

Curriculum policy for Key Stages 1 and 2 Falconhurst School



Proposed by: Head Teacher

Approved by: FGB

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1. Curriculum Intent

The curriculum intent for all our pupils is based on three Key Drivers which underpin all areas of our curriculum. In recognising the pupils’ backgrounds, their culture and our climate for learning, these drivers seek to instill a sense of aspiration and ambition for all.

- **Possibilities** – which helps pupils to build aspirations and know available possibilities for their future lives through enquiry, enterprise and an appreciation of diversity
- **Knowledge of the World** – which provides pupils with opportunities to develop a sense of cultural capital which enables them to recognise, understand, value and learn from their different communities, country and wider world in order to instill an ambitious outlook for their future.
- **Well-Being**– which helps to embed in all pupils a healthy lifestyle (physically, emotionally and mentally) which builds resilience and keeps them safe.

Alongside our drivers, we believe that all children should feel confident and motivated to experience the feeling of accomplishment in a wide range of areas. Our ambitious curriculum and nurturing school ethos therefore gives pupils a strong mix of academic and personal development, tailored to their needs. Core and foundation subjects; physical wellbeing and mental wellbeing are equally valued, understood and prioritised by our careful consideration of curriculum design.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, along with a well-planned and structured programme of personal development, underpins our work and is monitored throughout the school.

We carefully balance the requirement for pupils to reach national expectations in core subjects with our wider curriculum aims of providing a full spectrum of thoughtful and enriching experiences. As a result, our pupils thrive in many ways.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#), which all maintained schools in England must teach.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education’s [Governance Handbook](#).

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply pupils from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals

3.2 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEND

3.3 Other staff

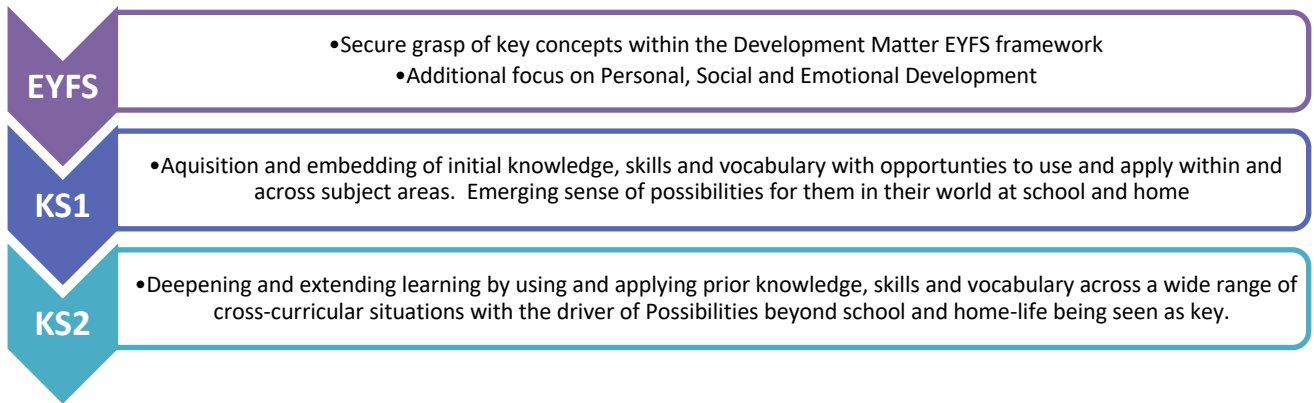
Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

4. Implementation

Our broad and balanced curriculum is designed to ensure that all children can:

- Encounter, embed and extend their knowledge, skills and understanding across all subject areas of the National Curriculum.
- Experience a wide range of opportunities and activities which will develop their awareness of life and the world around them – cultural capital
- Know and remember more over time through carefully designed tasks and experiences

- Broaden their vocabulary in relation to subject specific knowledge and everyday spoken or written words.
- Evaluate and recognise the progress they are making against attainment goals in all aspects of their learning. We refer to these as ‘milestones’.
- Recognise how the craft of learning can be practiced and developed in order to transfer new knowledge from their working memory to their long term memory.



Within each mixed-age phase of pupils, consistency of approach is critical. In order to secure this, subject leaders generally lead and monitor their subject for the whole school. Consistent approaches to coverage, expectations and assessment are captured through our Doorways and Pathways model, Knowledge Organisers, Curriculum Mapping and Assessment practices.

Doorways provide an overarching theme across the school which gives coherence and a sense of unity to children’s learning; for example, all children will be pursuing and deepening learning within the ‘Doorway’ (termly theme) of Perfect Planet in Spring.

Pathways are the learning maps/plans which set out how learning is going to be sequenced and organised over the course of the term. There are many different pathways and these will all be very different for each year group. As children progress through Falconhurst they will experience a wide range of history pathways, geography pathways, art pathways, DT pathways, music pathways and so on; all of which complement their Core Learning of English, Maths, Science, PE and Computing.

English, Maths and Science are also regularly brought to life through these doorways, as each theme lends itself well to exciting and creative learning opportunities in these subjects. Using and applying learning in a range of ways is what makes it ‘stick’, so if you enter into a ‘Pathway’ lesson, you are likely to see children taking on the role of detectives, historians, investigators, professors and many more!

In order to deliver our curriculum pathways, the children are taught in a range of ways:

1. Discreet subjects with timings allotted within the weekly curriculum.
2. Thematic afternoons where multiple subjects are explored and linked together to support the children in making connections.
3. Subject specific experience days where a key question, theme or enquiry is pursued and children are immersed in one subject for the day.

Teachers are supported in designing and delivering their children’s learning pathways and assessment practices through curriculum mapping. Details of our frameworks to support curriculum mapping (Planning for learning over time) are detailed below:

The Essentials Curriculum



The following subjects are supported and planned using the Essentials Curriculum: Art and Design, Design Technology, History, Geography and Science

Aims of the Essentials Curriculum

1. Learning is a change to long-term memory
2. To ensure that our pupils experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each key stage, long-term memory of an ambitious body of skills, understanding and knowledge of key concepts. By knowing how (procedural) and knowing that (semantic) in a wide range of curriculum subject areas, children will make progress towards securing attainment goals and milestones necessary to succeed in study beyond KS2.

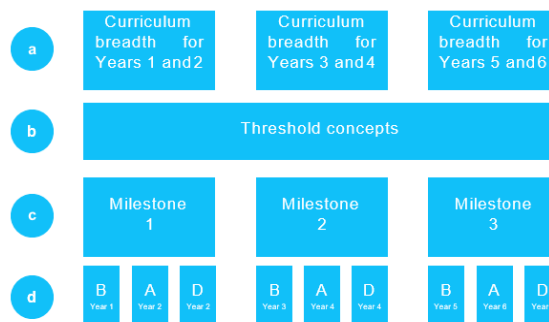
The Essentials Curriculum Intent Model

- The curriculum breadth is shaped by our curriculum drivers, cultural capital, subject topics and our ambition for pupils.
- Our curriculum distinguishes between subject topics and threshold concepts. Subject topics are the specific aspects of subjects that are studied.
- In each subject we use threshold concepts that tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. For example, in History, our threshold concepts are:
 - To investigate and interpret the past
 - To build an overview of world history
 - To understand chronology
 - To communicate historically
- The threshold concepts are then explored across a wide breadth of topics within the same curriculum subject area; i.e. Stone Age, Saxons, Ancient Greece and Mayans. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, pupils return to the same concepts over and over, and gradually build understanding of them.
- For each of the threshold concepts three milestones provide a progression model. Each of them includes the procedural and semantic knowledge pupils need to understand the threshold concepts,
- Knowledge categories in each subject give pupils a way of expressing their understanding of the threshold concepts.
- Knowledge webs help pupils to relate each topic to previously studied topics and to form strong, meaningful schema. Children store the knowledge webs in their books for class retrieval and independent work.
- Cognitive science tells us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if pupils are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for pupils to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding, they must first master the basics, which takes time. We believe that the 'basics' are the initial skills to be discovered, explored, strengthened and built upon in all subject areas. This may be the joy of listening to small pieces of music, securing the basic ability to hold a paintbrush, strengthening a body to reach and roll in gymnastics or understanding their place in the local area before they think about their place in a large city, county, region, country or world.
- Within each milestone, pupils gradually progress in their procedural fluency (know how) and semantic strength (know that) through three cognitive domains: basic, advancing and deep. The goal for pupils is to display sustained mastery at the advancing stage of understanding

by the end of each milestone and for the most able to have a greater depth of understanding at the deep stage. The time-scale for sustained mastery or greater depth is, therefore, two years of study.

- As part of our progression model we use a different pedagogical (learning) style in each of the cognitive domains of basic, advancing and deep. We use direct instruction in the basic domain and problem-based discovery in the deep domain.

Structure of the Curriculum



1. The **curriculum breadth** for each year group ensures each teacher has clarity as to what to cover. As well as providing the key knowledge within subjects it also provides for pupils’ growing cultural capital.
2. **Threshold concepts** are the key disciplinary aspects of each subject. They are chosen to build conceptual understanding within subjects and are repeated many times in each topic. We share these with pupils as “learning hooks” which underpin learning in each milestone. This enables pupils to reinforce and build upon prior learning, make connections and develop subject specific language. This provides a sequenced continuity of learning within a concept over time which we refer to as a ‘vertical accumulation of knowledge and skills’.
3. **Milestones** define the standards for the threshold concepts.
4. **Depth:** we expect pupils in year 1 of the milestone to develop a **Basic** (B) understanding of the concepts and an **Advancing** (A) or **Deep** (D) understanding in Year 2 of the milestone. Phase one (Years 1, 3 and 5) in a Milestone is the knowledge building phase that provides the fundamental foundations for later application. Learning at this stage will involve a high degree of repetition so that knowledge enters pupils’ long-term memory. If all of the core knowledge is acquired quickly, teachers create extended knowledge. The repetition of threshold concepts enables vertical accumulation as pupils move through their school journey.

Computing



At Falconhurst, we use iLearn2 to teach our computing curriculum. We believe in giving the children the requisite skillset and creativity to not only exist confidently in a digital world but to excel in all aspects of Computing. Using their understanding from the wider curriculum, such as Maths, Science and Design Technology, they are actively encouraged to understand the many aspects of computing and the systems involved. With such a rapid pace of change, our intentions enable pupils to be digitally literate, so as things do change they have the necessary knowledge to adapt, learn, overcome difficulties and make educated choices which then form part of their new learning in readiness for the future and the next advance.

Music



At Falconhurst School, we intend for our children to develop their understanding, make musical judgements and apply their new learning. Children are expected to develop their aural memory, express themselves physically, emotionally and through discussion create their own musical ideas. The Charanga Musical School Units of Work enable children to understand musical concepts through a repetition-based approach to learning. Learning about the same musical concept through different musical activities enables a more secure, deeper learning and mastery of musical skills. Musical teaching and learning is not neat or linear. Over time, children can both develop new musical skills and concepts, and re-visit

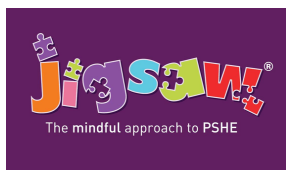
established musical skills and concepts. Repeating a musical skill as part of a mastery approach does not necessarily mean their progress is slowing down or their development is moving backwards! It is just shifting within the spiral.

Religious Education



We follow the Milton Keynes Locally Agreed R.E syllabus supported by Discovery RE, which is a comprehensive set of detailed medium-term planning for Religious Education from Nursery to Year 6. This allows for a knowledge-rich approach to the study of religion and philosophy, which will improve outcomes for pupils. Children receive quality RE which prepares them for the world of work and equips them with deep critical thinking skills.

Personal, Social and Health education



We follow a scheme called Jigsaw, which is designed as a whole-school approach, Jigsaw provides a detailed and comprehensive scheme of learning for ages 3-16. Jigsaw makes teachers' lives easier by providing extremely well-structured, progressive lesson plans with teaching resources included. Jigsaw is a unique, spiral, progressive and effective scheme of work, aiming to prepare children for life, helping them really know and value who they truly are and understand how they relate to other people in this ever-changing world.

Physical Education



Falconhurst believes that Physical Education (PE) is essential to ensure children attain optimum physical and emotional development and good health. Through PE Passport, we intend to deliver high-quality teaching and learning opportunities that inspire all children to succeed in physical education and in developing life skills. We want to teach children how to cooperate and collaborate with others as part of an effective team, understanding fairness and equity of play to embed life-long values. Our curriculum aims to improve the wellbeing and fitness of all children at Falconhurst, not only through the sporting skills taught, but through the underpinning values and disciplines PE promotes. It is our intention that all children are provided with opportunities to experience competitive sport by engaging in various ability level local competitions as well as intra school-based competitions on a regular basis.

Impact

Throughout their learning pathways, the impact upon children is continuously evaluated against the Early Years Framework or National Curriculum milestones and objectives. Class teachers and subject leaders will use a range of methods to assess and monitor that children are securing new knowledge and skills. By talking to the children, using records of learning in books, creating reflective evaluations and assessments teachers and leaders will be able to track formative and summative assessments of attainment.

5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds

- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)
- Pupils who have been exposed to Adverse Childhood Experiences which impinge on their ability to learn effectively.

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil making sound progress and achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of single equality information and plan, and in our SEN policy and information report.

6. Monitoring arrangements

Governors monitor coverage of National Curriculum subjects and compliance with other statutory requirements through:

- School visits to spend time in class with children and talk to teachers
- Link governor communications
- Reports to the Teaching, Learning and Standards Committee
- Termly Head Teacher report to the Full Governing Board
- Shared information and discussion with members of the school's Senior Leadership Team

Subject Leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- Learning Walks
- Pupils discussions
- Classroom observations and lesson study
- Book Looks
- Pupil Progress meetings
- Milestone checks

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head Teacher and Senior Leaders. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- EYFS policy
- Assessment policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Single Equality policy and pla