Ashbridge
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL & NURSERIES

CURRICULUM POLICY

Approved by: SLT

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Accessibility: Available on the website and on request

Scope: Ashbridge Independent School

This curriculum statement primarily concerns teaching in the school years, Reception to Year 6. A separate policy entitled Early Years Policy and Curriculum details teaching practices and procedures within the EYFS. There is a degree of overlap for Reception Class.

We recognise that children learn more effectively when the educational experiences they receive in school are of a meaningful and practical nature and when many of the starting points for study are firmly based in firsthand experiences. To this end we have developed our TAPESTRY Curriculum which covers and interlinks the key areas of learning and experiences we feel are important to ensure a full, wide ranging, challenging and thoroughly enjoyable curriculum through which all children will learn, progress and thrive in every aspect of school life.

The Outdoors
Academica
Personal Development
Extra Curricular Activities
Sports and Health
The Performing Arts
Residentials and Trips
Your Voice

We have adopted an integrated approach to the curriculum where skills learnt within one subject can be used and developed purposefully in the study of another, while ensuring the children are aware of individual subject specific knowledge and skills. We make use of the locality and the grounds; bringing artefacts and nature into the classroom and enhance our curriculum in a wide variety of ways for example enrichment weeks such as Shakespeare Week, Book Week, Parliament Week, STEM Week, numerous trips both day and residential, visiting performers and authors, lots of sport through the House events and competitive fixtures in a wide variety of sports, several concerts per year. All children from Year 4 to 6 are entered for recognised Drama Exams and pupils in Y5 have 10 weeks of swimming lessons as part of their PE lessons. All classes except Reception also take part in a 9 week Inamojo programme, focused on mindfulness and managing emotions as part of their personal development

Because children are unique individuals with their own specific educational needs, aptitudes and learning styles, we are 'child centred' in our approach. We are flexible enough to consider the different avenues of interest and study that can be generated by the themes we study and actively seek to fully engage children in their learning at all stages.

A variety of teaching strategies are used, the determining factor being the objectives of the work being undertaken and the individual needs, skills, knowledge and understanding of the children. The grouping of the children is also determined similarly.

Equal Opportunities, Access and Personalised Learning.

We ensure every child has access to a broad, exciting, interesting and challenging curriculum which meets the highest standards; our curriculum pays due regard to best practice, incorporates the EYFS and is underpinned by the principles of the National Curriculum 2014. Whilst recognising independence we celebrate innovation and adapt to current developments and insights. Our curriculum and its delivery is subject to constant development, review and scrutiny to ensure we are offering the very best of opportunities for all in an ever-changing world.

Our curriculum is taught through a range of positive experiences delivered to the highest standard using the best resources available to us. We recognise that children have differing starting points, backgrounds and abilities. We endeavour to meet the needs of all children to ensure they can have equal access to a curriculum which is meaningful and enables them to realise their full potential.

Within the curriculum of the school, account is to be taken of the core British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, the mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and the multicultural nature of our society. Part of the educational philosophy of the school is to enable children to eventually take up productive roles in society. We therefore ensure that positive steps are taken to prepare children to be active citizens of the international, multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-faith society into which they will grow. Older pupils learn about discrimination and the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

We recognise that all children need a curriculum which builds on their individual needs and is challenging. Differentiation is realised through support by adults or resources and utilising different groupings such as ability, mixed ability or pairs. This enables us to meet the needs of all children from those with significant additional needs, including EHC Plans, to those identified as able, gifted and talented. See also SEN, EAL and Able, Gifted and Talented Policies.
All pupils are given full access to the curriculum irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Our Curriculum Aims to inspire, enthuse, stimulate and promote life-long learning:-

Through our Tapestry Curriculum we aim to ensure all children:-

- Develop a love of learning and a curiosity about the world.
- Can express themselves through the spoken and written word.
- Develop the skills of speaking and listening with clarity and understanding.
- Become confident in writing in its various forms and as effective means of communication.
- Have a love of books and see them as an instrument of pleasure and enjoyment as well as a source of information.
- Can apply computational skills with speed and accuracy.
- Can use mathematics in everyday situations.
- Develop the ability to use mathematics in problem solving situations.
- Can see everyday applications of science and technology and develop their ability to use technology as a tool for further learning.
- Gain good knowledge and care for the local environment in all its aspects.
- Develop an understanding of themselves within the wider world in which they live.
- Are provided with opportunities to develop aesthetically through painting, drawing, model making, dance and movement, drama and role play.
- Are provided with opportunities to develop physically through PE, Games, Forest and Outdoor Education sessions, movement and dance.
- Are provided with opportunities for independent, co-operative and collaborative group learning.
- Develop Emotional Literacy through engaging with our Personal Development Programme which includes Relationships, PSHE, Learning outside the Classroom, Forest School and a wide range of enrichment activities and trips.
- Builds on children's cultural capital though expose to a wide range of new experiences for them to learn from

Curriculum Content – see individual subject policies for more detail.

Our Tapestry Curriculum incorporates English, Mathematics, Science, Design Technology, Information and Communication Technology, History, Geography, Modern Foreign Languages, Art and Design, Music, Physical Education and Forest School. Also included in the curriculum is Religious Education, and Personal Social and Health Education (including citizenship and relationships education), all known as PDP. **All subjects and areas of learning have specific policies and associated schemes of work and the following information is an overview only.**

English
Not only **literacy** – reading and writing, but also speaking and listening. Children learn to read and write a variety of different texts such as poems, stories, letters and non-fiction. In English, they work together as a class, in groups and as individuals. Communication skills are taught to all children so that they develop the confidence they need to speak, listen and read and write with fluency, flair and understanding. Within our English studies, reading is given priority and there is a well-established and extensive range of books and reading materials of all kinds, the use of which plays a vital part in the work of the school. Children are encouraged to read daily at school and at home, to borrow books from the Library and become engaged with a range of texts for pleasure. A clear, legible style of cursive handwriting is taught. Children write on a variety of topics and develop the ability to spell and punctuate. They are encouraged to discuss ideas and to communicate clearly with others in both speech and writing. A good

deal of children's writing is linked to learning across the curriculum. All the infants and some juniors take part in daily phonics sessions until they have successfully completed Phase 6.

Mathematics

Not only **numeracy and calculations** but also shape, measurement, and data handling. In Maths lessons children work as a class, in ability groups and individually. Many lessons start with a problem to solve and we teach the written methods of calculation when children have secured a good understanding of mental methods. A large part of mathematical work is practical or pictorial and this helps children to understand mathematical concepts. Our approach to the teaching of Maths moves the children from fluency to mastery in the different areas taught. Links between Maths and other subject areas are made where appropriate. We actively promote a positive attitude to Maths and make it fun. Maths is set in the Junior classes.

Science

We teach children to work scientifically through topics covering Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Science is taught to enable children to begin to make sense of the world in which they live. The skills of planning, observing, investigating, recording, predicting and evaluating and making changes (working scientifically) are developed and where appropriate links are made to other areas of study.

Computing and Information and communication technology (ICT)

Children learn to use computers and other forms of electronic device such as tablets and digital cameras. We teach skills in Computing/ICT using a variety of resources and IT is used across the curriculum for a variety of purposes. Skills such as keyboard use, information retrieval, word processing, and presentation are all important aspects and ICT is both a tool for children in their learning and is used as a tool for teachers in their teaching, planning and assessment. The development of computing skills is taught in all classes. Online safety and an understaning of how to use technology respectfully are also given high priority.

Design and Technology (D&T)

In Design Technology children learn a range of practical skills and how to plan and make things for a purpose. Children develop the skills of designing, making and evaluating and making changes, and how to use tools appropriately and safely.

History

In History children learn how we know about the past and its impact on today. We often begin from how the world is now and learn about how this came about through historical events. We adopt an enquiry based approach where children can analyse information and generate questions of their own. They learn about important people and periods in British and World history. Children are encouraged to understand the importance of History through carefully structured modules covering a wide range of knowledge and the skills of enquiry; chronological understanding, interpretation; organising and communicating their findings in a variety of ways.

Geography

In Geography children learn about their ever-changing world. They study the physical features of the landscape, climate and maps and consider social aspects of Geography which affect people's lives and the way in which we live. They learn about the impact of humans on the world and cover areas such as climate change, sustainability and Fair Trade. Mapping skills are developed throughout and we use opportunities to learn about our world through events happening in real time.

Modern Foreign Languages

Children study French from Reception and benefit from specialist teaching in the Upper Juniors. They follow a programme of study which develops vocabulary, written and oral skills as well as an understanding of French culture and tradition. We also offer German Club to the older pupils.

Music
In Music, children not only listen to music but learn to perform by singing, playing and creating their own music. Children have opportunities to listen to and enjoy a range of music, to take part in group singing and to play a variety of instruments. All children enjoy specialist teaching in Music. Children in Y5 learn a brass instrument and other junior year groups learn how to play the keyboard. Through the input of peripatetic teachers, many individual children learn a musical instrument and take related external exams. Music is a feature of concerts and performances and is used in classrooms to create a calm environment.

Art
In Art, children learn how to create pictures in a variety of different media, to develop their own ideas and put them into practice. Much of the work in Art links to Combined Studies themes and environmental work. Children learn to look at things carefully and develop an awareness of colour, pattern and shape. They use materials of all kinds including paint, ink, dyes, fabrics, wood and clay. They learn about the life and works of famous artists, past and present.

Physical Education (PE)
In PE children learn the skills needed to play a variety of games and develop their overall health and fitness. Children in Year 5 are taught to swim. The school is well equipped with large indoor apparatus, an all-weather sports pitch and grassy fields. The Physical Education programme includes gymnastics, dance, swimming, outdoor activities and games, through which the necessary skills are developed. Children take part in inter-school games, fixtures and festivals as well as a variety of House Events. Through their Physical Literacy work, children test themselves through walking challenges and residential trips.

Religious Education (RE)
In RE we follow the locally agreed Lancashire syllabus alongside the syllabus from Blackburn Diocese and we teach children the values of Christianity and link these to a range of other faiths and religions; helping children to develop an understanding of the beliefs and faiths of others.

PSHCE inc Relationships Education – our PDP programme
This area of study is taught both discreetly and in a cross curricular way permeating all areas. All aspects of PSHE and Relationships Education are covered using the PSHE Association resources and are delivered in line with the aims and ethos of the school. Our school council and leadership team demonstrate to children how democracy works; we encourage healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle and teach children how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways including online safety. Through this area of study, we cover all aspects of health and relationships education in consultation with families. Friendships, bullying, the importance of community, managing feelings, resolving conflict, rights and responsibilities, empathy for others, growing and changing and social skills are also covered. Children also learn about money developing their understanding of the financial aspect of life.

Learning Outside the Classroom
High-quality educational experiences which take place outside the classroom are integral to the delivery of the curriculum at Ashbridge. Learning outside the classroom has intrinsic value in any curriculum area and is used to raise achievement and to make experiences memorable and enjoyable. LOtC experiences across the curriculum will always be imaginatively planned, of a high standard, related to specific curriculum objectives for the subject/ lesson, and thoroughly evaluated. For all activities off site, the Educational Visits Policy applies, requiring thorough risk assessments. (please see Educational Visits Policy / Learning Outside the Classroom Policy / Lowland Walking Policy/ Forest School Policy

Forest School Sessions
Our extensive grounds and beautiful environment enable us to operate Forest School Sessions as part of our outdoor education curriculum. Forest School Sessions provide children with the opportunity to learn outside and are led by our Level 3 Practitioners.

The philosophy of Forest Schools is to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive outdoor experiences. By delivering this initiative, we aim to develop self-awareness and regulation, motivation, empathy, good social communication skills, independence and a positive mental attitude, along with children's self-esteem and confidence.
Currently each child enjoys a quality forest session each week, where they spend time within one of our wooded areas. These sessions encompass a wide range of experiences including enjoying the environment, music, trails and treasure hunts, creativity and arts, building dens and shelters, putting up tents, using real tools, fire lighting and cooking (upper juniors only), healthy eating, games and physical activity.
Through these activities children learn how to assess and handle risks, co-operate with others, use their initiative to solve problems, safely use tools and appreciate the beauty of the natural environment.

In addition to the Forest School programme, the outdoor education programme includes subject based LOtC sessions and the development of Physical Literacy working towards an age appropriate walking challenge.

Organisation and Delivery of Curriculum

Classes are organised in single year groups for the most part though we do set for Maths in the Juniors. Class teachers are supported by specialists who deliver aspects of the curriculum in Modern Foreign Languages including French, Music, Computing, Forest Sessions and PE and Games.