

Curriculum Statement

Intent

Our Concept Led Curriculum is driven by the big ideas rather than just subject content. It aims to help children develop understanding of broad concepts of change, choice, consequences, equality, exploration, identity and survival. These over-arching concepts connect ideas that have common attributes in ways that are abstract, cross-disciplinary and enduring. They lie at the heart of each learning journey and answer the question, “What is this *really* about?” Learning journeys are then organised under these seven key concepts.

Implementation

We recognize that the curriculum is the means by which we ensure that all our children get their fair share of the rich cultural inheritance our world affords but that if children don't remember what we have taught them, then even the richest curriculum is pointless. Knowledge can't empower if it is forgotten. So, as well as thinking about the richest, best material to put into our curriculum, we also have to structure it in a way that makes remembering almost inevitable.

In the first instance we know that it is deeper processing that encourages long-term retention of learning - hence the level of challenge in our curriculum. The themes within learning journeys are designed to be ambitious and offer children opportunities to think deeply about difficult ethical and moral issues. Each term's theme is built around a genuinely open key question - what then follows in terms of learning should help children to form their own conclusions and decide upon their own answer to the question. We want children to learn to research, reason, justify and evaluate.

Higher level vocabulary is also explicitly taught so that children are able to communicate and articulate ideas in more precise, sophisticated and mature ways. Additionally, each theme or learning journey has a number of texts associated with it to ensure that children are encountering high quality literature.

We have then tried to ensure that each learning journey contains explicit connections within and between subjects. Children are encouraged to engage with material actively and apply what they have learned in a range of contexts.

Our curriculum has intentional 'vertical' links across terms and year groups with children revisiting key concepts and ideas. This revisiting is done in a deliberate, planned way. We have also carefully built in 'diagonal links' – joining concepts across both year groups and across subjects. The aim of this being that each time a concept is encountered within a different context, not only is the concept more likely to be remembered, the understanding of that concept also becomes more nuanced.

These links form the bones of our curriculum ensuring that there is progression.

Our pedagogy is built around metacognition and self-regulation. We know that these approaches have consistently high levels of impact. Our curriculum is structured in a way that aims to teach children how to think - rather than what to think.

We place huge value on peer-to-peer learning throughout the curriculum and collaborative approaches are employed wherever possible. Our children learn to co-operate, listen and, when appropriate, challenge politely.

Impact

Our children are overwhelmingly positive about school and about their learning. Our curriculum excites and enthuses them. Relationships in and across our school community are warm and respectful – and our curriculum plays a key part in building a culture that encourages sensitive and mature thinking.