



Grendon Underwood Primary School

Curriculum Intent and Rational

September 2021

Our aim is for every child within the MAT to flourish academically, socially and personally through the challenging, engaging and knowledge led curriculum that has been developed across our schools.

Our vision and moral purpose translates into a knowledge rich curriculum which is driven by a strong set of values about what matters. It is informed by research and deliberately designed to enable all of our children to have equal access to knowledge, to value the pursuit of that knowledge and to be able to use that knowledge for good.

Our curriculum is ambitious for all children and the careful sequencing and planning, underpinned by research, aims to support even the most vulnerable or disadvantaged appropriately to close the attainment gap. We know that our classrooms may be the only source of the structured knowledge essential in providing firm foundations for the future learning journey of some of our most vulnerable children and so this must be guaranteed. From the Early Years onwards, the knowledge and understanding that children acquire in their time at Grendon Underwood we support the development of critical thinking, analysis and creativity which we view as necessary precursors to future educational success.

Our curriculum is a framework for setting out the aims of our programme of education, including:

- The knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage (intent)
- Translating that framework over time into a structure, narrative and with subject specific pedagogy (implementation)
- Evaluating what knowledge and understanding pupils have gained against expectations (impact)

Curriculum ambition

The curriculum enables children to deepen their understanding of the key concepts within each curriculum area and develop their knowledge through carefully sequenced units of work. The detail of this is informed by research carried out by subject associations such as the Historical Association and Geographical Association, through the work of subject specialists and through ongoing feedback from staff delivering the curriculum.

We believe that the knowledge base of our curriculum is key to developing understanding and is perhaps the most significant factor that the school can control regarding tackling disadvantage, hence the need for it to be mapped so precisely. Specific tiered Vocabulary is also essential for that knowledge development and understanding and so it is both identified, sequenced and taught explicitly in order that children have the necessary language to communicate both orally and in written form in each subject area.

The sequencing of our curriculum is a key factor in enabling our children to make appropriate and informed links in their learning which we believe will deepen their knowledge and provide opportunity to apply, evaluate and analyse what they have learnt.

The curriculum is enriched through carefully chosen trips and workshops, which give children the experiences that bring knowledge to life.

Realising the ambition

We are committed to high quality professional learning that focuses on developing excellence in teaching, including strong subject knowledge and supported by robust, research-based formative assessment practices. Curriculum design is driven by a curriculum team which supplements the traditional subject leader roles. Subjects are taught discretely but links are made where there is natural alignment to ensure that children develop an interconnected web of general knowledge. A core reading curriculum is identified for all children and the non-core curriculum is a key driver in developing reading comprehension thereby supporting children to engage on a 'level playing field.'

How we know if the curriculum is being learned

The curriculum is the progression model – if children are keeping up with the curriculum then they are making good progress. Within the context of the WMAT curriculum we understand progress to mean knowing more and remembering more and being able to demonstrate that knowledge in different contexts. We ask: has the child gained the knowledge to understand the key concepts and ideas? Is this enabling them to develop the skills they need to master? We set regular low stakes quizzes as well as cumulative quizzes on previous topics. Assessment is carefully planned and activities are underpinned by the principles of Bloom's Taxonomy. We know that if knowledge has been learned and retained in the long-term memory it can then be used to analyse, create and evaluate and so opportunities are planned to enable this.