

# 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 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 the relationships they have with others, mutual respect and how they 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**

In Wales we are in the process of transitioning from our Foundation Phase (aged 3-7) and the National Curriculum (aged 7-11) which we currently use as a framework for teaching, to the principles of the new Curriculum for Wales which will become statutory in September 2022.

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.

Our curriculum is organised in a combination of cross-curricular topics and a small amount of 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 competence.

The **cross-curricular skills** of literacy, numeracy and digital competence are essential to all learning and the ability to unlock knowledge. They enable learners to access the breadth of a school’s curriculum and the wealth of opportunities it offers, equipping them with the lifelong skills. It is mandatory for learners to be given opportunities across the curriculum to:

- develop listening, reading, speaking and writing skills
- be able to use numbers and solve problems in real-life situations
- be confident users of a range of technologies to help them function and communicate effectively and make sense of the world.

Our curriculum enables learners to develop competence and progress in these skills, and where there are opportunities, to extend and apply them across all areas. The content of the Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks and the Digital Competence Framework ensure a common approach to developing these skills.

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, 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.

### **Religious Education**

Younger 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.

As children progress through the school, 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)*

### **Curriculum for Wales 2022**

In March 2021 the Senedd voted to pass the new Curriculum and Assessment Bill which means that the new Curriculum for Wales will be introduced in September 2022.

As a school we are transitioning, evaluating our current practice and moving forwards with our preparations to introduce the new curriculum. Involvement and input from all of our children is an important part of developing our curriculum plans.

More details about the curriculum are available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales>

The curriculum is based on **four core purposes** (see *Appendix 1*) which are the shared vision and aspiration for every child and young person in Wales. Pupils will be supported to develop as:

- ambitious, capable learners
- enterprising, creative contributors
- ethical, informed citizens
- healthy, confident individuals.

The four core purposes are also underpinned by **integral skills** (see *Appendix 2*) which will be developed within a wide range of learning and teaching. These integral skills are:

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Personal effectiveness
- Planning and organising.

### **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 skills to be covered over the Foundation Phase and at Key Stage 2. Our medium-term plans give further details of learning for each term. These plans focus on developing children's skills, determine the learning activities and ensure an appropriate balance across the term. Children are involved in choosing context and experiences.

Short term plans are completed on a weekly basis by individual / teams of teachers. Each teacher keeps these individual plans. The SLT monitor these plans.

### **Effective learning**

Children learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow them to learn in ways that best suit them. We take into account the different forms of different learning styles when planning teaching and learning. 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;
- time for pupils to explore their own interests in a structured way.
- well planned play / active experiences;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- using and applying digital skills;;
- 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

The Curriculum is underpinned by twelve pedagogical principles, which state that good learning and teaching:

1. maintains a consistent focus on the overall purposes of the curriculum
2. challenges all learners by encouraging them to recognise the importance of sustained effort in meeting expectations that are high but achievable for them
3. means employing a blend of approaches including direct teaching
4. means employing a blend of approaches including those that promote problem-solving, creative and critical thinking
5. sets tasks and selects resources that build on previous knowledge and experience and engage interest
6. creates authentic contexts for learning
7. means employing assessment for learning principles
8. ranges within and across Areas
9. regularly reinforces the cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy and digital competence, and provides opportunities to practise them
10. encourages learners to take increasing responsibility for their own learning
11. supports social and emotional development and positive relationships
12. encourages collaboration.

Our effective teaching model is based on the above pedagogical principles, running alongside our culture of 'successful learning / growth mindset'. At Barker's Lane School you will see:

- Clear, succinct non-contextualised skill based learning intentions
- Co-constructed, process/strategy based steps to success (success criteria)
- WAGOLs (*what a good one looks like*) to support establishing steps to success and to exemplify expectations or WABOLs (*what a bad one looks like*)
- Pit-stops to refocus on steps to success, give time for reflection / peer support and to share good examples. This is an opportunity to improve work mid lesson 'over and over'.
- Whole class verbal feedback and individual verbal feedback at various times to all of the children.
- Self-assessment, giving time at the end of the session for the children to reflect on the steps to success, make any amendments that they can see need doing e.g. expected punctuation.
- Written teacher feedback – two or three examples highlighted in green of the very best work linked to the steps to success. There is at least one piece of feedback highlighted in orange which will up-level the work with an additional request, such as a direct instructions e.g. Add a simile + 1 more sentence. All expected spelling / punctuation is highlighted to that child's stage of learning.

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. 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 support pupils through our universal and targeted provision and 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 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.

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments which reflect the learning that is currently taking place. Working Walls are an important part of each classroom. 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, topic 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.

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.

### ***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 will 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 their 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 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 E Richardson in March 2021, following consultation with all staff and governors. The next review will be following statutory changes to the curriculum or Spring 2023 at the latest.

## **Appendix 1: Four Core Purposes**

Pupils will be supported to develop as:

### **Ambitious, capable learners** who:

- set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge
- are building up a body of knowledge and have the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts
- are questioning and enjoy solving problems
- can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, using both Welsh and English
- can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about
- can use number effectively in different contexts
- understand how to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts
- use digital technologies creatively to communicate, find and analyse information
- undertake research and evaluate critically what they find and are ready to learn throughout their lives.

### **Enterprising, creative contributors** who:

- connect and apply their knowledge and skills to create ideas and products
- think creatively to reframe and solve problems
- identify and grasp opportunities
- take measured risks
- lead and play different roles in teams effectively and responsibly
- express ideas and emotions through different media
- give of their energy and skills so that other people will benefit and are ready to play a full part in life and work.

### **Ethical, informed citizens** who:

- find, evaluate and use evidence in forming views
- engage with contemporary issues based upon their knowledge and values
- understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights
- understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and acting
- are knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past
- respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society
- show their commitment to the sustainability of the planet and are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world.

### **Healthy, confident individuals** who:

- have secure values and are establishing their spiritual and ethical beliefs
- are building their mental and emotional well-being by developing confidence, resilience and empathy
- apply knowledge about the impact of diet and exercise on physical and mental health in their daily lives
- know how to find the information and support to keep safe and well
- take part in physical activity



- take measured decisions about lifestyle and manage risk
- have the confidence to participate in performance
- form positive relationships based upon trust and mutual respect
- face and overcome challenge
- have the skills and knowledge to manage everyday life as independently as they can and are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

## **Appendix 2: Skills integral to the four purposes**

### **Creativity and innovation**

Learners should be given space to be curious and inquisitive, and to generate many ideas. They should be supported to link and connect disparate [experiences](#), [knowledge](#) and [skills](#), and see, explore and justify alternative solutions. They should be able to identify opportunities and communicate their strategies. This should support learners to create different types of value.

### **Critical thinking and problem-solving**

Learners should be supported to ask meaningful questions, and to evaluate information, evidence and situations. They should be able to analyse and justify possible solutions, recognising potential issues and problems. Learners should become objective in their decision-making, identifying and developing arguments. They should be able to propose solutions which generate different types of value.

### **Personal effectiveness**

Learners should develop emotional intelligence and awareness, becoming confident and independent. They should have opportunities to lead debate and discussions, becoming aware of the social, cultural, ethical and legal implications of their arguments. They should be able to evaluate their learning and mistakes, identifying areas for development. They should become responsible and reliable, being able to identify and recognise different types of value and then use that value.

### **Planning and organising**

Where developmentally appropriate, learners should be able to set goals, make decisions and monitor interim results. They should be able to reflect and adapt, as well as manage time, people and resources. They should be able to check for accuracy and be able create different types of value.

The development of these skills allows learners to work across disciplines, providing them with opportunities for both synthesis and analysis. There is particular potential for innovation in making and using connections between different disciplines and Areas.

When developing these skills, learners should:

- develop an appreciation of sustainable development and the challenges facing humanity

- develop awareness of emerging technological advances
- be supported and challenged so that they are prepared to confidently meet the demands of working in uncertain situations, as changing local, national and global contexts result in new challenges and opportunities for success
- be afforded the space to generate creative ideas and to critically evaluate alternatives – in an ever-changing world, flexibility and the ability to develop more ideas will enable learners to consider a wider range of alternative solutions when things change
- build their resilience and develop strategies which will help them manage their well-being – they should be encountering experiences where they can respond positively in the face of challenge, uncertainty or failure
- learn to work effectively with others, valuing the different contributions they and others make – they should also begin to recognise the limitations of their own work and those of others as they build an understanding of how different people play different roles within a team.