



Vane Road Primary School is part of the newly formed Archway Federation along with Woodham Burn Primary School. The Federation prides itself on ensuring the child is at the heart of everything we do. We strive for Excellence for all and our foundations are rooted in the following key principles;

- Excellence in Safeguarding
- Excellence in Education
- Excellence in Leadership
- Excellent Citizens
- Excellence in the Community

These key principles help shape our curriculum and are the building blocks on which we pride ourselves to create; Excellence for all.

At Vane Road Primary School, we understand that the importance of getting our curriculum right for our children; a curriculum matched to the needs and interests of our pupils allowing them to flourish – both academically and socially. In order to achieve this, we provide a curriculum that is both broad and balanced. We aim to identify and remove barriers to learning and provide suitable learning challenges that respond to diverse needs, including those of the most- able.

Our curriculum has been deliberately designed to meet the needs of our children and is centred around our five key values.

- **Respect;** we build all our relationships around this.
- **Ambition;** we can aspire to be whatever and whoever we wish.
- **Kindness;** we are kind to all.
- **Resilience;** we have the ability to bounce back from challenges we face.
- **Inclusivity;** we accept we are all different but treat each other equally.

Our five key values are intrinsically woven throughout our curriculum and encourage children to be inquisitive and independent learners. For example, Were the Vikings respectful when they invaded? Was Florence Nightingale kind?

Our aim is to ensure children leave Vane Road Primary as “respectful citizens” Our curriculum encompasses a variety of exciting, first-hand experiences to enable children to acquire appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding preparing them for today's world – respecting the nature of individual subjects. Through the provision of a stimulating environment and our school grounds, links within the community and beyond, children will develop their full potential. We are determined to reach our aim that any child should reach their goals and excel in any area of the curriculum - and not just in English and mathematics. As such, children's Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) development, and their Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education (PSCHE) is at the heart of our curriculum approach. We use the Restorative Approach to deal with any issues or disagreements between pupils and ensure fairness for all.

Our curriculum is aspirational; we aim to promote children's self- belief and a 'can do' attitude. We believe our children can aspire to be anything and we encourage this by

providing links to the 'real world' whenever we can, including occupations and locations which children may not relate to on a daily basis. Through our rich and diverse curriculum, we aim to broaden children's horizons beyond life in around Newton Aycliffe and provide children with opportunities to learn about the wider world. We understand that Newton Aycliffe is a typically white, British community and therefore we carefully plan for our children to study a range of ethnicities and cultures and celebrate diversity. In addition to this, we deliberately use our five key principles, which are threaded through our curriculum, to deepen the sense of belonging and community. From the day children begin their journey in our school we believe that the sense of belonging is a concept related to quality of life, encompassing a feeling that individuals matter to one another and to a group. Vane Road is a family within itself. We hope this sense of belonging will ensure that our children become fully inclusive and welcome all that join our school and their wider community. It is essential that they understand that being different is welcomed and believing in different things is embraced.

Our curriculum promotes kindness; The choices that we make, from our religious views, to the friends that we make, places us as part of the groups, networks and communities that make up human society. To that end, we want our children to be tolerant, kind and be people who defend/support the vulnerable throughout their lifetime. We feel this is especially important to teach these values so our children feel confident as they develop into adulthood. We aspire for our children to be productive, successful and happy adults in tomorrow's society. We embrace the notion that what they are taught and experience today, directly sets the standard for tomorrow.

Our curriculum promotes resilience; From day 1, children are encouraged to keep trying with appropriately faced challenges – whether these be academic, personal or social challenges. The notion of perseverance is valued highly. We promote a “can do” attitude in all aspects of school life and embed the ethos that mistakes are part of learning.

Our curriculum promotes inclusivity; At Vane Road Primary we believe “what makes us all the same is that we're all different” This belief is at the heart of our curriculum. We are committed to equality. Our school is committed to anti discriminatory practice to promote quality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families. We aim to:

- Provide a safe and accessible environment in which all children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued
- Include and value the contributions of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity.
- Provide positive non stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people.
- Improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of non -discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity.
- Make inclusion a thread that runs through the whole of our curriculum.

Our curriculum is designed to promote curiosity in our learners. We value the study of each subject separately - being conscious of the very 'essence' of each subject. We want children to experience both substantive and disciplinary knowledge and to be confident historians, geographers, artists and musicians.

The teaching of British Values is integral to our school's mission of ensuring our children are 'good people' and leave our school ready for life in Modern Britain. The 5 key '[British Values](#)' are:

- **Individual Liberty**
- **Respect for the Rule of Law**

- **Respect**
- **Democracy**
- **Tolerance of others, regardless of beliefs, faiths or lack of faith**

The teaching and promotion of British Values however, goes deeper than individual 'lessons' - it embodies our school attitudes, ethos and the way in which we work and interact with children and families. We are also a Rights Respecting School Level One.

Please visit each subject area to gain more information on a given subject area.

Curriculum Planning Overview

Our school curriculum is based on a simple premise: when a curriculum is carefully and sequentially planned and of good quality, it is the progression model which is set for our children. We understand that when children make progress, they simply know more and remember more – the impact of good quality teaching, tied to a high quality curriculum.

This 'sequence of learning' for each subject begins as soon as children join our school – and whilst 'national curriculum subjects' formally start in Year 1, it is vital that we make links into our Early Years curriculum, in order to prepare children effectively for Key Stage 1.

Our curriculum plans set out what we believe as a school our children need in order to develop the cultural capital that they need to develop in order to be successful in life beyond primary school. For all children, but particularly the most disadvantaged, it is vital that children leave Vane Road Primary School with the knowledge and experiences they need in order to continue to succeed. Knowledge develops confidence, confidence embodies success.

We believe that the purpose of education is embedded in the four pillars of learning. It is vital that our curriculum builds character, prepares pupils for the world of work, furthers their social justice and that we teach subjects for their intrinsic value. These four pillars are woven throughout our curriculum.

Our view on 'Knowledge'

Information can be rote learned, knowledge is interconnected and applied.

At Vane Road Primary School, we understand the way knowledge is stored as a complex, interconnected web or 'schema'. Every time a pupil encounters a word they have previously learned, but applied in a new context, it adds to the complexity of their understanding of that concept. In other words, they develop a deeper understanding of that concept and enhance their capacity to use that concept in their own thinking. Where pupils lack prior knowledge, they may find it difficult to learn new knowledge or skills, because their short-term, working memory is likely to become temporarily overloaded. If they are able to draw on their long-term memory and attend to a small number of new features in what they are learning, they are much more likely to learn and make progress. Research shows that we learn by relating new knowledge to what we already know. Therefore, the more pupils know, the more they have the capacity to learn. Our sequential curriculum is designed to develop children's schemas – through progressive content and interconnecting themes across subjects.

Vocabulary

The correlation between vocabulary size and life chances is as firm as any correlation in educational research. Vocabulary is important, because it embodies and communicates concepts. Simply put, the more words you know – and can use – the cleverer that you are. Our carefully planned curriculum considers the vocabulary which we explicitly teach and use. We understand that ensuring that children have the confidence and opportunity to repeatedly use vocabulary (we expect all children to practice and have the opportunity to use new vocabulary in lessons – built in to the lesson activities). Our curriculum plans detail both subject specific vocabulary – and importantly, transferrable vocabulary. These words can be used out of the taught context in a range of situations, broadening vocabulary understanding and when children are expected to use them, confident articulators.

Our Approach to retaining Key Knowledge

If nothing is altered in the long term memory, nothing is learned.

Children cannot remember all that is taught to them, in every lesson in every subject. However, it is vital that curriculum documentation makes clear exactly which information must be remembered in order to build a firm foundation for future learning, and which aspects of the curriculum are absolutely necessary in order to build an effective 'hinterland' on which to hang and place the 'key learning' in to context. In essence, we teach the hinterland in order to create a basket to contain the new key learning.

Curriculum plans detail what is to be remembered. Our approach to ensuring that this learning is retained is based on a spaced retrieval model.

SMART time is also used consistently throughout school to aid children's long term memory of key areas of knowledge.

School Memory Active Recall Time

In Early Years, when children learn through a topic, or experience, a physical item from the topic or experience is placed in to the 'memory box'. This bag is routinely brought out and the class discuss the items; what they learned, what they remember – and how that learning may link to what children are learning currently. An example would be that when children learn about Diwali, a diya lamp may be placed in the bag. When children move on to learn about Chinese New Year, the Diwali knowledge is revisited through the use of the lamp, and connections made to the new learning in relation to the themes of celebration, culture and light.

From Year 1 onwards, we have introduced to each class a 'Memory box'. After each unit of work is completed, the key learning is placed onto a large 'suitcase of knowledge' for the class – which is a progressively built up into an aide-memoir of all key learning from the year. At the end of each unit of work photographs are taken of each item and put into a memory book which is then passed on at the end of the year to the next class teacher.

These keys are used frequently to 'quiz' children in low stakes approaches in order to keep key knowledge alive in children's brains. In essence, 'keeping the kettle boiling'. Opportunities include when children are lining up, on entry tasks, team quizzes etc – class teachers determine how and when these are used. When new topics are introduced however, it is expected that the prior learning that the new content is building on will be revisited and revised at the beginning of the unit of work to ensure a firm foundation and progressive journey through the curriculum. Teachers are expected to draw links from prior and future learning throughout their teaching in order to strengthen children's schemas in relation to identified key concepts over time.

Curriculum Assessment

Successful assessment procedures and approaches as part of a high quality curriculum are at the heart of high quality teaching and learning at Vane Road Primary School. As such, curriculum and assessment are inextricably linked. Our school aims to ensure that all children achieve as well as they possibly can; accurate and appropriate assessment ensures that learning issues, barriers and successes are quickly identified so that teaching is precise and children progress.