



Fleet Primary School

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Teaching and Learning Policy

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Introduction

We believe that with a consistent, school-wide commitment to the principles and practices outlined in this policy, children will leave our school with the skills, confidence and experiences to take their love of learning on beyond primary education; we aim to equip our children with the skills to make informed choices about the important things in life.

1. Topic led creative curriculum

Creativity is given a high profile at Fleet through:

Teachers...

- have the children's interests in mind when deciding on a topic
- think creatively when planning
- make connections between individual subjects – curriculum links within the topic theme are thought about to ensure curriculum coverage
- develop innovative ways to bring learning alive

Children are encouraged to...

- think and learn creatively and independently making links between their learning
- discover things for themselves
- be open to new ideas
- be motivated to engage with their learning.

How does the topic based curriculum work?

- Each class focuses on three engaging and inspiring topics during the year.
- Teachers' planning is cross-curricular, making links from different subjects to each term's topic.
- Although as many subject areas as possible are dealt with through topic in a term, each year in KS1 and KS2 individual topics will have a different focus on a specific subject area. Other subjects come into these topics but the nature of them means they will be biased towards a particular subject from the wider curriculum.
 1. one topic will be history-based
 2. another geography-based
 3. the third will have a science emphasis

For example, a topic on the 'Romans' will focus heavily on the history objectives for the year. However, during this topic there will still be art, geography, science and other subject objectives delivered through the overarching 'Romans' theme. More time will undoubtedly be given to the History for this term than some of the other wider curriculum areas but they are still there. Then the following term the focus may shift to a more Geography based topic such as 'Rainforests' and there would be less focus on History for this term.

- There is a wider range of foci in topics in the EYFS.

This method of curriculum organisation means that subject distribution is not always even over the course of one term but will become so over the year. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure the appropriate balance and full coverage of the curriculum within this flexible framework and that children's cultures, backgrounds and interests are represented in their learning experiences. To aid this curriculum maps and trackers are completed each term. This is then monitored by the curriculum lead and senior management to ensure that no areas of the curriculum are missed out and that progression is evident.

Our topic-based, contextualised way of planning and teaching is designed to make the learning vivid and real, and to enable the children to constantly build on their previous learning experiences. The depth of knowledge and variety of skills they develop from being immersed in each topic allows the learners to

approach each new learning experience with confidence. Teachers use key texts each term which have been chosen to be able to embed into their topic.

As well as linking and contextualising the majority of the learning, teachers use their professional judgement to identify subject areas that do not fit appropriately into the topic framework and teach these independently.

Home learning links

To link in with the topic, each term an extended topic based home learning project is set for each class to enable every individual's creative approach to be celebrated. The work produced for these projects is then celebrated in school through an after school and before school gallery style exhibition which parents are invited to. Children also present their projects to their classmates in class and some are chosen to share in a whole school sharing assembly. They are also shared via the school newsletter and Twitter. These projects are given out a week before the half term holidays with the due date being a week after the children return.

Wider Curriculum, Performing Arts and Music

A wide range of visual and performing arts learning experiences, where creativity is encouraged and celebrated, are key components of each topic.

Each term, the classes from Year 1-Year 6 perform a class assembly. These are acting, singing and dancing performances where they, through drama, explain about the topic they have been studying for the term.

They perform to the school and to their parents/carers who are invited in for the occasion. Not only does it help consolidate their topic learning it helps develop their presentation, confidence and performance skills.

Music is a very prominent part of the Fleet curriculum. As mentioned above the class assemblies each term include a number of songs. These are a mix of original pieces created specifically for the assembly, and some are recognised songs adapted for use in the topic. Often there will be instrumentation involved also. Children take part in music assemblies every week – separate for KS1 and KS2. Whole class instrument tuition also takes place in year 3 (Ukelele), year 4 (recorder) and year 5 (brass – either trumpet or trombone). There is the opportunity to learn an instrument with individual tuition in school time provided by the Camden Music Service. This is a paid service and arranged privately by parents directly with the service. A leaflet can be obtained from the office with more detail. There are termly performance assemblies – a mixture of singing and instrumentation with all children in the school involved.

In any term a class will have a number of trips or experience days. These experiences are not for the sake of a trip but are key to the topic learning happening in class and help offer context as well as develop skills and experience that is not possible in school. All trips and experiences are followed up in class before and after to maximise the learning potential. A significant investment in terms of the school budget goes towards this.

2. A supportive, inclusive learning atmosphere

- Fleet prides itself on being an inclusive school and we put theory into practice. Our children come from a wide variety of backgrounds and our expectation is that, with quality teaching and appropriate support, all will flourish.
- Children and staff celebrate each others' different qualities, working together to create a supportive learning atmosphere. Teachers recognise that children's support of each other and their contributions to the learning process are their best resource.
- Caring and respectful relationships between teachers, support staff and children underpin teaching and learning. Teachers and support staff know the children in their class very well and strive to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

- Close relationships between school staff and the parents and carers of the children create a supportive atmosphere. We have an open door policy with parents able and encouraged to have an ongoing dialogue with staff. We have a 'soft start' in the mornings where teachers are available to parents, should they wish to see them for a quick chat or to look at their child's work, from 8.45am until lessons start at 9am.
- We encourage parents to come and see teachers, either by making arrangements directly with them or via the office at any point in the year if they want to discuss something.
- We pride ourselves on being a UNICEF Rights Respecting school in which the children know that their contributions are highly valued. Our child 'ambassadors' work with staff, parents and governor representatives on various projects throughout the year.
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities are well supported through individual learning plans, whole staff awareness and close liaisons with outside professionals such as the language and communication team, the educational psychology service and occupational therapists.
- Our learning mentor works with teachers, support staff and families of children with behavioural, social and emotional needs to enable them to learn and achieve success.

3. Teaching matches learning needs

- Teaching techniques and strategies are supportive of the objectives and the learning needs of the children; a week's learning will typically include whole class teaching and modelling of skills, individual, paired and group work and both written and practical learning experiences.
- A range of formative assessment strategies, including questioning, play a key role in teaching and learning throughout the school. Enquiry, debate, investigation, problem solving and discussion are all encouraged.
- Learning objectives and success criteria are shared with the children at the start of lessons – it is important that the learners are clear on what is to be learnt, the end goal and steps to achieve this.
- Teaching staff constantly evaluate the children's learning needs identifying next steps, challenges and areas for consolidation. Learning is pitched so it is accessible to each child, while still providing an appropriate level of challenge.

4. Support for Learning Team

- We are very lucky to have a 'support for learning' team in school. It is made up of the following members of staff
 - Deputy Head Teacher
 - Special Needs Co-ordinator
 - Learning Mentor
 - 2 Teaching Assistants
- They provide support to classes through extra adults in the classes as well as taking children – individually, pairs and groups – to run different interventions to support learning.
- Each week a timetable is created showing who and where they will be supporting based on the individual needs for that week.

5. Effective planning and assessment for learning

- There are high expectations of the quality of teachers' planning. Teachers bring vitality and creativity to topic planning in order to create learning that is relevant, engaging and exciting. Central to the success of topic planning is staff discussion, support with ideas and the consideration of learning opportunities that would absorb each class.
- Medium term planning and weekly Maths and English plans are monitored by subject leaders and the senior leadership team while day-to-day planning is left to the professionalism of the teachers, who use daily assessment to inform subsequent teaching.

- Half termly work scrutiny by the senior leadership team helps ensure that planning is being put into effective practise in the classroom.
- We assess the children’s learning in a variety of formative and summative ways.
 - Formative assessment takes place on a daily basis in all classrooms through discussions, questioning, peer and self-assessment and consistent marking which identifies next steps, along with observations in the Early Years. This then feeds into the planning of learning opportunities that will help the children take their ‘next steps’.
 - Children are summatively assessed against the National Curriculum expectations in English and Maths and the EYFS framework each term.

6. Communication with Parents and Carers

- For Year 1 – 6 a class meeting is held to welcome the parents and carers each September, and to outline the learning that will take place in the coming year.
- For EYFS, the meeting takes place before the summer with home visits at the start of the academic year to help prepare family and child.
- Parents and carers then have meetings with class teachers three times each academic year to discuss their children’s progress and attainment. A report for each child in English and Maths is shared at each Parents Meeting and includes targets for each child.
- It is an expectation, and stipulated in the home school agreement, that parents and carers should attend these meetings (curriculum and progress). If you are unable to attend please speak to your child’s class teacher to make alternative arrangements.
- The final term’s report includes a comprehensive summary of the child’s progress and attainment across the curriculum over the course of the year.
- Topic/curriculum letters are sent home each term to communicate the topic and main objectives for that term as well as detail the trips that are known about and possible sources of support for home learning.
- Our open door policy encourages day-to-day dialogue about children’s progress, between teachers, parents and carers.
- ‘Open Mornings’ are also held as opportunities for parents to come into class and work with their children, see learning in the classroom and take away ideas for support at home.
- Home learning tasks are shared with Parents and Carers through a Home Learning Journal and the reading journal is a good way to create a dialogue between teacher and parents about reading.
- Each week maths objectives are specified for each child to practise at home in addition to a fortnightly spelling pattern – it is expected that parents and carers will support their children to make sure all home learning tasks are completed and returned on time. If this is a problem please speak with your child’s class teacher who may be able to help you.
- The letters, text messaging, school newsletter, school website and school twitter account are all used to share school notices and celebrate work the children have done.

7. High expectations

High expectations underline teaching and learning principles and practices at Fleet. Children are entitled to high quality teaching and learning experiences and caring, supportive guidance. This is reflected in the excellent level of commitment and professionalism demonstrated and expected by all staff. Similarly, staff have high expectations of the children’s effort, enthusiasm and behaviour throughout their time at school.

Within all lessons is the opportunity to stretch learning and ensure all children are reaching their potential. That may be via different levels of challenge in the tasks set or it may be on the output/end product expected from each child. This is monitored regularly to ensure it is present by subject leads during book looks and work scrutinies, as well as by senior management from looking for evidence of this in planning and lesson observations.

8. Dynamic classroom environments and effective resourcing

- Our classrooms are warm and welcoming places where children feel comfortable and inspired to learn.
- Vibrant displays of children's learning are given high priority and the children aspire to have their finished pieces displayed both in the classroom, in the communal display areas around the school, in the school newsletter or shared on the school Twitter account.
- In addition to celebrating finished pieces, classroom displays also include learning walls, aid memoires and resources that support independent learning.
- Throughout the school resources are used creatively and appropriately alongside high quality teaching; we aim to teach the children to develop an appreciation of how classroom resources can help them in their learning and, most significantly, to be able to independently select and utilise the most appropriate and effective resources for each learning opportunity.
- All our teaching and support staff are committed to working as a team to benefit the children's learning.

9. Access to learning opportunities beyond the classroom

- We are committed to giving our children access to a range of wider opportunities and experiences beyond the classroom. At the heart of this is our extensive programme of class educational visits. Over the course of a term, each class participates in numerous educational visits, either on or off site, usually linked to their topic, although sometimes they are not and may focus on a particular curriculum area being taught discretely from topic (i.e. science based trip; CLC visit on area of computing curriculum unable to do in school etc.).
- These might be trips to:
 - galleries
 - museums
 - historic buildings
 - nature reserves
 - other places of interest that capitalise on our locality.
- These experiences enrich and stimulate the children's learning in the classroom and help bring the curriculum to life, as well as being very popular with the children.
- Each class performs a termly assembly, beginning in the summer term of Reception, performed for their parents and carers and the rest of the school, during which they showcase their topic through a range of music, dance, drama and sharing of their learning. There are also winter shows in the infants and juniors, and a range of other drama and music events throughout the year.
- We have a well-established and popular programme of after-school clubs with both academic and non-academic foci. Clubs are booked via the office at the start of each term. The office can advise at any point what clubs are on offer in a term and any places still available.