***Tre Uchaf Primary School***

***Curriculum Policy***

*The purpose of this policy is to set out how we organise the curriculum to ensure our pupils have the best possible foundations upon which to build future learning. Through the curriculum they learn the basic skills, understanding and knowledge they need as well as an appreciation of diversity, culture and community.*

**Our Vision for Tre Uchaf**

Tre Uchaf is a positive, inclusive, listening school. Everyone is encouraged to be the best that they can and to make a contribution. The school provides practical, stimulating and new experiences for the children which help them to build confidence, knowledge and a love of learning.

**Aims**

***We aim to help our pupils to*** *.....*

* Respect themselves, each other, adults and the environment
* Be confident in the basic skills of speaking, reading, writing and

mathematics

* Know how to find the information they need
* Gain practical skills which will help them in their lives
* Get along well with each other
* Be honest and kind
* Know about and contribute to their local community
* Celebrate the Welsh culture and to use the Welsh language
* Be safe, fit, happy and healthy
* Understand their own feelings and be confident in saying how they feel
* Enjoy new tasks, new people and new places

***At Tre Uchaf Primary School we aim to achieve these stated aims through providing a carefully planned broad and balanced curriculum which comprises of;***

* Timetabled teaching and learning which takes place in the classroom
* Enrichment activities which facilitate personalised learning through Interest Groups and extra -curricular activities
* Intervention programmes which target and support pupils’ learning where they at risk of not achieving expected levels
* A comprehensive programme of weekly themes which are largely explored through assemblies
* Homework tasks which build upon classroom learning whilst developing independence and home school links
* Special events which develop pupils’ understanding of the world of work, their place in the community and their responsibility for the wider world
* Educational visits
* Specialist Music lessons

*We strongly believe in equality of opportunity and we strive to ensure that all pupils develop confidence and a sense of belonging within our school community. Pupils of all abilities and talents are valued and we seek to personalise the curriculum in order for all pupils to experience success and enjoyment.*

This policy has been developed over time and through consultation with all stakeholders including teaching staff, teaching assistants, pupils, parents and governors. It has also taken into account the recommendations of the Donaldson Report ‘Successful Futures’. With this in mind, we have evaluated and developed our curriculum within the context of the six areas of learning set out by Donaldson. We believe that this has been a useful starting point in deciding upon the balance of the curriculum as a vehicle for a holistic approach to developing pupils’ thinking.

**Curriculum Balance**

We have agreed that, in general, the balance of planned curriculum time should be as follows;

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expressive Arts**  Art  Music  Drama  Dance  Poetry  **10%** | **Science and Technology**  Science  ICT  DT  **15% KS2**  **10% FP** | **Literacy**  English  **25%** | **Numeracy**  **20%** | **Humanities**  History  Geography  RE  **10%** | **Health and Well Being**  PE  PSE  **15% FP**  **10% KS2** |
| Welsh  **10%** |

Inevitably there is often an overlap between curriculum areas, particularly where Literacy, Numeracy and Digital skills are practised and developed through the wider curriculum.

The balance of the curriculum will change throughout the year, depending upon the focus of particular topics, special events and seasonal variations. However, teachers aim to maintain the agreed balance over the course of each academic year.

We believe that the balance between areas of learning differs slightly between Foundation Phase and Key Stage Two, in line with the Foundation Phase Framework and the Key Stage Two National Curriculum requirements. In Foundation Phase there is greater emphasis upon Health and Well Being whilst in Key Stage Two there is greater focus upon Science and Technology.

**Curriculum Planning**

The curriculum requires careful planning and evaluation and is on-going. As the make-up of classes changes from year to year, curriculum planning for the year ahead takes place annually in the Summer Term. Teachers plan within the context of chosen topics to ensure that over the course of the year each class is taught a balance of curriculum areas. Through this planning, which takes place collaboratively, teachers ensure that there is progression through the school and that pupils within each year group have equality of opportunity, regardless of the class in which they are placed.

Twice a year Curriculum Co-ordinators review coverage and progression and produce a report and Action Plan which secures coverage and development within each area of learning.

From Reception to year 6 the Cornerstones topics are used as an exciting and stimulating context for much of the learning which takes place. This is enhanced by educational visits and stimulating experiences, usually at the ‘Engage’ phase of the topics. The emphasis on different areas of the curriculum is often determined by the topic being taught, but over time we aim to balance the curriculum between the areas set out by Donaldson.

In Nursery and the Infant STF the ‘Ben and Betty’ approach has been adopted and this ensures that pupils are exposed to all areas of learning frequently, with the development of phonics at the core of learning and number skills being developed alongside on a daily basis.

**Literacy and English**

At least four sessions per week have literacy skills at their core. While some skills such as spelling, grammar and reading are often taught discretely, the text type focus is often linked to the topic being taught. These skills are practised and developed throughout the curriculum, ensuring that literacy is always a key focus in pupils’ learning.

Each half term teachers set out the main literacy objectives to be focused upon and assessed. They also plan for topic related rich tasks which enable them to assess pupils’ ability to use identified LNF skills independently.

**Welsh**

Welsh is taught and practised daily. In Foundation Phase ten minutes of Welsh takes place after lunch whilst in Key Stage Two this is done first thing in the morning. In addition to this, one session of classroom time each week is dedicated to teaching new Welsh patterns with an element of written Welsh at least every fortnight. Children in Key Stage 2 will complete at least one piece of extended writing each half term. Welsh is also used incidentally throughout the day throughout the school by pupils, teachers and teaching assistants.

**Numeracy and Maths**

At least four sessions per week have numeracy skills at their core. Much of pupils’ learning in mathematics is presented discretely while opportunities to practise these skills through topic related activities are planned for wherever possible.

As with literacy, each half term teachers set out the main objectives to be focused upon and assessed. They also plan for topic related rich tasks which enable pupils to demonstrate their ability to use LNF skills independently.

**Science and Technology**

This area of learning incorporates Science, ICT and Design Technology and the emphasis within any particular half term will depend on the context of the Cornerstones topic, or in the case of Nursery, the Ben and Betty focus for the week. This area of learning incorporates the Living/Non-Living Things aspect of Knowledge and Understanding of the World within the Foundation Phase Framework.

* **ICT** skills are taught and practised weekly in line with our scheme of work and opportunities to use ICT to develop other areas of learning are provided regularly. Sometimes ICT will be used to enhance learning in other areas, particularly Literacy and Numeracy.
* We ensure that **Science** skills are developed throughout the school through the use of a skills ladder as a reference point for planning. Science related activities are always available within Continuous and Enhanced Provision in the Foundation Phase. In Key Stage Two teachers aim to teach science, on average, for one timetabled session per week.
* Opportunities for developing the **Design Technology** skills set out in our skills ladder are planned for throughout the year. Pupils take part in a substantial Design Technology project at least three times per year and these projects will often alternate half termly with Music composition projects in order to achieve a good balance of experiences. In the Foundation Phase there is an element of Design Technology learning through Continuous and Enhanced Provision throughout the year.

**Health and Well Being**

* In the Foundation Phase **Personal and Social Development** is taught both discretely and incidentally. All Foundation Phase teachers set PSD objectives on a weekly basis within the context of the Foundation Phase framework and the current Cornerstones topic. While in both phases aspects of Personal and Social Development sometimes need to be taught in isolation, we believe that learning should, where possible, link to other areas of the curriculum. Inevitably in Key Stage Two, some topics have a greater emphasis on this area than others.
* Often personal and social issues will arise in the course of the school day and these will be addressed as needed and outcomes reflected in weekly evaluations.
* ***Weekly themes***, often explored through assemblies, ensure that, as a whole school, children develop a shared understanding of a range of cultural, religious, moral, social and emotional issues. These are revisited every year and children develop a greater depth of understanding as they mature.
* Children have at least one designated **PE** lesson each week. In the Summer months additional PE lessons take place outdoors and in Key Stage Two all pupils have at least half a term of swimming lessons.
* This aspect of learning also incorporates **Sex and Relationships Education**, for which we have a framework for progression throughout the school. Where possible, teachers plan to teach aspect of SRE alongside relevant topics.

**Expressive Arts**

We believe that the Expressive Arts is a very important area of learning which develops specific skills as well as providing an opportunity to enhance other curriculum areas. In the Foundation Phase all teachers plan for Creative Development learning each week and over time they achieve a balance between Art, Music, Drama, Dance and Poetry. Continuous and Enhanced provision provides opportunities to develop these aspects on a regular basis. In Key Stage Two the emphasis on particular aspects of Expressive Learning varies depending upon the current topic.

* Our skills ladder for **Art** ensures that pupils revisit skills each year and teachers plan for the use of particular media where its use enhances learning linked to their Cornerstones topics.
* Progression in **Music** is set out through a framework for learning and we believe that it is important to visit all aspects of music throughout each year. At certain times of the year there are opportunities for pupils to focus on performance skills through **singing, drama and dance** and we place great emphasis on achieving high standards within this aspect. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in a Composition project at least once each term and often these projects will alternate half termly with Design Technology projects, ensuring that a balance of experiences is achieved. In Nursery pupils gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they will need to begin to create their own music as they mature.
* **Dance** is also incorporated into the PE curriculum and our scheme of work ensures all pupils develop dance skills as they progress through the school.

**Humanities**

This aspect is developed within the context of Cornerstones topics and, through careful planning, teachers ensure that all pupils develop the skills, knowledge and understanding associated with **History** (***Time and People***) **Geography** (***Places and People***) and **Religious Education.** Educational Visits are particularly important within this aspect of learning.

Learning in History and Geography is often condensed into more in-depth projects which may only take place during one part of the year. Our frameworks for progression provide a point of reference for teachers to ensure pupils build upon their learning each year.

**Religious Education** is taught more regularly. In the Foundation Phase the context for learning is ‘Festivals’ and pupils build up an understanding of different religions linked to these festivals. This is enhanced through a well planned programme of assembly themes.

In Key Stage Two Religious Education is taught through links with Cornerstones topics with an emphasis on key questions which are set out in our framework for progression. A particular key question is explored each half term.

*Further information on how each area of the curriculum is organised can be found in individual curriculum policy files.*

**Personalised Learning**

***SEN***

* Some children require additional support in their learning and these identified children take part in ‘Intervention’ activities which focus on their particular needs. These activities take place alongside the planned classroom curriculum. We aim to ensure that while these children will be withdrawn from class for short periods they still experience the broad curriculum. The withdrawal of less able pupils for intervention allows teachers to focus on more able pupils’ needs through giving them feedback on their work or developing higher order literacy and numeracy skills.

**Enrichment Activities**

* All pupils in year 1 - 6 have the opportunity to pursue particular interests and talents through our weekly ‘Interest Groups’ session. A wide range of learning activities is available to pupils and they are encouraged to select an activity within a different area of learning each half term. Within this context of choice and enjoyment pupils are able to work with a range of different pupils to further develop their knowledge and skills across the curriculum. Choices of activities may include any of the following;

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expressive Arts**  **Pottery**  **Wool Crafts**  **Recorders**  **Art** | **Science and Technology**  **Cooking**  **Science club**  **Gardening** | **Literacy**  **Film Making**  **School Magazine** | **Numeracy**  **Community Cafe** | **Humanities**  **Look after Loughor**  **Spanish** | **Health and Well Being**  **Parachute games**  **Athletics**  **Football**  **Heartstart**  **Health and Nutrition** |

* Pupils with a particular aptitude for Music have the opportunity to learn to play an instrument and this takes place either during the school day or as an extra-curricular activity.

**Extra-Curricular Activities**

* We offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities for pupils and this is an important aspect of school life. Often, children have the opportunity to join school teams or performance groups and take part in celebrations, performances and competitions in the wider community. Typically the following will be on offer;
  + Singing
  + Football
  + Rugby
  + Basketball
  + Girls Sports
  + Netball
  + Gardening
  + Brass Instruments

**Homework**

* While the homework we set is intentionally minimal we do value the opportunity for pupils to practise the skills learnt in school independently, at a level which is well matched to their ability. As children mature they are set more open ended tasks which allow them to pursue their own interests and to organise their work in their own way.

**The Extended Curriculum**

From time to time we organise events which are designed to help pupils to develop understanding beyond the classroom and beyond the prescribed curriculum. We give pupils the opportunity to;

* Develop independence and confidence through Residential Visits,
* Contribute to the wider world through fundraising,
* Develop a sense of community through organising whole school events
* Develop organisational and numeracy skills through preparation for PTA events such as the Christmas Fayre
* Gain an understanding of the world of work through our jobs fayre
* Learn to take a leading role through representing and presenting to their peers as members of school committees.

**Monitoring and Review**

Teaching staff and governors will review the implementation of this policy on a regular basis. Curriculum co-ordinators will monitor standards in their curriculum area and will each help to monitor the effectiveness of the Curriculum Policy. The Governing Body’s Curriculum Committee will also monitor its effectiveness through visits to school and by meeting curriculum leaders.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or when there are WAG changes to the curriculum.

***June 2016***