**Morpeth First School Curriculum Policy**

**Aims**

* To outline the values and principles that underline our curriculum.
* To show how the curriculum is planned, delivered and monitored.
* To show how our curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.
* To show how our curriculum is inclusive meeting the needs of all children.

**Our Creative Curriculum Value Statement**

At Morpeth First School we believe that our creative curriculum should provide all of our children with an exciting and stimulating learning frame. The curriculum is planned to be relevant to their life experiences, should inspire and engage them in their learning. We encourage children to work in a flexible and collaborative way, with creativity at the heart of the curriculum.

**The Thematic Curriculum**

Where possible our curriculum is based upon learning through cross curricular themes. The themes are chosen to be relevant, stimulating and skills-based. We acknowledge that children learn best when engaged therefore they are encouraged to participate in the planning process through the suggestion of ideas and teachers use their knowledge of the children’s interests to direct learning. In this way, planning evolves in line with with the development of learning that takes place and can vary according to the needs of the children in each particular class and wherever possible, is based on real life experiences. Throughout the year the curriculum is also enriched by themed weeks which develop particular areas further. These include areas such as World Faiths, Safety week, and arts’ weeks based around particular themes which include dance, drama and art activities. We endeavour to teach children empathy and tolerance through the involvement of groups such as ‘Show Racism the Red Card’ and the local police and fire brigade as well as taking part in initiatives such as Anti-bullying and E-safety weeks.

**Key Skills**

Learning within the themes is based upon the acquisition of key skills. A framework of key skills is used for medium term planning to show progression. The assessment of the key skills is made through observation as the children work on practical task based activities. Skills based individual targets are set for core curriculum subjects for each pupil. These targets are set and reviewed regularly and parents are informed of these on a systematic basis. We place a strong emphasis on reading and regularly hold reading challenges, book weeks and arrange visiting authors to inspire children.

**The National Curriculum and RE**

The Key skills which are used for Medium term planning are taken from the National Curriculum and show levels of progression according to the National Curriculum Framework Document (2014). To ensure that we achieve coverage of the Basic Curriculum and Science curriculum, the science units of study for each year group are taught within themes where possible or discretely if they do not fit into the themes. Children have access to School 360 to support their online learning. Pupil Premium Grant is used to support those children who need it to develop key skills. Staff have been trained in the ‘Mastery Approach’ in mathematics to encourage children’s sound conceptual development in this subject. The school is involved with the Morpeth and Ponteland School’s Sport Partnership which has been highly effective in raising the standards in PE. This is also supplemented by after school clubs such as Keep Fit and Football. Children in Year 4 are also have swimming lessons once a week for 2 terms to increase water confidence. The school also holds whole school curriculum weeks where a curriculum topic such as geography, history, DT or science are explored in greater detail. Children in Year 3 receive 1 hour per week basic violin tuition from a trained music teacher. There are opportunities for children to learn a range of other musical instruments through the peripatetic music lessons provided by the local authority and pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium can opt to fund these lessons from their grant if they so wish.

RE is taught as a discrete subject as recommended and according to the agreed local SACRE scheme. However links are made with the theme if appropriate. We recognise the lack of ethnic diversity in the area and ensure that children are given the opportunity to find out about other countries and World Faiths through relevant planned visits and multi-cultural themed weeks.

**A Rich Learning Environment**

Learning through themes is supported by a range of resources including access to our outdoor learning area and the wider community through visitors to school and educational visits. We encourage the participation of other key practitioners such as musicians, dancers and artists to support children’s learning and this has led to the school gaining Gold Arts Mark Award. Staff use a variety of creative resources to engage children such as video clips, drama and role play to engage and motivate children and engage them in their learning. Year 4 children are offered the opportunity to take part in a residential visit in the spring term of their final year at the school which provides them with the opportunity to develop independence and confidence as well as extending their geographical awareness of the area. We regularly take part in local initiatives such as the Morpeth Gathering as well as using local resources to teach children about their local heritage.

**Creative Learning**

Our definition of creative learning looks at the attitude that children bring to their learning. We believe that creative learners.

• Develop personal and problem solving skills.

• Apply skills that they have learnt to different situations (Mental cognition).

• See learning as incremental.

• Use their imagination

• Persist at a task in pursuit of a chosen goal

• Develop resilience when encountering new situations and learning experiences

We believe that if children are fully engages in their learning and are able to develop the skills to learn independently the quality and standard of their work will improve.

Progression in creative learning will be shown by an observation of greater depth and complexity, autonomy and quality.

**Equal Opportunities**

 We believe that the thematic and cross-curricular approach enable all children including those with disabilities and SEND to participate fully in the curriculum. Children are able to participate and progress at their own level. The use of flexible planning and the setting of individual targets support assessing each pupil’s progress. Curricular approach and resources will be specifically selected to meet the needs of children with special needs or disabilities on an individual basis. Pupil Premium funding is also used to improve language and communication skills of children where required through small group work centred around thinking skills activities..

**Planning and Assessment**

When topics are introduced planning will start with the use of mental maps to select the sub themes to be followed. Teachers will then outline the key skills to be covered within the sub theme on a medium term planning grid. Within the sub theme planning should be flexible and evolving to follow the line of interest of the children. The coverage of key skills are tracked and sent to the Subject Manager. Individual progress will be shown through the use of Assessment for Learning. Discussion with the children will enable them to reflect on their learning to plan and set their own targets which will be reviewed regularly. The evidence of progression in learning can take many forms including:

• Observation notes

• Photos

• Examples of work

• Annotated work

• Children reflecting on what they have done

• Matching keys skills to work

• Plans, diagrams etc

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The curriculum coordinator is responsible for monitoring the development of the thematic curriculum and identifying and providing support and training as required. Through observation of teaching and collection of evidence from the work produced, the coordinator will be able to evaluate the curriculum and report to the Senior Leadership Team and the Governors through the curriculum committee.

**Keeping Parents Informed**

We aim to involve parents fully in their child’s learning. We share information about the curriculum through use of termly parent planners, information evenings reports and parents assemblies. The work produced by the children is shared and celebrated through displays, newsletters on the web and at community events. We hold regular focussed curriculum events where parents can join their children for specific learning opportunities such as practical Maths sessions or ‘Come and Read’ events. After school events are also regularly organised to share with parents specific teaching methods such as phonic approaches or tips to help with numeracy and literacy support at home. We also hold challenge events, where parents and grandparents can participate in problem solving activities with their children. Homework set should reflect the thematic approach and enable parents to support their child’s learning at home. A choice of homework is offered each week in order to support parents’ time constraints at home.

**The Early Years Curriculum**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is broken down into 7 areas of learning. The Prime Areas are the fundamental parts of development which children need in order to develop fully in all of the other Specific Areas of learning.

 **Prime Areas**

**Personal, Social and** **Emotional Development**

We support the children to develop the skills needed to manage their own feelings, make relationships and develop self-confidence and self-awareness. We aim for children to understand their feelings and ensure that they become independent learners in a nurturing environment which helps them feel safe and secure.

**Physical Development**

Children develop skills in moving in different ways, negotiating space, climbing and balancing. They also develop skills in handling a variety of tools including pencils. They are encouraged to be healthy, make healthy choices and manage their own hygiene and personal needs.

**Communication** **and Language**

We aim to enable children to become a good listener and provide the tools for every child to communicate effectively. We provide opportunities that ensure that children play in a language rich environment where they are constantly encouraged to talk about what they see, what they do and begin to use their own developing knowledge to make new connections and links.

**Specific Areas of Learning**

**Literacy**

We provide an environment rich in print, stories, poems and rhymes. We aim to foster a love of books and develop the skills needed to become an engaged reader. We deliver daily phonic sessions which may include listening to sounds in the environment, learning new sounds and blending these sounds to read words. Children are encouraged to be writers and understand the purpose of writing in different contexts.

**Mathematics**

Children’s knowledge of number will be deepened through real life experiences and within contexts that children understand. They will develop a sound knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures and encouraged to make links to the world around them.

**Understanding of the World**

Children develop a greater knowledge of the world in which they live through outdoor learning and opportunities to observe their environment and community. They learn about other cultures and gain a greater respect for their own and other people’s beliefs. They are given opportunities to use a range of ICT equipment such as cameras and programmable toys and understand how to use computer programmes to help support their learning.

**Expressive Arts and Design**

We aim to encourage your child to develop their imagination to its full potential. We help them to discover their own abilities in creativity and use a variety of media in innovative ways. We aim to create an environment which allows them to independently explore a range of media and express themselves in different ways.

**Disability Equality Impact Assessment**

This policy has been reviewed with reference to and in consideration of the school’s Disability Equality Scheme. Assessment will include consideration of issues identified by the involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents and any information the school holds on disabled pupils, staff and parents.

This Policy will be reviewed every 2 Years or earlier if National Curriculum guidelines dictate.

Next Review Date Autumn 2020

Signed Chair of Governors

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