





## CURRICULUM POLICY

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
<b>Signed Headteacher</b>	
<b>Signed Chair of Curriculum &amp; Standards</b>	
<b>Date Revised</b>	Autumn Term 2024

# Curriculum Design: An Enquiry Approach

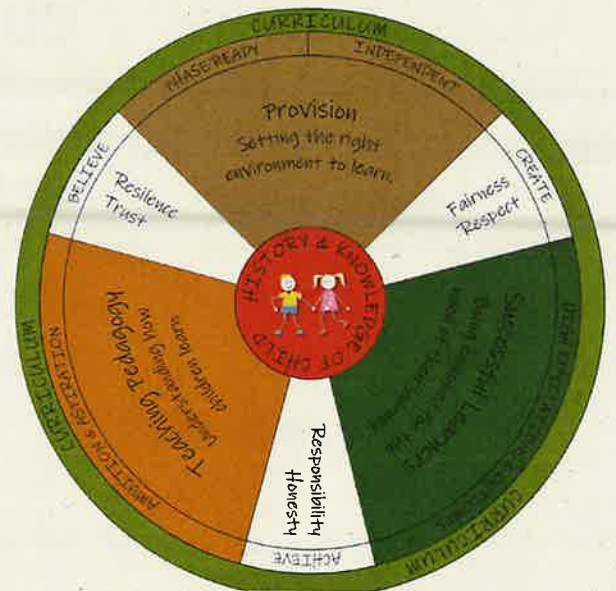
Created By: All staff at Rednal Hill Infant School

## Statement of Intent

At Rednal Hill Infant school, we aim to serve our community and to meet the needs of all our learners by providing the highest quality education within a broad and balanced curriculum. We provide children with a wide range of engaging and high quality purposeful learning opportunities which build on prior knowledge to promote a coherent learning journey. We strongly believe that children learn best when they are focused on the tasks that interest them, have a clear purpose and are fun. Our provision is designed to promote independent learning and a real sense of success.

## Firm Foundations

As an Infant setting we know children need a secure base on which to build life-long learning. In order to achieve within the curriculum, we need to understand our children, their starting points and their families. We then use this knowledge to adapt our high quality and purposeful learning environments to suit individual needs. Our pedagogy is based on the principles of Early Excellence and the effective use of Continuous Provision, and Enquiry Learning. Central to this approach, is our responsibility to develop and nurture children's character, so that they are prepared for the next stage of their learning journey and can make active contributions to their community and society throughout their life.



## Ethos and Values

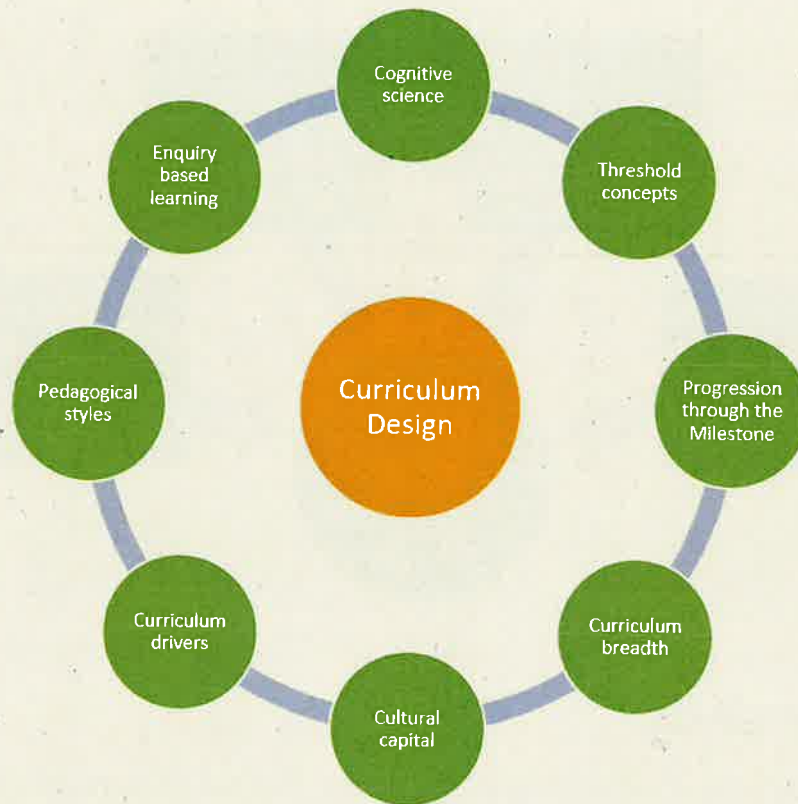
Our school vision of "be the very best you can be" unites the staff team and promotes a sense of continuous improvement. Staff are committed to maximising learning by ensuring every moment spent in school is a valuable one. Our school values of **Respect, Honesty, Fairness, Resilience, Trust** and **Responsibility** provide vehicles for learning across the curriculum and are embedded in everything we do. Forest School and outdoor learning are a vital part of school life for all of our children and provide additional opportunities for children to become absorbed in their own learning. We aim to build children's self-confidence and their independence in order that they develop into active citizens. Please read our Curriculum Statement for details of how we achieve these aims.



### Aims of our Curriculum

- To promote a thirst for learning and a desire to find out about new things; to pose questions of the world and have the tool kit to answer them.
- For children to learn with a purpose; to help them make links in their learning and see how it connects to the wider world around them.
- To generate a sense of responsibility for their own success
- For children to feel successful in many aspects of life, not only the academic.
- For them to feel the sense of improvement and achievement; knowing that this takes time, effort and perseverance.
- To develop the skills of collaboration and self regulation
- To provide consistently high quality, appropriate provision which challenges all children.
- Ensure children know more and remember more

The design of our curriculum is influenced by the research-based approach of Chris Quigley Education, as well as the Education Endowment Fund. If learning is a change to long-term memory then we must ensure our students experience a breadth of learning opportunities within a carefully constructed learning sequence, facilitated by excellent staff practice. These opportunities must be purposeful and engaging, building deeper knowledge on prior learning and triggering multiple learning pathways.

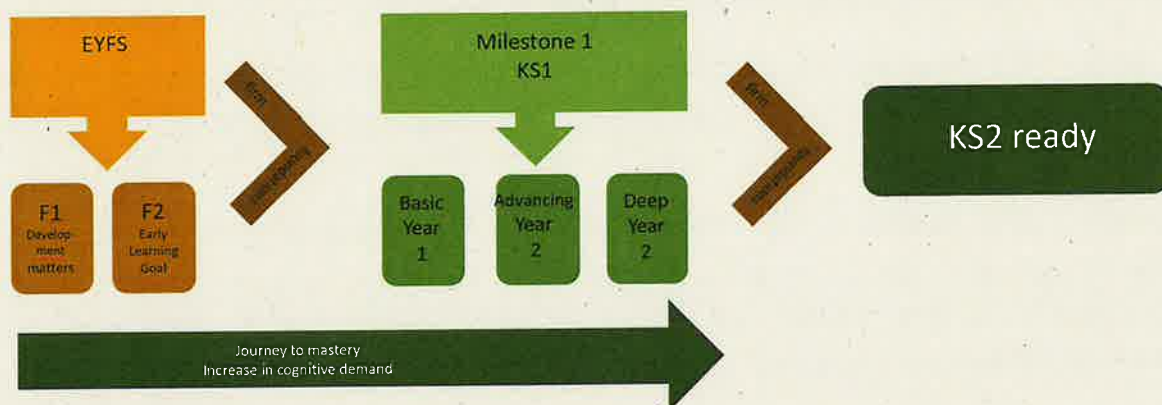


## Curriculum intent model

1. **Curriculum drivers** shape our curriculum and contribute to its breadth. They are the subject matter used to engage our children and are chosen as a result of our knowledge of our children and their life experiences as well as staff expertise in delivering high quality provision. Experiential learning (where children learn by doing) is an integral part of our provision.
2. **Cultural capital** builds the vital contextual knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and live by British values.
3. **Curriculum breadth** is achieved by careful planning to maximise links between subjects and a commitment to broaden children's life experiences to promote cultural capital. Subject areas are shaped to the needs and interests of the cohort, and the extended beyond the National Curriculum.
4. Our curriculum distinguishes between **Enquiry themes** and 'threshold concepts'. Enquiry themes unite the different subject areas and create a purposeful learning sequence. Enquiry learning is scaffolded with 'what do we know/what do we want to find out/how will we do this questions
5. **Threshold concepts** are the skills and prior learning which tie together the enquiry themes into a meaningful scheme. The same concepts are explored in a wide

breadth of Enquiries. This allows for children to return to the same concepts over and over to gradually deepen their understanding of them.

6. As an Infant school we work within **Milestone 1** of the Chris Quigely model, which includes the procedural and semantic knowledge children need to understand the threshold concepts, building in progression. Progression maps are created by staff so that individual years groups know where priorities lie and how these links to subsequent learning.
7. **Cognitive research** tells us that working memory is limited and that cognitive overload is likely if children are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for students to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding, they must first master the basics, which takes time and repetition.
8. **Pedagogical style** varies in each of the cognitive domains of basic, advancing and deep. Research supports focusing on direct instruction in the early stages of learning and discovery based approaches subsequently. Although we mainly use direct instruction in the basic domain, we also use exploration to motivate children to develop their sense of enquiry.



## Implementation

We use a thematic approach to our learning in order to give children purpose and opportunities and to link ideas, concepts and skills linked within a web of knowledge.

Key knowledge in Maths, English and Science are predominately taught in discrete sessions with opportunities for children to use what they have acquired built in throughout the rest of the curriculum. Once children have received direct instruction children then have the opportunity to demonstrate and use what they have learnt in different contexts. Our non-core subjects are delivered through our Enquiry approach, and these three main principles underpin its organisation:

1. Learning is most effective with **spaced repetition**.

2. **Interleaving** helps children to discriminate between topics and aids long-term retention.
3. **Retrieval** of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which increases both storage and retrieval strength.

**In addition to these three principles we also understand that repeated exposure promotes learning in the short term and that sustained mastery takes time.**

**Continuous provision and longitudinal learning**, in the form of daily routines, replaces the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum and, in other cases provides retrieval practice for previously learnt content.

Longitudinal learning is used for children to experience concepts in reality, repeatedly and over time. Concepts such as time, weather, seasonal change, chronological events, money and geographical knowledge are referred to either on a daily basis or frequently through the week.

### **Enquiry Based learning**

We believe children who are curious are destined for success.

A curious child is motivated to ask questions, seek answers, and apply answers to personal experience. Our aim is for every child to demonstrate curiosity, wonder, and a desire to discover.

Curiosity and motivation lie at the heart of enquiry-based education. This approach to learning underpins our curriculum and ensures our classrooms are high-energy learning environments, where children are excited to learn and participate. Our provision is specifically designed to enable all children to become independent and successful learners.

This approach, alongside rich content, allows our children to ask themselves three questions about any new concept being introduced: What do I already **know**? What do I **want to find out**? What have I **learnt**?

During **Enquiry Based Learning** subjects are intertwined in order to provide meaningful opportunities for children to find answers to the questions they have posed. The skills needed in order for children to progress are expertly considered within each subject, across each year group, in order to ensure depth and breadth of learning. Highly skilled staff judge when there is a need for direct teaching of discrete skills and knowledge and this is carefully balanced within each **Enquiry** and the rest of the teaching day.

### **Continuous Provision**

An enabling environment is a rich and varied space where risks are minimised and well managed, and children are protected from harm, and able to immerse themselves in learning. Continuous provision is used across our school to facilitate this aim.

We:

- Create an environment that is warm, welcoming and nurturing and facilitates a sense of belonging.
- Offer a range of resources, which are familiar to the children as well as activities that are new to them.
- Ensure that the learning and environment offer room for outdoor and indoor play, sufficient space for children to move and collaborate, and encourage exploration and risk-taking.
- Plan for a range of activities which serve different purposes: inspire imagination and role play, exploration of personal relationships and feelings, problem solving, quiet time and reflection.
- Ensure our provision is differentiated to meet the needs of all the children who attend, from very young children to older children, from the most able to those requiring additional support for complex needs.
- Focus on individuals. By considering what children are genuinely interested in and incorporating this into the environment, staff facilitate children to communicate better.
- We recognise when and how children are intrinsically motivated to learn and therefore how they can have choice and control over this. The school day is planned to maximise children's natural motivation.
- Staff understand the importance of building warm and supportive relationships and the importance of nurturing a child's development through secure attachments.
- Ensure resources are at child height and accessible and use resources which can be moved and used in a variety of ways.
- Allow children the time and space to focus.
- Involve children in making the schools' ground rules for behaviour, and creating the behavioural codes of practice, involving them as much as possible.
- Engage children in activities to build their emotional resilience and social skills- especially self regulation.

### Continuous Provision

Continuous provision links all areas of the curriculum and provides purposeful opportunities for children to read, communicate through writing, solve mathematical problems and articulate their thoughts, ideas and plans. In our classrooms, you would see well-organised and resourced environments, where children are empowered to be active in collecting the resources they need to complete their task or project. Collaboration with other children in negotiating the use of resources and sharing ideas, especially when working within a team.

An example of this would be in the creative area, where after a 'spark' or 'hook' from an experience children may independently investigate how to build a vehicle by using junk modelling. Arranging the materials in different ways and testing if they can add any other materials to their vehicle to make it sturdier. Continuous provision also enables children to return to their explorations and consolidate their learning over the course of a day or a more extended period. When children do this, they can explore what happens to things as they change over time, and make changes to explore new ideas.

When preparing our resources for continuous provision we consider:

- The skills and key knowledge we want the children to learn
- Whether each area within the continuous provision has the necessary resources to encourage children to play and explore in a variety of ways.
- Whether areas offer a range of high-quality resources that will act as a good starting point for the children's explorations.
- Differentiation to support and challenge individuals.
- The need for open-ended questioning to engage the children in conversations and prompt their creative thinking.
- Giving children time to revisit what they did yesterday, last week, or even a few weeks ago.

## Impact

Do children know more and remember more? This question drives our evaluation of the curriculum.

Learning is a change to long term memory and impact gathers momentum over time. We use continuous assessment to adapt our practice within learning sequences and formative and summative assessments throughout the year. This allows us to determine whether we are achieving our goals and maximise progress against target standards.

We use lesson observations, daily walks and professional dialogue to assess impact and to ensure pedagogy matches our expectations, and to compare student's work over time. These sit alongside data capture, statutory assessments and end of year teacher assessments.

Pupil voice plays a vital part in evaluating the impact of the curriculum. Daily conversations with children, pupil progress meetings and school council capture pupil voice. Subject leaders triangulate evidence to assess the impact of each subject within the curriculum. Enquiry work provides evidence of applied skills and learning journeys and are a source of great pride.