The Curriculum

Teaching and Learning at Deeping St Nicholas Primary School

Organisation of the classes

Children are organised into three classes at our school. These are:

Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 (EYFS and KS1)
Years two and three (KS1 and KS2)
Years four, five and six (KS2)

The classes are arranged in this way so that we can keep class sizes small and pupil numbers as evenly distributed as possible. As year groups are often different in size we have to review the teaching and learning arrangements annually.

Key Stages

Two of our classes teach across key stages. This would not happen in the majority of larger primary schools but it is common in small primary schools.
In practice this means that teachers have to plan carefully to ensure that all children are following the curriculum for their own age group and working at a level that challenges them, but the children would probably not appreciate that this was happening. The children just know that they are learning alongside their friends. Working in this way has the advantage that children are able to fit in with others in their class, whatever level they are at. More able children can work alongside older ones and those children who find learning more difficult can continue to develop the skills that they need.

Early Years Foundation Stage

This key stage is notably different from KS1 and KS2 as it is very practical and child centred. The children in EYFS/Year 1 are taught using good early years practice: first - hand practical experiences; self – initiated activities and guided group work to develop basic literacy and numeracy skills in a learning environment designed to develop independent learning skills.
Carefully chosen challenges guide the learning on two different levels. Older or more able children will be expected to complete the challenges at a higher level of difficulty.
The pattern of the day's learning has to have some flexibility so it may be that literacy and numeracy are taught at different times of the morning to the rest of the school.
Teachers and teaching assistants regularly observe the children to assess their learning outcomes. We use **Tapestry**, an ICT package, to record the children's development and this is available for parents to log into and see exactly what their child is learning. We also keep learning journeys for any evidence of learning that cannot be photographed.

Programmes of Study

These are the statutory areas of study that children should be taught in each subject. They are divided into attainment targets so that teachers can plan for the progression and development of each child's learning.

Phonics

Every child starts the day with phonics after the register. Children are taught in mixed aged ability groups across the school. Every teacher and teaching assistant guides a group so that everyone gets to know each other. The groups usually change at the end of each term but if it becomes clear that a child new to the school is not receiving the right amount of challenge they are moved more quickly.

English

There is an hour of English teaching every day where children develop the skills that they can then practise across the curriculum. To ensure balance and breadth, teachers are guided by the text genres that were used in the previous curriculum.
Reading skills are developed through group and guided reading activities in addition to individual reading that we encourage children to practice at home. The core reading scheme is Oxford Reading Tree but to ensure that there is breadth and understanding other schemes supplement this. By the end of KS2 more able readers are reading real books from the school library and teachers encourage the children to read across a variety of genres.
Writing skills are developed using Big Write, usually on Fridays, when children are encouraged to write independently for an extended period of time towards individual targets.
Speaking and listening is developed through opportunities to speak in pairs and in groups. Performances also encourage children to address a wider audience.

The National Curriculum states that:

> Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.

Maths

Teachers plan from the mathematics curriculum that is age appropriate to the children in their class. Where children are working at a different level then learning activities are planned which meet their needs.
Big Maths is used to develop basic numerical skills further and this encourages children to compute numbers quickly. Practical, problem solving activities are important, and children respond positively to learning challenges set outside the classroom.

The National Curriculum states that:

> Teachers should develop pupils' numeracy and mathematical reasoning in all subjects so that they understand and appreciate the importance of mathematics. Pupils should be taught to apply arithmetic fluently to problems, understand and use measures, make estimates and sense check their work. Pupils should apply their geometric and algebraic understanding, and relate their understanding of probability to the notions of risk and uncertainty. They should also understand the cycle of collecting, presenting and analysing data. They should be taught to apply their mathematics to both routine and non-routine problems, including breaking down more complex problems into a series of simpler steps.

Science

In EYFS and Year 1, science is an everyday part of the children's learning. There may be additional science focus in some study themes. From Year 2 upwards, science is taught as a discrete subject based on the areas for learning in the curriculum. Children are expected to work scientifically and study plants; animals including humans; everyday materials; seasonal changes; living things and their habitats; uses of everyday materials; rocks; light; forces and magnets; states of matter; sound; electricity; properties and changes of materials; Earth and Space and evolution and inheritance all at a level of understanding appropriate for their age.

The National Curriculum states that:

> A high-quality science education provides the foundations for understanding the world through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics. Science has changed our lives and is vital to the world's future prosperity, and all pupils should be taught essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science. Through building up a body of key foundational knowledge and concepts, pupils should be encouraged to recognise the power of rational explanation and develop a sense of excitement and curiosity about natural phenomena. They should be encouraged to understand how science can be used to explain what is occurring, predict how things will behave, and analyse causes.

Computing

It is our belief that computer technology should be used across the curriculum to facilitate and enhance learning. With the possible exception of Physical Education, computing can enable children to learn in all areas of the curriculum. The school has fizz books, iPads and laptops to ensure that all children have access to computer technology. We have recently purchased a published scheme of work to ensure that teachers understand and can deliver all areas of the new curriculum.

The National Curriculum states that:

> A high-quality computing education equips pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computing has deep links with mathematics, science, and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work, and how to put this knowledge to use through programming. Buildings on this knowledge and understanding, pupils are equipped to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of content. Computing also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

Religious Education

We use the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus to ensure that all children are taught about religion in a balanced and factual way. We are not a church school but believe that broadly Christian principles enhance our opportunities to promote the social, spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at our school. Members of local faith groups are invited into school to explain what it is like to live by a faith but children are encouraged to develop a respect for and understanding of major world religions.

Study Themes

At Deeping St Nicolas Primary School, foundations subjects are taught in study themes that cover the elements of the national curriculum over time. This enables the curriculum to be designed to meet the needs and interests of pupils, making good use of local facilities, opportunities and places to visit. Over the course of one year, children will study six different themes which focus on each of the humanities, the arts, science and design and technology. Annual programmes build over a four year period to ensure that children have a broad and balanced curriculum which develops the skills that they need to be successful learners.

Art and Design

Art and design may be studied as a part of a study theme – for example "Sculptures" in Term 2 2014 – 2015. It is also used as a tool to enhance learning in all areas of the curriculum.

The National Curriculum states that:

Art, craft and design embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality art and design education should engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As pupils progress, they should be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design. They should also know how art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.

Design and Technology

Children are given opportunities to design, make, evaluate and develop technical knowledge as part of study themes or to enhance learning in a core subject.

The National Curriculum states that:

Design and technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. Using creativity and imagination, pupils design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. They acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art. Pupils learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens. Through the evaluation of past and present design and technology, they develop a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world. High-quality design and technology education makes an essential contribution to the creativity, culture, wealth and well-being of the nation.

Geography

Geography may be studied as a part of a study theme – for example "Home and Away/Location, Location, Location" in Term 1 2014 – 2015. It is also used as a tool to enhance learning in all areas of the curriculum, particularly history and science.

The National Curriculum states that:

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

History

History may be studied as a part of a study theme – for example "Significant People in History" in Term 3 2014 – 2015. It is also used as a tool to enhance learning in all areas of the curriculum.

The National Curriculum states that:

A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

Languages

The language that the children are learning is French. Children start in Year 2 because of the organisation of the classes. There is equal emphasis on the spoken and written word so that children learn about rules of grammar alongside punctuation. A published scheme of work has been purchased to support this area of the curriculum.

The National Curriculum states that:

> Learning a foreign language is liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils' curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. The teaching should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing. It should also provide opportunities for them to communicate for practical purposes learn new ways of thinking and read great literature in the original language. Language teaching should provide the foundation for learning further languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries.

Music

Lincolnshire Music Service delivers some specialist lesson to school; this year the older children are all learning the Ukulele. Music is taught by a member of staff to all classes on a weekly basis. Every Christmas the children demonstrate their musical skills in a performance to parents. All assemblies are opportunities to listen to an appraise music from a broad classical spectrum.

The National Curriculum states that:

> Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. A high-quality music education should engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. As pupils progress, they should develop a critical engagement with music, allowing them to compose, and to listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon.

Physical Education

Sports funding is used to provide a coach to deliver gymnastics and games teaching to all children on a weekly basis. Gymnastics is also offered as an after school club. As a small school we are very aware of the need to be able to take part in larger sports events and we work in partnership with 5 other primary schools and our local secondary school to ensure that children have opportunities to compete against other people as well as beating their personal bests.

The National Curriculum states that:

> A high-quality physical education curriculum inspires all pupils to succeed and excel in competitive sport and other physically-demanding activities. It should provide opportunities for pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness. Opportunities to compete in sport and other activities build character and help to embed values such as fairness and respect.

Homework

Children are encouraged to read at home and learn spellings that are appropriate for their age and ability each week.
Learning times tables may also be set as homework.
Learning Logs are used to set weekly challenges which are based on learning experiences in school.
In terms 1, 3 and 5 children are invited to take part in an Extended Home Study when they can produce something for the exhibition which cannot be stuck into the

Learning Log. This encourages creativity – we have seen life size models of the Tardis and giant scotch eggs to name but two exhibits!

Subjects to be taught in the National Curriculum

	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Age	5 – 7	7 – 11
Year groups	1 – 2	3 – 6
Core subjects		
English	✓	✓
Mathematics	✓	✓
Science	✓	✓
Foundation subjects		
Art and design	✓	✓
Computing	✓	✓
Design and technology	✓	✓
Languages		✓
Geography	✓	✓
History	✓	✓
Music	✓	✓
Physical education	✓	✓

Further, more detailed information about the national curriculum can be downloaded from:

www.gov.uk/dfe/nationalcurriculum.