



Curriculum Policy

Completed by: Curriculum Lead

This policy will be reviewed in line with the policy review timetable.

Our Curriculum Intent

At Heron, our aim is to provide our pupils with skills and knowledge that is transferable. We believe that our curriculum is broad, balanced, inclusive and relevant; it complies with the requirements of the national curriculum and meets the needs of all children whatever their ability. This is achieved through the experience of a range of opportunities so that pupils have the potential to achieve and be the best they can. It is designed to: recognise children's prior learning, encourage independence, provide first hand learning experiences, allow the children to develop interpersonal skills, build resilience and become creative, critical thinkers.

The curriculum is planned to provide continuity and progression. We believe that children learn best when they can see links and have reasons for learning. Therefore we promote the enjoyment of acquiring new skills and knowledge through discussion, play, exploration, creativity, purpose and relevance. We celebrate and welcome differences within our school community; we hope that pupils are motivated by achievement both now and in the future and have a positive attitude towards themselves, others and their environment.

The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and British values. We constantly provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that childhood should be a happy, investigative and enquiring time in our lives where there are no limits to curiosity and there is a thirst for new experiences and knowledge. We use our Drivers (Healthy Living, Express Yourself, Respect, Our World and Never Give Up) to promote positive attitudes to learning which reflect the values and skills needed to promote responsibility for academic development and future success.

Implementation

At Heron, our curriculum design is based on the following:

- Learning is most effective with spaced repetition.
- Interleaving helps pupils to discriminate between topics and aids the long term memory.
- Retrieval of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which increase both storage and retrieval strength.

Our school curriculum is underpinned by **Drivers** that have been created to reflect both our pupil's needs and the community that we are part of. Our Drivers are:

Healthy Living

Express Yourself

Respect

Our World

Never Give Up

To embed these Drivers into the curriculum, teachers plan and promote the following on a daily basis:

- We value the way in which all children are unique and promote respect for the views of each individual child, as well as for people of all cultures.
- We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.
- We value imagination and creativity in pupil's learning.
- We promote physical and mental development and an awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.
- We value the importance of each person in our society. We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community.
- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society and develop the ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong. We respect each child in our school for who they are and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all the children in our school.
- We value our environment and we aim, through our curriculum, to teach respect for our world and how we should care for it for future generations, as well as our own.
- We encourage children to explore their developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time.
- We help children understand Britain's cultural heritage as well as showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity.

Organisation and planning

The planning process is central to the effective delivery of the curriculum. Our teachers start from the point of building on what the children know - making links to prior learning - and what they want to find out. They use this information, together with the key skills required in each subject by the National Curriculum, to inform their planning. Assessment For Learning (AFL) is a key aspect and forms a large part of our daily teaching and we use this to inform next steps.

The main emphasis of planning in the school is to make the curriculum relevant to the child's learning by making explicit cross-curricular links where appropriate. Through teaching and planning of the curriculum, children are offered breadth and balance in their learning; planning provides plenty of opportunities for 'mastery' of skills in order that once pupils have achieved their year group expectations they are applying what they have learnt independently, across the curriculum. Our pupils are provided with transferable knowledge that they need for subsequent learning; teaching staff are encouraged to enthuse the children and broaden their experiences through the 'WOW' factor e.g. off-site visits, visitors into school and shared experiences of the wider school community. Children's achievements are celebrated regularly in the school through displays in classrooms and shared areas, as well as during assemblies.

Planning structure:

- A whole school overview of each curriculum area is agreed upon, creating a long term plan for each year group. This indicates which topics are to be taught during the year and is a guide for delivery of foundation subjects.
- We have a curriculum that builds on both skills and knowledge so that both are transferable.
- Units of work are planned, usually over half a term's duration. These form our medium term plans and contain details of the work to be covered with a progression of learning objective / success criteria.
- Units of work are planned using the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the National Curriculum.
- Short term planning is carried out in detail for Literacy and Numeracy using an agreed format. These plans will indicate which groups are supported and which children are working independently. Staff ensure

regular rotation of groups so that all children are supported and challenged during the week, as well as having the chance to apply those skills independently.

- The expectation is that the majority of pupils will move through the programmes of study at broadly the same pace. However, decisions about when to progress should always be based on the security of pupils' understanding and their readiness to progress to the next stage. Pupils who grasp concepts rapidly will be challenged through being offered rich and sophisticated tasks before any acceleration through new content. Those who are not sufficiently fluent with earlier material will consolidate their understanding, including through additional practice, before moving on.
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural aspects of learning underpin all aspects of school life and the values of the school (see Drivers). The school will take account of the non-statutory guidance material on Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) and citizenship when planning the curriculum.
- Religious Education is planned from the Locally Agreed Syllabus, linked with the thematic units wherever possible.
- The curriculum for Computing allows for the use of computing as an integral part of the thematic units. E-safety and responsible online behaviours will permeate all aspects of school life.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the seven areas of learning will be delivered through a thematic approach.
- The school has chosen French and Spanish as its modern foreign languages, to provide multiple opportunities to develop a love for language and to reflect the range of secondary schools that our pupils attend.
- Assessment of the national curriculum subjects will take place regularly and be moderated by subject leads, using a tracking system developed by the Assessment leader.
- Continued development and revision by school leaders will evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum as a vehicle for raising standards.

Threshold concepts

Threshold concepts are the 'big ideas' that shape students' thinking within each subject. The same threshold concepts will be explored in every year group and students will gradually increase their understanding of them. Each subject begins with an overview of the essential characteristics students should develop and these form the basis for the threshold concepts.

An example of one of the threshold concepts in history is “evidence tells us about the past”. This, of course, cannot be taught in isolation: it would be abstract and meaningless to students. The concepts will therefore be explored within a breadth of different contexts so that it has tangibility and meaning.

Breadth of contexts

Breadth provides the contexts for exploring the threshold concepts. It has two roles:

1) Knowledge: Concepts need knowledge to make sense. Contexts give students subject specific knowledge with which to think about the concepts. For example, students will use the context of the Great Fire of London to explore the concept 'evidence tells us about the past'. They will be shown extracts of Samuel Pepys diary and will explore how an historical account gives us the knowledge of the cause and spread of the fire. The more knowledge students have, the better their understanding of the concepts becomes. Another benefit of knowledge is that it helps pupils reading comprehension. A student with a greater knowledge of the world will infer more from a text than one with little knowledge, no matter how good his or her decoding skills may be.

2) Transference: By providing a breadth of contexts, students begin to transfer the concepts. They do this by comparing the new context knowledge to previously learned knowledge, the bridge being the concept. For example, if students explore the concept 'evidence tells us about the past' through the context of The Great Fire of London, they learn that a vital piece of evidence is that Samuel Pepys kept a diary. They then later explore the same concept in the context of The Ancient Egyptians, in which they learn that the Rosetta Stone gives us evidence of the meaning of hieroglyphics.

Milestones for progress

Because the threshold concepts are repeated in each year group it is important that students progress in their understanding of them. Our curriculum sets out this progression in the form of three 'Milestones'. Each Milestone contains a range of descriptors which give more detail to be discovered within the concept. We believe that learning takes time and that some children take longer than others to achieve. Therefore the focus for progress is DEPTH of learning rather than just quantity. Over a two year period students will become more and

more familiar with these details by exploring them in a breadth of contexts. Milestones will be met initially to a basic level, working towards a deep level.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and disadvantaged pupils

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. A diverse range of learning needs are met through a curriculum which is inclusive to all.

If a child has a special educational need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEND Code of Practice as part of a graduated response in providing for children with special educational needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, his/her teacher makes an assessment of this need. In most instances the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. If a child requires a specific intervention or resource, we if necessary, use the support provided by Teaching Assistants and we involve the appropriate external agencies.

The school provides an Individual Educational Plan (My Plan) for each of the children who are on the special needs register. This sets out the nature of the special need and outlines how the schools will aim to address the need. It also sets out targets for improvement with realistic outcomes, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals. These My Plans are created and reviewed through consultations with the child concerned.

We offer a continuum of provision to meet the diversity of pupils' needs. Although all pastoral classes are mixed ability, the school and individual teachers have the flexibility to set smaller ability groups, within their classes, for specific aspects of the curriculum.

Additional in-class support is available in all classes provided by Teaching Assistants.

A wide range of intervention programmes are available to all pupils who require additional support in specific curriculum areas but also with social, emotional, behaviour needs and also sensory/physical needs. Intervention programmes are organised through a termly provision map, which details who will be delivering the programmes and to which children. Children are carefully assigned to programmes following detailed progress meetings between key members of staff.

There are some organised extra-curricular clubs and activities which all children have access to. Additional provision or adjustments may need to be organised for particular pupils in order to ensure their inclusion.

Our teachers plan their approaches to teaching and learning so that all pupils can take part in lessons fully and effectively. To ensure we meet the full range of pupils' needs, staff are aware of the requirements of the equal opportunities legislation that covers race, gender and disability. We take specific action to respond to pupils' diverse needs by:

- Creating effective learning environments.
- Securing pupils' motivation and concentration.
- Providing equality of opportunities through teaching approaches.
- Using appropriate assessment approaches.
- Setting suitable targets for learning.
- Being aware of pupils on the Pupil Premium register who are disadvantaged in comparison to their peers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The curriculum that we teach in our Reception classes meets the requirements set out in the revised National Curriculum at Foundation Stage. Our curriculum planning focuses on the Early Learning Goals and on developing children's skills and experiences, as set out in this document.

Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play, and by engaging in well-planned structured activities. Teaching in the reception class builds on the experiences of the children in their pre-school learning. We do all we can to build positive partnerships with the variety of nurseries and other pre-school providers in the area.

During the children's first term in the Reception class, their teacher begins to record the skills of each child on entry to the school. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is used to assess children's progress during the year.

We are well aware that all children need the support of parents and teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents of each child by keeping them informed about the way in which the children are being taught and how well each child is progressing.

Roles and responsibilities

- The Headteacher has the responsibility for the leadership of the curriculum and delegated responsibility to staff.
- Curriculum coordinators are responsible for writing and reviewing policies, formulating action plans, auditing resources, managing the curriculum budget (alongside the Headteacher), purchasing resources and monitoring standards of teaching and learning in their subject across the whole school. This will be achieved through observations and review of progress made over time, monitoring planning, pupil conferences and book scrutinies.
- The assessment coordinator ensures that the progress of each pupil is tracked in all subject areas. Pupil progress meetings focus on progress in reading, writing and maths and that there is appropriate challenge, support and intervention.
- The SENDCo ensures that pupils with specific learning needs have access to the curriculum.
- The Gifted and Talented coordinator ensures that pupils with a particular talent in any curriculum area are suitably challenged and that work is at an appropriate level for their needs.
- The Governors monitor the success of the curriculum at committee level and at whole Governing Body meetings through the termly Headteacher's report.

Impact

Learning is a change to the long-term memory therefore we use probabilistic assessment based on deliberate practise. This means that we look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long-run.

We use comparative judgement in two ways: in the tasks we set and in comparing a student's work over time.

We use lesson observations to see if the pedagogical style matches our depth expectations.

Across the curriculum, pupils will develop detailed knowledge and skills, and as a result have the capacity to achieve well. This is reflected in results from national tests and examinations.

The curriculum ensures that pupils are ready for the next stage of education. They have the knowledge and skills they need that allow them to go on to destinations that meet their interests and aspirations and the intention of their course of study.

Our curriculum ensures that:

- All pupils are given the same opportunity to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Pupils' work across the curriculum is of good quality.
- Pupils read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age.
- Pupils can apply mathematical knowledge, concepts and procedures appropriately for their age.

We adopt a whole school approach to Successful Learning through the provision of rich and varied activities, delivered throughout our curriculum. The impact of this is that we create resilient learners by:

- Helping children to think creatively and solve problems.
- Developing children's capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively.
- Enabling children to respond positively to opportunities, challenge and responsibility.
- Encouraging perseverance and having a strong work ethic- showing pride in their work and striving for more, being aspirational.

- Demonstrating self-responsibility.
- Encouraging the best possible progress and the highest attainment for all children.
- Enabling children to make connections across different areas of learning through 'mastery' of their age appropriate skills.
- Enabling children to acquire and develop a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Having a rounded experience and interests, being prepared for their secondary education.
- Developing life skills- the ability to communicate well with a range of audiences, be able to make healthy choices and take care of themselves as well as showing respect.
- Being enquiring and knowing how to find answers, being willing to take risks, use resources and technologies effectively, enjoy learning and discovery, including outdoor learning.
- Understanding their local context and appreciating diversity.