

## Box CE VC Primary School Curriculum Policy

*'Through the focus on 'key skills' schools should give deeper consideration to progression and continuity of their curriculum; should take account of the distinctiveness of their school; and, organise their curriculum so that there is every opportunity for pupils to make use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills within a creative model designed to enrich and excite. The principles of enabling every child to succeed outlined in 'Every Child Matters' should predominate our thinking.'*

**Key Skills for the Excellent and Enjoyable Curriculum - forward Clive Davies (2004)**

### **Purpose**

We aim to develop a curriculum that is broad, balanced and based on the development and application of skills and one that has cross curricular links to ensure that pupils' learning has even greater coherence. We also aim to embed the application of ICT across the curriculum in order to maximise pupils' learning and progress.

The curriculum we provide meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Agreed Syllabus for RE as well as providing an extensive range of learning experiences beyond the statutory requirements. The curriculum also embraces the outcomes of 'Every Child Matters', enjoyment, being healthy, staying safe, positive contribution and economic well being.

### **Guiding principles**

- Opportunities for cross curricular links are identified during medium term planning, especially in English, ICT and the foundation subjects
- Attainment in core subjects increases as teaching and learning becomes more meaningful with cross curricular links and a clear progression of skills
- There is an improvement of the quality in the teaching and learning in the foundation subjects with a clear progression in skills that is age appropriate
- There is greater continuity and progression in teaching and learning
- Teaching and learning is more exciting for both pupils and teachers
- Teachers have more freedom to decide how key skills are taught

### **Related documents and policies**

The National Curriculum, the renewed Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks, Every Child Matters, 'Designing and timetabling the Primary Curriculum' QCA 2002, 'Key Skills for an Excellent and Enjoyable Curriculum' and 'Planning a Skills Based Curriculum' by Chris Quigley and A Guide to the Law for School Governors

Box CE VC Primary School curriculum map and subject overviews, vision statement and agreed aims, curriculum, assessment for learning, educational visits, charging and remissions, special educational needs, able gifted and talented, equal opportunities and homework policies

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The **headteacher** will ensure that:

- all statutory elements of the curriculum are met

- the amount of time provided for teaching the curriculum is adequate and reviewed regularly by the policy and curriculum committee
- where appropriate the needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from the National Curriculum
- the governing body is fully involved in the decision making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- the governing body is advised on statutory targets in order to make informed decisions

**Other staff** will ensure that the curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

The **governing body** will ensure that:

- it considers the advice of the headteacher on curriculum issues and when setting statutory and non statutory targets
- progress towards annual statutory targets is monitored
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessment results are published in the school prospectus and in the school profile and progress towards meeting agreed targets is described
- it participates in the decision making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- political issues are always presented to pupils in a balanced way

#### **A skills based curriculum with cross curricular links**

Our curriculum map sets out what will be taught and when. Relevant links between subjects have been maximised on the curriculum map, for example historical fiction will be studied during a history based topic; puppet making to link with traditional stories; seaside holidays, going to the seaside with green plants and the environment; and electricity and light with making fair ground rides or a torch. Each subject has an A and a B year to take into account pupils who are in the same class for two years. Some subjects, such as science, art and music, are taught on a two year spiralling curriculum with the themes covered at a higher level each time they are taught.

Teachers plan to teach skills discretely and provide opportunities to apply these skills. The six key skills from the National Curriculum, (communication, application of number, information technology, working with others, improving own learning and performance and problem solving) are used as a basis to plan for skill development in each subject.

The skills for each subject are levelled and teachers should ensure that skills taught in foundation subjects are at least age appropriate. If a cross curricular lesson is being taught, for example Yr 6 pupils are asked to write a report on an environmental issue caused by a change in the environment and attempts to manage the environment sustainably, then that lesson will have at least two objectives - one geography and one literacy. This will help to ensure that both subjects are taught at an appropriate level with the correct vocabulary.

*See 'Key Skills for and Excellent and Enjoyable Curriculum'*

#### **Skills development**

The skills that are taught and developed each term will directly link to the term's 'main outcomes'. For example, what medium will the children learn to use in art? If one of the main

outcomes for the term is to paint a portrait then all of the skills taught need to centre around that and children should be taught how to mix skin tones, hair or eye colours, look at the proportion/positions of facial features. For example when they learn about primary and secondary colours they could mix shades of a colour making their own shade cards, experimenting with what happens when you add a little bit of blue to red etc. then trying it with another colour. Painting techniques can be developed in a similar way - how to use a brush and how to mix powder paints, looking at the use of colour or painting techniques used by other artists e.g. the straight brush strokes of Van Gogh or the dots used by Monet.

It is the teaching of the skills that children can then transfer to other situations that is so important. They need to be given plenty of opportunities to practice these skills.

### **Teaching and learning**

As well as focussing on the development and application of skills we aim to teach exciting and challenging lessons delivering lessons in a variety of ways by providing as many first hand practical experiences as possible, such as the use of practical apparatus, artefacts and technology; visits and the use of experts. Through continual assessment, work is matched to the ability of the child through differentiated activities, adult support, providing a level of challenge that is stimulating for pupils and questioning skills. Children who are not making sufficient progress are quickly identified and are placed on intervention programmes, such as ALS or ELS, and those identified as having special educational needs are given either a provision map or individual education plan linked to the stage they are on the code of practice. The progress of these children is closely monitored.

*See special educational needs, able gifted and talented, assessment for learning and equal opportunities policies*

### **Designing and timetabling the primary curriculum**

Since the document, '*Designing and timetabling the primary curriculum*', was published in 2002 the recommended timings for some subjects have changed, for example schools are now expected to teach 2 hours of PE each week not the old recommendation of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hours. As well as the subjects listed there are now other subjects, such as a FL & PSHE&C, that need to be included as well as collective worship. Using the 2002 recommendations it is impossible to fit everything into a weekly timetable. At Box Primary School we have explored ways of planning and timetabling the curriculum. We have also made decisions about how much time should be allocated to subjects.

### **Subject Allocation**

Many foundation subjects, such as music, don't need to be taught weekly but can be taught very effectively in a block of a few weeks. Some subjects, such as DT, can be taught very effectively during a block of a few days. Teaching subjects such as DT over a shorter amount of time it is possible to achieve a higher standard of work and it is easier to maintain enthusiasm for the project. In line with our cross curricular approach, teachers will look for opportunities to link or block subject areas, for example making biscuits in DT would link well with instruction writing in literacy. This will also help to free up some time in the timetable.

The subject allocations for Box Primary School are below. Not all subjects need to be taught weekly or even termly.

### To be taught weekly:

- **Maths** 5 lessons of 1 hr
- **English** 5 lessons of 1 hr
- **Science** 2 hrs KS2, KS1 at least 1½ hours
- **PE** 2 hrs
- **FL (Foreign language)** 35 - 40 mins
- **Collective worship** - Monday - whole school 20 mins  
Tuesday or Thursday - KS 20 mins  
Tuesday or Thursday - class assembly 10 mins  
Wednesday - hymn practice 30 mins  
Friday - family assembly 30 mins

### To be taught in blocks:

- **DT** two big projects each year
- **Art** - termly focus, six weeks
- **Music** - termly focus, six weeks
- **PSHE&C** - termly focus, six weeks
- **RE** - termly focus, six weeks

*NB subjects should not be taught on a fortnightly timetable, teaching a subject such as music fortnightly would mean you would end up spending time doing a long recap on the previous lesson as it was so long ago.*

### To be taught annually

- **History** - major focus for a term
- **Geography** - major focus for a term

### Weekly timetables

Weekly timetables will change each term to reflect the balance of subjects on the curriculum map. A weekly timetable will include:

- **Maths** 5 lessons of 1 hr
- **English** 5 lessons of 1 hr
- **Science** 2 hrs KS2, KS1 at least 1½ hours
- **PE** 2 hrs
- **FL (Foreign language)** 35 - 40 mins
- **Collective worship** - Monday - whole school 20 mins  
Tuesday or Thursday - KS 20 mins  
Tuesday or Thursday - class assembly 10 mins  
Wednesday - hymn practice 30 mins  
Friday - family assembly 30 mins

The rest of the timetable will be used flexibly by teachers to teach subjects in block.

## **Planning steps**

### **Long term planning**

The curriculum map for each class and the subject overviews set out what should be taught and when.

### **Mind map**

The first step in planning is to create a mind map or topic web to create a context for learning. The skills are then mapped for subjects. The mind map summarises the four or five main learning outcomes for a term; these directly link to the key skills that are taught and developed each term. The mind map also shows the links between subjects.

### **Medium term planning grids**

The medium term planning grid is the only record we have of coverage of the curriculum. A brief outline of the main learning objectives/areas to be taught, need to be recorded on the planning grid for each week even if they are taught by other teachers. In literacy this should be broken down into word, sentence and text level.

Subjects such as literacy, numeracy, science and PE will be filled in weekly whereas other subjects will be taught as blocks which will be seen clearly on the planning grid. Opportunities for cross curricular work and the development of skills will also be clear on the planning grid.

Planning grids are completed at the start of each term and cover one old term or two new terms. Half way through and at the end of the term the planning grid will be reviewed and areas not covered will be highlighted and adjustments made to the grid. Any key outstanding areas will be included in the next terms planning.

### **Recording skills**

Skills to be developed each term will be recorded electronically on the skills development tables in Key Skills for an Excellent and Enjoyable Curriculum. The breadth of study checklists will also be used to help ensure appropriate curriculum coverage. The skills will be highlighted and dated.

## **English**

English is a vital way of communicating in school, in public life and internationally. It enables children to learn how to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively. In studying English pupils develop skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing (including punctuation and grammar) spelling and handwriting. Where possible these skills are developed through linking the teaching of English with other curriculum areas, for example making biscuits in DT would link well with instruction writing in literacy. From Yr 1 onwards children have a daily 'literacy hour' based on the renewed literacy framework. A range of big books, the First Steps books and Ros Wilson strategies are used to support work on the renewed framework.

***See English, reading, writing, spelling, presentation and speaking and listening policies***

## **Mathematics**

In maths teaching we aim to equip pupils with tools such as logical reasoning, problem solving skills and the ability to think in abstract ways. Throughout the school we teach the following areas of study; using and applying maths, number and algebra, shape space and measures and data handling. From Year 1 onwards children have a daily 'numeracy hour' based on the renewed Numeracy framework and the Abacus Evolve sow.

*See mathematics policy*

## **Science**

Science stimulates and excites pupils' curiosity about phenomena and events in the world around them. Science links direct practical experience with ideas so it can engage learners at many levels. During the teaching of science an emphasis is placed on the teaching of scientific skills such as predicting, estimating, measuring, fair testing, hypothesising, and drawing conclusions. These skills are taught through a two year cycle of topics, life processes and humans, sound, electricity, light, the earth and beyond, separating materials, grouping materials, forces and motion and green plants and the environment. Science is taught using the Wiltshire science scheme of work with the strands taught on a two year cycle.

*See science policy*

## **Information Communication Technology (ICT)**

ICT prepares children to take part in a rapidly changing world in which work and other activities are increasingly transformed by access to varied and developing technology. Through ICT teaching children learn how to store, manipulate, retrieve and present information which may consist of text, numbers, images, sound or other signals. These skills are taught through a two year cycle of topics consisting of communicating information, handling information, modelling and control based on the Wiltshire ICT scheme of work.

*See ICT policy*

## **Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship**

RE is taught in accordance with the Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus for RE and scheme of work. Along side Christianity children study two other major religions, Islam is introduced in key stage one and Judaism in upper key stage two.

We have daily acts of collective worship (assembly) that are lead by school staff and representatives of local churches. On a Friday we have a Family Assembly where we celebrate the achievements of the children with family and friends. We have services in the St Thomas a Becket Church at the end of each term and for Harvest Festival and family and friends are also invited to join us.

Parents are able to withdraw their child from RE or collective worship but should discuss this with the headteacher.

*See RE, collective worship and spirituality policies*

## **Art and design**

Art and design provides visual, tactile and sensory experiences and is a unique way of understanding and responding to the world. Children use colour, form, texture, pattern, different materials and processes to communicate what they see, feel and think. They

explore ideas and meaning in the work of artists as well as learning how to understand, appreciate and enjoy art. Visits are made to provide first hand experience of the work of artists, for example children have followed the sculpture trail at Rocks East Woodland and had a tour of a group of paintings at the National Gallery. Art is taught using the 'Steps in Art' books with the strands taught on a two year cycle.

### **Design and technology (DT)**

DT also prepares children to participate in a world of rapidly changing technology. Everything we use in our day-to-day lives - from forks to food and hats to houses - has been designed. Finding out more about how these objects are designed and made helps children to make sense of the world around them. By designing and making their own products, children learn: practical skills, like finding out how things work and making products that are useful and look good and ways of thinking and working, like coming up with ideas, solving problems and working as a team. DT teaching is based on the units in the QCA scheme of work.

### **Geography**

Geography provokes and answers questions about the natural and human worlds. It develops knowledge of places and environments throughout the world, an understanding of maps, and a range of investigative and problem solving skills both inside and outside the classroom. Geography is taught through a series of themes such as settlement, environmental issues, localities and water. Visits are made to the area surrounding the school to support work in geography. The Year 6 residential trip to Stackpole in Pembrokeshire is used as an opportunity to explore a contrasting location and to learn about the formation of coastal features.

### **History**

In history children explore the past in Britain and the wider world. The key areas developed through the teaching of history are chronological understanding, knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past, historical interpretation and enquiry and being able to organise and communicate their findings. For the younger children the historical themes they explore are related to their own experiences such as homes, toys and the seaside. They then explore the lives of significant men and women and significant historical events in British history such as the Great Fire of London or the Gunpowder Plot. In key stage two children learn about specific periods in history such as the Ancient Egyptians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Aztecs, the Tudors, the Victorians and Britain since 1930. At both key stages children study local history which for us includes the railway and Box Tunnel. Work in history is often supported by visits in the local vicinity and to places such as Trowbridge Museum, the museum of Bath at Work, Chedworth Roman Villa, Caerphilly Castle, the Museum of Welsh Life, Museum of Steam in Swindon and the seaside.

### **Foreign Language**

Weekly French lessons will be taught from Yr 1 by a specialist teacher. Class teachers will learn with the class so that they can reinforce teaching points incidentally throughout the rest of the week.

## **Music**

The teaching of music develops children's ability to listen and appreciate a wide variety of music and to make judgements about musical quality. They are encouraged to take an active role in composing and performing music. The school has a strong tradition of music and does biannual end of term productions in the Selwyn Hall. As a school we greatly value the contribution music makes to everyday life and strive to involve as many children as possible in musical activities. Children in Year 4 are taught to play the recorder so they are able to learn how to read notation and experience what it is like to play an instrument. We hope that after a year learning to play they will join a school recorder group or extend their musical expertise by learning to play another instrument. Children in key stage two are able to have extra curricular music lessons on either the flute, clarinet, saxophone, violin, guitar or keyboard. Yr 6 have weekly specialist music tuition on the use of the voice as an instrument. There are opportunities for children to attend concerts. Music is taught using a range of resources such as Silver Burdette Music, Nelson Music and Music Express.

## **Personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHE&C)**

PSHE&C helps to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. 'Circle time' is an integral part of the PSHE&C teaching when children are able to express their views and opinions on concerns they may have. Drugs Education and Sex and Relationship Education are part of PSHE&C teaching. The school has achieved Healthy School status as part of our work in PSHE&C. 'Health for Life' is the main resource used for PSHE&C teaching.

*See PSHE&C policy*

## **Physical Education (PE)**

In PE children develop their physical competence and confidence as well as their ability to perform in a range of activities such as gymnastics, games, dance, athletics and swimming. PE provides opportunities for children to be creative, competitive and to tackle challenges as individuals, groups and in teams. It also promotes positive attitudes towards active and healthy lifestyles. During our residential trips to Braeside and to Stackpole children take part in outdoor and adventurous activities such as climbing, abseiling, mountain biking and orienteering. The school has its own swimming pool which is used in the second half of the summer term to teach children from Reception to Year 4 to swim. Children in Yr 3 and 4 also swim weekly at the Springfield Centre in Corsham for six months of the year. The school has an 'Active Mark' for its work in PE.

*See PE policy*

## **Extra curricular activities**

Throughout the year we aim to offer a range of extra curricular activities including day trips to support work in a variety of curriculum areas and inviting experts into school to work alongside pupils. In Yr 4 there is a three day residential trip to Braeside and in Yr 6 pupils do a five day trip to Stackpole in Pembrokeshire; both trips focus on outdoor and adventurous activities. From Yr 3 children are able to have music lessons on the flute, clarinet, saxophone, guitar, keyboard or violin. A range of after school clubs are offered throughout the year including football, multisports, yogabugs, netball, rugby, choir, ICT, recorders and drama.

### **Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating**

Arrangements for monitoring the curriculum are set out in the annual 'monitoring timetable' followed by all members of staff and in the assessment or learning policy. In addition to this the governing body will receive an annual report from the headteacher on:

- the standards achieved in subjects at the end of each key stage compared to national averages, gender, special needs, ethnicity and other similar schools
- the number of pupils for whom the curriculum was disapplied
- the evidence of the impact on standards of national strategies and strategies introduced by the school
- the nature of any parental complaints

### **Appendices**

1. Curriculum map
2. Example of a mind map
3. Example of medium term planning
4. Example of a weekly timetable
5. Planning proformas

Policy written October 2008

Agreed by staff:

Ratified by governors: