

# **The Bellbird Primary School**



## **Curriculum Policy**

**July, 2024**

## **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.

### **Vision, Values, Motto and Aims**

#### **Vision:**

At The Bellbird Primary School, we focus on developing happy, confident children, who are intrinsically motivated to achieve their individual potential. We aim to provide them with a safe and creative environment with consistent learning opportunities to achieve this. We recognise the value in involving the whole school community in this vision and seek to empower all staff, parents, carers and governors to work towards this goal for our children: learning does not just take place within the school day. We actively promote the values below to support our children in 'soaring to success'.

## **Values:**

Through working with our school community, we have identified the following key areas that we all value for our children:

- Our learning environment, which provides a caring, secure and stimulating place in which every child can develop as an individual: intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically.

- Our curriculum, which provides access to balanced, engaging and progressive learning opportunities for each child to ensure each child can excel at each stage of their education and feel ready for the next stage of their education.

- Our school community, which provides opportunities for every child to feel a part of The Bellbird. A place where they can develop respect for themselves and others through the celebration of equality, diversity and inclusivity. We aim to inspire curiosity not judgement of others.

Our vision and values can be summarised in our motto and aims which we use with our children to support their development.

### **Motto: 'Soaring to success'**

#### **Our Bellbird aims are :**

**Balanced and kind:** we are balanced when we approach any new situation, we are curious and not judgmental which helps us to be kind individuals who feel happier because of how we behave;

**Independent:** we aim for independence from adults in our learning because it helps us to build confidence in our abilities;

**Respectful and responsible:** we respect ourselves, each other, our resources and our environment taking responsibility to make the right choices;

**Determined:** we show determination to do the best we can even when things are hard, we use support when we need to and are proud of the progress, we make making us resilient and confident learners;

**Safe and supportive:** we support others to feel safe with our words and actions and use CHUM CATS to supportively resolve our differences to support each other.

## **Our Curriculum**

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**

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 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”.

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.

### **EYFS/Foundation Stage**

We offer a comprehensive induction programme into school life.

Children in the Foundation Stage follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, where there are six areas of learning –

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

Children participate in a wide range of activities, both indoor and outdoor, that provide a sound foundation for later achievements. The Foundation Stage classrooms have an outdoor area leading from the classroom to ensure the outdoor curriculum is used to its full advantage. The Foundation Stage allows our children to explore and develop their interest and understanding through carefully planned and shared activities and opportunities. Our Early Years really help our children to explore and engage in their learning.

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## **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 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;**

The Bellbird School has recently introduced the CUSP (Curriculum with Unity Schools Partnership), ‘high ambition curriculum’, whose pedagogy, approach, content and exemplified planning is identified on our long-term planning for Art and Design, Design and Technology, Geography and History. CUSP is guided by evidence-led curriculum structures, such as retrieval, spaced retrieval practice and interleaving. It is underpinned by explicit vocabulary instruction and research-focused pedagogy.

Long term curriculum sequences for each year group indicate broad learning objectives and links made between subjects. Units of work are planned, usually over a term or half term duration.

Year group curriculum sequencing plans provide an overview of topics/themes covered in each year group.

**Medium Term Planning:** these show specific objectives to be taught within each area of the curriculum and the links between them. They give a detailed breakdown of the skills, knowledge and vocabulary that must be taught in each foundation subject and identify cross-curricular links.

**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.

At The Bellbird we are focused on high quality teaching (HQT) for all learners. This is supplemented by a range of interventions and adjustments to cater for individual needs. We use scaffolding to support access to our broad and balanced curriculum. Where children have complex Special Educational Needs, we recognise that they may need a bespoke curriculum.

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### **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.

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**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 adopt a mastery approach, with ‘five big ideas’:

### Coherence

Teaching is designed to enable a coherent learning progression through the curriculum, providing access for all pupils to develop a deep and connected understanding of mathematics that they can apply in a range of contexts.

### Representation and Structure

Teachers carefully select representations of mathematics to expose mathematical structure. The intention is to support pupils in ‘seeing’ the mathematics, rather than using the representation as a tool to ‘do’ the mathematics. These representations become mental images that students can use to think about mathematics, supporting them to achieve a deep understanding of mathematical structures and connections.

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Mathematical Thinking



Mathematical thinking is central to how pupils learn mathematics and includes looking for patterns and relationships, making connections, conjecturing, reasoning, and generalising. Pupils should actively engage in mathematical thinking in all lessons, communicating their ideas using precise mathematical language.

### Fluency

Efficient, accurate recall of key number facts and procedures is essential for fluency, freeing pupils' minds to think deeply about concepts and problems, but fluency demands more than this. It requires pupils to have the flexibility to move between different contexts and representations of mathematics, to recognise relationships and make connections, and to choose appropriate methods and strategies to solve problems.

### Variation

Procedural variation considers how the student will 'proceed' through a learning sequence. Purposeful changes are made in order that pupils' attention is drawn to key features of the mathematics, scaffolding students' thinking to enable them to reason logically and make connections.

### 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?". As well as children developing progressive subject knowledge, we embed a range of scientific enquiry types within all our science learning. This exposes the children to the various ways in which we can study, test, collect data and present it, 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 are a fundamental part of The Bellbird's curriculum as it stimulates creativity, individuality and imagination in all pupils.

## **Art**

The CUSP Art curriculum that we follow at The Bellbird is organised into blocks with each block covering a particular set of artistic disciplines, including drawing, painting, printmaking, textiles, 3D and collage. Pupils can revisit key disciplines at increasing degrees of challenge and complexity and are equipped to successfully think, work and communicate like an artist.

## **Design Technology**

Our CUSP Design Technology curriculum inspires pupils to acquire knowledge as designers and technologists. The curriculum is organised into blocks with each block covering a particular set of disciplines, including food and nutrition, mechanisms, structures, systems, electrical systems, understanding materials and textiles. The children consider the design stages; creating prototypes, experimenting with different materials, making and then evaluating their product. They are encouraged to think about the production criteria and how to make their product unique. 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.

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## **Geography**

The CUSP Geography curriculum at The Bellbird focuses on 4 substantive concepts. These are locational knowledge, place knowledge, human and physical geography and geographical skills and fieldwork. 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.

Alongside our substantive concepts, we encourage the children to ‘think as a geographer’ through 5 areas of disciplinary knowledge. These are place and space, scale and connection, physical and human geography, environment and sustainability and culture and diversity. Place refers to a location and what it means to people. Scale and connection will give children a better understanding of locality compared to globality, as well as how places are connected. Physical and human geography will give the children an appreciation of how places are shaped and evolve. Our focus on environment and sustainability will encourage the children to think about our ethical consumer habits and choices. Finally, culture celebrates the difference between places and an understanding and respect for diversity.

## **History**

The CUSP History curriculum at The Bellbird equips children with substantive knowledge, the subject knowledge and explicit vocabulary used about the past, and disciplinary knowledge, the use of that knowledge and how children construct understanding through historical claims, arguments and accounts. The features of thinking historically may involve significance, evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspective and contextual interpretation.

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. We have a French specialist who teaches French to the children in KS2.

## **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. Both key stages have weekly singing assemblies, and every year group gets performance opportunities through class assemblies. We are passionate about music being at the heart of our school, recognising the role music plays in both children's academic and social development.

## **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, sometimes with the help of inspirational visitors. Children have plenty of opportunities to take part in extra-curricular clubs and competitions. All of KS2 participate in swimming lessons and our Year 4 and Year 6 children also have the opportunity to learn cycling skills through Bikeability. 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.

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.

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