



## The Isaac Newton Primary School Curriculum Policy

At Isaac Newton Primary School we define the curriculum as: “All of the planned activities that are organised in order to promote learning and personal growth and development”.

### Our Mission

“To be the best that we can be in everything that we do”

### Our School Values

Our curriculum is also heavily influenced by our school values. These are part of the ‘fabric’ of our school and run through every aspect of school life. As a school community we are committed to these values and use every available opportunity to promote them:

- Respect- To treat others as we would want to be treated, making sure that we are understanding of those who are different to ourselves.
- Pride- To feel good about ourselves and to take pride in our work and our school- be proud to be part of Isaac Newton!
- Responsibility- To take ownership of our actions and be responsible for making the right choices and the impact that they have on others.
- Kindness- To think of others before ourselves especially those who are in need. Be thoughtful, friendly and considerate to all members of our community.
- Resilience- To always try our best and to keep on going even when things get hard- learning only begins when we are not able to do something!

### Our Curriculum Drivers

When designing, reviewing and evaluating our curriculum we consider carefully the local context of our school and any gaps within our pupils’ backgrounds. In doing so we have identified some key ‘curriculum drivers’ which have influenced our curriculum offer:

- Communication- We will ensure that our children value the importance of communication and develop the necessary skills to communicate effectively and appropriately.
- Diversity- We will ensure that our children have an appreciation and understanding of the diverse world within which we live and show tolerance to those who are different from themselves.



- Health- We will support all of our children and their families in leading happy and healthy lives. We will help them to make informed choices and provide support for both physical and mental wellbeing.
- Aspirations- We will work with all children to ensure that they have high expectations of themselves, understand the world of possibilities for their own futures and have a pathway to achieve success.
- Engagement- We will help our children and their families to engage fully with school life so that they can make the most of their time here at Isaac Newton. One way in which we help children is by 'building their learning power' so that they can fully access our high quality, engaging curriculum.
- Community- We want our children to understand their place within our local community and access the many opportunities and experiences that are available to them. We will help them to appreciate the value of being part of a community both within school and outside of it.

#### **Our Curriculum Aims/Intends To:**

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that's coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Have a high academic ambition for all pupils
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Ensure that reading is prioritised, using every opportunity to develop pupils' reading skills, vocabulary, comprehension and contextual understanding- providing a firm foundation for future learning.

#### **Our Curriculum Design**

At Isaac Newton we intend to take the children on a journey with us to many real or imaginary places where they will become different types of learners such as Scientists, Historians and

Artists. They will learn and develop skills whilst exploring and discovering themes within each journey they are on. Our curriculum will enable us to develop a broad band of knowledge that exposes children to different ways of looking at the world.

We aim to work in partnership with all members of the school community to make teaching and learning exciting and enjoyable, support and challenge every child to achieve at the highest possible level and create a safe and secure environment where every child is happy, valued and prepared to make a positive contribution to our rapidly changing society.

Some key elements to our curriculum design are as follows:

- a) The curriculum breadth for each year group ensures each teacher has clarity as to what to cover. As well as providing the key knowledge within subjects it also provides for pupils' growing cultural capital.
- b) Threshold (key) concepts are the key disciplinary aspects of each subject. They are chosen to build conceptual understanding within subjects and are repeated many times in each topic.
- c) Milestones define the standards for the threshold concepts. These milestones are detailed in our subject hierarchies (progression documents).
- d) Depth: we expect pupils to begin at a *Basic* understanding of the milestone and move on to an *Advancing* or *Deep* understanding as this is re-visited. *Basic* it is the knowledge building phase that provides the fundamental foundations for later application. LEARNING AT THIS STAGE MUST NOT BE RUSHED and will involve a high degree of repetition so that knowledge enters pupils' long-term memory. If all of the core knowledge is acquired quickly, teachers create extended knowledge. In most foundation subjects, such as History and Geography, children will move from a *Basic* level in the first year of the phase (years 1, 3 and 5) to an *Advancing* or *Deep* level within the second year (years 2, 4 and 6). Within some subjects, however, where there is a greater amount of curriculum content, such as Science, the children will move from a *Basic* level to an *Advancing* or *Deep* level within each year group.
- e) Sustained mastery: nothing is learned unless it rests in pupils' long-term memories. This does not happen, and cannot be assessed, in the short term. Assessment, therefore answers two main questions: 'How well are pupils coping with curriculum content?' and 'How well are they retaining previously taught content?'

### Roles and Responsibilities

The Local School Board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation. They will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets

- Isaac Newton is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, and science, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Local School Board
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The Local School Board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The Local School Board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

- The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for overseeing the curriculum in school. CPD for subject leaders is up to date and this is shared across the staff to ensure they are skilled to teach all subjects.
- Phase leaders are responsible for ensuring the curriculum is implemented across their year groups and that there is also progression of skills taught between phases too
- Curriculum leaders will ensure all aspects of their subject are being taught, as well as check for progression of knowledge, skills and vocabulary. They will ensure that there are appropriate and up-to-date schemes of work and subject resources available to support teachers. Subject leaders will create action plans to address areas for development and ensure that they keep their subject knowledge and expertise up-to-date through regular research and training. They will also conduct monitoring and scrutiny activities as part of this process.

## Implementation of the Curriculum

At Isaac Newton School, our curriculum is planned to ensure all subjects are taught and have equal importance. We do however recognise that reading is the key to unlocking other curriculum subjects and therefore ensure that this is prioritised and applied throughout our curriculum. We plan learning in a thematic approach to the curriculum with quality texts to inspire discussion, support the development of reading and provide writing opportunities within each theme. Themes have been organised across each year group to ensure that all milestones are taught and re-visited, providing the children with a school curriculum which is at least as ambitious as that set out by the National Curriculum. Our thematic approach allows for more flexibility in the delivery of our curriculum. For example, in some weeks children may not study History but would instead focus on Geography. During other weeks, the opposite may be true, and then in some weeks there may be a balance across both the subjects. This allows for content to be repeated and re-visited at various points during the term to ensure that knowledge is transferred into long-term memory. An extensive range of high quality resources are also used to underpin the curriculum.

The organisation of our curriculum ensures that teachers have a degree of flexibility in the way that they deliver and personalise learning for the children within their class. This degree of autonomy ensures that teachers can make decisions based on their ongoing assessments (of how well the children are coping with the curriculum content and what they are retaining) so that they can adjust their curriculum accordingly. It is however, still an expectation that all classes/ year groups have taught all of the content outlined within our curriculum framework by the end of that academic year. Subjects such as R.E, P.S.H.E and PE are consistently delivered in a weekly or fortnightly lesson, with each subject following our whole school planning and progression frameworks.

We see the local community as so valuable to our children's learning so we thread these links into the curriculum throughout each year group. Using the outdoors as a classroom is fundamental to our values and this can be school based or with enrichment visits to other locations. Trips/activities and experts are all vital to the enhancement of the learning opportunities we offer our children.

## Building Learning Power

This threads through the whole curriculum and is also known as growth mindset. It helps to create classroom cultures that cultivate the habits and attitudes of curious, confident and independent learners. Students who are more confident of their own learning ability learn faster and learn better. They concentrate more, think harder and find learning more enjoyable. Building Learning Power prepares youngsters better for an uncertain future. BLP helps children in their lifelong learning. In order to thrive, pupils need to have learnt how to be tenacious and resourceful, imaginative and logical, self-disciplined and self-aware, collaborative and inquisitive. Children know and understand this vocabulary as it is used in all aspects of school life including lessons, displays and school assemblies.

## The Early Years Foundation Stage

The curriculum that we teach in the reception class meets the requirements set out in the revised

National Curriculum at Foundation Stage. Our curriculum planning focuses on the Early Learning Goals and on developing children's skills and experiences, as set out in this document. Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play, and by engaging in well-planned structured activities. Teaching in the reception class builds on the experiences of the children in their pre-school learning. We do all we can to build positive partnerships with the variety of nurseries and other pre-school providers in the area. During the children's first term in the reception class, their teacher completes a baseline assessment and records the skills of each child. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child. Throughout the EYFS curriculum we make explicit links to our 'subject hierarchies' where possible. For example, when undertaking work on 'Understanding of the world' in EYFS, activities will be planned to link with related skills set out in our Year 1/2 hierarchy for Science. This helps to ensure that our curriculum is progressive and that the children are able to build on their prior knowledge as they enter into Year One.

## Extra-curricular activities

We try to have as many extra-curricular activities as we can, as we recognise the benefits they can have to health and well-being. Some activities take place at lunchtime, but others take place after school. Outdoor activities and outdoor and adventurous activities form part of the delivered PE curriculum. This may involve problem-solving or team-building activities in the school grounds as well as formal activities such as orienteering. In addition we plan for our older children to experience adventurous activities away from the school site, such as when using the climbing wall at our local leisure centre.

We have our own Forest School within the school grounds and our trained Forest School Leader ensures that our children have many opportunities to experience this as part of their overall education. We recognise that a Forest School can benefit children in many ways including self-confidence & self-esteem, team work, motivation, skills and knowledge, and pride in, and understanding of, their surrounding environment.

School visits are often planned to enhance the taught curriculum and are designed to excite children's interest and imagination. These may involve visits to museums or theatre or special activity days. We make regular visits to the local high schools in support of our curriculum, sports and transition.

## Impact of the Curriculum

First and foremost we want to instil in our children a love of learning and an understanding that the learning is part of a journey they are on. We want them to feel safe, to express and celebrate their learning achievements and recognise their own personal and academic growth.

How we know we are successful in this is through:

- Teacher assessment – formative – through ongoing questioning, dialogue, verbal and written feedback, informal quizzes, practical tasks, day to day work, reasoning. Summative – POP tasks (Proof of Progress), end of period of learning tests.
- Pupil Voice – pupil questionnaires, self and peer assessment, school council, learning dialogue in the classroom that encourages self-evaluation.
- Parental Feedback – parent questionnaires, parent afternoons, parent/teacher meetings, informal meetings before and after school, parent governors
- Data Analysis – internal with SLT, subject leadership, pupil progress meetings, governors, external data (SATS)
- Quality Assurance – lesson observations, drop ins, learning walks, book looks, subject ‘deep dives’ (internal and external),
- Positive Attitudes to Learning – children engaged and inspired by their learning, posing own enquiry questions, taking initiative, co-constructing the learning pathway
- Respect – visibly demonstrated through their school environment, their work, interactions, moral responsibility, spirituality
- Participating in Community – proudly representing their school in music festivals, School Council, intergenerational events, sports tournaments, Artsmark work, community events, invited guests and rotary club events.
- Case Studies – to measure the academic, personal, social and emotional progress of our most vulnerable children through case studies, Pupil Premium etc.

The impact of what we do and what the children achieve cannot always be measured in data. We consider our children as individuals who will need to leave school as secondary ready, having enjoyed and embraced their learning experiences along the way.

### Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the [Academies Act 2010](#), and the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#) which we have chosen to follow.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education’s [Governance Handbook](#).

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and will be approved by the Local School Board.

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