

## **Curriculum Statement 2015-16 – KS1 & KS2**

With the publication of a revised National Curriculum 2014 came the opportunity to revisit and reinvigorate our learning provision for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. At Nansloe Academy, we have worked together as a whole staff team to review the way we organise learning across the school. A new yearly plan has been produced which sets out what elements of each subject will be taught in which year groups. This ensures continuity, progression, breadth and balance across the curriculum.

In the light of our own observations of how children learn and recent research into teaching and learning strategies, we have revised our practice and provision to reflect the 3 areas which have been shown to have the greatest impact on progress.

### **1 The promotion of a positive school ethos; a belief that we all can improve and achieve**

#### **The Nansloe Learning Powers**

**Be Ready! Take Responsibility! Be Resourceful! Be Resilient! Build Relationships! Always Reflect!**

The Nansloe Learning Powers permeate all classroom and wider school learning opportunities. These reflect our commitment to developing a positive school ethos, as research shows that this has a very positive impact on pupil progress. “If you think you can...you’re probably right.” Teachers strive to challenge and extend pupils in their thinking and learning, and to encourage learners to challenge themselves. Key to this is that we have high expectations of every child. This relates to all aspects of their development including not only their learning but also their behaviour, smartness and politeness.

### **2 The use of feedback**

Feedback is seen as a crucial to progress. If children understand what they have done well and what they could do to improve through oral or written feedback then they are immediately enabled to make the necessary changes which will demonstrate progress. By providing “improvement time” and making this an integral part of the classroom routine, children learn to evaluate their own performance with a critical eye so that they become increasingly independent and thus gain control of their own learning and progress.

### **3 Metacognition**

Put simply, metacognition means learning about what it is to be a learner, how we learn and what can make the job of learning easier. Through learning assemblies and classroom discussions, children are encouraged to get to know themselves as learners and to find out how they learn best. For example, they are given opportunities to work alone or in groups and then reflect on what works best for them. They are actively taught about the brain, how it works, and how they can help their brains to function better. This higher level “metacognitive” learning has been shown to make a significant difference to children’s wider learning and progress.

## **Making learning real and relevant**

Children are encouraged to reflect on the value of each learning opportunity, both now and in the future. Teachers aim to demonstrate how new learning links with previous learning or learning in other subjects so that children develop a sense of its relevance to their own lives. They are given opportunities to talk about their plans for the future and see how classroom learning today can help them achieve their longer term goals.

To ensure learning feels real and relevant, we have agreed 3 “Key Drivers” which represent areas where we feel the need to invest particular focus over the coming year. These also reflect our school ethos and identified development priorities. **For 2015-16, these key drivers are;**

### **Enhancing progress in writing**

We recognise the need to continue to refine and develop our repertoire of teaching strategies to ensure every child makes the maximum possible progress in writing. By adopting the National Curriculum 2014, we have introduced further challenge into the classrooms. Rigorous and consistent teaching of basic skills such as punctuation, grammar and spelling will ensure children have a thorough understanding of the mechanics of writing. By providing exciting, interesting and genuine contexts for writing such as through story telling strategies or by relating writing opportunities to class projects, areas of interest and class visits etc, we aim to enhance motivation to write and ensure learners are enabled to demonstrate their developing skills and make very good progress.

### **Talk to Learn!**

We recognise the need to promote and develop children’s oral skills. Language is seen as the key to intellectual development as we all use language to think through ideas, reason and wonder. The more we develop children’s spoken language, the more they are able to use advanced language “in their heads”, and they become more able to think through challenging ideas and topics. By supporting the development of a “learning vocabulary”, children are more able to engage in talking and thinking about the attributes of a good learner and the things they could do to help make learning easier for themselves.

Talk is also a necessary learning skill – if we are able to engage in complex talk and discussion, then we are able to access new ideas and learning from others. Children are given opportunities to “coach” other children. This is actively encouraged as it enables the child to clarify their own thinking as they reason things through and explain to a peer. Their peer benefits too, by having things explained in a different way perhaps. Research shows that we are likely to remember up to 90% of things we have taught someone else.

Talk is also a social tool, and classes are encouraged to agree talk rules such as “respect everyone’s view” in order to foster good learning relationships. The need to be a good listener is also key learning and rules such as “look at the speaker” are discussed to support children in developing their listening skills. A range of strategies are used to ensure talk pairs or groups are very varied. This helps children build confidence in their spoken language skills as they become comfortable working with any member of the class. Talk is also encouraged at other times of day, for example in the dining hall, where adults sit amongst the children to eat and talk with them, modelling appropriate interactions, manners and politeness which will help them to become more effective communicators.

The use of talk also supports the development of children’s ability to reflect. By encouraging children to critically analyse their own and peer work through talk, they are able to give and receive feedback which is crucial to progress. They develop a more in depth understanding of the criteria for success.

Good talk is also a prerequisite of good writing – so by developing children’s talking skills we will also impact on their writing skills.

### **Let’s see what’s out there!**

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We recognise the need to ensure our learners get the most out of their immediate environment. We are fortunate to live in a beautiful area, rich in history, and full of opportunities to learn about geography and science for example. We aim to ensure we take full advantage of “what’s out there” to widen children’s experience of and knowledge about their own area. Opportunities are taken to enrich learning through visits outside school, and by inviting visitors in for example. Children are also encouraged to make comparisons with other areas around the world, both national and international. Visits and trips also provide real contexts to support our work in developing writing.

### **Motivating themes and projects**

Teachers use the yearly plan to organise termly or half termly themes for their classes, choosing exciting topic titles to link areas of learning together eg “School Rocks”, a year 3 theme with an emphasis on learning about rocks in science as well as aspects of physical geography. The Nansloe Learning Powers and the key drivers permeate all learning opportunities. There is an emphasis on using the content (knowledge) elements of the curriculum to provide interesting contexts for the development of subject specific skills (eg the skills of enquiry in history), wider learning skills (Learning Powers) and crucially for discussion about the nature of learning. By engineering learning situations which demand that children operate at higher levels of learning and reasoning, we provide challenge and opportunities for intellectual growth. This diagram demonstrates that while interesting content is important in that it provides motivating contexts for learning, the development of subject specific skills, wider learning skills and metacognition ensure an appropriate degree of challenge and extension.

Higher order learning ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑	Children develop an understanding about what it is to be a learner, how we learn and what can make the job of learning easier (metacognition). They get to know themselves as learners.
	Children develop a set of transferable skills, attributes and attitudes which make them an effective learner (Nansloe Learning Powers)
	Children develop subject specific skills eg skills of enquiry in History or Science, editing skills in English
	Children learn content, knowledge and facts – there is breadth and balance, and learning feels real and relevant

### **Hooking onto learning**

Teachers aim to capture children’s interest in learning through the use of various engaging lesson openers or “hooks”. They might use an object, poem or picture to stimulate a reaction in the children, whether it be fascination, disgust or shock for example. Similarly, they might use an incredible fact about the topic to be studied, a question to promote critical thinking or a controversial statement to stimulate discussion.

<b>Examples of “hooks” used across the school</b>		
Year 6 – “Viva Italia” - Geography: Tourism Volcanoes and Earthquakes		Controversial statement “Italy? No thanks – I’d rather stay at home.” Piece of pumice stone; photo of petrified bodies in Pompei
Year 6 - Science Human nutrition	Design & Technology Cooking & Nutrition	Controversial statement – “Pizza is bad for you!”
Year 2 – <b>Who lives in a house like this?</b>		Higher order question – What if... houses were made of

Science – properties of materials	chocolate
Year 5 – <b>Changing Coastlines</b> Geography – Coasts Art – The work of Turner Science – solids, liquids and gases	Higher order question – “Is Cornwall shrinking?” Amazing fact – Turner tied himself to the mast of a ship in a storm just to experience what it was like. Shocking video – plastic pollution on the island of Midway
Year 4 – <b>Smashing Saxons &amp; Battered Brits</b> Geography – settlement	Would you rather...live at the top of a hill, or the bottom of a valley?

### **A focus on basic skills**

Fundamental learning of basic skills such as reading, writing and mathematics is at the core of our curriculum. Children are rigorously taught through daily literacy and numeracy lessons as well as supported guided reading, spelling and mental mathematics sessions. Where we identify that children need additional support, various interventions are used such as speech and language therapy, additional phonic teaching, focused guided writing sessions. Similarly where children demonstrate particular strengths, they are given extension and challenge activities day to day and special provision at appropriate times.