

Luckington Community Primary School



Curriculum Guide for Parents

1. Introduction

Thank you for looking at our curriculum guide! It is designed to help you understand:

Curriculum design and rationale	What the children learn and how they learn it	How we teach our curriculum
---------------------------------	---	-----------------------------

For more detailed information, you may want to look at the following policies on our website:

- Curriculum policy
- Teaching and Learning policy
- Assessment policy
- English policy
- Maths policy
- EYFS policy

To begin with, it is important to understand what is meant by 'Curriculum'. Well, at Luckington, the curriculum is everything that happens from when the children walk through the door in the morning to when they leave in the afternoon. In fact, it extends further than this: homework; competing in sport tournaments; going on educational visits; or helping out in the local community. Yes, the traditional curricular subjects such as maths and English form part of our curriculum, but so do learning to compromise with friends at play time, or helping the younger children cut up their food at lunchtime.

All areas of our curriculum are underpinned by a set of values. These values were chosen by the school community; the seven core values that we felt our children need to go on to lead happy and successful lives:

Reflection	Resilience	Honesty	Positivity	Compassion	Respect	Forgiveness
------------	------------	---------	------------	------------	---------	-------------

These values run through everything we do at Luckington, whether that's being resilient when you come across a difficult maths problem or showing compassion when another child is feeling sad.

2. Curriculum design and rationale

We believe that our children will be the leaders, innovators and philanthropists of the future. To achieve this, it is important that their educational journey through pre-school and primary school prepares them to continue this journey in secondary school. We want our children to be a step ahead of the pack; at a minimum, they should have all the skills and knowledge they need to start secondary school in line with their peers. To ensure this, we have designed our curriculum with the following core principles in mind:

School Values

We want our children to be successful in their lives, but more importantly, we want them to be happy. Over the past few years, we have learned how being a positive part of a community is a vital contributing factor in our own happiness. Whether we are talking about our families, our local community, the national or global or community - or even the online community; we want our children to understand the importance of contributing positively, not just for their happiness, but for those that they interact with.

To be successful and happy, the children not only need to master the academic side of things, but they also need to have a strong set of values on which to base the decisions that they make in life.

High Expectations

Every child begins school at a different starting point. The key is that no matter where they start, both school and parents must have high expectations for them. This means that we always expect them to try hard, no matter what they are working on. It also means that we have high expectations for their attitudes to learning and for behaviour.

Broad, rich and experience based

We feel that every child should be able to experience everything that the National Curriculum has to offer. By doing this, children will be able to explore interests and talents that they may want to develop in the future. A narrow curriculum would restrict their opportunities as they grow older. We also believe that experience based learning helps to embed skills and knowledge, so look for opportunities wherever we can; whether it's a visitor coming in to do a talk or a trip to the local farm.

Relevant

A curriculum should never stand still. It should reflect the world that the children are living in. From year to year, while the skills and knowledge they learn may remain broadly similar, the context in which the children learn about them needs to change. This is for a number of reasons.

We live in a period of great change; the world is a very different place from the one we lived in when the most recent National Curriculum was introduced in 2014. Our curriculum needs to reflect this; we want our children to be as prepared as possible for the world that they grow into.

We also recognise that each cohort of children is different. They have different interests, motivation and needs. Whilst learning many of the same skills and much of the same knowledge as cohorts of the past, our teachers adapt their approach to ensure that the topics and teaching styles are personalised to their current class.

Building on Prior Learning

You'll know from your own experience how hard it can be to make things that you've learned 'stick'. It is the same for children; they may seem like they understand how to do something, but when you go back to it the next day, they seem to have forgotten completely!

The reason for this is that they have not yet 'embedded' the skill - it has not been committed to their long term memory.

Imagine each skill or piece of knowledge as a building block. Each lesson, the children add more blocks, building upon what they learned last time. If a block is missing, then the entire structure becomes undermined, making it harder to add new blocks.

The key is to make sure that skills and knowledge are properly embedded before moving on.

3. What the children learn and how they learn it

At Luckington we want the children to have the opportunity to experience a broad and rich curriculum. This means that they have a wide range of experiences and in the future they will have the foundations on which to build upon areas that they are particularly interested in.

Subject Allocation

We teach all the subjects that are recommended within the National Curriculum. It is our belief that for children to make great progress, subjects need room to breathe, therefore we have organised our subject allocation as follows:

Subject	Frequency
English (reading, writing, phonics)	At least one hour a day, supplemented with guided reading, spelling etc.
Mathematics	At least one hour a day
Science	Two hours per week
Computing	One hour per week
Physical Education (PE)	Two hours per week
Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)	At least one hour per week, supplemented with additional 'circle times' as needed
Geography	Every other term, alternating with history. Taught using a cross curricular approach i.e. in English, but also in specific geography lessons where necessary.
History	Every other term, alternating with geography. Taught using a cross curricular approach i.e. in English, but also in specific history lessons where necessary.
Art and Design	Every other term, alternating with DT. Often taught in a block of lessons within a week, i.e. 5 full afternoons.
Design Technology (DT)	Every other term, alternating with art. Often taught in a block of lessons within a week, i.e. 5 full afternoons.

French	Every other term, alternating with music for one hour per week.
Music	Every other term, alternating with French for one hour per week

It is important to note that each subject is supplemented through the year with different enrichment activities, for example: weeks to mark certain areas, such as Maths Week or Science Week; educational visits; sports tournaments; and visitors to school.

It is our belief that for the children to make good progress in a subject, quality time needs to be devoted to that area of curriculum. To teach every subject, every week would not allow this. Therefore, by giving each subject room to breathe as described above, the children spend more quality time on each area. This allows the children to become really involved in the topic and they make much more progress.

Cross Curricular

We recognise that real life cannot be compartmentalised into subject areas. When the children have careers of their own they will use a whole array of skills and knowledge from day to day - no matter what job they have. For example, an accountant needs excellent mathematical skills, but they also need to have the ability to communicate effectively when writing reports and use IT to create presentations for their colleagues.

This cross curricular approach also helps reinforce learning across the curriculum. A good example of this might be in science; the children may be asked to draw a line graph to represent the temperature of a material over time. Line graphs are a skill they predominantly learn in mathematics - using it in science only reinforces it, helping commit it to their long term memory.

Values

There are many ways that we teach our values, but the biggest method is simply through everyday conversation. For example, we draw out examples of children being 'compassionate' and discuss them with the children.

In each lesson there is also an opportunity to identify a value that we want the children to exhibit. It might be that in an art lesson we ask the children to evaluate the work that they have done, looking at what they have done well and what they could improve. This is an example of our 'reflection' value.

In weekly assemblies we look at specific values together, as a whole school. We might learn about a real life example of someone who has been resilient or read a story that helps us learn about the importance of honesty.

4. How we teach our curriculum

Learning Styles and Active Learning

Everybody learns a little bit differently.

Think about your own experiences of school. Which lessons do you remember? In which lessons did things really make sense?

The chances are you've had a mixed experience. Some of us learn by repeating things over and over until it sticks. Others of us need pictures and diagrams to follow. Some lucky people only need to listen to instructions once and they get it!

When considering how we teach a particular lesson at Luckington, we begin by thinking of all the different learning styles in our class. We also think closely about what up to date educational research tells us about how children learn best. Therefore lessons tend to incorporate a number of approaches to teaching. It is our belief that in any given lesson, the children should be actively learning, rather than passively. A rule of thumb that we are mindful of, is that the children should be actively learning at least 80% of the time. Active learning is an umbrella term for learning and teaching methods which put the pupil in charge of their own learning through meaningful activities. Active learning promotes recall and deeper understanding of material, as students are engaging with the content rather than simply listening to it.

Physical Learning Environment

For a small school, we have a good amount of space for the children to learn in. Our classrooms are spacious, we have a lovely library, a large school hall, an ELSA room, a small group room and lots of outside space - not to forget our beautiful rural surroundings.

Much of our teaching takes place in the classroom, sitting at tables, but we endeavour to make the best use of our building, grounds and location. The classrooms need to be adapted to meet the needs of the children within; if you want a plant to grow into a beautiful flower, you need to provide the correct conditions for it to grow.

We want our classrooms to help provide a positive learning culture. A teacher's job is to provide this positive culture by setting rules, expectations, engaging lessons etc., but the physical environment can go a long way to creating this culture too. Therefore, we insist that all learning spaces:

- offer support for all learners and are inclusive e.g. they must contain visual timetables
- contain resources to support independent learning
- display exemplary pieces of children's work in a range of subjects
- contain maths resources to support maths mastery
- have bright, stimulating and interactive displays
- contain up to date working walls
- ensure that children have most of the things they need for each lesson on their desk
- are tidy, neat and not cluttered
- provide space on the carpet for 'circle time'.

Learning Culture

At Luckington we vary our teaching, using different learning styles, to ensure that we engage and enthuse all of our children. Although these approaches can be different, they are underpinned by a set of fundamental principles:

- All children are engaged and working hard
- The learning space is calm. This may not always mean 'quiet', but all of the children are on task and following the school rules
- There is evidence of the children exhibiting our school values in every lesson, for example, a conclusion of science investigation is an example of 'reflection'.
- Learning is planned with engagement in mind - each group is different and may need a different approach
- When asked, the children can explain 'what' they're learning, 'why' they're learning it and what the next steps in their learning are
- The children will show a good degree of independence and not an over reliance on the teacher
- The children show an eagerness to learn and make progress
- The children will be respectful of one another and help each other when they get stuck.

5. And finally...

Hopefully you have found this guide helpful. It is worthwhile reading the related document on our website, particularly our Curriculum and Teaching and Learning policies. Please let us know if you have any questions!