



Teaching and Learning Policy

Approved by: Full Governing Board

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Next review due
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Principles of our 'Big Ideas' Curriculum

At West Moors Middle School, we believe that our curriculum should be broad, balanced and relevant, meeting the needs of all our children whatever their ability. Our curriculum has been carefully designed through liaison with the curriculum leads in our pyramid schools by identifying the 'Big Ideas': the essential skills, knowledge and concepts pupils need to develop in each subject area, which are introduced, built on over time, revisited and assessed, providing all our pupils with robust knowledge and progression of skills, enabling them to grow intellectually, spiritually and emotionally, and allowing them to seek out their passions, become increasingly knowledgeable and make sense of more complex concepts.

Using the National Curriculum as a starting point for a wide and varied learning experience for our children, we enrich it with our strong ethos based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which are placed at the centre of our teaching and learning approaches. Through inclusion of the UNCRC in our curriculum, children, teachers and the wider school community have a better knowledge of children's rights and how these apply to our lives. This knowledge enables children to recognise and enjoy mutual respect for rights.

As we are committed to developing the whole child, our children have the opportunity not only to be academically challenged, developing a sense of wonder at the world we live in, but also to be to be physically active and creative. In fact, with our commitment to embedding arts and cultural provision at the heart of our school, we are currently in the process of becoming an Artsmark accredited school, awarded by Arts Council England to those schools demonstrating this dedication to pupils' creative and cultural development.

In addition, we also prepare our pupils for the world of work with our effective Careers Education Programme, which enables our pupils to identify and choose career opportunities that are suitable for them, aiming for them to make a successful transition from education to employment. In this respect, the Gatsby Benchmarks are central to our Careers' Strategy. This renowned Careers' Education Project was developed through extensive national and international research, providing the benchmarks to allow all young people to reach their full potential.

Continually reviewing and improving the curriculum we offer to our children ensures our pupils benefit from a wide range of learning experiences that challenge, stimulate and promote thinking and learning, and match the needs of each group of children.

Aims of our curriculum

Our 'Big Ideas' curriculum is mapped effectively, providing continuity and progression. It promotes an enjoyment of learning and a commitment to learning and achieving. Through the provision of rich and varied activities with engaging resources, we aim to:

- encourage the best possible progress and the highest attainment for all pupils, enabling pupils to develop key skills in all areas of the curriculum by ensuring continuity and progression;
- promote high standards in reading, writing and Maths;
- enable pupils to acquire and develop a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- enable pupils to make connections across different areas of learning;
- help pupils to think creatively, develop their own thinking and solve problems;
- develop pupils' capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- promote a positive attitude towards learning and a basis for lifelong learning
- enable pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenge and responsibility;
- provide equality of access and the opportunity for all pupils to make progress;
- promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- prepare all children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life;
- promote physical development and the awareness of a healthy lifestyle;
- promote the involvement of parents, carers and families in their child's learning.

Organisation and Planning

In order to integrate our new pupils into year 5 successfully, pupils are taught by their tutors for a range of subjects, always including Maths and English. The remainder of the timetable is with different teachers to promote their sense of independence and growing maturity. By year 6, pupils are ready for a more secondary style of timetable, although they are still taught Maths and/or English by their tutor. In year 7 and 8, pupils have a range of teachers in all their subjects. Across the school, pupils are set by ability in English and Maths, and those pupils requiring additional support in Maths and English also receive intervention for short, focused periods of time during the year.

Planning begins with our 'Big Ideas' overview of the progression across every year group in each subject. In Foundation subjects in KS2 and KS3, cross-curricular units are planned, where subjects work together to plan a 'hook' to engage the pupils' interest, as well as planning lessons where pupils transfer their knowledge and understanding across different areas of learning, and enjoy a final outcome which is celebrated with parents.

Subject co-ordinators provide detailed medium term plans and resources, which cover the objectives to be taught and assessed. Individual teachers then adapt these plans as appropriate to their particular class.

Children with Special Needs, including More Able pupils

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school, always providing additional resources and support for children with special needs. If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs, complying with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice in providing for children with special needs. If staff or parents or carers raise a concern about a child, his/her teacher will make an assessment under advice from the SENDCo. In most instances, the teacher is able to provide appropriate resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. Support staff or specialist teachers may be used to assist the child.

If a child is working at the extension level, they will be given open-ended questions and tasks, as well as being encouraged to follow lines of thought independently.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We are committed to developing the whole child and therefore offer a wide range of extra opportunities that enrich the curriculum, encouraging our pupils to be enthusiastic and responsible members of the school community.

- **Sporting activities:** a wide range of sports including football, tennis, athletics and fitness.
- **Performing arts:** music lessons and clubs & opportunities to perform in front of an audience.
- **Leadership skills:** prefects, playground leaders, school council, sports leaders, learning ambassadors and Rights Respecting Representatives.
- **Trips and visits:** planned for all our pupils in all year groups, including:
 - For Year 5, a day trip to Bovington Tank Museum, an African Drumming Workshop and a residential visit to Avon Tyrell;
 - For Year 6, a day trip to the Titanic Sea City Museum in Portsmouth and a residential visit to Fairthorne Manor;
 - For Year 7, a day trip to Corfe Castle and Lulworth Castle, and a Music trip to Salisbury Cathedral.
 - For Year 8, a London trip to Kew Gardens, the Science Museum and the Natural History Museum, and a day trip to the Royal Dockyard.

British Values

Our curriculum also aims to promote British Values:

- respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process;
- respect for the basis on which the law is made and applies in England;
- support for equality of opportunity for all;
- support and respect for the liberties of all within the law;
- respect for and tolerance of different faiths and religious and other beliefs.

Teaching and Learning

We give all our pupils every opportunity to succeed by:

- knowing the pupils we teach: taking into account pupils' prior knowledge, skills, abilities and level of cognition through effective assessment;
- clearly setting out the Learning Journeys: exactly what pupils are learning in small steps, why and how this fits in with their progression;
- setting high expectations for all pupils, regardless of their starting point, through effective modelling on flip-charts in all our classrooms, which are subsequently placed on our Learning Walls for pupils to use as effective models for their own work;

- using engaging teaching strategies and resources to enhance learning;
- continually assessing pupils during lessons (formative assessment), through observation, targeted questioning, guided teaching, 'live' marking and talking to pupils, as well as using visualisers in each classroom for effective peer assessment;
- reflecting on lessons taught in order to modify and plan future lessons;
- ensuring that all pupils take responsibility for their own learning.

Assessment for Learning

Our school embraces the principles of Assessment for Learning, aiming to enable all pupils to become independent learners, who are aware of the criteria for their success and their individual targets for sustained improvement. In this regard, pupils understand, and can articulate where they are on their Learning Journey, where they need to get to and how best to get there.

Effective Planning

Our 'Big Ideas' curriculum, developed in partnership with the curriculum leads in our pyramid schools, ensures that the key skills and essential knowledge we have identified permeate our curriculum from year 5 to year 8, allowing our pupils to make links in their learning as well as develop the ability to think more deeply about what they are learning. In this respect, pupils' learning is meaningful and purposeful, and designed in a range of contexts, which offer breadth and variety to their learning.

Furthermore, our new cross-curricular topics in all year groups completely immerse our pupils in their learning, enabling them to gain greater depth and breadth in their knowledge, skills and understanding, as they move between lessons, making links and connections in their learning. From the Venturesome Vikings in Year 6, to Medieval Mania in Year 7 and the Terrible Tudors in Year 8, our pupils benefit enormously from this highly regarded approach to learning, which allows pupils to gain a deeper understanding, whilst developing their vocabulary and at the same time being incredibly engaging and motivating.

Using our 'Big Ideas' progression, developed through liaison with our colleagues in our Ferndown pyramid of schools, and carefully planned Learning Journeys with medium term plans developed by our Subject Co-ordinators, based on National Curriculum requirements, we deliver 'Quality First' teaching by:

- using effective assessment, we determine pupils' prior knowledge, skills, abilities and level of cognition, as well as assessing what has happened as a result of teaching and work out the implication of this for future teaching;
- ensuring that Learning Journeys are determined with achievable learning objectives set so that pupils can articulate what they are learning; why they are learning it and how it fits into the overall progression;

- setting learning objectives and questions in language that pupils understand so that they can describe in their own words what they are learning and why;
- differentiating lessons, using specified SEN strategies and EHCPs, so that all pupils are supported and challenged appropriately;
- planning to use engaging and active learning strategies that help pupils to develop a deeper understanding;
- ensuring an appropriate pace to support learning and progress is used;
- linking to other curriculum areas so that learning, numeracy and literacy is applied and reinforced;
- planning to deploy Learning Support Assistants effectively to support pupils where needed and to help them develop independent learning skills, and manage their own learning;
- working collaboratively with colleagues in our school as well as our pyramid of schools to moderate pupils' work, ensuring robust assessment.

Effective Teaching:

Our teachers have excellent subject knowledge and deliver well-prepared lessons, using effective teaching strategies to actively engage pupils, ensuring pace and challenge and promoting a love of learning by:

- ensuring the physical learning environment supports learning with well-organised, engaging resources for pupils to access;
- ensuring the learning environment is positive and encourages risk taking;
- ensuring pupils know what they are learning, why and what they need to do to be successful and make progress through effective modelling using flip-charts in all classrooms and Learning Walls to show WAGOLs (What A Good One Looks Like);
- referring to the learning objective or question throughout the lesson;
- reviewing previous learning and prior knowledge at the beginning of lessons;
- presenting new material in manageable steps, supported by tasks to assimilate and reinforce new learning, before introducing the next step;
- asking targeted questions and requiring pupils to answer;
- questioning in order to check understanding and to advance understanding;
- constantly checking pupils work – question, talk, 'live' mark, guide, scaffold, assess;
- allowing time for reflection during lessons, immediately after feedback has been provided;
- requiring and monitoring independent practice and pupils' self-regulation;
- deploying all additional adults effectively;
- using targeted praise to advance learning and behaviour;
- SLT employing an open door policy, in order to support the development of other colleagues' practice.

Effective feedback, Assessment and progress

We will know our pupils and ensure they make progress by:

- using the Feedback Policy effectively;

- using pupils' assessment (formative) and data (summative assessment) to plan and modify lessons;
- consistently giving feedback to pupils during lessons: question, talk, live marking, guide, scaffold, assess;
- allowing time for reflection during lessons and immediately after feedback has been provided;
- providing targeted positive feedback and comments;
- ensuring pupils can assess their own learning and can articulate their Learning Journey, explaining what they have learnt, what their next step is, why and how they can improve;
- using peer assessment effectively by modelling to pupils how to peer assess, ensuring they do it effectively;
- setting appropriate 'next step' targets - monitoring these regularly and adapting our planning accordingly;
- sharing feedback and marking strategies through workshops with colleagues in order to improve practice;
- contacting parents when we are concerned about a pupil's progress;
- actively participating in standardisation and moderation of pupils' work with colleagues in our school and in our pyramid of schools to ensure consistency;
- ensuring that accurate data is submitted at each data drop.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher has the overall responsibility for the curriculum and delegates responsibility to key staff:

- the Assistant Headteacher co-ordinates the work of the subject co-ordinators and ensures that the curriculum has progression and appropriate coverage;
- subject co-ordinators are responsible for the medium term plans and liaising with class teachers over the content and delivery of the units of work, evaluating and monitoring standards in their subject through frequent Book Looks and pupil conferencing;
- class teachers ensure that the curriculum is taught and that the aims are achieved for their class, planning collaboratively to ensure parity across the year group;
- the assessment manager and Assistant Headteacher ensure that the progress of each pupil is tracked and that there is appropriate challenge, support and intervention;
- the Governors monitor the success of the curriculum at committee level and at whole Governing Body meetings through the Headteacher's report.