



## The Federation of Boskenwyn & Germoe Schools



### OUR CURRICULUM JOURNEY

#### RATIONALE

Our 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners require a fit for purpose curriculum which equips them with the knowledge, skills and understanding required to engage in and be a crucial part of the ever-changing world around them. We have been lucky enough to secure funding from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ scheme to research and observe a variety of teaching and learning approaches in countries which are highly placed in the PISA league tables (such as Finland, and Estonia) and countries which have an alternative curriculum unique to them (such as Reggio Emilia in Italy, Hjalli in Iceland and International Baccalaureate in IBO Schools in Denmark, Norway and Slovenia). Our curriculum is tailor-made by staff, governors, parents and children to fit the very best of the models we have researched, into the National Curriculum 2014 to make it an exciting and unique, tailor-made to fit its' purpose, inquiry based curriculum offering transferable skills for future learning and employment.

#### INTENT

We pride ourselves in giving our children the opportunity to develop **"a love of learning for life"** through our unique, tailor-made, inquiry based curriculum. Our rich indoor and outdoor learning environment encourages children to engage in authentic learning and employ subject knowledge to solve real life problems. Through solid concepts, leading to lines of inquiry and followed by research, projects, activities and visits, our learners acquire skills for life such as problem solving, decision making, critical thinking and reasoning, all of which are transferable for future learning and employment. Our aim is for our children to become independent thinkers and learners who construct and organise knowledge, engage in research, inquiry and analysis in order to communicate effectively and become global citizens.

Providing a curriculum rich in Inquiry based learning allows our children to nurture their talents and passions and take control of their learning. They are driven by both their own curiosity and hunger for learning and their teacher's ability to provoke their interest by using stimulating resources and artefacts. We intend for our learners to be:

#### **Collaborators**

Working with others on shared goals, questions and challenges. Using different roles for different task, respecting one another's views (empathetic, compassionate, reliable)

#### **Thinkers**

Approaching cross-curricular tasks by thinking logically, creatively and reflectively and able to change thinking as they learn (open-minded, flexible, persistent)

#### **Researchers**

Formulating questions, locating and using a wide range of sources and techniques to investigate problems, interests and issues, thinking critically of information gathered (curious, courageous, resourceful)

#### **Self managers**

Learning independently and making decisions about learning, work towards personal goals and improve own learning (resilient, responsible, reflective)

#### **Communicators**

Communicating ideas confidently in different ways for different purposes (confident, responsive, respectful)

## IMPLEMENTATION

Through mixed age classes of no more than 2 year groups, our pupils access the National Curriculum 2014. We have a two year rolling programme which is divided into 6 terms, created as a team by our subject leaders to ensure progression in all subjects from year one to year six. Children in reception comply with Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (see separate policy) and follow the same principles. Each term is headed with **contrasting concepts** (eg systems and survival) and a **big idea** (eg. We need systems for survival). Whole class discussions take place regarding what pupils know already and what they wonder. From this, children construct their lines of inquiry according to their interests and begin their research. Each line of inquiry has a cycle which is covered over approximately 2 weeks. Pupils have opportunity to transfer key knowledge to long term memory through presenting their work at the end of the inquiry cycle. The cycle of inquiry, after being introduced to the big idea, is as follows:

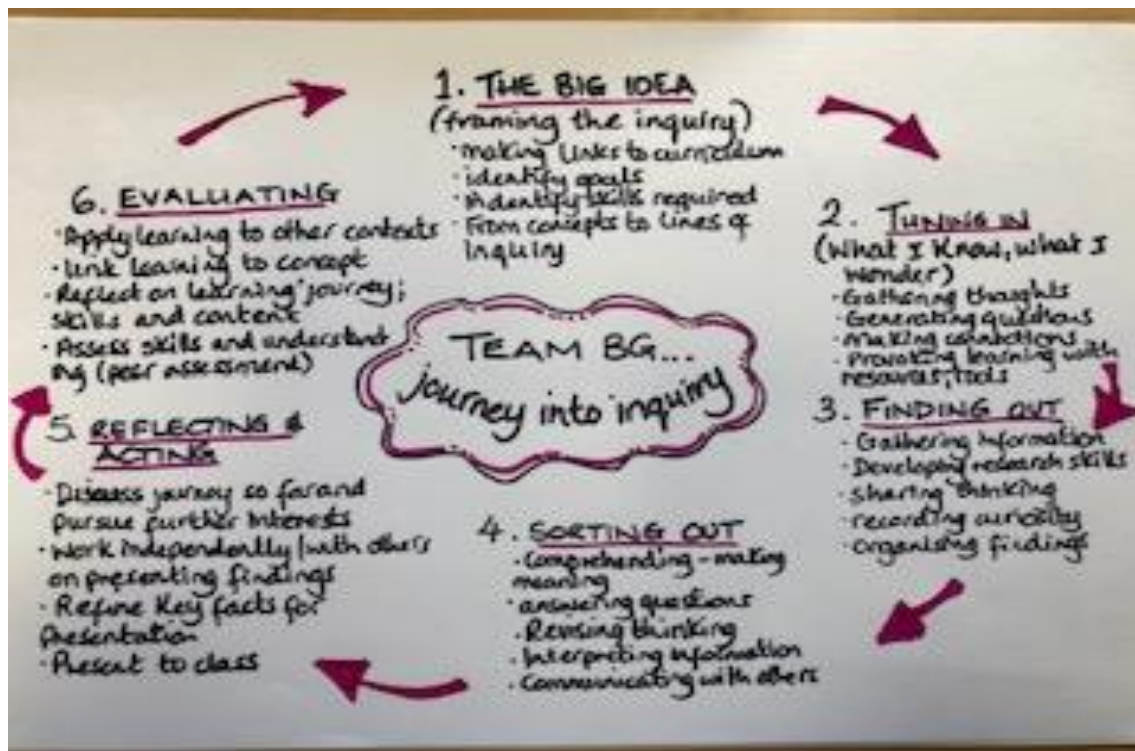
**Tuning in** – generating lines of inquiry, what I know and what I wonder

**Finding out** – researching

**Sorting out** – patterns, connections, linking learning to real life contexts

**Reflecting and acting** – new knowledge, skills and understanding

**Evaluating** – presentation and assessment (self and teacher)



Inquiry based learning is typical of all our core and foundation subjects along with knowledge and skills led lessons where necessary or preferred. English and Maths lessons have their own dedicated daily time (1 hour) and are heavily knowledge and skills based with inquiry built in to activities and linked to real life contexts (see A Journey into Maths/English).

Science, RE and PE are weekly and both inquiry based and skills based. All other foundation subjects, including RSE are multi-disciplinary (or cross-curricular) and linked to the Big Idea and lines of inquiry. This allows us to develop cultural capital by using a wide range of subject linked vocabulary in the classroom, outside the classroom and on visits (see A journey into Science, RE, PE, geography, history, art and design, design technology, computing, MFL, music). Children work independently or in small groups of mixed abilities and ages, allowing the higher ability to use teaching skills to reinforce their learning and allowing lower ability to learn a variety of skills and learning strategies from their peers. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included and thrive on the flexibility that the inquiry based curriculum allows them. Children with Education Health Care plans have the support of an adult mediator and their peers.

Strategies for promoting good emotional health, wellbeing and resilience are embedded into our curriculum and also addressed explicitly during our Family Values dedicated days. We are a trauma informed school and we use a variety of bespoke packages to address and tackle areas such as anxiety, bereavement. These include a variety of external and in-house music/art/lego therapies, adventure activities, specialised programmes, "A Volcano in my tummy" etc. Growth mindset displays are non-negotiable in classroom environments to promote both academic and emotional resilience. Our nurture groups offer small group and one to one mentoring and focus on overcoming barriers to academic and emotional achievement.

Our Family values are embedded into our curriculum. We take one value per half term and dedicate a whole day to focus on knowledge and skills, all assemblies during that half term are linked to the value. Our family values incorporate our British values and are as follows:

**Fairness** (Phenomena: Fair trade, British values (tolerance, democracy, rule of law, respect), manners, honesty)

**Attitudes to Learning** (Phenomena: Growth mindset, building learning power, mindfulness)

**Making Healthy Choices** (Phenomena: Healthy living, mental health and wellbeing, physical wellbeing, environmental issues, lifestyles)

**International Citizenship** (Phenomena: global issues, religious and cultural diversity, heritage, celebrating differences, power of languages; verbal and non verbal)

**Living and learning safely** (Phenomena: Online safety, keeping safe: road, sun, fire, sea, Anti-bullying, healthy relationships, risk management)

**Yearning for success** (Phenomena: Entrepreneurship, raising aspirations, economic wellbeing)

Our children are involved in many local initiatives such as Surfers Against Sewage, beach cleans, local village/church shows and competitions, Harvest Festivals and therefore make a positive contribution to their community. They expand their cultural capital to the wider society with their participation in Erasmus Projects at home and abroad with our European partners, they visit countries all over the world via Zoom to engage in exploration, investigation and inquiry with experts (Exploring by the seat of their pants) such as deep sea divers, paleontologists, marine biologists, which has the added bonus of raising their aspirations. Their educational visits are local, national and international and therefore allow them to communicate with others from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds and gives them opportunities which they would not usually have access to in remote Cornish villages. Annual trips include skiing in Italy, Minack Theatre and local pantomime. All children from year 3 upwards are offered the opportunity to experience residential, pupil premium subsidies are applied to encourage engagement of children from disadvantaged backgrounds (see Pupil Premium Policy). We have many visitors to school, including from parents to share their expertise in areas such as farming. Visitors include police, lifeguards, firefighters, local church groups and European visitors which allows our children to be appreciative of human creativity and achievement. They participate in two dramatic productions a year, taking to the centre stage in front of the proud community. Our pupils are also involved in choosing their termly topics, budgeting for and contributing to school improvements, contributing to learning consultations with their parents and their teacher and participating in local sporting events/competitions off site.

Homework is generally uploaded to our learning platform SeeSaw. This meant that during the COVID-19 pandemic children found the transition to online learning much simpler as "Blended Learning" – integrating technology and digital media with face to face school based learning – was something they were already used to. Inquiry and projects at schools are often continued at home and uploaded for the teacher, learning support assistants to monitor, assess and offer provocations for further inquiry.

Outdoor learning is high priority as we see our environment as the third teacher (with pupil and staff). Children engage in forest school and during regular lesson time, the outdoor environment is one of our “zones of trust” where children can choose to learn in all weathers. Our indoor environments are natural with wooden resources as we work towards becoming a plastic-free school. Interactive displays stand out and are used as a living learning resource. All of our learning environments include graphic, digital, written, spoken and physical languages.

### **IMPACT**

Our children are enthusiastic and curious learners who ultimately have a love of learning and therefore behave well and display a good attitude to learning. They enjoy sharing what they have learnt in their presentations, workbooks, learning platforms, assemblies, school productions and annual reports. They make good academic progress during the time they are with us, especially in reading. They also make outstanding progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; they are confident, resourceful thinkers and researchers who are able to learn both collaboratively and independently and can communicate effectively to achieve their purpose. Through our broad and balanced, inquiry based curriculum and our unique and multi-cultural wider curriculum, they have acquired the transferable skills necessary for success in future learning and employment.

Our summative assessments, along with ongoing peer assessments and teamed with formative end point assessments ensure progression is achieved and particular needs are identified early for intervention. By working collaboratively with other schools, the effectiveness and accuracy of our assessments are quality assured.

Pupils benefit from the international professional development of their teachers and learning support assistants who have observed learning in higher achieving countries and embedded their best practice into our schools. Staff have high expectations of all learners and pupils benefit from the ambitious targets set for them and with them. Subject leaders are highly skilled and as a whole team have designed a curriculum to best suit our learners and achieve the best possible pupil outcomes.

Our children feel safe and protected and able to try new things with a ‘can do’ attitude as they feel well supported by those around them.

**Written by Paula Blackburn**

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