

Montbelle Primary School



MONTBELLE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Curriculum Overview 2019/2020

'Learning together for life'

This document is supported by the Montbelle Curriculum Grids for Years One to Six, which sets out the specific curriculum children will follow, and the Early Years Develop Matters Handbook.

Our Values:

- To provide creative teaching that stimulates learning and inspires children to achieve all that they aspire to be;
- A learning environment where we are all valued and our uniqueness is celebrated;
- A place where the expression of feelings and opinions are welcomed and recognised;
- Where we learn to walk before we run and know that stumbles are part of the journey;
- A safe, calm, purposeful and happy environment which nurtures life-long learners;
- Developing our role as citizens in our local community, building bridges with people and places;
- Well managed resources which provide an inspiring learning environment and effectively support every child's needs;
- Meeting the challenge of the Governing Body to raise standards and to support the school in achieving its goals;
- Children understand their rights, responsibilities and develop learning behaviours which provide skills for their future.

Statement of curriculum intent

Our pedagogical belief is that learning is most impactful when it is holistic. We view this approach as being challenging, collective and collaborative, providing interconnected experiences through real life and inquiry-based experiences in a safe and democratic environment.

Introduced through exciting and engaging hooks, our curriculum ignites a life-long love of learning and thirst for knowledge-based enquiry that equips children for life now, and beyond school life. It is built upon real-life, first-hand experiences that reflect the unique interests and needs of our pupils, and the vibrant community in which they live.

Through the careful layering of knowledge-based experiences over time, children develop the depth of understanding needed to become independent, limitless thinkers, who have the vocabulary and confidence to express their ideas and become the change makers of the future, whilst also preparing them to be globally aware and responsible citizens. In this way, robust, knowledge-led discovery is used, alongside careful skill development, as a stimulus for cumulative fluency to stretch the minds of all our pupils so that they develop high aspirations and can realise their potential.

Statement of curriculum implementation

Our curriculum is designed to provide a consistent, relevant, well-rounded, and comprehensive learning experience. It is divided into three main modes of learning:

Proficiency - We understand that in order to be life-long learners children need to be proficient in the key skills and knowledge associated with core subjects, and that proficiency can only be achieved through repetition over time. In Early Years, this means prioritising young children's proficiency in the prime areas - Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional development. In Key Stage 1 (Year 1 and Year 2) and Key Stage 2, this prioritisation of the prime areas of English and Maths continues and we focus on them daily each morning as core, discrete competencies, enabling the necessary repetition that leads to proficiency and teaching each with a passion, enthusiasm and rigour that is infectious for our pupils.

Stories have a special place within our curriculum and, from the moment they join us at Montbelle, all children are taught the power of the possible, through exposure to a wealth of genres and authors that ignite a life-long pleasure for reading. For younger children daily systemic phonics teaching helps form the key that unlocks their early reading development, whilst older children build on this foundation and dig deeper into the comprehension skills needed to fully understand the power of stories and narratives – knowledge that can then be translated to all other areas of learning and be used to develop children's proficiency in crafting, verbally rehearsing and writing their own stories.

Maths development is presented within a spiral curriculum that revisits key number, calculation, shape, space and measure concepts over time to ensure understanding is fully embedded and children become competent problem solvers within their numerical worlds.

Experiential - The remainder of our curriculum is divided into a broad and balanced range of subjects rotated on a bi-weekly basis to allow for breadth of coverage. These include; sciences (biology, chemistry, physics and geography); arts (music, art, design and technology, drama); humanities (history, religious education); PE; PSED; computing and SMSC, alongside the specific areas of the Early Years curriculum (literacy; maths; knowledge and understanding of the world; expressive arts and design) are mainly taught in the afternoon.

Individual subjects are strategically led and managed by a subject leader, who use their own passion and knowledge about their area of expertise to inspire others within our wider school community. Learning is adapted to the children’s needs and interests to ensure that everyone has opportunities to realise their own potential, and is facilitated within hour-long lessons that focus on inspiring children and deepening their understanding. Hooks are used to captivate interest, and children are encouraged to take risks, problem-solve and actively explore and experience concepts, themes and ideas, through hands-on activities that fully utilise our indoor/outside learning environment and wider local community.

In developing our curriculum in this manner, children are able to actively revisit, practice and apply subject-specific learning over time within practical topics; layering their knowledge and skills to build cumulative fluency, and ensure subject-specific learning is fully embedded in rich and meaningful ways. At times throughout the school year, this daily experiential learning is enhanced by subject focus weeks, or whole school subject-specific projects, such as Science Week, and subjects are celebrated by our whole-school community through half-termly curriculum afternoons.

Extra-curricular activities before, after and during the school day, provide further opportunity for children to develop key skills, knowledge and understanding through focusing on specific areas of interest, such as on sports, music or drama. At times, specialist teachers or visitors to the school enhance our experiential curriculum and help bring subjects alive for the children in ways that school based staff cannot do. Residential trips in years 4 and 6, in addition to weekly Forest school sessions for children in the Reception and Year One, all provide the ultimate experiential experiences for children and the chance for them to really get stuck-in and get their hands dirty, to explore real-life learning in the natural world.

Sample KS1 timetable:

Week one						
Session	Learning strand	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Proficiency	Maths	English	English	Maths	Maths
Playtime						
2	Proficiency	English	Maths	Maths	English	English
3	Proficiency	Phonics/ guided reading	Phonics/ guided reading	Phonics/ guided reading	Phonics/ guided reading	Phonics/ guided reading
Lunch time						
4	Experiential	Art	Science	Geography	Computing	PSED
5	Experiential	History	Science	PE	Music	SMSC

Week two						
Session	Learning mode	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Proficiency	Maths	English	English	Maths	Maths
Playtime						
2	Proficiency	English	Maths	Maths	English	English
3	Proficiency	Phonics/ guided reading	Phonics/ guided reading	Phonics/ guided reading	Phonics/ guided reading	Phonics/ guided reading

Lunch time						
4	Experiential	RE	Forest School	Computing	Science	PSED
5	Experiential	PE	Forest School	DT	Science	SMSC

Thematic – Each half-term we timetable a ‘Take One- week’ to allow children the opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge base in a wider, multi-disciplinary way. Through exciting and enjoyable projects children are able to creatively make links in their theme-based learning and use real-life experiences to add breadth and depth to their global understanding. Take One weeks use a central, whole-school stimulus, such as take one story, picture, poem, problem, or symphony, to dig a little deeper and draw upon subject-specific disciplines in a joined-up meaningful way. In so doing, they not only allow children the opportunity to consolidate their proficiency and experiential learning, but do so in a fully immersive and cross-curricular way that fosters their life-long love of learning beyond the confines of school. Take One weeks for the 2019/2020 school year are as follows:

Thematic learning: Take One- Overview			
	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
1	Story	Shakespeare	Symphony
2	Career	Trip to somewhere new	Sport

Thematic learning is further enhanced through specific focus weeks throughout the school year, such as ‘Anti-bullying week’ and ‘Heartstart week,’ as well as children’s enterprise and take over day, all giving further scope to link learning through common themes, and dig deeper into areas of interest and specific focus.

Golden threads – As a school we value the role that knowledge plays in unlocking the world around us and have developed our curriculum around robust knowledge discovery. In order to become active participants in their own lives and change-makers within the wider community, we have identified a number of key ‘golden thread’ concepts, whose mastery, in terms of understanding, we feel are central to children’s ability to engage fully within society. As a result we have skilfully woven these golden threads throughout all learning opportunities within school, and across the years - from their introduction in early years, through to their consolidation in Year 6. By weaving them across curriculum areas, subjects and topics, and therefore presenting these key concepts to children in a plethora of different ways, we hope each and every child will leave school with a firm, multi-faceted understanding of what they mean; one that they can draw upon in a multitude of different ways across the course of a life-time to add breadth and depth to any subject at hand. For the year 2019/2020 our Golden threads are:

Thematic learning: Golden threads			
	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
1	Metamorphosis	Responsibility	Optimism
2	Sacrifice	Discovery	Achievement

Early Years

As a whole school community we recognise the unique and special role that the Early Years plays in laying firm foundations that can inspire and withstand a life-long love of learning. Replicating the three whole-school modes of learning – proficiency, thematic and experiential, our early year’s curriculum shares much with the rest of school, whilst also being unique and different.

Our Early Years curriculum is largely skills based as we understand that all knowledge is first underpinned by skill, and without the necessary skills children will struggle to engage with the knowledge-rich content that comes later, and fully realise their own potential. The curriculum is also heavily focused on fostering, honing and exploiting children’s characteristics of learning so that they develop a thirst for active exploration, enquiry and discovery that will carry them throughout their education and beyond.

Finally, we are proud of the fact that our Early Years curriculum recognises that young children learn best through quality play. Early years specialist practitioners therefore skilfully plan play-based learning activities that enable children to use first-hand experiences to explore the world around them in a fully holistic, developmental and meaningful way. As such individual interests, schemas and learning styles are used as the stimulus for child-centred learning journeys that develop autonomy, independence and social skills. Within playful activities and sustained-shared interaction, language naturally forms a central pillar of our Early Year’s curriculum and is promoted at every opportunity within our communication friendly spaces, and interchanges. Whilst, through the median of play, fine and gross motor skills are continually developed to enable children to take charge of their own learning, manage their self-care independently and develop as emergent writers.

Characteristics of learning in the early years:

Characteristics of learning (EYFS Development Matters)		
Playing and exploring	Active learning	Creating and thinking critically
Be willing to have a go Find out and explore Use what you know in play	Be involved and concentrate Keep trying Enjoy achieving what you set out to do	Dig deeper Ask why Make connections Have original ideas Use what is already known to learn new things Find new ways to do things

Our ‘Hidden’ Curriculum

At Montbelle we feel that the way children learn is just as important as what they learn. We passionately believe that the development of a healthy lifestyle, a growth mindset, well-developed social skills and emotional intelligence, British values, and behaviours for learning are just as important to wellbeing, future functioning and happiness, as the fulfilment of academic potential. Every aspect of our curriculum is therefore underpinned by a comprehensive set of values and learning behaviours, and we utilise every given opportunity within our school day to explicitly teach, reinforce and model these values and behaviours to our pupils. For example, characteristics of learning in the Early Years, and behaviours for learning in KS1 and KS2 are taught through planned activities, and are explicitly referenced in every lesson so that children understand what they are, why they are important and how to best use them to progress confidently within their own learning journeys.

In addition, children are always provided with stretch and challenge to enable learning at a greater depth, and are taught from a young age that that an element of ‘struggle’ is an integral part of learning. Likewise, mistakes are embraced as a necessary part of skill and knowledge development, and an ethos is created, and actively maintained in school, which enables all children to explore and experiment in a safe environment, knowing that they will at times struggle, fail and make mistakes, but that it is ok to do so. Specific time is allocated each week for all children to explore social, emotional and personal development through whole-class and group circle times, team building activities, an inter-school buddy system and a restorative approach to peer dispute. Whole school, phase and in-class assemblies are also used to reinforce these messages, alongside specific work on British values and citizenship.

Our whole-school behaviours for learning:

Behaviours for learning					
Resilience	Strength	Collaboration	Determination	Creativity	Balance
Persevere Relish the challenge Don’t give up	Embrace risk Take chances Inspire others	Confident alone. Stronger together Compromise Communication	Focus on the end goal Continue Overcome	Be original Be imaginative	Look outside the box See the whole picture Step back Weigh up

British Values (Ofsted 2014)	
Democracy	The rule of law
Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith	Individual liberty

Statement of Curriculum Impact

We believe that the impact of our curriculum will shape our young people, at each stage of their education, to have the knowledge and skills to be successful, independent and motivated learners, ready for the next stage in their education. They will be unique, resilient, recognise their achievements, be supportive of others and have the ability to build positive relationships. Furthermore, they will be confident in their own beliefs, respectful of the views of others and will have built strong learning behaviours that will allow them to continue learning for life.