

Fairview Primary School



Curriculum Policy

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Last Review Date: September 2024

Review: September 2027

FAIRVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

The curriculum policy that follows is a statement of intent. It reflects the requirements of The Northern Ireland Education Order (2006) which sets out the minimum requirements to be taught. It is recognised that this is an evolving document which will be reviewed in light of any future developments.

Everyone involved in our school works to ensure that Fairview Primary is a friendly, welcoming and caring child-centred school where individual qualities are valued. We encourage our pupils to develop lively, enquiring minds, to think creatively and to use their own initiative to work with increasing independence. Our motto 'Inspire, Support, Achieve' captures the vision and the experiences which we aspire to offer to all who are part of the Fairview Primary School family. We believe,

- In the importance of promoting self-esteem, developing self-confidence and encouraging positive attitudes to learning
- That quality teaching and learning takes place in a calm and orderly environment where positive behaviour is promoted and close home-school contact is maintained
- That a rich and varied curriculum should be available to every child whilst maintaining a focus on achieving appropriately high standards in English, Mathematics and ICT commensurate with pupil abilities;
- That we are committed to providing the highest quality of teaching thus enabling our children to have every opportunity to develop their personal, social and academic potential.

General Aims

The Board of Governors, Principal and staff of Fairview believe the broad aims for the school should be:

- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of children
- To prepare children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- To enlarge children's knowledge, experience, skills and imaginative understanding
- To provide quality teaching and learning experiences for the benefit of every child who attends the school.

We work towards achieving these broad aims by promoting purposeful teaching and learning, through an appropriate range of structured educational and social experiences, within the framework of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and by helping children to:

- Develop self esteem and respect for themselves and others;
- Recognise and become confident in their developing abilities;
- Work independently and as members of co-operative groups;
- Develop self-discipline within an environment which promotes positive behaviour and attitudes towards people and their property;
- Acquire appropriate knowledge, skills, concepts and attitudes;
- Begin to understand the community in which they live and to appreciate the values, beliefs and attitudes of our society and the society of others.

Objectives

In drawing up the school's guiding principles and main aims with regard to the curriculum we have carefully considered:

- The content of what we provide for the children who attend our school;
- The range of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes we want our children to gain through the work being done at each stage;
- The understanding and qualities we wish to help children develop and acquire.

We encourage our pupils to develop lively, enquiring minds, to think creatively and to use their own initiative to work with increasing independence. Further information and specific objectives are set out in each subject policy and reviewed as required.

Areas of Learning

The curriculum for the three stages is set out in six areas of learning. Although the areas of learning are set out separately teachers should, where appropriate, integrate learning across the six areas to make relevant connections for children. Teachers have considerable flexibility to select from within the learning areas those aspects they consider appropriate to the ability and interests of their pupils.

The prescribed areas of learning are as followed:

1. **Language and Literacy** – This includes Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing, schools are also encouraged to teach additional languages;
2. **Mathematics and Numeracy** - focusing on the development of mathematical concepts and numeracy across the curriculum;
3. **The Arts** - including Art and Design, Drama and Music;
4. **The World Around Us** - focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in Geography, History and Science and Technology (STEM);
5. **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding** - focusing on emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, health, relationships and sexuality education and mutual understanding in the local and global community;
6. **Physical Education/Development and Movement** - focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding through play and a range of physical activities.

In each of the above, the Northern Ireland Curriculum sets out the minimum requirement that should be taught at each Foundation Stage (P1 and 2), Key Stage 1 (P3 and 4) and Key Stage 2 (P5 – 7). This is followed and used as a starting point for teacher planning.

Religious Education is also provided for all pupils in line with statutory requirements for schools. Teachers use a core syllabus as the starting point for planning.

Cross Curricular Skills and Capabilities

At Fairview, we place strong emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and for our pupils to become successful and contributing members of society. Within lessons, we provide the opportunities for pupils to engage in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum and progressively develop their competencies and confidence in developing and using,

- **Cross - curricular skills:**

These are,

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using information and Communication Technology

- **Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities:**

These involve,

- Thinking, problem-solving and decision making
- Self-Management
- Working with others
- Managing Information
- Being Creative

Breadth, Balance and Relevance of Curriculum

In ensuring breadth and balance in the delivery of a high quality curriculum, it is important that the school retains within its teaching complement, staff who are experienced in co-ordinating and delivering the key areas of the curriculum. It is also essential that these staff participate in curriculum development training and promote and disseminate this to all staff. By following programmes of work based across all curriculum requirements, a breadth of learning can be achieved. Curriculum balance is achieved through ensuring adequate allocation of time to each of the areas of learning and also through use of a range of teaching and learning/classroom management strategies.

It is our intention to make the curriculum we offer as relevant as possible by ensuring that content and delivery meets the children's present and future needs and clearly contributes to the progressive development of knowledge, understanding, skills, qualities and attitudes. We try as far as possible to ensure that the curriculum is practical, first in the sense that it involves active learning (doing, making, experiencing) and second that the learning is related, where possible, to real situations applicable to everyday life.

Equity of Access

At Fairview, teachers are aware that pupils have different experiences, interests and strengths, which will influence the way in which they learn. In planning curriculum and assessment activities, teachers are aware of the requirements of the equal opportunities legislation and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO) 2005 and have high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities and pupils from a diverse variety of social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Approaches to curriculum delivery (learning and teaching) provide suitably challenging opportunities for all pupils to take part in lessons fully and effectively enabling all pupils to achieve at a level commensurate with their abilities. For pupils with special educational

needs, the staff take account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child through differentiation of tasks and materials appropriate to the age and requirements of the individual pupil. For pupils whose attainments significantly exceed the expected levels of attainment during a particular key stage, teachers plan suitably challenging work by extending the breadth and depth of study across areas of learning.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Assessment helps the teacher to determine the progress, level of ability and attainment of each child. It also helps the teacher to decide the content and pace of further work. Assessment takes many forms, from the monitoring of written class and home work to teacher observation of children undertaking a range of tasks.

Within the school, a variety of summative assessment methods are used. These include Standardised Tests in English, Reading, Spelling and Maths, Cross Curricular Tasks and Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT). The results of these are used to track pupil progress and aid curriculum planning. These are enhanced by a range of formative assessment methods within every day practice.

The measuring of a child's progress and achievement, the recording of this information and oral and written reporting of information to parents are important elements in our school curriculum. For further information, please refer to the school's Assessment Policy.

Continuity and Progression

Careful planning and good communication ensures that each teacher is aware of what has been achieved and what needs to be done with pupils in each class. Close monitoring of each child's progress, continuous assessment and record keeping will also contribute to ensure coherence. Continuity in teaching methods, delivering the agreed programmes of study, following policy and co-ordinator guidance along with careful assessment and record keeping all help to ensure teaching and learning in any one school year builds on what has already been achieved. Our subject guidelines, overseen by designated leaders, are structured to ensure appropriate progression in learning through sequencing experiences, activities, knowledge and skills development, appropriate to the age, stage, understanding and ability of the children.

Curriculum, Parents and Wider Community

We value and seek to foster parental involvement in supporting children's learning. We also encourage community involvement wherever practical to enhance and support curriculum delivery and to reinforce its real-life relevance at school, local, national and international levels.

Learning and Teaching Approaches

We endeavour to meet the needs of children generally within the context of mixed ability classes, each with a teacher who is primarily responsible for the overall educational and personal development of each child in that class. Teachers decide how children are organised in each class. Teaching occurs in whole class, mixed or ability groups, or on occasion, for individuals/small groups with Special Educational Needs.

Various teaching and learning approaches are used involving direct teaching, practical, exploratory and interactive methods. The requirements of the subject, the intended outcome(s) of the planned activity and the needs of the children in each class determine class organisation and teaching methods. For further information, please refer to the school's bank or Curricular Policies or Special Educational Needs Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal and Board of Governors hold management responsibility for determining the allocation of resources towards recognition of curriculum delivery. The Principal will report to the Board of Governors with regard to progress on all matters relating to the curriculum. The Vice Principal, Heads of each Key Stage and Curriculum Co-ordinators will assist the Principal in monitoring and evaluating curriculum planning, delivery and practice and, with all teaching staff, in putting any planned or identified development/improvement measures into effect.

Complaints Procedure

In the event of a complaint concerning the curriculum, parents should in the first instance write to the Principal. The Principal, in liaison with relevant staff, will seek to bring about a resolution of the matter.

If such a resolution does not emerge, parents should write to the Chairman of the Board of Governors. He will raise the matter at the next governors' meeting. He will hand the matter to the curriculum complaints tribunal panel within the Board of Governors. They will arrange a hearing for the complaints and reach a decision on whether or not to uphold a complaint.

If a resolution has still not been arrived at following the hearing, parents may write to the Curriculum Complaints Tribunal of the Education Authority, North Eastern Region.

Review and Evaluation

The Governors, Principal and staff recognise that the school's curriculum may well evolve in response to the changing needs of society, statutory requirement/legislation and/or through processes of school development and improvement planning.

All internal review and evaluation is undertaken with the intention of maintaining and developing the quality and relevance of teaching and learning that occurs within the school. School programmes of study, yearly plans and timetables give an indication of the breadth and balance of the various elements of the curriculum.

External evaluations through, for example, school inspection reports will give an indication of the quality of learning experiences provided and internal and external assessment results show the range and level of achievement of different groups of children.

This policy has been developed in full consultation with the teaching staff and Board of Governors. Further details of curriculum organisation, priorities and planned developments are contained in the current school development plan.