staying from a few nights to a week. This ensures that our children become confident and independent, ready to face any challenge that they are faced with. During the last few years we have provided opportunities for our children to experience a range of sports including golf and rock climbing.

Enrichment beyond the curriculum: At Hempstalls we believe in enrichment and extended services beyond the classroom. We recognise the need to provide affordable and safe child-care for all parents and therefore this provision will be available on opening. Parkside offers Before School and After School provision (7.30am until 6pm and includes a Breakfast Club)

Enrichment, extra-curricular opportunities: Last term in Parkside the majority of our children took part in at least one extra-curricular activity. We aim to provide a range of clubs which suit the needs of our individual children ranging from gardening club to street dancing. Clubs and activities take place at lunchtime and after school. These are often over-subscribed and offer all children a wonderful opportunity to develop interests and skills. The schools use a range of external providers that bring expertise and specialism to our extra-curricular activities. Teachers

and support staff also lead clubs each term which allows schools to offer a range of clubs throughout the week. These clubs are free to all children across the school. In addition, the school runs highly successful Homework and Booster Clubs, running both at lunchtime and after school.

Knowing the facts is just not enough. We want our children to develop intellectually, solve problems creatively and manage complex challenges. A concept-based curriculum captures the innate curiosity of the child and allows them to make connections, developing structures in the brain for sorting and organising

Impact

The impact of the curriculum is seen within the high data outcomes in reading, writing, spelling and punctuation and numeracy. The children and parents reviews show that they see learning as a high priority and enjoy the knowledge gained through the topics. Emotional connections are made for our pupils and they truly believe that dragons roam our field that Willy Wonka visits the school and they suspend the disbelief on a daily basis.

Our curriculum, creative, innovative and challenging children are expected to make substantial progress through our personal and unique curriculum. Are you ready for an adventure like no other? Come as you are and leave as a Champion!