

What is the Cornerstones Curriculum?

The Cornerstones Curriculum is a creative and thematic approach to learning that is mapped to the 2014 Primary National Curriculum to ensure comprehensive coverage of national expectations. This is appropriate to the needs of our children because it enables them to engage in experiences and cultures that they otherwise would not encounter. Our new curriculum will be delivered through Imaginative Learning Projects (ILPs) which will provide a rich menu of exciting and motivating learning activities that make creative links between all aspects of our children's learning.

We believe children learn better when they are encouraged to use their imagination and apply their learning to engaging contexts. Our new curriculum will provide lots of learning challenges throughout the academic year that will require children to solve problems, apply themselves creatively and express their knowledge and understanding effectively across the curriculum. We also encourage parents to become involved in this process by inviting them to curriculum assemblies and workshops to help home-school links in these areas.

Our four-stage learning process is built on academic research and years of practical teaching experience. It is called 'The Four Cornerstones'. The four steps to learning can be seen below.

Engage

- Hook learners in with a memorable experience.
- Set the scene and provide the context for learning.
- Ask questions to find out children's interests.
- Spark children's curiosity using interesting starting points.

Develop

- Teach facts and information for deeper understanding and knowledge.
- Demonstrate new skills and allow time for consolidation.
- Provide creative opportunities for making and doing.
- Deliver reading, writing and talking across the curriculum.

Innovate

- Provide imaginative scenarios that encourage creative thinking.
- Enable children to apply previously learned skills.
- Encourage enterprise and independent thinking.
- Provide opportunities for collaborative working and problem solving.

Express

- Provide environments for reflective talk.
- Create opportunities for shared evaluation.
- Celebrate and share children's success.
- Identify next steps for learning.

Curriculum Themes

Our themes usually last for a term or half a term. Parents are given termly/half termly copies of a curriculum map detailing the programme of study and are updated on each child's progress through termly meetings with teachers. Children are made aware of the key learning objectives at the start or end of each lesson.

Teaching is undertaken in various styles, sometimes whole class instruction, sometimes with individuals, sometimes in group work to enable the learning to match each child's ability. There is an emphasis on learning for application in real situations. The need to support learning by providing an appropriate context is met, in the main, by organisation around cross-curricular themes. This learning is richly enhanced by making learning links with other providers and parents are also welcomed as sources for the children to extend their knowledge and understanding.

Key Stage 1 teachers use a range of phonics and reading schemes to develop all children's skills, including , Phonics Storytime, Jolly Phonics and a wide range of banded 'reading for writing' books.

The teachers here know that children learn better when they are excited and engaged and we are constantly looking to provide stimulating and motivating learning opportunities. To do this we work with parents and the whole community to think creatively about how we can use the skills of everyone in the school. We look for improvement, setting our own challenging targets and work tirelessly to build on success.

Learning beyond the Classroom

As a school we believe that learning is not limited to the walls of our building but can happen anywhere. To this end, staff are encouraged to be responsive to the many learning opportunities available in our surrounding area. Therefore when a learning opportunity arises staff are encouraged to take advantage of nearby resources and activities. Similarly, staff use the outdoor learning environment as much as possible for example using the outdoor space in Early Years, the playground and playing field.

For this reason parents must ensure that their child is provided with suitable clothing for the very mixed British weather conditions.