



Edgewood Primary School

Building skills and values for life

Curriculum Statement

We believe children learn best when:

- Behaviour for learning is at least good.
- They're working in mixed ability groups.
- They have an element of choice in the difficulty of work they complete.
- Staff ensure children are challenging themselves in the work they choose so they make the greatest progress.
- Differentiation will be used when needed, not as a default setting, and will contribute with child choice to ensure it works for all children.
- There is a clear focus on retention of key information to prepare all learners for the next step in their education.
- Themes revisit, repeat and build upon prior knowledge in a strategically mapped curriculum pathway.
- Low stakes 'Pop' quizzes are used flexibly to assess acquired knowledge and help revisit learning.
- Learning is put in context, especially where and when.
- Contextual vocabulary is taught and also woven into all topics and subjects to help build the breadth and depth of vocabulary our children are comfortable using.
- While children are taught key content in line with the National Curriculum, they also have the opportunity to investigate aspects that interest them within topics where appropriate.

Research tells us that the following is important within a curriculum:

- Cognitive load theory
- Over-learning
- Contextualisation
- Semantic versus episodic learning - Not relying on WOW moments which the children remember over the learning.
- Child-led (or to a degree controlled) learning leads to higher investment.

Our curriculum focuses around:

- Mastery approach to maths using White Rose and Maths No Problem resources as appropriate.
- Rainbow Grammar throughout the school as the key way we teach the technical aspects of writing and grammar.
- Strong Maths provision with developing STEM provision
- Topic based approach to planning

Our assessment and tracking uses:

- Sharing Standards assessment of writing for Year 1-6 annually.
- Termly tests to establish test performance.
- Insight to collect key objective performance and report progress to parents. Encourage use of it to assess success of planning / teaching.

To make most effective use of staff time:

- Teams plan together and share planning workload across the team.
- Team meetings alternate with staff meetings to provide teams with time to meet and assess children and inform future planning.
- Marking uses minimal writing from staff to gain greatest results from least time used.
- Assessment is used minimally for the greatest possible impact.

What some of these principles look like in lessons

Cognitive load theory

Staff training on Cognitive Load Theory has taken place so that staff understand how it impacts on learning within the classroom.

All teams plan blocks of learning with opportunities to recap and use the retrieval of information into the working memory to help build links between learning and increase the ability of children to make links, using information previously taught within new blocks of learning. This reduces the overloading of children's working memory when teaching new information.

Staff ensure blocks of learning minimise overloading the working memory.

Every class has at least a working wall for maths and English to help with recapping and using previous learning within future lessons.

Over-learning

Our curriculum, especially in English and Maths, is a mixed age curriculum centred on building towards the content of the higher year group for the majority of each block of learning, progressing rapidly from content of the lower year group at the start. The lower year group is exposed to all this content in the first year at a simpler level and then revisits it at a more difficult level in the second year. This rapidly builds progress and ensures good progress in the lower year groups and accelerated progress in the higher year group. Chilli Challenges are a key part of making this approach effective (see below).

Contextualisation

In line with Cognitive Load Theory, children should be helped to make links between different areas of study, either over time or within and between different topics.

This is greatly enhanced by contextualising as much information as possible in lessons.

This could be through vocabulary, which is linked to words they use or experiences familiar with them wherever possible and getting them to use (and return) to these words regularly over time rather than exposing them once and then moving on.

Or this could be through the concepts of where and when events occurred. To help this, each class has a map and a timeline as a display in their classroom. These are dynamic displays that are referenced whenever possible and also link with the topics taught in other year groups so children can build links between past and future learning within the references of where and when.

Semantic versus episodic learning

We believe that well-taught lessons with great behaviour for learning and contextualised information are the most effective way of building engagement with learning and helping children make the most of their time in school.

'Wow' lessons are a risky proposition. They can lead to greater excitement and investment in learning for some children but they also run the risk that children remember the event and not the learning.

To this end we build a clear pattern of blocks of learning that use trips, external providers within school and lessons designed to build engagement sparingly with the main focus on lessons that provide solid learning opportunities that reference the previous engaging sessions and build on that knowledge.

Child-led (or to a degree controlled) learning leads to higher investment

While letting children select all elements of their learning is not an effective use of time outside of EYFS, we do feel that children taking some control over their learning is vital to build positive learning attitudes within our children.

To this end, Chilli Challenges are used wherever appropriate (not in every lesson) across school. The basic concept is that different levels of challenge are provided to the children and they then choose which one will best suit them for that lesson. The teacher's role moves from dictating how difficult the work is that each child does (which can often lead to inadvertent mismatches) to guiding children's choices.

Other options can include a set of criteria that the child might want to use in writing and they then select which to use when or having different apparatus so children can access the same piece of work with or without concrete or pictorial devices to support their learning, amongst many others.

Feedback

Please see the feedback policy for further information.

We think that the best learning uses regular feedback from the pupils to the teacher so they can adapt the lesson and also uses as much verbal or written feedback within (or straight after) lessons to allow children to adapt their learning and improve their work.

Written marking away from the point of teaching has little use and anything more than an acknowledgement by the staff is often a waste of their time and has little to no impact upon the child's learning.

Teams should ensure they use pre and post teach sessions on a regular basis to ensure any child found in the lesson not to make the expected progress is catching that up and staying with their peers. Pre teach should be used when the teacher knows a group or individual needs some priming before the lesson to ensure they can access the content to be taught and stay with their peers. Post teach should be used when a teacher has seen something in the lesson, perhaps at the end in a plenary or summary, and needs to correct it.

Pop quizzes are a key device, especially in lessons other than maths and English, to establish the levels of understanding of content taught or to be taught. They should be short but capturing key information children should know. Teams can either plan them into their planning for each subject or can make them up. The results do not need to be recorded.