

Curriculum Policy

2019-20

**Urmston Primary School**

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***This is an interim policy. Through curriculum audits and reviews in each phase of the school, the staff has developed clear intent on what the curriculum at Urmston Primary should look like. This policy outlines this intent, along with policy statements for each subject. The next step is for this to be implemented and then adapted based upon an ongoing review of the impact that these changes are having on pupils’ learning experiences, enjoyment and achievement. The appendices show the topics in each year group and the current rationale for those choices being made. This will evolve as staff consider a more thematic approach in the future.***

**Vision**

At Urmston Primary School we place children at the heart of all we do, our values leading us in the way we teach and the way we learn. We embed these values into the fabric of our school culture and enable our children to learn in an environment that is relevant, engaging, and challenging and encourages them to reflect upon their learning.

We believe that it is imperative for children to have an appropriate balance between focused learning - to develop their knowledge and understanding - and investigation and exploration - to enhance their skills in using and applying what they know, developing their independence and self-confidence. Along with a focus on enhancing an awareness of our children’s place in our society and the impact that their actions can have on others, this ensures our curriculum develops happy, kind and well-rounded young people.

Our curriculum will enable this balance. All learning, in every area of our curriculum, provides pupils with context, providing memorable learning experiences, giving learning relevance and ensuring that our pupils are engaged and enthused by their education. This leads to a lifelong love of learning that our children carry with them as they move on to secondary education and beyond.

The combination of acquiring knowledge, enhancing vocabulary, applying knowledge and skills practically through enquiry and first-hand experience, including school trips, will all add to our pupils’ ‘cultural capital’ whilst nurturing inquiring minds and a love of learning.

Aims

* To ensure coverage of all objectives set out in the Primary National Curriculum
* To ensure our pupils are supported and challenged and nurtured in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding
* To ensure that children’s knowledge and skill progresses as they move through the school and builds on prior learning
* To ensure pupils know why they are learning to develop certain skills and acquiring certain knowledge, which is linked, useful and purposeful
* To ensure our pupils learn core literacy and maths skills and can use and apply these skills, transferring them across the curriculum
* To provide creative and inspiring topics that our children are engaged in and enthused about through giving learning context and meaning
* To ensure learning is fun
* To ensure memorable learning experiences that stick with our children
* To provide opportunities for children to use their imaginations and explore and investigate
* To offer opportunities for learning to be child-led, giving children the licence to question the world and find out the answers
* To evoke intrigue and inquisitiveness in our children
* To enable our children to understand how our values are important in today’s societies and cultures and how they might differ depending on belief systems, geographical location or historical era
* To provide opportunities for children to empathise with others locally, nationally and globally
* To nurture confidence and independence through encouraging resilience and positivity in all areas of the curriculum
* To ensure staff are aware of pupils’ abilities and plan, assess and deliver lessons and programs appropriately

**Planning**

Teachers produce long term and shorter term plans which consider the most effective ways of linking learning and giving it context and relevance for our pupils. Topics are broadly planned for at the beginning of the year and although this is obviously subject to ongoing change and development, it enables teachers to ensure coverage and plan engaging learning around national curriculum objectives and the progression of knowledge and skills, whilst weaving the children’s learning needs and desires into the program of study. These year group topics can be found in the appendix and are not exhaustive lists. Although much of what is taught may be through topics, discreet lessons will also be taught to supplement these, where necessary. Urmston Primary does not currently expect the following of specific schemes. Following amalgamation of the infant and junior schools, one of the few commonalities was the use of Focus Education’s Learning Challenge Curriculum. In this period of transition, planning for History, Geography and Science in the primary school stems from this, with subject leaders and teachers having taken the first significant steps to make the curriculum more personalised to Urmston Primary. Knowledge and skills progressions have been developed, incorporating the school’s values, emphasising its vision of developing active young citizens of the local, national and global community, and making use of its historical and geographical context. The curriculum will continue to evolve over the next few years as staff find further ways of making contextual links between the topics learnt through the year groups, and find increasing ways of developing enquiry, fieldwork and analytical skills across the curriculum.

*The balance of knowledge and skills*

The balance of knowledge and skills is key to the curriculum at Urmston Primary. Teachers have planned extensively and have set out their vision to ensure that children’s cultural capital is developed by the acquirement of knowledge that sticks with the child through engagement and excitement for the topics and use and application of the subject matter. Skills development is also paramount and its importance is emphasised through the use of the UPS KS2 Knowledge and Skills Passports, a concept in its infancy and one which will evolve in terms of purpose and implementation. Knowledge will be acquired not only to accumulate facts but to engage, excite and enhance enquiring minds. Topic mats will offer pupils some key factual knowledge and vocabulary which will provide a stimulus and starting point to learn and want to find out more.

**Teaching and Learning**

Topics will be engaging and exciting for pupils, who will always be given meaning for learning that will be relevant and increasingly refer to, and build on, prior learning of other topics. This will, more often than not, include a ‘hook’, ensuring that learners always have a point of context. Teachers will deliver lessons and programs of study in line with our Teaching and Learning Policy, catering for all types of learning styles and incorporating all manner of activities; visual, audio, kinaesthetic, investigatory and exploratory – with an appropriate balance between child and teacher-led learning. The combination of acquiring knowledge, enhancing vocabulary, applying knowledge and skills practically through enquiry and first hand experience, including school trips, will all add to our pupils’ ‘cultural capital’ whilst nurturing inquiring minds and a love of learning.

**SMSC and our UPS values**

Social, Mental, Spiritual and Cultural aspects will be woven through life at UPS, both through our curriculum and through avenues such as assemblies, friendship groups, school council, etc. along with the implementation of our behaviour policy among others. Such ideals are further embedded through our school values of happiness, kindness, pride, respect, resilience and responsibility and the immersive culture of our school.

**Beyond the curriculum**

To supplement our curriculum, we will incorporate whole school events and awareness days/weeks - some relating to the curriculum and some not - to offer different learning experiences for our children. These will be planned for on a yearly or termly basis or perhaps more ad-hoc, depending on the circumstances. Such events may include British Values Week, Diversity Week, Children’s Mental Health Week, Diwali, Eid al-Fitr among others. Community links such as with Urmston Manor Retirement Home and year group charities add to this wholesome approach.

**Recording**

Pupils’ learning will be recorded in a number of ways. Much of this may be by video or photographs in order to evidence learning but, more importantly, to offer opportunities for pupils to reflect on that learning. This will be alongside written work in books, on paper or card, and on display to celebrate learning.

**Progression, Support and Challenge**

Our Teaching and Learning Policy makes clear the expectation that pupils of differing abilities are both supported and challenged appropriately. Teachers will use a range of age-appropriate models and activities to engage all learners and ensure progression year on year, with work set appropriate to the ability levels of the children. This is particularly the case for our SEND pupils as well as stretching those children who excel and are particularly able, gifted or talented in certain areas of the curriculum, or indeed outside it. Well thought out skills progressions are apparent (and will continue to be reviewed and developed), with this being clear from year group plans and curriculum subject overviews. The sequencing of knowledge is more fluid and develops as the year progresses, led mainly by the teacher but also through the inquisitiveness developed by the child. Here, again, we see the linkage of this sequencing within the topics taught through the years as a key focus and this will continue to evolve. A culture of resilience is developed where children thrive on challenge - they desire to be challenged and to challenge themselves.

**Assessment**

Core literacy and maths skills will be formally assessed on a termly basis but ongoing assessment will be more robust than other curriculum subjects, to ensure that pupils are developing key skills in order to access all areas of the curriculum and beyond. Teachers will assess other subjects by looking at pupils’ work in each year group and gauging a sense of achievement. This may be partly based on books, pupil discussion but, more significantly, through the following:

Firstly, the first lesson of each topic will involve a ‘knowledge harvest’. Teachers will provide the children with prompts and reminders of previous learning, based upon the core scientific, historical and geographical knowledge and skills that they’ll be learning throughout the topic. Here, children will be encouraged to share key themes and ideas that they have learnt prior to beginning this new topic. This will ensure that they can use their prior learning and build on it within a new context.

Secondly, pupils will complete their own topic-based glossaries, acquiring new knowledge and vocabulary as they learn. By the end of the topic, they’ll have this new knowledge (along with some core skills understanding) that they can take with them to the next topic, either later in the academic year, or in the following one.

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Review: the bigger picture**

Subject Leaders will use their monitoring procedures to gauge how pupils are performing in their subject areas and may use this as an indicator of areas for development in that subject across the school. With the use of knowledge and skills progressions, they will be able to clearly see how pupils develop year on year and the expectations set by each year group. Subject Leaders will monitor their subject’s success through using each year group’s knowledge and skills progressions as a guide when monitoring impact, pupil discussions and questioning them about their knowledge and skills providing a key indicator of the impact of the teaching and learning across the school.

Along with an awareness of the topics and objectives covered in each year group, as well as book reviews, observations/learning walks and in talking to the pupils, leaders will have a clear idea of pupil standards, how the children are enjoying and engaging in their subject area and what areas for development might be. Subject Leaders will have an action plan at the start of the academic year, including actions that are based on their knowledge of their subject and the subsequent needs of our school and our pupils. This may include additional resources for pupils of varying abilities or, indeed, highlight those pupils who may be gifted or talented, who can then be provided for and opportunities to hone these skills further can be looked into. They will again use all of this analysis as a platform for implementing improvement and enhancing our pupils’ experiences in that area of the curriculum.

**Policy written: November 2019**

Date agreed by Governors:

Signed: ***S Parker***  (Head),  ***D Brown***  (Chair of S&C Governors committee)

*Appendix 1:*

Urmston Primary School Topics 2019-20

*(Provisional – are subject to change and perhaps added to. Included are topics based on Science and Humanities. Additional topics in Art and Design, Computing, etc may or may not be linked to these)*

**YEAR GROUP: 1/2 (rolling 2-year due to mixed-aged classes)**

***Cycle 1***

**Autumn**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| All about Me | History, Geography, Science | PSHE, Literacy, Art, Music, PE |
| Dark and Light | History, Science | Geography, Literacy, Art |

**Spring**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Animals Around the World - Polar Animals, African Animals, Farm Animals and Pets | Geography, Science | History, Literacy |

**Summer**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Castles, Kings and Queens | History, Geography | Art and Design, DT, Literacy, Science |
| In the garden | Science | Geography |

***Cycle 2***

**Autumn**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Ourselves | Science | History, Geography, PSHE, Music, Literacy |
| Festivals and Celebrations | Music, R.E., PSHE, Art and Design | History, Literacy |

**Spring**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Fire and Ice | Science, History | DT, Geography, Literacy |
| Fairy Tales | Geography | Science, DT, Literacy |

**Summer**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Lowry | History | Geography, Art and Design, Literacy |
| Explorers | Geography | Science, DT, History, Literacy |

**YEAR GROUP: 3**

**Autumn**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Who first lived in Britain? | History | Geography, Science, Art, DT, Literacy |
| What makes the Earth angry sometimes? | Geography | History, Literacy, Art, DT |

**Spring**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| What can you tell me about Egypt? | History | Geography, Science, Art, DT, Literacy |
| How far can you throw your shadow? | Science | Art, Literacy  |
| What can you tell me about magnets? | Science | Geography, DT, Literacy |

**Summer**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| How did that blossom become an apple? | Science |  |
| How does Usain Bolt run so fast? | Science  | PSHE, P.E., Art |
| What can you tell me about Blackpool? | History | Geography, Art, DT, Literacy |

**YEAR GROUP: 4**

**Autumn**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Why is music enjoyed by so many? | Science, Music | P.E., Maths  |
| History of the Romans | History | Geography, Literacy, P.E. – Dance, Maths |
| How would we survive without water? | Science | Geography, Literacy |

**Spring**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| How would you cope without electricity for a week? | Science | Literacy, DT |
| Park Life | Science | Geography, Maths, Art |
| Mapping Skills | Geography | Maths |

**Summer**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| What happens to the food we eat? | Science | - |
| Early Law Makers (China – Shang Dynasty) | History | Literacy |
| Why is Manchester such a cool place to live? | Geography | History, Art |

**YEAR GROUP: 5**

**Autumn**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Brazil | Geography | History, Literacy |
| English Civil War | History | Literacy |
| Solids, Liquids and Gases | Science |  |

**Spring**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Topic | Main subject focus | Additional cross curricular subjects |
| The Mayans | History | Music, Art |
| Earth, Sun and Moon | Science | Maths |

**Summer**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Anglo Saxons and Vikings | History | Literacy |
| Life Cycles…and the ageing process | Science |  |
| Forces | Science |  |

**YEAR GROUP: 6**

**Autumn**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| I’m a Y6 pupil – get me out of here! | Geography | IT, History |
| Light and Sound | Science | Literacy |
| WW2 to present day | History | Geography, Music |
| Circulatory System – Healthy Lifestyles | Science | PSHE |

**Spring**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Ancient Greeks  | History | Geography, Art, Literacy |
| Variation and Classification  | Science | Literacy  |
| Maps | Geography | DT, Maths |

**Summer**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Main subject focus** | **Additional cross curricular subjects** |
| Electricity | Science | Geography |
| Evolution and Inheritance  | Science |  |
| Y6 Production | Drama | Literacy, Music |

*Appendix 2: Rationale*

**KS1**

It is essential that the learning opportunities that the children are provided with in KS1 are full of excitement and intrigue and nurture a love of learning and acquiring new knowledge and skills as pupils move in to KS2. The topics chosen and the hooks in to these are planned with this in mind, as well as offering a little insight in to what might come when children move up to the next phase of their education. Although these topics will evolve as staff find new ideas of what works well and what the pupils enjoy, the current topics chosen ensure a breadth of study which sets up children for a deeper look at history and culture in KS2.

As they will do in KS2, pupils get an early opportunity to find out about their immediate locality and their place within it, joining together history and geography and taking the opportunity for pupils to look at their place within this community, in ‘All About Me’, which is also the topic where pupils consider their bodies and the importance of keeping fit and healthy. This is nicely followed up when the children study Lowry and the obvious local historical and geographical links to the artist.

Broad geographical themes and questions are answered in KS1 in topics such as ‘Dark and Light’ and ‘Animals around the World’ where opportunities are taken to bring science, geography and history together through contextual links and themes which also provide excellent opportunities for cross-curricular writing. Here, again, the work done on habitats will be built upon in Year 4 and then again in Year 6.

Staff’s awareness of KS2 History is important here in order to provide a contextual foundation to build upon for pupils to make links later on. An example of this is the key event of the Great Fire of London being studied in Year 2, which is built upon in Year 5 when looking at the period just before – the Stuarts and the aftermath of the Gunpowder plot. Also, the topic of ‘Explorers’ and exposing pupils to the very concept of adventurers such as Christopher Columbus, Amelia Earhart and Neil Armstrong, will evoke an excitement that will be revisited in numerous KS2 British and world history topics, the Romans, the Vikings and the Mayans being some obvious examples.

The topic of ‘Castles’ is one that evokes immediate intrigue and begins the process of children looking at how settlements develop, as well as considering the role of the monarchy, the governance of countries and, indeed, civilisations, something which is further developed when looking at the Romans in Year 4 and Maya and Ancient Greece in Year 5 and 6.

**KS2**

History, Geography and Science are inextricably linked and so thought has gone in to when History, Geography and Science topics are taught at Urmston Primary and how the world is shaped today. For example, achievements of ancient civilisations such as Maya and Greece, are taught in Year 5 and 6 respectively. This is for a number of reasons, one of which, for example, is that rivers will be taught in Year 5, building on knowledge of the Water Cycle in Year 4. By looking at the Mayans and Ancient Greeks here, pupils are provided with obvious opportunities to build upon their understanding of how civilisations outside Britain are also built and settle around rivers, something that the children will have learnt in Year 3 when they study Ancient Egypt and in Year 3, 4 and 5’s British history topics. The human and physical geography concepts of trade, settlements and resources are key foci in all time periods (particularly ancient civilisations) and connections, contrasts and trends here will be made explicit, regardless of the history topic being studied. Other National Curriculum subjects are incorporated within History, Geography and Science topics where appropriate and where the subject matter lends itself to particular objectives. This is something that will continue to evolve, as mentioned in the main body of the curriculum policy. There are always pros and cons for such choices but the initial rationale behind our choices in KS2 are as follows.

For KS2 British History, the topics planned are based largely on chronological sequencing, starting with the earliest period of time in Year 3, moving from The Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age, through to the Romans in Year 4, and the Anglo Saxons and Vikings, both being in Year 5, with these two being so closely linked. This does mean that the youngest children study the periods that are furthest in the past, with the least concrete evidence available, making them a little more difficult to imagine. Furthermore, sticking rigidly to chronology does mean that links with other subjects can be limited, especially as Science topics are year group specific. Notwithstanding, this is outweighed by helping the children develop a good understanding of chronology, which is one of the key aims specified in the National Curriculum, and provides a solid grounding to build on prior knowledge of people, places and events. Notwithstanding, because of these apparent limitations, teachers will use their creativity to raise key questions to the children on how these links with other subjects are made, how they might empathise with people from different time periods, as well as discussing any deviations from chronology. Such deviations are valuable as we make use of the calendar, The British Civil War and WW2 (Y5 and Y6) being in November - linked in with the aftermath of the Gunpowder plot and Remembrance respectively, being examples of this (although use of Civil War is being reviewed for next year). Again, in considering these deviations, it is imperative that teachers give children clarity of when these fit in to both British and world history, giving pupils essential context and an understanding of how humanity’s knowledge has been built on throughout the different time periods.

In Year 3, the first history focus is on Prehistoric Britain, which brings with it obvious links to how people settle. The children also learn about volcanoes (What makes the Earth angry sometimes?) in Geography. When they get to Year 4, they have a knowledge of this phenomenon when studying what occurred in Pompeii, during their topic on Romans. Year 3’s charity is The British Red Cross and here, links are made to the devastating impact that natural occurrences can have on the physical world and its occupants and the difference that supporting such charities can make. As mentioned, Year 3 also learn about the Ancient Egyptians, which gives them their first taste of what life was like outside Britain before going on to look at the Shang Dynasty, Mayans and Greeks in Years 4, 5 and 6. Across every year group, opportunities are given to look at local history and geography. Because there was ample opportunity to look at Urmston and Manchester in KS1 and again in Year 4 and Year 6, Year 3 made the decision to look a little further afield and focus on the historical and geographical changes to Blackpool, linking in with a trip in the summer term.

In Year 4, children study the Romans and build on what was taught in Year 3. Here, the pupils get the opportunity to look at why the second invasion was more successful than the first, for example. As mentioned, the science topic of the Water Cycle is key to Year 4 and here, a contextual link is made to the year group charity, WaterAid, the various social and environmental connections here being obvious. Year 4 also look at Early Law Makers of the Shang Dynasty, enhancing the pupils’ understanding of seemingly tyrannical leaders, which is first looked at in Year 1/2 in the ‘Castles’ topic, with a deeper focus on Henry VIII; leadership is a theme looked at throughout KS2, from the Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt, to Caesar’s Roman Empire, to William the Conqueror, to Alexander the Great (staff have already considered this theme with a view to making it more explicit when planning for a more thematic approach moving forward).

In Year 5, pupils extend their understanding of the chronology of British history through looking at the Anglo Saxons and the Vikings. This is done in the summer term as it provides an excellent opportunity for a contextual link and hook regarding a trip to Tatton Park. These two periods were chosen to follow on immediately from one another due to the long struggle between the two for control of Britain. Year 5 also take the opportunity to touch on the English Civil War, as mentioned, to link in with the Gunpowder Plot and to take advantage of some opportunity to discuss, debate and write about the monarchy and democracy. Furthermore, they look at another non-European society in the Mayans. The rationale behind this was to again link in with geographical work on rivers and space, Maya astronomy being an obvious link here, but also to build further on learning done on the Romans in Year 4 and the links between the demise of both civilisations, as well as the religious aspects of each era. Geographically, Year 5 look at Brazil and the Amazon Rainforest, again providing current links to sustainability. The year group’s chosen charity, The Woodland Trust, provides further opportunity to embed a greater understanding of humanity’s responsibility to look after the environment and the world, building on this understanding developed in supporting WaterAid in Year 4. Year 5 will also look to build in work on rivers through their history and geography topics and the importance of these both geographically, in terms of settlement and the physical landscape, and scientifically.

Year 6 begins with the geography topic, *I’m a Year 6, Get Me Out Of Here*, enabling a focus on our knowledge of our locality and developing skills such as planning and mapping. Such a knowledge of the local area will be important in the transition between primary and secondary school. Year 6, like all cohorts, also use every opportunity to write across the curriculum, looking at our locality, enabling writing on historical events such as the Peterloo Massacre and the context in which it occurred. The topics chosen in Year 6, are very much done so with a view to being ready for the next stage in their education and being responsible and self-aware. This is why their chosen charity is Place2Be, a children’s mental health charity.

Pupils really delve into a theme beyond 1066 - World War 2 - and how this has helped shape British society today. Extensive work is done here in linking with literacy and writing – the year group text being *The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas*. It was also decided that Year 6 would study Ancient Greece, even though the time period is chronologically before Maya, which now comes in Year 5. This was partly so that children had already gained an understanding of forces and earth and space in Year 4 and Year 5, but also links in with Aristotle’s work done on classification and the impact his pioneering work had on how we see the world today. Furthermore, maps are looked at in closer detail in the spring term and links can be made with Greek cartography. The children can be inspired by Greek inventions when they come to do their DT topic in the summer term, further enthusing them about STEM subjects as they move on to secondary school. Finally, and significantly, the rise and prominence of philosophical theory opens the door to Year 6 really delving into some mature and thought-provoking concepts, leading to some analytical and persuasive writing and setting them up for the next challenging stage of their education.