

**Garden Fields JMI School, Townsend Drive, St. Albans, Herts. AL3 5RL.**



## Creative Curriculum

### Rationale:

*In 2008, Sir Jim Rose the former director of inspection at Ofsted was invited to review the curriculum by the Education Secretary; Ed Balls. His report, The Primary Curriculum Review (2009) stated that the curriculum: ...must provide all pupils with a broad and balanced entitlement to learning which encourages creativity and inspires in them a commitment to learning that will last a lifetime.*  
(Sir Jim Rose, The Primary Review Remit 2009)

### Our Vision:

The Creative Curriculum at Garden Fields JMI School encompasses all core and foundation subjects and enables us to provide a high standard of teaching and learning.

We aim to foster a life-long love of learning, through adopting a highly practical and cross-curricular approach. Our Creative Curriculum aims to deliver a twenty-first century education that will equip our children with the skills required to be independent and responsible citizens.

### The creative curriculum statutory aims are to:

- a) Provide a broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account.
- b) Implement and develop the agenda for Excellence and Enjoyment while supporting the Every Child Matters Agenda
- c) Give children greater opportunities to develop their thinking and problem solving skills mathematically in a variety of situations using concepts of number, algebra, measurement, shape and space, and handling data.
- d) Teach learners to know about geographical, historical and social aspects of the local environment and the national heritage and be aware of other times and places and recognise links among family, local, national and international events
- e) Develop the use of ICT across the curriculum as an integral part of learning and teaching.
- f) Have an understanding and knowledge of the beliefs of the major world religions.
- g) Develop learners enquiring minds and scientific approaches to problems
- h) Enable the communication of knowledge and feelings through various art forms including art/craft, music, drama and by acquiring appropriate techniques which will enable them to develop their inventiveness and creativity
- i) Develop social skills and encourage children to become more active citizens within the school community and beyond.
- j) Promote pupils health and well-being, through a well-planned P.E curriculum and extended hours

opportunities, which provide a range of physical activities.

### **This is what the Creative Curriculum will do for our learners:**

- 1) We aim to increase learners' motivation, enthusiasm and engagement in their learning, making learning more meaningful, by putting it into context.
- 2) Raise standards in both teaching and learning.
- 3) Help learners become more independent and take greater ownership of their learning, developing children's confidence and motivation to learn through the use of a range of learning and teaching styles.
- 4) Give opportunity for a flexible timetabling approach to make space for true depth of study.
- 5) Establish cross-curricular links to foster a broader understanding.
- 6) Create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment, including Whole school and Key Stage "theme weeks"

### **Garden Fields wants Effective Learning:**

In order for a creative curriculum to lead to creative teaching and learning, the approaches in school need to be founded on the following principles:

- a) Children know what it is they are going to learn
- b) Children know what they need to do to be successful learners
- c) Children are helped to be able to assess their own learning and the learning of others
- d) Children receive positive feedback that helps them to identify what they need to do next
- e) Children have time to reflect and review their learning.
- f) Children feel cared about and are happy, secure, motivated and stimulated.
- g) The learning environment is well organised, attractive, stimulating and positive.
- h) Children experience a variety of learning situations, both indoors and outdoors.
- i) Lessons are interesting, stimulating and fun and children have the opportunity to learn through first hand, multi-sensory experience.
- j) Expectations are high.
- k) Timetabling provides opportunities for flexibility and spontaneity is encouraged.

### **How we develop teaching and learning styles:**

At Garden Fields JMI School we use a variety of teaching styles.

All lessons start with whole class teaching, using open-ended, probing questions, visual stimuli and talk partners; this is followed by a period of learning, where children may work independently, in pairs or as groups. A plenary may be delivered at any point during the session to extend or review learning.

We recognise that children have preferred learning styles, and so make allowances for this in our planning and delivery. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability and learning style of the children. (Further guidance can be found in the Teaching and Learning Policy)

We achieve this in a variety of ways by:

- a) *Planning open-ended tasks to elicit a variety and depth of response; setting tasks of increasing difficulty and scaffolding where appropriate,*
- b) *providing practical opportunities for kinaesthetic learners;*
- c) *using visual stimuli and artefacts to promote interest;*
- d) *using Teaching Assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children;*

- e) *using trips and visitors to further understanding;*
- f) *Group work to allow collaboration and develop thinking skills.*

Teaching staff are encouraged to capture children's interest and broaden their experiences through trips, visitors in school and providing real life experiences.

Children's achievements are celebrated regularly through Golden Book awards, merits, class blogs, displays in classrooms and shared areas around the school and during school assemblies.

The school also engages in Whole School 'Theme Weeks' which are planned throughout the year.

### How we plan and organise our creative curriculum:

The programmes of study of the National Curriculum tell us the minimum requirement of what needs to be taught in Key Stages 1 and 2. The aim is that the required Knowledge, Skills and Understanding are covered as many times as possible throughout the Key Stage.

In order to track the progression of skills, each subject is arranged in Levels and these are used to plan the next steps in children's learning. Long term plans indicate what themes will be taught and when. Using a brainstorm of activities, a topic is devised and we then consider what the best learning sequence would be. This may include how the topic will be introduced including a 'WOW' factor e.g. a visit, film or trip. The medium term plans for each topic hold the relevant Learning Targets and experiences.

There are three parts to our planning:

A. Long term themes for the year using yearly overview format: these are what themes will be taught and when. We also include a number of 'Theme Weeks' where all of the school works together promoting cross phase work when appropriate.

B. Medium term planning: Using a brainstorm of activities, including children's input about what they would like to learn within the topic; we then consider what the best learning sequence will be. Not all topics are expected to contain a focus upon each curriculum area. e.g. some may contain no history yet several science skills.

Each half term is also underpinned with a SMSC focus – for example **Goals, Attitudes to Learning, Resilience, Determination, Empathy, Negotiate**

c. Short term planning: Teachers use the Gardens Fields skills document and the midterm plans to create meaningful activities for the children. This incorporates:

- A formative assessment of children's understanding – such as a mind map
- How the theme will be introduced – A 'WOW!'
- Opportunities for trips and visits from external agencies
- What the learning outcome is.

Children's work is recorded in a draft book, science book, or art book - that is subject to the marking policy. Neat work is then published and presented in a 'neat' Topic Book showing the development of the pupils' learning.

At times there will be a need to teach 'stand-alone' units of work to ensure that the curriculum has full coverage.

### How we make assessment and record keeping of the pupils learning:

Class teachers assess and record attainment and progress of the core subjects, (see Assessment Policy)

- Class teachers monitor the coverage of Knowledge, Skills and Understanding by cross referencing with planning and ensuring progression from one class to the next.
- Each term children are assessed according to the Skills and children who are below, at and above expectations are noted.
- At the end of the school year class teachers plot children on a whole class tracking sheet and a copy is given to the subject leader. Subject co-ordinators collect evidence to compile a portfolio that allows them to assess how well their subject is being delivered; this includes planning, assessment data, photographs, work, and children questionnaires from year groups

### How we will monitor, evaluate and review our creative curriculum:

The Creative Curriculum Leaders are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Creative Curriculum on an annual basis, responding to monitoring and evaluation and discussions with subject co-ordinators. This process is reflected in the Leaders' action plan, and is achieved through:

- regular formal and informal discussions with staff
- regular observations of lessons
- analysing assessment data
- regular scrutiny of children's work
- monitoring planning to ensure curriculum coverage
- Collating data from staff, parent and children's questionnaires.
- Speaking with the children about their learning.

A Curriculum working team consisting of curriculum coordinator, subject leaders and teachers will meet to review and amend the creative curriculum action plans on an half termly basis, responding to lesson observations, book scrutiny, reviewing planning, and discussions with subject co-ordinators and Senior Leadership Team.

### Communication:

Governors are kept informed of developments and priorities through meeting with the Creative Curriculum Leader (or team). Parents and carers are kept informed of developments, through regular class letters, Head Teacher newsletter, open evenings and end of year reports.

### Ensuring Equal opportunities and special educational needs are considered with the creative curriculum:

It is expected that all children will be given the opportunity to learn in a creative and encouraging learning environment which encompasses a range of learning and teaching styles. All children are entitled to this as part of the ECM agenda. It is hoped that this approach will motivate and support children's learning at all levels including the Able and Talented, English as an Additional Language and children identified with a Special Educational Need (SEN).