

The Bellbird Primary School



Curriculum Policy

June, 2022

(To be reviewed Summer 2023)

Curriculum vision

"Words do two major things: They provide food for the mind and create light for understanding and awareness."- Jim Rohn

At The Bellbird Primary School, we strive to offer a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all pupils. We believe our curriculum prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. By the end of Year 6, children leave our school ready to face the excitement and challenges of secondary school. They are confident to take responsibility for their own learning, develop new relationships, and have a positive attitude to school life.

Our curriculum is made up of both the statutory curriculum, and wider opportunities and experiences that help develop our pupils into responsible citizens with a life-long love of learning.

Aims and Values

The Aims of our School are;

Be yourself

Express yourself

Enjoy yourself

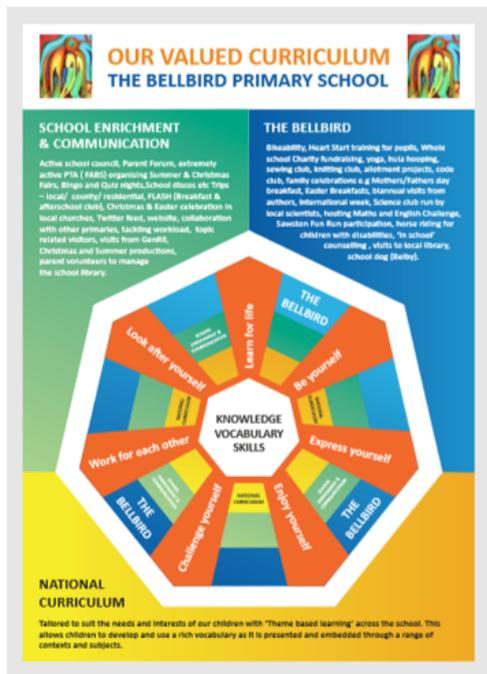
Challenge yourself

Work for each other

Look after yourself

Learn for life

The Bellbird Primary Curriculum Concept



Our curriculum – based on knowledge, skills and vocabulary.

- Yellow – National Curriculum
- Blue bars – aims of our school
- White – school council, Parent Forum, FABS, Trips – local/ county/ residential, FLASH, celebration in local churches, Twitter feed, website collaboration with other primaries, tackling workload, topic related visitors, visits from GenR8
- Orange – Bikeability, save a life, charity fundraising, yoga, hula hooping, sewing club, knitting club, allotment projects, code club, family celebrations (Mothers/Fathers day breakfast), biannual visits from authors, International week, science club run by local scientists, hosting Maths and English Challenge, Sawston Fun Run participation

At The Bellbird, our curriculum is ambitious and designed to give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. The design of our curriculum is intended to develop and further extend confident use of a rich vocabulary, preparing our young pupils for the next step in their educational lives. This focus is based on evidence which suggests that pupils enter our school with poorer than average communication skills, specifically around vocabulary acquisition. This is a factor noted in our EAL families but also the indigenous Sawston population.

A varied and diverse vocabulary is vital for pupils to best express opinions, write texts, and explain their understanding and share knowledge, both written and verbal. At The Bellbird, the design of our curriculum is intended to develop and further extend confident use of a rich vocabulary preparing our young pupils for the next step in their educational lives. A varied and diverse vocabulary is vital for pupils to best express opinions, write texts, explain understanding and share knowledge both written and verbal.

We are committed to ensuring that learning is always exciting and is taught in meaningful contexts which are relevant to pupils, using a cross-curricular approach. The way in which we implement this is through the development of a curriculum that makes use of clear and strong links between foundation subjects, Science and high English quality texts. Through these links, the children totally immerse themselves in learning across different contexts and the impact is a greater depth of understanding and knowledge, evidenced in the quality of writing in both English and topic books. Pupils encounter common topical vocabulary in a range of contexts, thus increasing their comprehension and consequent

use of more sophisticated Tier 3 words (content-specific vocabulary). Oracy skills and confidence are enhanced as children choose vocabulary wisely when explaining, reasoning or discussing.

Our bespoke curriculum is weighted towards the development of the core skills necessary for our children to be successful in the ever changing modern world.

All pupils engage in daily English and mathematics lessons and there is an expectation that the skills learned are applied and rehearsed in all other subjects where the opportunity arises.

Alongside basic skills, we prioritise the development of a strong sense of moral purpose, anchored in British values, through our assemblies, PSHE and school council. Children actively learn respect and understanding of people who have different characteristics to themselves, whether that be age, disability, gender, religion, race or sexuality.

A rigorous, well- planned curriculum, in an ethos of care and support, enables our pupils to be well rounded, empathetic young people who have a thirst for learning and respect for the world around them.

Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning takes a high priority in the curriculum and is a focus for our SDP and staff training.

Well-constructed and well-planned outdoor learning helps develop the skills of enquiry, critical thinking and reflection necessary for our children to meet the social, economic and environmental challenges of life in the 21st century. Learning outdoors can be enjoyable, creative, challenging and adventurous; connecting children with the natural world and enabling them to grow as healthy, confident and responsible citizens who value and appreciate the natural environment. We are committed to ensuring that the range of outdoor learning opportunities we facilitate, engages children with their learning, promoting personal development and well-being.

Every teacher is required to facilitate up to one hour per week of outdoor learning. Classes have their own designated area of school allotment to facilitate gardening skills. The children have access to our school pond and willow, wilderness and woodland areas within the school grounds for forest school activities.

The Organisation of the Curriculum

We believe that our children should not only reach their best academically, but also develop a love for life- long learning and understand the importance of resilience when faced with a challenge. Our staff ensure that the curriculum engages and excites all of the children, and is taught in meaningful contexts which are relevant to pupils.

Planning

We have developed a curriculum overview which is scaffolded and rigorously planned by teachers and subject leaders, but is flexible enough to respond to the interests of the children. Our newly devised year group curriculum maps provide thematic links that give the curriculum a joined up feel and provide a real purpose for learning. Our curriculum is designed to develop children's understanding of key concepts ('big ideas') across a broad range of disciplines, whilst giving time to ensure these are studied in sufficient depth. The overlearning of key skills and knowledge is encouraged and children have time for repetition. The curriculum is sequenced so that skills, knowledge and vocabulary are interwoven and revisited regularly, and learning is cumulative in nature.

There are three parts to our planning:

Long term planning; year group curriculum mapping indicates broad learning objectives and the links made between subjects. Units of work are planned, usually over a term's duration. These medium term plans contain the detail of the work to be covered with a progression of learning objectives.

Year group curriculum maps provide an overview of topics/themes covered in each year group. They give a detailed breakdown of the skills, knowledge and vocabulary that must be taught in each foundation subject and identify cross-curricular links.

As a school we review our long-term planning on an annual basis.

Medium Term Planning: these show specific objectives to be taught within each area of the curriculum and the links between them.

Weekly Planning: these break down the objectives into weekly achievable targets and activities. The plans indicate how the work will be differentiated and what the pupil outcomes will be.

Weekly plans, particularly in maths and English, are linked to daily responsive marking sheets, where teachers record class misconceptions and individual learning needs that need to be addressed promptly. Responsive marking requires teachers to be flexible and adapt their weekly plans, providing timely intervention and targeted support that meets the needs of all learners.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children have equal access to the curriculum and are treated fairly regardless of age, disability, gender, religion, race or sexuality. Our curriculum at The Bellbird has the same academic, technical or vocational ambitions for all learners. Where this is not practical (for example, for some learners with high levels of special educational needs and/or disabilities) their curriculum is designed to be ambitious and to meet their individual needs. Children learn best when they can see links and have reasons for learning. We hope that pupils are motivated by achievement

both now and in the future and have a positive attitude towards themselves, others and their environment.

Monitoring and review

The Senior Leadership Team monitor the progression, continuity and effectiveness of the curriculum together with the governing body.

The Headteacher and SLT are responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. The Headteacher and SLT monitor weekly planning through year group reviews and book looks, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of our curriculum. Subject leaders regularly monitor long and medium term planning to ensure continuity and progression across both key stages.

Appendix 1 Subject Statements

English

The English programmes of study within the National Curriculum for English states:

“A high quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them.”

At The Bellbird we have identified five areas which we believe support the development of our children’s communication skills. These areas are:

- The direct teaching of vocabulary – our children are taught to be ‘word aware’ and we teach high-level vocabulary (known as ‘spotlight words’) on a weekly basis.
- Reading for pleasure – our well stocked school library is at the heart of our school and teachers base their English planning around high quality texts. Well known authors and illustrators visit and work with all classes throughout the school year.
- Writing for effect and for a range of audiences – writing tasks are set within meaningful contexts and, where appropriate, work is published for a wider audience, for example in the Sawston Scene magazine.
- Confident speaking and attentive listening – children are taught how to explain, compare and discuss their ideas with others and to present their knowledge of a range of poetic forms.
- Have a secure understanding of the rules governing grammar and punctuation and to be able to spell a broad range of words. The five aspects of our English curriculum are vital skills for life and, at The Bellbird, we believe that effective communication, in all its forms, is the key to becoming a happy citizen who contributes to our society.

Maths

At The Bellbird, we study topics for longer so that children can develop conceptual understanding along with procedural fluency. We have high expectations for all children and help them to develop understanding of important mathematical concepts through creative and practical activities. We aim to build fluency of key facts through developing deeper knowledge and varied practice.

In lessons at The Bellbird, children develop their understanding by reasoning mathematically, solving problems in a range of contexts. Children will also have the opportunity to apply their understanding to other areas of the curriculum such as science, design technology and topic.

Science

Science at The Bellbird provides our children with the means for understanding the world within them, the world around them and the world beyond them, alongside harnessing their natural curiosity and deepening

their desire to know "Why? How?" and "What if?" We embed a range of scientific enquiry types within all of our science learning to expose the children to the various ways in which we can study, test, collect data and present it in order to improve our understanding of our world. Our science curriculum interconnects with other curriculum areas as we apply our maths skills in data collection and representation, our English skills when writing to explain what we have investigated and why and our speaking and listening skills as we use the correct scientific vocabulary to present our enquiry data clearly and coherently.

Art and Design Technology

Art and Design Technology are a fundamental part of The Bellbird's curriculum as it stimulates creativity, individuality and imagination in all pupils. The topics that we deliver within our Art and DT lessons are closely linked to other learning themes within the curriculum. This provides a cross curricular approach and in turn enriches the children's learning, by providing opportunities for a deeper understanding to take place within the classroom. The Art curriculum that we follow at The Bellbird aims to develop children's skills across five main areas of Art; drawing, painting, printmaking, textiles and 3D art. The children are taught about at least one famous artist within each year group from Year 1—6. This aims to enhance the children's understanding of techniques that artists have developed, along with the opportunity to apply these techniques within their own work.

Our Design Technology sessions are based on the children thinking about the designing stages; creating prototypes, experimenting with different materials, making things and then evaluating their product. They are encouraged to think about the production criteria and how to make their product unique. Children often work in different groups, encouraging them to present and share their own ideas. They are expected to solve problems in a creative and reasonable manner at any stage of the design process. We encourage children to use different resources and materials to create their own product. Children are also given the opportunity to experience food technology and create their own food products. Design Technology allows children to understand the world in which they live and develop skills to continue to add to our wider community.

Computing

At The Bellbird we seek to equip children with the skills they need to safely use the increasing amount of technology around them. E-safety is a constant theme for all year groups so that by the time they leave us, the children are able to understand the digital footprint their online activities create. Internet access is closely monitored with support and clear structures for reporting any concerns. Within classrooms, we use technology to enhance learning, for example through the use of interactive boards and visualisers that enable modelling. The Bellbird is well equipped with trolleys of laptops and sets of iPads to support access of approved learning platforms that may be used by children individually, or as part of whole class learning sessions. Our curriculum is carefully structured to cover coding and digital literacy; using technology appropriately for presentation and communication in a variety of ways. In the Bellbird, technology is used to support learning in a range of subjects for example, internet access to enable non-fiction research and writing, this is in addition to discrete computing teaching.

Geography

At The Bellbird, we aim to equip children with a wider understanding of different locations around the world and how they compare and contrast with each other. Children learn about how humans interact with their environment and the impact they have on the areas in which they live and on the wider world. They also learn about the physical geography of the Earth and vocabulary associated with its different features. Children develop their ability to interpret different sources of information including compasses, maps, photographs and graphs.

History

Who were the Mayans? How did the Egyptians build their pyramids? What did the Romans (ever) do for us? Why did Shackleton's Antarctic expedition fail so heroically? Who?, What?, Where?, When?, How? and, most importantly, Why?, are the questions that drive our history curriculum. Through such a spirit of enquiry, the children will develop a sense of chronology, an understanding of the causes and consequences of events, the similarities and differences between historical periods and the role of the individual in forming the past. Visitors in, trips out, artefacts and a huge range of sources will help to spark the children's curiosity by bringing life to events from centuries past.

Languages

Our children in Key Stage 2 learn French with the emphasis on practical communication. Once a week, we have a French specialist who teaches French to the children in year 3.

Music

Music is seen as an important part of our school's curriculum. All children are given a wide experience of listening to music, music-making and singing. Children will explore a wide range of musical styles including pop, soul, rock and classical. Across the school, children learn to play and compose music on a range of tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments. In KS2 recorders are also introduced, and ukuleles in Year 6. We use an excellent music resource, Charanga, to support staff in delivering an exciting and inclusive musical curriculum. Extra-curricular music tuition is available for those parents who wish to purchase this service. Children in KS2 have the opportunity to join our Choir and their performances are always greeted enthusiastically. The school presents a number of productions throughout the year, which are a well-supported feature of our school life. All children are encouraged to take part in those as well as other events that run throughout the year, such as 'The Bellbird's Got Talent', Carol singing and Proms in the Playground.

Physical Education

At The Bellbird, Physical Education is taught by both the class teacher and Premier Sport, who are an external company. We have a wide range of equipment for the children to use in their PE lessons and we have a large field, hall and playground. Throughout the year, we teach the children a range of sports and we introduce new sports, which include lacrosse and Paralympic sports. Children have plenty of opportunities to take part in extra-curricular clubs and competitions for our KS2 children, and a multi-sports

morning for our Key Stage 1 children. Sports Day is the PE highlight of the year for children at The Bellbird and we invite our parents to come and support their children in a range of sporting activities.

Religious Education

The main aim of Religious Education at The Bellbird is to enable children to understand the beliefs of others, both locally and throughout the world, and to think about and articulate their own beliefs. This is highly important for children in developing attitudes of respect, engage in the complexities of belief, avoid stereotyping and contribute to an informed debate. These are essential skills, particularly in modern day Britain. RE is taught weekly across the school and, throughout their time at The Bellbird, the children will explore in depth each of the six main religions in the world (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism) as well as a secular world view (Humanism). It is an exciting, interactive subject where children are able to explore religious artefacts, investigate different practises throughout the world or interview members of the faith community. Children often enjoy engaging in critical thinking and respectful debate about belief. We regularly take trips to local places of worship and our daily assembly often includes an act of collective worship with a mainly Christian ethos, although careful consideration is given to the multi-faith society we live in.

PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) / RSE (Relationships and Sex Education)

At the Bellbird, we want to help children to respect themselves and others and to be able to move safely and confidently through childhood, into adolescence and beyond. We want to help our children to form healthy friendships and relationships, to understand and manage their emotions, to be confident, knowledgeable citizens and to be able to understand the changes their bodies go through as they grow. All of these will help them to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to keep themselves healthy and safe, and prepared for life and work.

Teachers have access to the 'Cambridgeshire PSHE' service schemes to help them plan units of work that are sensitive and suitable to the age and stage of their children. The children's learning revolves around five key ideas that will enable them to develop into conscientious and well-rounded people: Myself and My Relationships, Citizenship, Healthy and Safer Lifestyles, Economic Wellbeing, and Sex and Relationships Education. Since September 2020, Relationships and Health Education has become a statutory part of the curriculum. There are many cross curricular links with the Science curriculum. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the element defined as 'sex education', which is defined as human conception and birth. These elements are taught exclusively in Year 4 and Year 6. Parents are informed of the SRE curriculum areas being taught before Summer 2 so that they can ask questions, talk to their children and make informed decisions.

We think it is essential to support the positive wellbeing and good mental health in our children to help them to be happy and confident learners. Most classrooms have stations that enable children to signal how they are feeling each day so that any problems are picked up quickly. We have a Wellbeing Co-ordinator who is responsible for running social skills, friendship and self esteem sessions with small groups throughout the week. Relaxation station is held most days of the week at lunchtime to support children who find lunchtimes more challenging. In addition, a specialised Wellbeing Hub called 'The Nest' is currently under construction on the school field and should be ready for use by September 2022. Children

who are bereaved can have access to memory boxes which they can create to share their memories of their loved one with their teachers and their family.

Outdoor Learning

Spending time outdoors in the natural world has huge benefits for children’s physical and mental health. At The Bellbird, we recognise these advantages and are committed to giving children access to a range of exciting outdoor learning activities. The Bellbird Primary School is fortunate to have a large outdoor area containing a range of different habitats, and we are focusing on developing learning opportunities for children in these grounds. Staff have recently benefited from external training to encourage and equip teachers with the knowledge to create learning activities across the whole curriculum in the outdoor environment. As one of our pupils recently said about their own learning, “Being outside makes it an adventure”.

June 2022