

PRETTYGATE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Curriculum Policy

Review : Annually summer term

Vision Statement: *'Open the Gate to Lifelong Learning'*

- Ensuring a safe, welcoming environment where everyone is valued.
- Providing experiences to flourish and achieve.
- Embracing every opportunity to learn.
- Inspiring creativity, aspiration and excellence.
- Promoting healthy hearts and minds.
- Developing social, moral, spiritual and economic well-being.

Introduction

At Prettygate Junior School, we seek to provide experiences that aid the development of the whole child. Our aim is to help each pupil to become a confident, capable and involved member of the community.

Our educational programme draws from the following areas of experience:

Linguistic, Mathematical, Cultural, Aesthetic and Creative, Scientific and Technological, Spiritual and Moral, Social and Physical.

The programme is defined within the new National Curriculum (2014) subjects:

English, mathematics, science, art and design, computing, design and technology, geography, history, languages (French), music and physical education (PE) as well as the school's 'wider' curriculum areas such as personal, social, health education (PSHE), including citizenship, and Religious Education (RE), and other cross curriculum dimensions.

1. In teaching we aim to:

- Have a common approach to the curriculum which allows continuity and progression
- Provide a stimulating environment throughout the school environment
- Provide sufficient resources for high quality work to be produced
- Have all staff confidently participating in the running of the school and feeling that their professionalism, expertise and talents are appreciated
- Support and develop our key school values

2. In the community of Prettygate and further afield we aim to:

- Continue our established links with partner infant and secondary feeder school children, staff and parents
- Continue to develop links with other cluster schools
- Share good practice with other schools in Essex and beyond
- Develop our role within community events and functions
- Welcome community interest in our school
- Make this school valued within the community

3. We aim to establish a good attitude in all children but if this is to be successful it is felt essential that parents should be aware of what the school is trying to achieve. We appreciate the help and support of parents in their children's learning.

Therefore, all parents will have:

- An open invitation to help at or visit the school (DBS checks permitting)
- Regular informative newsletters via the website or as a paper copy if requested
- Invitations to attend Open Evenings, displays, information briefings and other functions
- Opportunities to attend concerts and sporting occasions
- An updated folder in school containing all relevant documents
- Access to letters and calendar details via the website or Prettygate Junior School App.

Parents work towards the school's aims by:

- Ensuring the child attends school in good health, regularly and punctually
- Ensuring the child follows the school's dress code
- Providing support for the role of the teacher and the disciplinary code of the school
- Participating in discussions regarding their child's progress
- Giving due importance to homework, hearing reading, assisting with learning tables and spellings
- Allowing their child to take increasing responsibility as they progress through the school
- Contacting the school on the first day of absence

Approaches to the Curriculum

The aims and objectives of the curriculum are the shared concern of the teaching staff and Governors. Staff hold regular curriculum and standards meetings. Governors have a Curriculum and Pupil Related Matters Committee which reports back to full meetings. Views of parents and the wider community are taken into consideration.

Staff plan their class work to ensure continuity and progression. There is some specialisation in teaching; a games coach, a French teacher and peripatetic music teachers visit on a weekly basis, teachers may deliver the same subject to both year classes. Co-ordinators advise other staff. There is liaison between staff regarding pupil progress.

We feel Prettygate Junior School should be a well ordered and caring community in which the children are encouraged to be happy, thoughtful, co-operative, independent and responsible. We aim for an overall atmosphere which is one of mutual respect, encouraging positive values and attitudes. Undesirable behaviour is dealt with at an individual level. Parents will be involved if necessary. Anti bullying strategies are shared with both children and parents. Safe internet use is encouraged both at school and home.

We believe that all children have an equal right to quality education. Discrimination on the basis of colour, religion, culture, origin, sex or ability is unacceptable. Discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated. The school aims to be inclusive and strives for equality of opportunity for all.

An extensive range of extra curricular activities are provided. However, pressures on staff are a restriction. Some of these activities are run by external groups and attract a tuition fee.

Co-operation with parents is seen as essential to the smooth educational progress of the child. Parents are encouraged to come into school to see work and discuss their child each term. The scheme for parental involvement in reading is well established. Home school diaries act as a good link between home and school. Many parents and friends come in to help on a regular basis and their contribution is much appreciated. The school links with the Adult Education College to provide a timetable of classes for parents and members of the community.

Class teachers and the SENCO are responsible for identifying those children who need extra help with their learning and liaising with staff and other agencies ensuring these needs are met. The school SENCO has responsibility for managing the inclusive school agenda.

Staff are aware of changes within our educational system. They keep themselves well informed by reading, discussing and attending courses. The school invests in quality professional development for all staff. We realise that in this changing world, curricular documentation is subject to change and modification.

All staff have job descriptions. Appraisal is undertaken for teaching and support staff as part of the school's Performance Management policy. This links with the annual pay review cycle.

An internal audit led to the School Development Plan. This has highlighted the priorities for the school. Views were also sought from staff, children, parents and governors. A copy is available for parents. Further reviews will ensure continued development. The school recognises that this has to be flexible but is an essential planning tool. Separate Improvement or Action Plans exist and are included in the School Development Plan.

Regular liaison meetings are held with schools serving the Philip Morant School. This liaison means that children transferring should be 'Secondary Ready' and have a positive transition into KS3. Year 2 children visit the school during the Summer Term at various times so they are prepared for the following September.

Appendix to Curriculum Policy

The Curriculum

We deliver the 2014 National Curriculum. We recognise that the stimulus for intellectual growth should be provided through a broad and balanced range of experiences. Direct first hand experience often provides the starting point for further studies. The school has adopted the locally agreed Religious Education syllabus. A cross curricular approach is being developed.

English

- **Speaking and Listening.**

We recognise the importance of talk in formulating and developing ideas across the curriculum. Talk is the starting point for reading and writing. We aim to enable our children to be confident and fully communicative members of society by developing listening skills, through developing clear and expressive speech, by encouraging children to speak with confidence on matters of personal and social interest. Organisational skills are developed for imparting information and articulating opinions. Drama, poetry and speaking to a variety of audiences develops the use of spoken language. Problems with speech and hearing are discussed with parents and may be referred to the school medical service. We work closely with local speech therapists.

- **Reading**

Our aim is to develop the ability to read and understand all types of writing and to respond on a sensitive, critical and interactive way to texts. We hope children see this activity as pleasurable. We have an extensive range of reading books, drawn from several publishers. Children are encouraged to take books home to share with their families. Each child has a Home school diary which they are encouraged to use with their parents. The appreciation of all books is fostered. The School Library Service provides additional books on a termly basis to complement topics covered. We have a well resourced library and a bank of guided reading group readers. Staff hear children read regularly.

- **Writing**

Children should be able to construct and convey meaning in the written language. We aim to give children writing tasks, which make real demands on their linguistic skills. Correct expression is encouraged on an individual basis. We make time for children to be able to share their writing with others. We incorporate regular Big Write and Exciting Writing sessions into our timetables and encourage VCOP in all classes.

- **Handwriting**

A clear, legible and attractive style is encouraged in all children. They are encouraged to join letters from an early stage. Black ink pens are introduced in years 3 and 4 and are the expected medium for written work in years 5 and 6

- **Spelling**

Children need to understand the importance of spelling in helping the communication of ideas to others. Good spelling is dependent on close observation of the internal structure of words and we teach spelling by the 'look, cover, write, check' routine. Spellings are often given as homework.

Mathematics

Practical work, discussion, enquiry and investigation are essential in helping children to develop mathematical concepts. Moving from the concrete to the abstract, we aim to give experience in the following areas:

- Number (place value, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions including decimals and percentages)
- Measurement
- Geometry (properties of shapes, position and direction)
- Statistics
- Ratio and Proportion (Year 6)
- Algebra (Year 6)

Our mathematics teaching is structured by the use of the National Curriculum objectives. This is resourced by published and teacher made materials. To ensure maximum understanding, concepts are introduced to children and they are then encouraged to verbalise their mathematical thinking, using correct language wherever possible. Children usually work in mixed ability groupings but can be set.

We promote the ability to think clearly and logically alongside, the confidence and independence to tackle problems. We encourage an awareness of the use of mathematics in the world beyond the classroom.

Science

We aim to develop and foster a range of skills and a body of knowledge that children can use in their exploration and experimentation of science. Experience in the following is given to all children:

- Scientific investigations
- Working scientifically
- Developing subject specific vocabulary
- Life and living processes
- Materials
- Physical processes

We recognise the need to provide experiences which take into account the sequence of a child's development from the concrete stage to the formal style where abstract ideas are utilised in work. Children are made aware of safety aspects when involved with experimentation.

Design and Technology

Technology occurs across the curriculum. Children consider mechanisms, structures, control, quality, health, nutrition and safety and vocabulary.

The skills for executing design needs to be taught with safety aspects discussed. After designing and making high-quality prototypes and products for a wide range of users, pupils critique, evaluate and test their ideas and products and the work of others and, if necessary, modify their work.

History

We aim to develop a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. Consideration of people, their activities, their contributions and their ways of living today creates the foundation of the study of other people in the past and gives meaning to the concepts of continuity and change.

Use of artefacts along with museum and other visits and visitors to school encourage a feel for the past. Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources. Study skills are an important element of this learning.

Geography

Work here is based around the four areas:

- Location knowledge
- Place knowledge
- Human and physical geography
- Geographical skills and fieldwork

Where possible, we aim to start from the immediate environment, spreading wider afield for our geographical studies. A local studies week about Colchester takes place each year.

Art and Design

We make available a wide variety of media, encouraging experimentation and the development of a wide range of techniques.

We make provision for developmental stages. Children need time to explore natural and man made objects and materials, to draw and make patterns and designs and develop their powers of observation and description. Gradually gaining control over materials, they develop a growing capacity to make meaningful statements and to talk sensibly about their work.

Famous artists' work is also examined and discussed. Appraising art is a good vehicle for discussion of technique as well as personal responses and feelings.

Music

Children participate in various musical activities, including singing, playing tuned and untuned percussion, composing, appraising and performing.

Children are helped to verbalise their feelings about particular pieces of music. A peripatetic teacher teaches recorder to all children in year 4 and Brass and woodwind instruction is given to all children in year 5. Individual lessons are offered by two visiting teachers.

PE

Opportunities are provided to develop skills in movement, gymnastics (using both large and small apparatus), dance, athletics, individual and team games and swimming. See separate policy.

Computing

Computing is seen as an essential tool for learning in our technologically advanced world. As such we appreciate the need to teach a high-quality computing education to pupils in order for them to understand the world through logical thinking and creativity, including making links with mathematics, science, and design and technology. The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, and how digital systems work. Computing equips pupils to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of media. It also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world. See separate policy.

French

Learning a foreign language provides an opening to other cultures. High quality French education fosters our pupils' curiosity and deepens their understanding of the world. Pupils express their opinions and ask and give information in French and understand and respond both in speech and in writing. A specialist French teacher delivers a well-planned programme of study across the whole school.

Religious Education

The school follows the Essex Agreed Syllabus –exploRE (March 2015). Within "exploRE" content related to all the major world faiths is covered and the exploration of secular as well as religious world views is included. Daily assemblies are held. RE is also part of every class's termly programme.

We aim to provide the children with a broad range of experiences that will enable them eventually to make thoughtful choices in social, moral and spiritual matters. Our programme is designed to help the children:

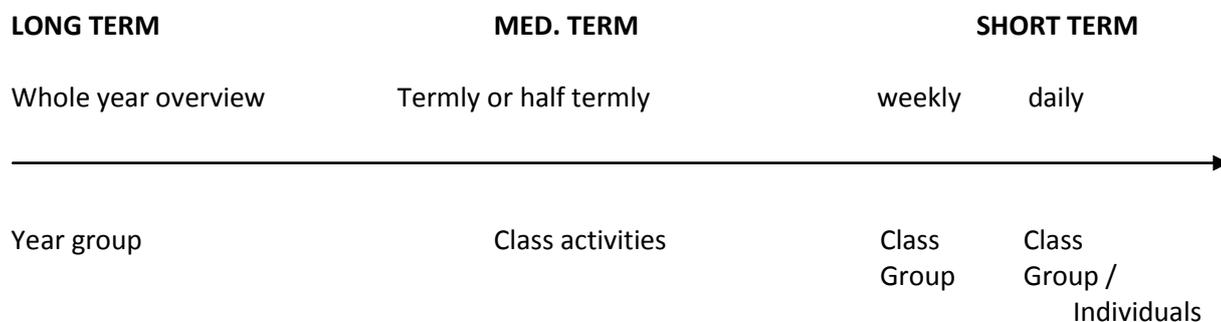
- Grow in awareness of themselves
- Grow in awareness of others
- Develop an interest in the immediate environment and natural world
- Clarify and enlarge their ideas about religion and other cultures.

Children's attention is drawn to the ethnic diversity within the community and extending world-wide.

Personal, Social and Health Education

PSHE is taught as a discrete subject as well as incorporated within many curriculum areas. Visits and visitors to school, Circle Time and general charity work all enhance the awareness of others. See also Sex and Relationships Policy.

Governors have ultimate responsibility for monitoring the curriculum. This is delegated to the Headteacher for day to day responsibility. The Standards Committee have delegated authority from the full Governors to monitor. They consider curriculum related matters at their meetings (held at least once a term). All minutes from Committee meetings are circulated to all Governors and copies available for parents to see upon request. Governors also monitor within the school – these are recorded on a pro-forma which is circulated at full Governor meetings.



Planning is seen as a continuum focusing from the Year group to the individual child. It should be a tool for all teachers that enables the best possible learning and teaching opportunities.

For further information regarding specific areas, please see the relevant curriculum maps.