

SOUTH HAMS FEDERATION

CURRICULUM POLICY

Approved: 24.04.17

Review: January 2018

The curriculum of the South Hams Federation follows the National Curriculum and consists of all those activities planned by the schools to promote the intellectual, moral, social, spiritual and physical development of the children, and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

Extra curricular activities and those features which contribute to the ethos of the schools in the Federation, such as the quality of relationships and commonly expressed values, are exemplified in the way in which everyone within the "school family" sets about its tasks and the way in which it is organised and managed.

Our curriculum policy statement is derived from the schools' visions and statements of aims. The schools believe that the purpose of learning is to help children to:

- Develop lively and enquiring minds, the ability to question and argue rationally and to apply themselves to tasks and physical skills;
- Acquire understanding, knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and employment in a fast-changing world;
- Use language, number and technological/computer skills effectively;
- Develop personal moral values, respect for religious values and for other cultures, faiths and ways of life;
- Develop a concern for the environment and an understanding of the world in which they live and the inter-dependence of individuals, groups and nations;
- Appreciate human achievements and aspirations;
- Take their place in society in an informed, positive and active way, seeing education as a life-long process.

In promoting these aims, our curriculum serves a variety of functions:

- a) A continuous and progressive development of each of the five elements of learning:

Knowledge
Concepts
Skills
Attitudes
Mastery

- b) Our Curriculum

In Foundation Stage our children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum; once children enter Key Stage 1 in Year 1, they begin to study the National Curriculum

Breadth: Children will study themes based on the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2, and the Foundation Stage Curriculum. We utilise the International Primary Curriculum to develop creative, meaningful global connections in order to enhance learning in the foundation subjects. A range of teaching and learning styles are used, to ensure a richness of educational environment, which enhances the experience of all learners - children and adults.

Balance: Each area of learning is given appropriate attention in relation to others and to the curriculum as a whole. This includes sound guidance and the monitoring of cross-curricular experiences using the International Primary Curriculum Assessment for Learning Framework.

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Relevance: Learning is linked as far as possible to children's own experience and lives. Opportunities are sought to develop learning opportunities, which facilitate this linkage, involving experiences both inside and outside the classroom.

Curriculum to meet the individual needs of children and allow all children to make good progress across a range of areas.

Progression and Continuity: Effective transition from Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 requires careful planning and this is ensured in the Foundation Subjects and Science through the delivery of International Primary Curriculum, Mathematics and English is linked where possible to areas of study for learning to be effective and meaningful. Work undertaken at each stage is based on previous progress and achievements. Our policy is therefore, to use assessment for learning as a formative mechanism to ensure progression and good progress for all children.

Coherence: The curriculum is perceived as an entity in which the various elements and experiences have been consciously planned as complementary and interlocking. In order to assist children in gaining an overview of their experiences in this way, various strategies will be used. Curriculum enrichment experiences will enhance the quality of learning available to all children, with the pastoral system of the schools operating in such a way as to support the management of the children's learning experiences; target setting, reflection and self-assessment will be encouraged through personalised learning strategies focussed on all children making at least good progress or better, given their ability and starting points.

Opportunities for Mastery within the Curriculum

The Mastery Learning approach to curriculum delivery

The Mastery-learning model forms the basis of our approach to traditional teaching. This means spending greater time going into depth about a subject as opposed to racing through the things that all children should know. Previously, racing through content lead to some children having large gaps in subject knowledge because the concept they had just learnt was either too big or learnt too quickly. As primary schools within the South Hams Federation, it is our duty to ensure that children have an absolutely solid, concrete understanding of subject knowledge and skills as well as being emotionally resilient for secondary school.

Now, we have the confidence to take learning at a steadier and deeper pace, ensuring that no child is left behind, as well as providing deeper and richer experiences for children who are above the national expectation for their age.

We focus on all children achieving what is expected of their age group and not going beyond this. Evidence shows that children need to be able to understand a concept, apply it in a range of situations and then be creative to really understand it. Simply going beyond their age group does not guarantee they understand something, it just means they have heard it.

Within our Federation no child will be taught content from the year group above them, they will spend time becoming true masters of content, applying and being creative with new knowledge and skills in multiple ways.

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In short, this means working towards:

- **Teach less, learn more:** less teacher talk and more evidencing learning and progress
- **No child left behind:** all children are enabled to keep up every day.
- **Space and time** to experience and apply, with all children entitled to additional support to ensure they do not fall behind or to go deeper
- **Understanding real life** applications wherever possible to make learning relevant and not abstract; nothing should be taught without a purpose.

All of this means that you may see a change in the way we teach and assess your child, most notably will be in how we organise your child's learning and how we report their progress to you.

We will be doing more of this:

- Teaching all children in class, together, most of the time
- Verbal feedback during lessons, shorted comments in books and more ticking of correct concepts
- Spending longer on one idea
- Giving children who need it, additional support over shorter, more intense periods, like a day or week.
- Half termly assessments with a few formal tests over the year

And less of this:

- Formal marking with lots of written feedback and highlighting
- Covering lots of ideas in one week
- Formal, long term interventions to boost them out of class
- Separating children into ability groups

This approach is seen as good practice. It is promoted by the government and seen as the best way to deliver the new national curriculum.

The principles outlined in this document form the basis for a range of policy statements. Whilst such policy may be formed and modified by the demands of circumstances, the underlying beliefs and principles have their own integrity and remain unchanged.