

Curriculum & Teaching for Learning Policy

Introduction

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the Foundation Phase and National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential

Vision

Working together we can support each other to achieve our shared school vision:-

“LEARN TOGETHER – Let’s learn to enjoy, achieve, respect and nurture together”

Aims

Our aims for Barker’s Lane Community Primary School:

- *To create learning opportunities that engage and challenge children to maximise their learning potential;*
- *To provide an environment that both inspires and stimulates the desire to learn;*
- *To develop a relationship with parents, carers and the wider community, involving them in the learning process for the benefit of all children;*
- *To foster and encourage positive attitudes in a happy, caring atmosphere, where children will become confident, develop a sense of self-worth and relate well to others.*
- *To encourage children to think, make decisions and develop lifelong learning skills.*
- *To empower children to be active citizens and to develop a global perspective, understanding the need for sustainable development and promoting a culture of respect for diversity.*

The Curriculum

At Barker’s Lane we provide a broad and balanced curriculum promoting spiritual, moral, emotional, cultural, intellectual and physical development. The school promotes lifelong learning and aims to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. The Foundation Phase (aged 3-7), National Curriculum (aged 7-11), and Religious Education are implemented through topic work in addition to subject specific activities.

Our curriculum is organised in a combination of cross-curricular themes and some discrete subject teaching. Classes are organised by age, usually in single age year groups in each class. Where the children benefit, vertical grouping of not more than two age groups is used.

Teachers carefully plan activities in close collaboration with their teams ensuring continuity and progression for the children, with a particular emphasis on literacy, numeracy and digital competency in line with national policy.

Foundation Phase Curriculum (Aged 3-7)

The holistic development of children and their skills across the curriculum lies at the heart of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The curriculum promotes equality of opportunity and values, and celebrates diversity. Children learn through first-hand experiential activities. Play is the child's work and a very serious business. Our staff plan and structure play to ensure the children encounter the learning experience intended. Play is a child's way of learning, how they develop skills, concepts

and attitudes. The children experience the curriculum through a balance of focussed practical activities and free-play supported and extended by skilled adults.

The statutory Foundation Phase curriculum encompasses the seven areas of learning in the Welsh Government's 'Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7 year olds in Wales':

- Personal & Social Development, Wellbeing and Cultural Diversity
- Language, Literacy & Communication
- Mathematical Development
- Welsh Language Development
- Creative Development
- Physical Development
- Knowledge & Understanding of the World

The National Curriculum (Aged 7-11)

The National Curriculum in Wales was revised and restructured in 2008. The purpose of these changes was to identify the skills for each subject and the range of contexts, opportunities and activities through which these skills could be developed and applied. The content was updated to ensure relevance to the twenty-first century learner. At Key Stage 2, learners build on the skills, knowledge and understanding they have acquired during the Foundation Phase.

The National Curriculum comprises of the following Programmes of Study:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Welsh Second Language
- I.T
- Geography
- History
- Physical Education
- Art & Design
- Design Technology
- Music

Religious Education

In the Foundation Phase children are introduced to religious stories and artefacts. They learn about themselves, familiar people, places and objects through their play and daily routines. They role play and talk about special feelings, buildings, festivals and celebrations.

As they progress they begin to respond to open questions, offer ideas and make connections. They handle and explore artefacts from different religions through play and on visits. They are introduced to places of worship and have opportunities to visit the local church.

At Key Stage 2, R.E fosters children's interest and wonder in the world and human experience. Through practical stimulating activities and exploration of religion in their locality in Wales, in Britain and the wider world learners will develop skills and gather information that will help them

think creatively about fundamental religious and moral questions and share ideas through discussion. The children have opportunities to express their own feelings and opinions, identify how their actions may affect others, recognise that other people's viewpoints differ from their own and reflect on this.

(Further information about the curriculum can be found in the School Prospectus)

Learning, Developing & Applying Skills Across the Curriculum

The Literacy & Numeracy Framework (LNF)

The Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) sets expectations for learners to develop and apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Literacy skills in oracy, reading and writing; and numeracy skills in numerical reasoning, number, measures and data are planned for across all areas of the curriculum.

Digital Competency

The Digital Competency Framework (DCF) develops skills and confidence that enable learners to become adaptable to changes in technology over time. The DCF is planned across the curriculum to develop skills in **citizenship, interacting & collaborating, producing and data & computational thinking.**

Thinking Skills & Other Learning Across the Curriculum

Learners are given opportunities to build on their thinking skills in line with the non-statutory *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*. Learners acquire, develop, practise, apply and refine these skills through group and individual activities in a variety of contexts across the curriculum. Progress can be seen in terms of the refinement of these skills and by their application to tasks that move from: concrete to abstract; simple to complex; personal to the 'big picture'; familiar to unfamiliar; and supported to independent and interdependent.

Learners develop their thinking across the curriculum through the processes of **planning, developing** and **reflecting**.

We provide pupils with opportunities and experiences throughout their time in school that will promote knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales (Curriculum Cymreig), their personal and social development and well-being and their awareness of the world of work.

We also develop, through various means such as collective worship, cultural festivals, Eco-schools project, visits and classroom activities, pupils' knowledge of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship.

Pupils' experiences are enhanced through well planned educational visits, visiting speakers to school and a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

(A fundamental review of curriculum and assessment arrangements from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4 has been undertaken. A new Curriculum for Wales is currently being developed with

an emphasis on equipping young people with skills for life which will be implemented by September 2022.

The purpose of the new curriculum is to support our children and young people to be:

- *ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives*
- *enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work*
- *ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world*
- *healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society*

At Barker's Lane we will be working towards these aims as we review our pedagogy and involve the children fully in developing their own learning.)

Organisation and Planning

Planning is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps out the learning challenges to be covered over the Foundation Phase and at Key Stage 2 on a two year cycle. The Phase Teams / Curriculum Leaders liaise with colleagues to establish these.

Our medium-term plans give further details of learning challenges for each term. These plans focus on developing children's skills, determine the learning challenges and ensure an appropriate balance across the term.

Short term plans are completed on a weekly basis by individual / teams of teachers. Each teacher keeps these individual plans, and the teachers and SLT discuss them on an informal basis. The headteacher monitors these plans.

Effective learning

Our philosophy for the most effective practice is reflected in our approach to teaching and learning. In the infant classes we base our philosophy on the Foundation Phase principles of learning through play, using problem solving and investigational activities which stimulate creative thinking – and make learning fun! This is built on and extended throughout the juniors providing a balance of opportunities for independent research and enquiry together with whole class teaching.

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. The psychologist Howard Gardner identifies seven main areas of intelligence: linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal/group working, and intrapersonal/reflective. We take into account these different forms of intelligence when planning teaching and learning styles. We also aim to provide opportunities for children to strengthen learning styles which may not be their strength.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- well planned play / active experiences;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;

- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- responding to audio, visual and audio-visual materials;
- using the outdoor environment;
- role-play;
- designing, making and evaluating;
- participation in physical activity.

We encourage children to take responsibility for some of their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn to ask and answer questions, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn, through the time for reflection, self and peer assessment.

Effective teaching

When teaching we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We emphasise the process of the learning through the use of progressively structured open-questioning, encouraging discussion, debate and the development of a more creative approach to thinking.

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's stage of development. Our prime focus is to develop further the skills and knowledge of the children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with Additional Learning Needs we give due regard to information and targets in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We have high expectations of all children, and we believe that their work here at Barker's Lane is of the highest possible standard. We challenge more able and talented pupils through extended research, opportunities for presentation, investigational and problem solving activities, ensuring they meet their potential.

Together with the children and parents we set academic targets for the children in each academic year. We review the progress of each child termly. We plan our learning opportunities with clear learning intentions and success criteria, with appropriate emphasis on literacy, numeracy and digital competency. We undertake on-going assessments to inform future learning.

Each of our teachers establishes good working relationships with all children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to good behaviour. We expect all children to comply with our Golden Rules that have been devised to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children break our rules we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school 'Good Behaviour' policy.

Personal and social development and well being are promoted through a range of contexts and involve a variety of experiences for pupils. We place great emphasis on attitudes, values and the knowledge and understanding relating to PSE.

We ensure that all experiences and activities that the children are involved in are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission.

Learning Support Assistants play a vital role in the classroom and are valued as important members of the team. We deploy LSA's and other adult volunteers effectively. Sometimes they work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups. They can also assist with PPA, the preparation and storage of classroom equipment, displays, etc.

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays at least once a term, to ensure that the classroom area reflects the learning which takes place. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display and celebrate their best work at some time during the year. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries, fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to literacy, numeracy and cymreag. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and areas for development and plan their professional development needs accordingly together with the SLT. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. Supportive classroom observation takes place termly by the headteacher, SLT and all teachers. Observation is carefully timetabled according to priorities set out in the SIP. (see Monitoring & Evaluation Policy for further detail). We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

Equality

Equality is always observed with positive attitudes being developed. We will not unlawfully discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or on the grounds of Welsh language.

All pupils, their parents and guardians, volunteers, staff and school governors are valued and will be treated with dignity and respect. The school will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

We work across our school community to ensure our commitment to equality and fairness is shared and take steps to ensure that our school is accessible, welcoming and inclusive.

The role of governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include curriculum reviews from learning area leaders and the termly headteacher's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

The role of parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding parents' information meetings to explain our school strategies and philosophies for effective learning;
- literacy and numeracy workshops to share specific teaching strategies;
- providing information for parents at the start of each academic year in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying;
- reporting regularly to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how their child can improve further, encouraging dialogue to ensure parent's have opportunity to offer views / opinions;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We expect parents to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is punctual for school;
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.

Monitoring and Review

Our governing body's curriculum committee is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented.

We have named governors for literacy, numeracy, ICT and ALN. The governors liaise with their class partners / curriculum leaders and monitor closely the way the school teaches the curriculum.

The headteacher is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. The headteacher monitors planning for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the Foundation Phase and National Curriculum, and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives.

SLT / Curriculum Leaders monitor the teaching throughout the school on a planned programme.

We are aware of the need to review the school curriculum / teaching for learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

This policy was drawn up by Mrs C Edwards in April 2015, following consultation with all staff and governors. It was reviewed in March 2018. The next review will be following further development / statutory changes to the curriculum or Spring 2021 at the latest.