



Paradykes Primary School & Family Learning Centre ~ a school where everyone matters

Curriculum Rationale - 2018

Introduction

Our school vision and values are regularly reviewed by our learners, staff and parents/carers. We use these as the basis for developing a clear rationale for the curriculum, taking into account the learners' entitlements.

We support children's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development by ensuring the school undertakes its statutory duty to assure the quality of service provided and to look for continuous ways of effecting improvement. We also recognise key strengths in practice, identify priorities for the improvement plan and help gather evidence to report on standards and quality in the school. We also take into consideration the significant new influences and challenges facing young people today as social, political and economic change, the growing diversity of our society, our better understanding of the ways in which children and young people learn, the use of new technologies and the potential of partnerships in the local, national and global community.

Policy Rationale

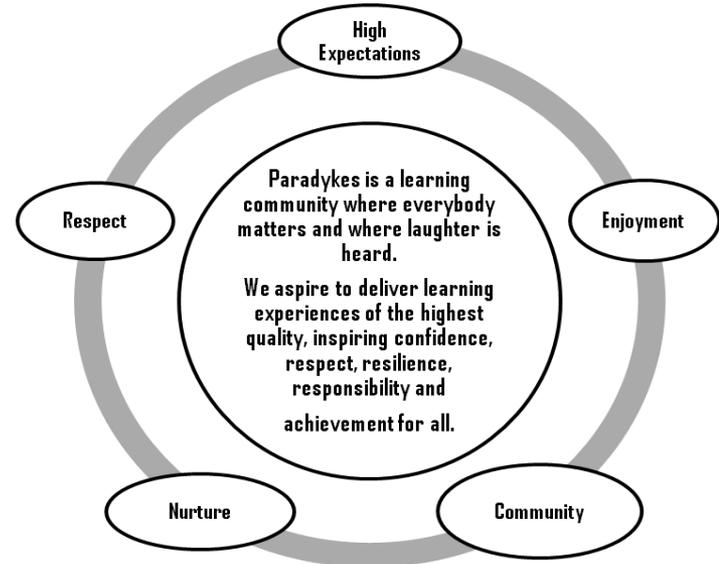
At Paradykes Primary School we aim to provide a broad education that meets the needs of all of our learners. We are working towards achieving our Nurturing School's Award and we expect that all learning is underpinned by the nurturing principles - children's learning is understood developmentally; the classroom offers a safe base; the importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing; language is a vital means of communication; all behaviour is communication; the importance of transition in children's lives. All children will be supported and challenged, enabling them to develop skills to use across the curriculum at all levels for learning, life and work. They will develop the four capacities - to become confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens. By doing so, we aim to prepare our learners to take their place as adults in society.

The seven key principles of curriculum design should be embedded in teaching approaches and learning experiences :

- challenge and enjoyment
- breadth
- progression
- depth
- personalisation and choice
- coherence
- relevance

Curriculum Rationale

"The curriculum reflects what we value as a nation and what we seek for our young people. It is designed to convey knowledge which is considered to be important and to promote the development of values, understanding and capabilities. It is concerned both with what is to be learned and how it is taught. It should enable all of the young people of Scotland to flourish as individuals, reach high levels of achievement and make valuable contributions to society. The curriculum affects us all" [A CfE Curriculum Review Group]



Curriculum Entitlements

- ✓ a curriculum that is coherent from 3 to 18
- ✓ a broad general education (from early years to S3)
- ✓ a senior phase (S4-S6) where he or she can obtain qualifications
- ✓ opportunities to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, focusing on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing
- ✓ personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities that Curriculum for Excellence can provide
- ✓ support in moving into positive and sustained destinations beyond school

This means that every pupil in Paradykes Primary School is entitled to a curriculum which is :

- Challenging, building on knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure progression.
- Coherent from Nursery through to the end of their primary education, with smooth transition onto high school.
- Developed on sound learning and teaching practices, informed by research, and including well planned learning experiences which are active and engaging.
- Based upon developing skills and competences for learning, life and work and an ability to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing.
- Real and relevant now and in the future.

In Paradykes Primary School there is a collegiate approach to developing the experiences and outcomes in curriculum areas, which develops staff knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. This ensures that we provide the highest quality for learning and teaching for our pupils.

Organising Learning

Key Features of our Curriculum

Staff plan to develop the whole child through the ethos and life of the school, curriculum areas and subjects, interdisciplinary learning and opportunities for personal achievement.

All curriculum areas are planned using the experiences and outcomes. The curriculum has been organised into 8 areas :

- Languages
- Mathematics
- Health and Wellbeing
- Social Studies
- Sciences
- Technologies
- Expressive Arts
- Religious and Moral Education

Interdisciplinary Learning

- Allows children to make connections between different areas of learning within meaningful contexts.
- Allows children to meet and revisit concepts and skills from new perspectives, bringing different strands of learning together in order to deepen understanding.

- Ensures that all children have access to an active, enterprising learning environment.
- Increases children's ownership and control of their learning, offering greater opportunities for personalisation and choice.

Our ethos underpins the delivery of the curriculum.

Supporting all pupils to become literate and numerate is a key priority for our school. This has implications for the organisation of our learning as follows :

- The importance of developing literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing will be reflected in the balance of teaching and learning time across each week.
- Opportunities to embed literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing within other curricular areas is a priority.
- At all stages, this learning is linked to skills for life and work, including career management skills (self/strengths/horizons/networks).

Planning

Staff plan (with stage partners if appropriate) a yearly overview which is broad and flexible. Individual pieces of interdisciplinary learning are planned for with a focus on outcomes - what will learners be able to do, know, understand and be. 3 medium planning blocks provide opportunities to plan using the experiences and outcomes across curriculum areas and then on a weekly basis, focusing on specific learning intentions and success criteria. Informal evaluations and weekly plenary sessions allow learners to influence the process.

Assessment and Moderation

Paradykes Primary School follows local and national guidance on assessment and moderation. Assessment is For Learning principles and supporting strategies are becoming embedded across the curriculum and are used in assessing the effectiveness of learning and teaching in our school. Collaboration with colleagues across all stages in the school allows for moderation of standards and expectations. Attainment data is used to audit the pace and challenge we provide for our learners, ensuring that we appropriately support and challenge every child to ensure that they reach their full potential.

Learner achievement and attainment progress is tracked through the levels.

As part of our school self evaluation process, learning and teaching is monitored. This data and evidence is used to ensure that Paradykes Primary continues to improve and provide high quality learning experiences.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider School Community

We work closely with parents/carers and our community. We look for opportunities to involve them in the life and work of our school, to share achievements and to build links which enhance our school.

Links with businesses and employers, community groups, other council departments, and, voluntary organisations can help to contextualise and make learning relevant for our children. It can provide invaluable opportunities to help raise attainment and achievement, and contribute to the development of skills for learning, life and work. In particular at Paradykes, we already have strong links with Loanhead Parish Church, The Link, Loanhead Library, Play Therapy Base, Loanhead Leisure Centre, Loanhead After School and Breakfast Club, and Loanhead Gala Day,

So What Makes Paradykes Primary Schools Curriculum Different ?

The following Curriculum Diagram gives some specific examples of how we organise and plan learning across our school :

Languages and Literacy

Story sacks in the nursery; All classes regularly visiting Loanhead Library; Paired reading in the early years with reading buddies from P6 & 7; multi-sensory phonics programme; Weekly discrete comprehension, grammar & punctuation lessons.; use of Story Kitchen resource across the school in extended writing; Regular focussed proof reading activities; active spelling programme; 1 + 2 Modern Languages - L2 will be French; whole school book month

Mathematics and Numeracy

SEAL approach in the early years; use of City of Aberdeen maths planners to support Midlothian Understanding Mathematics Programme (MUMP); Basic Facts; fluid maths groups linked to the The Learner's Journey; regular problem solving tasks; Plus One & Plus Two to support specific learners; 1, 2 & 3 star maths tasks;

Health and Wellbeing

Class Charters; Fun31; Mindfulness Programme; P7 Residential Experience to Benmore; outdoor learning opportunities ; School House System; P6 & 7 leadership responsibilities; Circle Meetings across the school; Play Therapy support for individuals and drop-in service; Attachment Aware School; Sure Start parent/carer groups; PE specialist teacher, Nurturing Schools Programme;

Expressive Arts

Movement Specialist Teacher; whole school art days; nursery and P1&2 Nativity Shows; Drumming Workshops; class showcases of learning

Religious and Moral Education

Agreed focus on Christianity, Islam & Hinduism; links with Loanhead Parish Church

Technologies

I-pads and Chrome Books introduced across the school; interactive whiteboards; capturing learning on film; use of green screen for moving image.

Sciences & Social Studies

Science Festival workshops; links with Community Garden; agreed Experiences and Outcomes to be "visited" across each year group; historical links to mining; Loanhead Gala; World of Work Week; links with schools overseas; charity events; Christmas Fair; Summer Fun Day; wide range of out of school excursions

