

The Pilgrim School (a Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary with Nursery)

Foundation Subjects Policy

Date agreed by staff: June 2016

Date agreed by governors: June 2016

Review by date: Summer 2019

Signed:



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy is a reflection of The Pilgrim School's creative outlook and Christian ethos where we believe that creative pupils lead richer lives and grow up to make valuable contributions to society. Therefore our approach is about developing pupils' creative thinking through a broad, rich curriculum involving cross-curricular projects.

The emphasis is on a creative process where activities directly engage both adults and pupils in exploring the endless possibilities for learning. Children will be encouraged to develop skills and attributes such as personal awareness, problem solving, team work and moral awareness. This is all done within structure of the National Curriculum.

As a part of this approach we believe that everyone is inherently creative and that everyone has a right to participate in varied and exciting activities. To this end, we are a school who believes that the outside world is a rich learning environment and make every effort to enhance learning through a wide variety of school trips. Our local area and community offer an enormous range of opportunities for our pupils and, as our Church school ethos suggests, we aim to involve pupils in the understanding and care of their immediate environment. In addition to this we incorporate visits to Rochester, London, the coast, and France as destinations and to adventure centres, environmental centres museums, galleries, castles and places of worship, as venues.

We believe that the quality of teaching is paramount as children learn better when they are excited and engaged, and it is excellent teaching which challenges them and shows them what they can achieve. "When there is joy in what they are doing they learn to love learning." *Charles Clarke in Excellence and Enjoyment Strategy for Primary Schools DfES 2003*. Teachers are encouraged to choose topics that inspire them so that they can explore the advantages of creative teaching, to maximise the opportunities for creative learning.

PLANNING AND ORGANISATION

Planning for a topic that inspires the teacher helps them to put creative learning at the centre of their planning. It also ensures that teachers regularly use the National Curriculum to support their planning and helps them to focus on the skills that children

need to be taught. This empowers them to develop enquiring minds and more independent thinking. Where subjects don't easily fit into a topic, they will be taught in an elite manner to ensure necessary coverage. We have devised a new planning grid which is colour co-ordinated in line with subjects in the National Curriculum and allows immediate recognition of the focus of each lesson. In the Foundation stage planning is linked to the Early Learning Goals and continues to be independent of KS1 and 2.

Co-ordinators for the foundation subjects work individually to regularly monitor skills being developed through each topic and ensure progression throughout the school. They then work as a team to support the focus on our creative, topic-based approach to the foundation subjects. We aim to promote a creative and cultural education through encouraging a range of teaching and learning styles and, as such, we believe that planning documents will be 'live' documents which will continually be reviewed and updated to suit differing learning needs.

TIMINGS

Timings can vary depending on the need for elite teaching and the possible incorporation of ICT time into the topic. A minimum of 3 hours 45 minutes is taught per week in KS 1 and 2. In addition, KS1, and where appropriate KS2, provide and make use of inspiring role-play areas. Part of the co-ordinators' role is to look at planning to ensure that the necessary amount of time for their subject is allocated over the year (this may be focussed in a block or dispersed throughout the year depending on the topics being covered.) In the Foundation Stage skill development is ongoing daily through stimulating activity areas both inside and outside the classroom.

INCLUSION

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All pupils, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, ability, or any physical or sensory disability, will be encouraged to develop and use foundation subject skills. We believe that every child is entitled to access a creative and inspiring learning environment. Where possible, materials could be drawn from a range of cultures. For example, topics can be linked to other countries and cultures. As it says in our Racial Equality Policy and the National Curriculum, we aim to use our topic based approach to; "Prepare all pupils for life in a world where they will meet, live and work with people of different cultures, religions, languages and ethnic backgrounds."

DIFFERENTIATION/ SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS/ GIFTED AND TALENTED

As a school, we consider it good practise to differentiate work to meet the needs of the individual child. In our planning, we identify how we will challenge the most able and support those children with learning needs. We believe that it is essential that we provide access to the National Curriculum for all children. Pupils' special educational needs are met by using a variety of approaches and specialist resources identified in a child's IEP. Staff work closely with the SENCo to provide the best possible support. In each lesson, the tasks undertaken by children will focus on the same area of the curriculum, but be differentiated accordingly. Where appropriate, teachers can draw on schemes purchased specifically for supporting special needs.

Gifted and talented children are given wider ranges of experiences through a large variety of resources and access to facilities in other schools and the local community, for example talented artists are encouraged and have been successful in entering their work in competitions and exhibitions. Trips are arranged for children to widen their experiences in their fields of interest. Where appropriate, pupils are encouraged to take the lead in their own learning. The Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator provides support to staff and pupils in identifying and providing needs.

RECORD KEEPING AND ASSESSMENT

Teachers carry out assessment using the self-designed Pilgrim Progress that has been written for each subject by its co-ordinator. The assessments are carried out for a variety of purposes:

- Ongoing assessment is an informal part of every lesson. The purpose is to inform the teacher of pupil's learning and therefore future planning
- Self-assessment with the opportunities for reflection on learning is valued in all subjects
- Pupils' verbal responses to learning are encouraged through learning dialogues
- Foundation stage pupils are constantly assessed through ongoing observations

In art, pupils' sketch books work as a portfolio and pass with them through KS1 and 2, to help them to identify their own progress and to inform the next teacher of skills previously developed. This may be appropriate for other subjects in the future.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

The primary objective of this style of approach to learning is to develop cross-curricular links with other subjects and teachers are actively encouraged to do so. This includes links with core subjects when it creatively enhances the main focus of a lesson or offers opportunities to reinforce skills from previous teaching.

TOPICS AND COMPUTING

Whilst the activities are not reliant on new technology, access to a wide range of resources such as digital cameras, video equipment, laptops, i-pads, learning pads and our computing suite greatly enhances the process and outcome. This also provides pupils with further, regular access to the outside world. As we teach computing skills in an elite manner, we are able to use those skills as a tool to enrich the learning of a topic. It is also identified in planning if a skill has been taught as the main learning objective or if it has been used as a tool to enhance the lesson.

History

Historical skills provide a real complement to 'life skills', where people ask questions, consider information as a critical thinker and are able to make informed judgements based on evidence given to them. We therefore believe that our approach to teaching and learning in this subject will encourage the development of these important skills.

We follow the National Curriculum and its organisation for History.

The use of historical evidence and the understanding of historical vocabulary are important and pupils should develop progressive skills of:

- chronological understanding
- knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past
- historical interpretation
- historical enquiry
- organisation and communication

Although knowledge of certain periods in history is valued we consider the focus of teaching pupils to use:

- oral and aural evidence
- visual evidence
- primary and secondary evidence
- artefacts
- written evidence
- ICT to access evidence
- historical vocabulary
- opinion and bias (when appropriate for individual or groups of pupils) the most important learning in history.

Geography

Geographical understanding becomes increasingly important, daily. As the world becomes ever nearer through media, technology and migration, they help pupils gain a confident sense of identity by knowing their local area well and by understanding its place in the nearer and wider world. We believe that pupils need to explore their environment so that they can learn to understand, value and protect it now and in the future.

We follow the National Curriculum and its organisation for Geography.

At Foundation Stage, pupils find out about their environment, people and places that have meaning to them as part of the Early Learning Goal of Knowledge and Understanding of the World. In both Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils develop progressive geographical enquiry skills of:

- asking questions, observing and recording (Key Stage 1) to analysing, concluding and communicating views (Key Stage 2)
- using geographical vocabulary
- using fieldwork skills
- using secondary sources of information, for example the internet, videos, pictures, stories and artefacts and extending to aerial photographs and maps
- knowing and understanding places in the near locality, in Britain, Europe and the wider world.
- Experiences within a forest school environment to develop environmental skills and also within the local woodlands.

Art and Design

Art is seen as a means of communication through a variety of skills that are taught and developed in their own right. Pupils are encouraged to explore a large range of mediums to enable them to make informed choices for developing their ideas. They are taught how to use tools and techniques which increase their range of choices for exploring and developing their own creative ideas. Pupils are given opportunities to evaluate art and design for its visual effect, texture, colour and its effect on the environment. Pupils' work is celebrated in a school art gallery as well as in their classrooms and sketch books (something that acts as a portfolio of developing skills and follows them from year to year). Through their life at the Pilgrim School they will be given opportunities to visit art galleries, museums and places of worship to see works of known artists firsthand and also work alongside visiting artists.

We follow the National Curriculum and its organisation for Art and Design.

In Foundation Stage pupils are encouraged to explore thoughts, ideas and feelings daily, as part of their creative development. Pupils in KS1 and 2 are taught the skills of and then given the opportunity to:

- record experiences, observations and imaginative ideas
- ask and answer questions about theirs and others' work
- investigate a variety of materials and tools
- make 2D and 3D artefact representations of their ideas and feelings
- review pieces of art, give opinions and make suggestions for change
- develop technical vocabulary
- explore a range of starting points
- work individually, in pairs, small and larger groups.

Music

Through our links with the Wider Opps Music programme we are able to make use of a music specialist to develop instrumental lessons in KS1 and 2. As a Church school, all pupils take part in singing during 'Worship through Song' weekly celebrations where these skills can be learnt and practised. We have a school choir and pupils with a keen interest and or talent for music are encouraged to take part and all pupils are given the opportunity to perform in concerts/productions spread throughout the year. We provide pupils with the opportunity to take up peripatetic lessons by bringing in an external tutor for piano/keyboard and guitar as well as experiencing other opportunities from qualified tutors.

We follow the National Curriculum and its organisation for Music.

In the Foundation Stage it forms part of the Creative Development Early Learning Goal.

In lessons pupils are encouraged to:

- control sounds in their voices, through chants and singing
- play, practise and perform to an audience
- create and develop their own musical ideas
- respond to their own and other's ideas

- review compositions and suggest ways of improving them
- listen and apply their learning to their work
- use computing to enhance and or record creative ideas
- explore a range of starting point's musical and non-musical, from a range of historical and cultural influences.

Design Technology

Design technology is regarded as a process by which pupils are encouraged to be adventurous and not feel restricted by the constraints of 'getting it right'. We believe that we can learn more from mistakes and therefore foster an environment where pupils are rewarded for taking risks, having a go and sharing their ideas. We see design technology as the process of generating an idea, designing, refining, making, evaluating, adjusting and presenting.

We follow the National Curriculum and its organisation for Design Technology.

In all phases pupils are given opportunities to:

- develop, plan and communicate their ideas in a range of situations
- work with a variety of tools, equipment and materials including cookery
- use knowledge and understanding of a range of materials, components and techniques to design and make quality products
- explore and then choose their equipment making judgements about their suitability
- evaluate both their processes and work in a positive environment
- use a variety of computing equipment to develop skills at each phase of the design process
- celebrate their learning.

Health and Safety

In accordance with our Health and Safety policy the children will be adequately supervised at all times. They will be reminded about the safe use of tools and equipment at the start of each practical session and safety goggles will be worn when they operate sawing and drilling tools. **Heated glue guns** can be used by all pupils with close appropriate supervision. They must not be left unattended.