

## Chapter 5: Our Curriculum

*'The curriculum is a framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage (**intent**); for translating that framework over time into a structure and narrative, within an institutional context (**implementation**) and for evaluating what knowledge and understanding pupils have gained against expectations (**impact/achievement**).'*

*Sean Harford, Director for Education for Ofsted, January 2018*

Providing a first class education for our children is our core purpose. Within the primary phase we seek to lay the foundations of knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare children extremely well for their next stage of education so that transition from one stage to another is natural, seamless and timely. We seek to develop in children a life-long love of learning and the underlying skills to enable them to succeed. Our curriculum aims to go beyond the merely academic, but also into the behaviours and attitudes we wish our children to demonstrate as citizens of the world.

At CHANGE Schools Partnership we believe that:

- The curriculum in our schools is everything that our pupils experience including the school and classroom environment, their interactions with staff and pupils and the quality of the daily pedagogy used in the delivery of a course of study.
- The content of our curriculum should build 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as collaboration, critical thinking and communication, and will continue to evolve responding to our ever-changing world.
- We have a moral duty to our most vulnerable pupils for whom we know education is the best route for a successful future.
- All children are capable of excellence through becoming reflective and independent learners within an environment that exposes them to great outcomes.
- We seek to promote children's intrinsic motivation by giving them choice and ownership over the direction of their learning.
- Children should love coming to school each day where their time will be filled with fun, purposeful and challenging learning.
- Children deserve learning experiences that will stick with them for a lifetime.

### Our Curriculum Intent

As a Trust, our aim is to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that takes into consideration the overall requirements of the National Curriculum (2014). In particular, we recognise the priority of children to have core knowledge and skills in English, Mathematics, Science and Religious Education. (Religious Education is taught using the Essex locally agreed syllabus). We recognise the increasing need to develop children's skills, exploring and using a range of technology and media as lives are lived on an international platform with international interconnectivity. Our aim though is to go further and provide an education that supports children's holistic development – academically, intellectually and culturally; socially and emotionally; physically and spiritually.



Scan for a link to the National Curriculum:



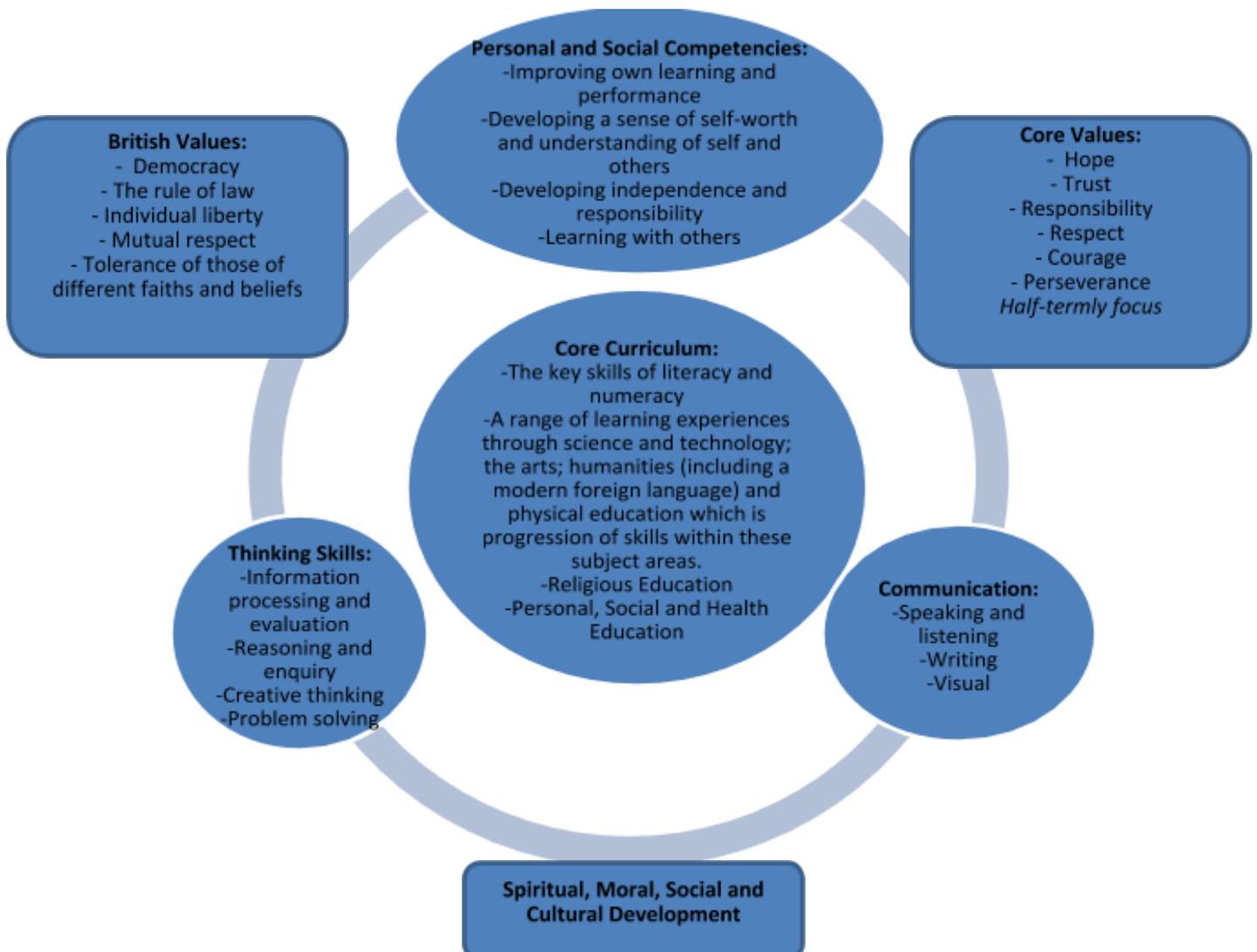
We seek to provide an inclusive curriculum either as a whole school, across year groups or within classes. This would offer ‘learning without ceilings’; rigour and challenge; and enjoyment, engagement and enrichment whilst acquiring the associated knowledge, skills and behaviours. This includes a range of opportunities that further our aims via extra-curricular and enhancement activities where children are provided with the opportunity to enrich their learning further.

**Curriculum Implementation:**

*‘We have a thematic curriculum: teachers use multidisciplinary themes.....for weeks or months at a time, and within these themes students complete projects. These projects are the primary framework through which skills and understandings are learned. They are not extensions of the curriculum or extras when the required work is done. They are themselves at the core of the curriculum. In the course of thematic study there may be three or four significant projects, most of which require research, writing skills, drafting skills, and sometimes mathematical or scientific skills. In the course of these projects there are usually traditional skill lessons and traditional information lectures as in any school. The difference is that these skills are put to immediate use in the service of an original project with high student investment.’*

*Ron Berger, An Ethic of Excellence*

Whilst we recognise that some subjects may be taught in isolation, we primarily want children to work on thematic based projects that bring the curriculum together with an intentional outcome. Projects need to be planned carefully and collaboratively, taking into account the following to ensure engagement, motivation, deep learning and progression:



## Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

At CHANGE Schools Partnership we have adopted the definitions given by Ofsted in the Subsidiary Guidance (April 2014) which states that:

Pupils' spiritual development is shown by their:

- beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings and values
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences

Pupils' moral development is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and their readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives
- understanding of the consequences of their actions
- interest in investigating, and offering reasoned views about, moral and ethical issues.

Pupils' social development is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, including volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- interest in, and understanding of, the ways communities and societies function at a variety of levels.

Pupils' cultural development is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage
- willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities.
- interest in exploring, understanding of, and respect for cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

## Implementing Our Curriculum

We know that we are responsible for educating the whole child and so we have a moral duty to ensure that we have a values-led curriculum, which promotes the behaviour and dispositions we wish to see in the citizens of the future.

As well as ensuring that the children have a grasp of the age expected knowledge base for their year group, there are broadly two kinds of outcomes that we wish our children to demonstrate: *prosocial outcomes* are to do with cultivating the attitudes of a good citizen; while *epistemic* outcomes are to do with the qualities of mind of a powerful learner who is able to deal with the uncertainty of an ever-changing world with confidence. Through our culture of learning and the curriculum we deliver, we need to develop the following characteristics within our children:

Prosocial Outcomes	Epistemic Outcomes
Kind (not callous)	Inquisitive (not passive)
Generous (not greedy)	Resilient (not easily defeated)
Forgiving (not vindictive)	Imaginative (not literal)
Tolerant (not bigoted)	Craftsmanlike (not slapdash)
Trustworthy (not deceitful)	Sceptical (not credulous)
Morally brave (not apathetic)	Collaborative (not selfish)
Convivial (not egotistical)	Thoughtful (not impulsive)
Ecological (not rapacious)	Practical (not only 'academic')

Our curriculum therefore reflects the following principles when designing short and long-term units of learning:

### 1. A focus on cultivating dispositions as well as developing knowledge

Helping learners to be confident about the disposition they are developing (e.g. getting better at dealing with setback) as well as what they are learning (e.g. complex algebra).

### 2. A set of learning to learn strategies

Equipping learners with a menu of learning strategies which they can deploy according to the context in which they find themselves (e.g. encouraging them to make inferences from the information they are given or scaffolding using a simplified version of a problem first).

### 3. Growth mindsets for all

Explicitly ensuring learners see that the analysis of and reflection on their mistakes is a sign of strength and not weakness.

### 4. Learners as teachers

Giving learners regular opportunities to teach other pupils something (e.g. having mini-mentors during lessons or encouraging older pupils to coach the younger pupils).

### 5. Authentic and connected prior experiences

Ensuring all learning themes and units of learning in English and Maths start by finding out what learners already know and inviting them to share this through pre-assessment tasks.

### 6. Stretching goals, feedback rich environments; all powered by engaging questions

Beginning all learning themes by exploring a 'big question', which is capable of being investigated at many levels and to which there are no easy answers.

### 7. Emotional and intellectual, social and individual

Consciously creating opportunities for all four of these important aspects of learning to be developed during units of learning.

### 8. Practical and academic experiences, within and beyond the formal curriculum

Learning of all kinds is genuinely and equitably celebrated within and beyond school (e.g. Children's University and recognition of sporting/personal achievements).

Based on these principles, learning at Trust schools therefore is:

- progressive, taking into account children’s prior knowledge and skills and with a clear understanding of what the desired outcomes for the unit of learning should be;
- focused on quality rather than quantity;
- aims to move from the shallow to the profound (see table below);
- personalised, taking into consideration children’s interests, views and prior understanding;
- reviewed throughout the unit/term based on progress to date, developing understanding and new lines of inquiry;
- facilitated through the highest quality creative pedagogical approaches including thematic learning journeys which use a ‘scintillating starter’ to hook children into learning; a ‘motivating middle’ which may include educational visits or external partners visiting the school; a ‘fabulous finish’ which encourages children to showcase their learning; and use of supporting resources from within and outside of the school;
- relevant, transferable and can be applied in a range of contexts;
- utilises a range of learning contexts to maximise engagement, enjoyment and progress;
- makes the best use of the local environment and facilities;
- actively contributes to children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, enabling children to have a clear understanding of British values and to prepare them for life in modern Britain.

Throughout our learning journeys, in a variety of subject areas, we aim to move children’s understanding from the shallow to the profound so that all children can demonstrate mastery in their understanding. Shallow learning is necessary within a curriculum, so that children grasp the foundational concepts of a theme or theory. Once they have built a core knowledge, they are then able to move into deeper learning where they can apply their understanding in a variety of ways, recognising and valuing how the learning is transferred through metacognition.

*Shallow learning is focused on the memorisation and replication of information, which is the basis of most education systems. It is getting the answer right. Deep learning is fundamentally concerned with the creation of knowledge, which the learner is able to relate to their own experience and use to understand new experiences and contexts. The deep learner is able to integrate theory and practice, to create holistic models and to distinguish between evidence and debate. Crucially deep learners know how to create knowledge, they are reflective about what they learn and how they learn. Profound learning is what makes us a person, it gives us a sense of uniqueness and determines our ability to think and act for ourselves. Profound learning is the way in which we develop personal wisdom and meaning, which allows us to be creative, to make moral judgements, to be an authentic human being who is able to accept responsibility for our own destinies. Profound learning builds on shallow and deep learning and is the ultimate expression of personalisation.*

**John West Burnham**

Through the curriculum offered in our schools and the emphasis on mindset and metacognition, children should develop some of the following characteristics of different modes of learning that moves their understanding from the shallow to the profound:

	<b>SHALLOW - What?</b>	<b>DEEP - How?</b>	<b>PROFOUND - Why?</b>
	<b>Foundational</b>		<b>Conceptual</b>
<b>Means</b>	Memorisation	Reflection	Intuition
<b>Outcomes</b>	Information	Knowledge	Wisdom
<b>Evidence</b>	Replication	Understanding	Meaning
<b>Motivation</b>	Extrinsic	Intrinsic	Moral
<b>Attitude</b>	Compliance	Interpretation	Challenge
<b>Relationships</b>	Dependence	Independence	Interdependence

This deeper learning can be developed through the types of inquiry based questions we ask children as part of their project based learning journey. This also models to children the type of questions we wish them to ask of themselves and their learning opportunities. Children should also be given the opportunity

to continuously reflect on their learning journey and adapt their questions and thinking as the learning develops and they gain new knowledge and insight through the crafting process.

An example might be:

Topic: Development of technology in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Huge question: What can history teach us about the inevitability of technological progress?
	Big specific question: Explain what you consider to be the most significant technological advances in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century so far?
	Sub-specific question: How have these affected the life of the average 10 year old?

### An Ethic of Excellence

All learning within our curriculum will aim for excellence through the emphasis on the crafting of ‘beautiful’ work – asking children to develop work and expertise through multiple drafts or revisions until it is ‘beautiful’ and has meaning beyond the classroom, representing the very best that the child is capable of producing (See chapters 2 and 3). Examples might include: application of concepts, performances that bring learning alive, art that represents higher level mathematical thinking, products that offer a solution to a problem, or poetry based on experiences and conversations.



As part of the thematic curriculum, there will be meaning and purpose that goes further than academic expertise in an area. As previously mentioned, curriculum design should begin with the end in mind with a variety of 'fabulous finishes'. Each project should be devised under the following broad categories where there is planned time within an academic year to work on several whole school projects:

#### An answer to a question

A question is posed at the start of the unit. Through a series of learning experiences, the question is answered at the end.

Examples include:

- Who was the best ruler ever?
- Can we move to space?
- Where did all the dinosaurs go?
- Advertising – manipulation or inspiration?

#### A solution to a problem or a discussion of an ethical issue

A problem is shared at the start of the unit. Through a series of learning experiences, pupils work towards solving the problem by the end of the unit.

Examples include:

- A crime has been committed in class 5. Who committed the crime and why?
- All children have a right to an education, yet there are still children in many places around the world who do not have access to education. How can we help solve the problem?
- Tesco want to bring out a range of healthy sandwiches aimed at children's picnics. What are the most tempting healthy options for children of a primary age?
- Immigration – what are the challenges and why do people emigrate?
- Plastic pollution – what are the facts and how can we reduce waste?

#### A completed challenge

A challenge is set for a particular future date. Through a series of learning experiences, the children develop the skills needed to successfully complete the challenge.

Examples include:

- Redesign the Olympics based on one value behind the event and bid for your chosen country to host the games in 2020.
- Open your own restaurant serving delicious healthy food to paying customers for a week.
- Lead a team of Vikings into a battle on a long boat.
- Open your own museum to showcase the school's historical learning.
- Develop a sensory garden for the school.
- Open a profit making healthy snack break time 'tuck shop'.

#### A final product

The pupils work through a series of learning experiences to gain the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to be able to successfully complete a final product after a planned period of time.

Examples include:

- Create a TV advert to raise the profile of the school.
- Create a book describing the history of their local town through artefacts.
- Make a class newspaper set in a period of history.
- Mural or large class artwork for the local community centre or library.
- Devise a new school menu for lunchtime.