

Grow and Flourish Curriculum– Intentions and Implementation



Communication

Intentions

Communication is central to the whole curriculum and underpins all areas of learning. It is fundamental to how pupils control their lives, build relationships, express thoughts, feelings and emotions, make choices and develop independence.

Our intention is to provide pupils with opportunities to develop and improve skills in:

- Expressing needs, preferences, thoughts and emotions
- Engaging with others socially and emotionally
- Understanding and responding to communication from others
- Using a range of verbal and non-verbal communication methods

Pupils are encouraged to transfer their communication skills, where appropriate, across all areas of the curriculum and into everyday life. They are supported to demonstrate their communication in a variety of ways, enabling them to interact with others, build relationships, make choices and develop independence.

Our aims are to enhance pupils' engagement and effectiveness as communicators through:

- A Total Communication approach embedded across the curriculum
- Providing meaningful opportunities to communicate in a range of contexts
- Developing communication through exploration, interaction and shared experiences
- Supporting pupils through personalised approaches and ongoing assessment of communication skills and understanding.

Implementation

Communication development is delivered through a range of practical, sensory and interaction-based approaches, with a strong focus on meaningful and purposeful communication. Teaching is designed to support pupils at all stages of communication, including pre-intentional and intentional levels.

A Total Communication approach underpins all teaching, incorporating tactile, verbal and auditory cues, objects of reference, photographs, symbols, Makaton signs and AAC systems alongside spoken language. Intensive Interaction is used as a key strategy to support early communication and to foster meaningful engagement for pre-verbal and pre-linguistic learners.

Opportunities for communication are embedded across the school day, including individual, small group and whole-class activities. Consistent routines and schedules are used to support understanding, anticipation and engagement. Pupils are encouraged to communicate with a range of people and audiences, using their preferred methods.

Communication is most effective when it is functional, meaningful and relevant. Pupils are supported to apply their communication skills in real-life contexts, helping them to express themselves, interact with others and develop independence in preparation for life beyond school.

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Creative Arts

Intentions

The Creative Arts curriculum at Fairfield School is designed to encourage curiosity, engagement and exploration through various art forms, fostering a space where pupils can express their ideas, feelings and creativity. Art and design are not just about creating; they are about giving pupils the opportunity to explore different media, experiment with materials and reflect on their personal choices. Through these experiences, pupils are empowered to share their thoughts and feelings while developing new skills. Whether it is through music, dance, movement or visual arts, our aim is to inspire creativity and provide an inclusive environment where every pupil can engage with the world through art.

In music, we aim to offer diverse opportunities for pupils to extend their musical abilities, appreciate sounds from different cultures and times and communicate their emotions through music. Whether through singing, instrument play or rhythmic exploration, music plays a vital role in supporting their academic, emotional, physical, and social development.

Implementation

To make these intentions a reality, the Creative Arts curriculum is carefully implemented through hands-on experiences across a variety of media and activities. In art, pupils develop their understanding of colours, shapes, textures and forms through observation and creative expression. They are encouraged to experiment with materials, explore their own ideas and engage with art through different processes—whether it is mark making, collage or sculpture. These activities not only help build their creativity but also develop their cognitive and emotional skills.

Music is woven throughout the curriculum, allowing pupils to engage with sound-making tools, experiment with rhythms and perform in group settings. With a focus on sensory exploration, pupils play with different instruments, create soundscapes and engage in collaborative music projects. They can express themselves vocally or using assistive technology, which enables them to participate in ways that suit their needs.

The curriculum includes practical, sensory-based learning like using hands and fingers for tactile exploration in art or experimenting with different instruments in music. Large-scale projects, cross-curricular connections and collaborative activities also give pupils opportunities to reflect on their artistic journeys and discover their unique preferences.

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Knowledge and Understanding of the World (KUW)

Intentions

The Knowledge and Understanding of the World (KUW) curriculum is designed to foster a deep awareness of the world around us, both in terms of history and geography, helping pupils develop an understanding of time, change and the environment.

Pupils will explore important concepts such as attitudes, values, issues, similarities and differences, processes and systems and location and place. They will learn how global events, people and environmental changes impact their own lives and develop a broader sense of the world they inhabit.

The aim is to inspire curiosity and reflection, encouraging pupils to ask questions, think critically and connect their own lives with the broader world. Through exploration of climates, physical features, cultures and history, pupils will gain knowledge of the world's geography and historical events. This approach aims to stimulate pupils' curiosity, fostering a sense of awe and wonder about the world, while helping them to understand patterns, processes, and sustainable development in their environment.

Implementation

To support pupils in developing their Knowledge and Understanding of the World (KUW), the curriculum is designed to actively engage them in learning through sensory experiences, investigation and exploration.

Pupils will be encouraged to use all their senses—sight, sound, touch, movement and even smell and taste—to engage with the world around them. This multi-sensory approach helps to deepen their understanding and make abstract concepts more tangible.

Lessons are designed to encourage pupils to investigate, question and make sense of both historical events and geographical features. Pupils will explore the world's physical landscapes, climates and environments, while also learning about historical events, people and changes. They will have opportunities to observe, reflect and make connections over time, identify patterns and classify and group objects or ideas in both history and geography.

Teachers will also use the outdoor environment as an extension of the classroom, providing pupils with hands-on learning experiences that enrich their understanding of geography and history. These outdoor learning opportunities allow pupils to explore real-world examples of geographical features and historical events, helping them to connect abstract concepts to the world they experience.

Through these diverse and engaging experiences, pupils will develop their Knowledge and Understanding of the World in a way that is both meaningful and personal, enabling them to make sense of the world and its past while preparing them to understand and engage with the future.

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Maths

Intentions

Maths is the skill of exploring and applying mathematical concepts, processes and understanding in a range of contexts.

Our intention is to provide pupils with opportunities to develop and improve skills in:

- Counting
- Understanding and using numbers
- Calculating simple addition and subtraction
- Describing shape, space and measure

Pupils are encouraged to transfer their mathematical understanding, where appropriate, to other areas of the curriculum. They are supported to demonstrate their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills in a variety of ways, enabling them to communicate, manage information, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.

Our aims are to enhance pupils' interest and engagement in maths and to strengthen mathematical understanding through:

- Integrating maths across the curriculum
- Providing opportunities to explore and manipulate mathematical ideas with curiosity and interest
- Introducing mathematical concepts, methods and language through a range of appropriate experiences and teaching strategies
- Supporting pupils' learning through personalised opportunities and continuous assessment of mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding.

Implementation

Mathematical development is delivered through a range of practical, sensory and theory-based methods, with a strong focus on embedding knowledge through real-life application. Teaching is designed to promote deep and meaningful learning by allowing pupils to practice mathematical skills in a variety of environments and situations.

Problem solving is a key part of mathematical skill development and pupils are encouraged to become active problem solvers across the curriculum. Opportunities for applying mathematical skills are built into both in school and off-site activities, such as the Post 16 café and trips to the supermarket, which support functional and purposeful learning.

When mathematical learning is functional, meaningful, relevant and purposeful, pupils are motivated to develop their skills, supporting independence and preparing them for future life.

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Physical

Intentions

Physical development is the process of exploring and developing movement, coordination and physical independence in a range of contexts.

Our intention is to provide pupils with opportunities to develop and improve skills in:

- Fundamental movement, including head control, sitting, standing and walking
- Agility, balance and coordination
- Spatial awareness, orientation and body awareness
- Manipulation and hand-eye coordination

Pupils are encouraged to develop their physical skills in meaningful contexts, enabling them to explore their environment, interact with others and engage more fully in learning and daily life.

Our aims are to enhance pupils' engagement and independence in physical activity and to promote overall wellbeing through:

- Supporting pupils to become as physically independent as possible
- Providing opportunities to develop confidence, competence and enjoyment in movement
- Promoting a healthy, active lifestyle to support physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
- Encouraging inclusion, cooperation and positive social interaction through physical activity

Working in partnership with families and professionals to identify and support individual physical needs

Implementation

Physical development is delivered through a range of personalised, practical and therapeutic approaches, with a strong focus on embedding movement into everyday life. Teaching is designed to meet individual needs and to promote active participation through engaging and meaningful experiences.

Pupils access a wide range of physical opportunities both in school and in the wider community, including hydrotherapy, swimming, rebound therapy, soft play, dance and yoga. Programmes such as MOVE and the Motor Activity Training Programme (MATP) support pupils in developing purposeful movement and recognising themselves as active participants at all levels of ability.

Physical activity is embedded throughout the school day. Pupils are supported with regular positional changes to enable engagement in learning, alongside the use of massage, stretching and positioning programmes to support muscle function, reduce stiffness and develop body awareness.

Learning is further supported through the use of specialist equipment and individual movement programmes, developed in collaboration with physiotherapists and occupational therapists. Pupils are provided with opportunities for both supported and independent movement, including weight-bearing activities to promote muscle and bone strength.

When physical development is consistent, meaningful and adapted to individual needs, pupils are motivated to engage in movement, supporting increased independence, improved health and greater access to the world around them.

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PSHE

Intentions

PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) supports pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

Our intention is to provide pupils with opportunities to develop and improve skills in:

- Developing a positive sense of self
- Building and maintaining positive relationships
- Understanding and managing emotions and developing self-regulation
- Developing independence and confidence in everyday situations
- Maintaining physical and emotional wellbeing
- Understanding how to keep themselves safe
- Recognising their role within the wider community

Through personalised learning experiences, pupils are encouraged to develop lifelong personal, social and emotional skills. They are supported to build confidence, resilience and independence while developing the practical knowledge needed to stay safe and healthy.

The PSHE curriculum also supports pupils to develop social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding, alongside Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) knowledge that helps them safeguard themselves and build positive relationships with others.

Our aim is to promote respect, inclusion and positive behaviour while supporting pupils' personal development through meaningful experiences and continuous observation of their social, emotional and communication development.

Implementation

PSHE is delivered through a range of practical, sensory and discussion-based learning experiences that support pupils' social and emotional development.

Teaching is structured around three core themes:

- Relationships
- Health and Wellbeing
- Living in the Wider World

These themes form the basis of learning across the school and are revisited throughout the year through a spiral curriculum, allowing pupils to consolidate and build upon their understanding over time.

Learning takes place through a variety of engaging approaches including structured activities, stories, role play, assemblies and discussion. Teaching is adapted to meet the individual needs of pupils and is supported through visual prompts, communication systems and real-life experiences.

Opportunities to develop PSHE skills are embedded across the wider curriculum and within daily routines. Pupils are encouraged to practise communication, social interaction, emotional regulation and decision-making in meaningful contexts.

When learning is functional, relevant and purposeful, pupils are motivated to develop their personal and social skills, supporting independence and preparing them for life beyond school.

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Reading

Intentions

Our reading curriculum aims to develop a love of reading and early communication, ensuring all pupils can access, enjoy and respond to stories, rhymes and a wide range of texts. We intend for pupils to understand that print carries meaning, to develop listening, attention and comprehension skills and to engage with reading in ways that are meaningful to their individual needs.

We aim for all pupils to make progress from early sensory engagement with sound, rhythm and stories through to recognising words, applying phonics and understanding texts, so they can communicate, make meaning and connect reading to their own experiences and daily lives.

Implementation

Reading is delivered through a Total Communication Approach, using AAC strategies such as objects of reference, symbols, Makaton and technology (e.g. VOCA devices, iPads). Pupils experience multi-sensory, highly personalised reading opportunities, including stories, rhymes, songs and non-fiction, with a strong focus on repetition, routine and engagement to support attention, understanding and enjoyment.

Teaching follows a progressive pathway from early listening and interaction to phonics, word recognition and comprehension, supported by adult modelling, shared reading and structured questioning. Pupils are encouraged to join in with repeated phrases, develop vocabulary, retell stories and make predictions and inferences, ensuring reading skills are applied in real-life and meaningful contexts.

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Writing

Intentions

At Fairfield School, we recognise that writing begins with communication. Our writing curriculum aims to develop pupils' ability to express their thoughts, needs, ideas and experiences through a range of mark-making, symbols, words and sentences, using a Total Communication Approach. We intend for all pupils to understand that marks, symbols and print carry meaning and that writing is a purposeful way to communicate with others.

We aim for pupils to progress from early sensory exploration and physical interaction with marks and tools to forming letters, writing words and composing simple sentences, applying phonic knowledge and vocabulary. Writing is designed to be meaningful, personalised and linked to real-life contexts, enabling pupils to develop confidence, independence and creativity in expressing themselves.

Implementation

Writing is taught through a multi-sensory, personalised and communication-led approach, underpinned by AAC and total communication strategies, including objects of reference, symbols, Makaton and technology such as VOCA devices (Voice Output Communication Aid), switches and tablets. Pupils are supported to explore mark-making using a range of tools, media and physical experiences, developing early skills in cause and effect, fine motor control and intentional communication.

Teaching follows a progressive pathway, from early mark-making and symbol use to letter formation, spelling and sentence construction, supported by systematic phonics teaching, modelling and repetition. Pupils are given regular opportunities to write for a purpose, including labels, captions, lists and simple narratives and to share, read aloud and reflect on their writing, ensuring skills are applied in meaningful, real-life contexts.