



Our Curriculum

A Guide to learning at our Academy



THE CURRICULUM AT PORTER CROFT

PRINCIPLES

Porter Croft Church of England Academy is committed to creating a high quality, safe, encouraging but challenging learning environment with a caring ethos which values everyone. Our creative curriculum is bespoke to our pupils needs and social, moral, spiritual and cultural learning is embedded throughout it. We aim to provide memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high-quality learning and wider personal development by focusing on skills for learning. The curriculum has been developed to ensure that our pupils benefit from a highly coherent and relevant curriculum which promotes excellent outcomes and is underpinned by Christian values.

ORGANISATION

For most of their time in the Academy children work with their own class teacher. Their work will be based on policies and programmes which have been agreed by the whole staff, which take into account both national and LA guidelines. Teachers plan the details in small teams and these will change according to the needs of the children concerned. All our current policies and schemes of work are available for viewing by parents. Please ask at the Main Office.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

Children in the reception class follow the EYFS statutory framework which comprises of 7 areas of learning:

- **Communication and language development** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **Literacy development** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Children work towards Early Learning Goals in the areas by building up a 'profile' through observations of them in their activities. Much of the learning takes place in the wider space of the outdoor environment. The Early Years provision is taken through to Year 1 according to the needs of the child.

THE CURRICULUM IN YEARS 1 TO 6

Education both influences and reflects the values of our society, and the kind of society we want to be. It is therefore important to recognise a set of common aims, values and purposes that underpin the curriculum and the work we do.

There new National Curriculum is being introduced over the next two years. As an Academy, we are not required to follow the National Curriculum and so have reviewed the content of what we teach in order to ensure our curriculum meets the needs of all of our learners. Our Curriculum is based upon the 2010 Primary National Curriculum (which can be accessed at <https://orderline.education.gov.uk/gempdf/184962383X.PDF>, last accessed 8th January 2013) but retains elements of the new National Curriculum (English and Mathematics programmes of study can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum#programmes-of-study-by-subject>, last accessed 8th January 2013).

AIMS

Our Curriculum has three broad aims. It should enable all young people to become:

- **Successful learners** who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- **Confident individuals** who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- **Responsible citizens** who make a positive contribution to society.

These aims should inform all aspects of teaching and learning.

VALUES

The curriculum should reflect values in our society that promote personal and spiritual development, equality of opportunity, economic wellbeing, a healthy and just democracy, and a sustainable future.



These values should relate to:

- **Ourselfs**, as individuals capable of spiritual, moral, social, intellectual and physical growth and development
- **Our relationships**, as fundamental to the development and fulfilment of happy and healthy lives, and to the good of the community
- **Our society**, which is shaped by the contributions of a diverse range of people, cultures and heritages
- **Our environment**, as the basis of life and a source of wonder and inspiration that needs to be protected.

Our key values are summarised by our mission statement 'Together we are Porter Croft'. It is very important to us that all members of our community feel valued and part of a larger whole – our diverse community is one where multiple faiths are expressed and we view all children as children of God. Our Academy Trust is named 'Koinonia' in recognition of this and so we talk about this sense of 'togetherness' or fellowship often. Key also are compassion, tolerance and respect for others and children will speak of 'respecting oneself, respecting others and respecting our environment' when expressing this. Our School Prayer, written by the children last year, expresses thankfulness and humility, which are also key in our teaching.

The specific values that are linked throughout the Curriculum are:

- **Koinonia** (fellowship)
- **Compassion**
- **Respect**
- **Tolerance**
- **Thankfulness**
- **Humility**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Justice**

SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

The subjects and areas of learning that make up our Curriculum are:

- **Understanding the Arts** (Art and Design and Music)
- **Understanding English, Communication and Languages** (English, Modern Foreign Languages [taught as French in Key Stage 2])
- **Historical, Geographical and Social Understanding** (History and Geography)
- **Mathematical Understanding** (Mathematics)
- **Understanding Physical Development, Health and Wellbeing** (Physical Education and Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship)
- **Scientific and Technological Understanding** (Science, Design and Technology and Computing)

- **Religious Education**

Our learning is linked wherever possible in order to teach our children the essential understanding, knowledge and skills for learning and life. At the heart of our approach is a focus on communication skills. As an accredited ESCAL Communication Friendly School, we aim that all children at Porter Croft learn to be articulate and literate in order to help them:

- **Enjoy life**
- **Think**
- **Communicate**
- **Participate**
- **Aspire and achieve**

The creative curriculum is planned around units which are designed to begin and end with a 'WOW'. They provide opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills in a range of challenging circumstances. The links between subjects are strong and explicit. Each year group has its own bespoke units of work but we also have whole school events: Safety week, Eco week and Theme weeks at the end of every term. We make links between subjects where appropriate, but in order to ensure complete coverage, the following subjects are taught as dedicated, discrete sessions:

- **Numeracy** – Maths skills are key to developing everyday skills although links can be made to the curriculum through data handling, position and measurement, especially in Science, Design and Technology and Geography.
- **Aspects of Literacy** – Phonics, Guided Reading and Handwriting are taught as discrete subjects as they build up basic skills.
- **Religious Education** – in accordance with the Blackburn and Sheffield Agreed Syllabuses although links with topics are made where appropriate.
- **Aspects of PE and Swimming** – delivered by teaching staff and additional specialised staff
- **Modern Foreign Languages** – French– team taught with a specialist French teacher
- **Aspects of Music** – instrumental lessons are taught by a specialist teacher throughout Key Stage 2

The use of Information and Communication Technology is encouraged in all topic areas as a subject in its own right and in both the teaching of the topic and in the opportunities for children's independent learning.

More information about the specific topic areas is available in our 'Curriculum Map' summary document, which can be accessed on our website at http://www.portercroft.sheffield.sch.uk/downloads/curriculum_map.pdf.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLE

Teaching staff are encouraged to broaden the experience of the topics for the children through trips, visitors into school and shared experiences of the wider school community, e.g. involvement with parents and school links etc.

Children's achievements are celebrated regularly through the school in newsletters, displays in classrooms and shared areas and in assemblies where children are encouraged to share their knowledge with the rest of the school.

We use a variety of teaching styles:

- Open ended probing questions, visual stimuli and talk partners
- We recognise that children have preferred learning styles, and so make allowances for this in our planning and delivery.

We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability and learning style of the children. We achieve this in a variety of ways by:

- Setting common, open ended tasks to elicit a variety and depth of response
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty, scaffolding where appropriate
- Grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group
- Providing practical opportunities for kinaesthetic learners
- Using visual stimuli and artefacts to promote interest
- Using Teaching Assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children
- Using trips and visitors to further understanding



CREATIVE CURRICULUM PLANNING

Current and prior National Curriculum objectives are incorporated into planning.

- Long term themes for the year; these are what themes will be taught and when. The long term plans for each theme hold the relevant objectives for the theme.
- Using the brainstorm of activities, we then consider what the best learning sequence would be. We record our medium term plan which includes:
 - How the theme will be introduced (a 'wow' factor, that could be a visit, visitor or a trip).
 - Opportunities for trips and visits from external agencies
 - What the learning outcome will be – this could be an artefact, presentation, or experience for example

- A final assessment of children's learning.

Weekly plans are written by class teachers and regularly monitored by subject leaders.



ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING

Each term children are assessed according to the Key Skills and children who are below, at and above expectations are noted.

Ongoing assessment includes:

- Children's books – including children's comments
- Questioning and discussion
- Children's work – posters, oral presentations, performances, photographs, videos
- Self-assessment
- Peer assessment
- Formative assessment of children's understanding – such as a mind map

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We aim to give all children, irrespective of age, gender or ethnic origin equal opportunity to make maximum progress. It is expected that all children will be given the opportunity to learn in a creative and encouraging learning environment which encompasses a range of learning and teaching styles. It is hoped that this approach will motivate and support children's learning at all levels including the Able and Talented, EAL and children identified with a Special Educational Need (SEN).

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We aim to involve parents fully in their child's learning. We share information about the curriculum through use of termly letters to parents, the Home -School diary, newsletters, information evenings, reports and parent's evenings. The work produced by the children is shared and celebrated through displays, photos and Friday good work assembly. Homework set reflects the thematic approach and enable parents to support their child's learning at home.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Headteacher, Subject Leaders/Class Teachers and Governing Body have overall responsibility for the curriculum.

The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Subject Leaders are responsible for overseeing the delivery of the curriculum through:

- Regular formal and informal discussions with staff.
- Monitoring planning to ensure curriculum and key skills coverage.
- Carrying out book scrutiny alongside planning and to ensure cross-curricular links are optimised.
- Observing learning and teaching to ensure progress is being made within the topics.
- Regular reviews of the curriculum through pupil discussion and open dialogue.
- Making changes where necessary.
- Formulating an action plan to move the school forward.
- Speaking with the children about their learning.
- Sending out curriculum information to parents regularly

All teaching staff are responsible for the planning and delivery of the curriculum on a day-to-day basis and for making cross-curricular links where appropriate. Staff make amendments to planning in order to optimise learning opportunities when they arise.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The following documents are available on request or may be viewed while on site. Please also feel free to contact us for more information.

- Programmes of Study for the different areas of learning
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Governing Body notes and minutes
- Examples of Children's work
- Subject Policies and Action Plans
- Displays around our Academy
- Subject Plans

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