

Curriculum Policy

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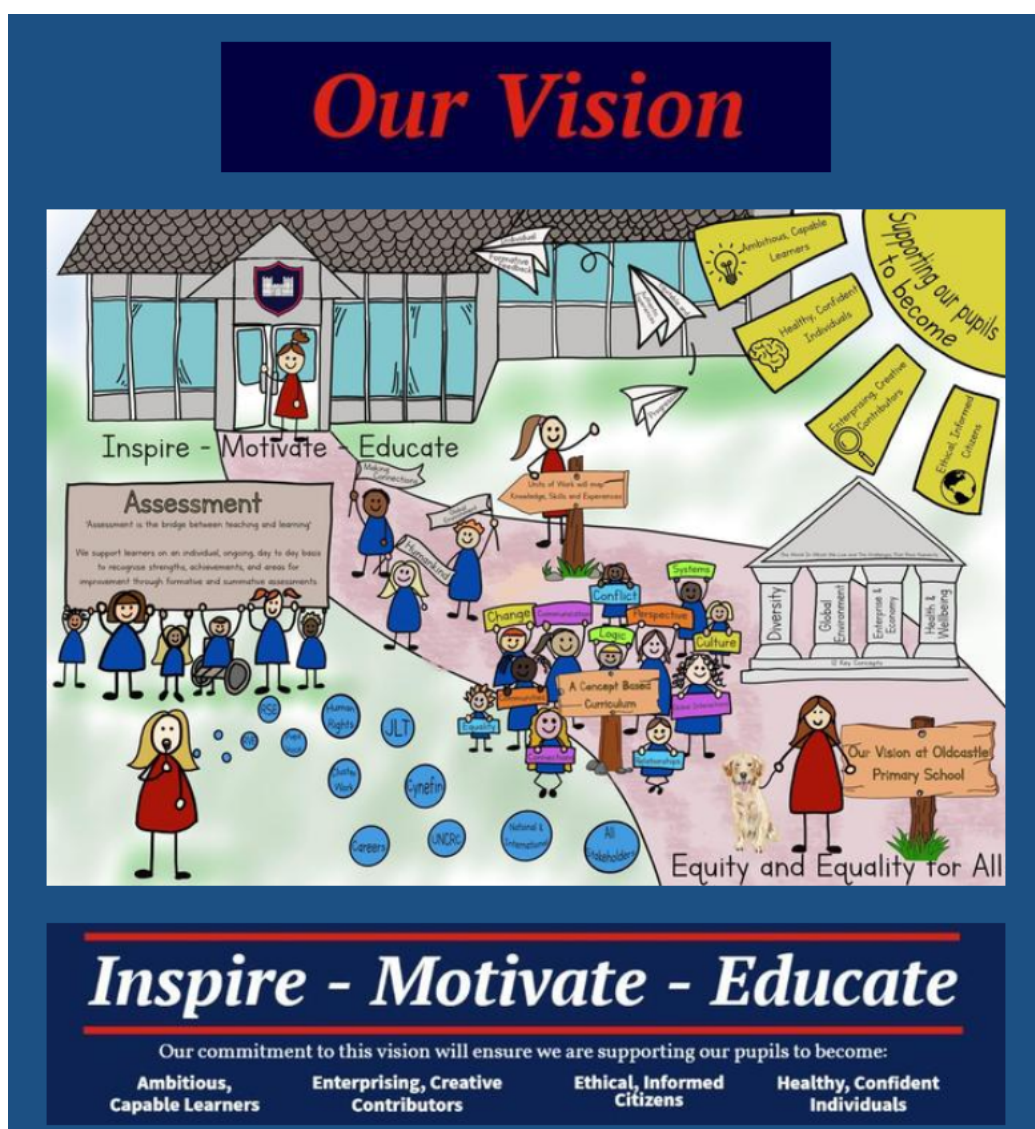
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1 Introduction

1.1 Oldcastle's Curriculum Vision

At Oldcastle Primary School we believe that every child should have the opportunity to access an enriching curriculum that challenges, inspires and excites them. Every child, regardless of background or socio-economic circumstances, should access opportunities to unlock lifelong learning, knowledge and skills that will enable them to become successful, happy human beings. Our pupils should be participants, not spectators, as they progress throughout their lives.

We have designed an inspirational curriculum that allows every child to participate fully in their learning. Through rigorous, coherent and progressive sequences of lessons, our pupils gain a detailed knowledge and understanding of Wales and the world, exploring both the past and present.



INSPIRE

At Oldcastle, we raise aspirations by providing inspiring, varied opportunities which break down potential barriers, build self-belief and remove self-limiting expectations. We believe that everyone has the ability to achieve greatness, and by providing the opportunities to explore many experiences, we believe that our children will be inspired to succeed as lifelong learners.

Everyone within our school community is encouraged to:

- Value and support collaboration in all areas of school life and at all levels. e.g. Junior Leadership Team, Pupil Champions, House Captains, and School Community Focus groups.
- Nurture collaboration, respect and communication, ensuring that the Junior Leadership Team and Pupil Voice work alongside the Senior Leadership Team to develop school improvement.
- Beyond the classroom, create opportunities for pupils to express themselves creatively using school resources and embracing the rich cultural provision of our local area, e.g. Newbridge fields, the local beaches, local nature reserves and drawing on expertise within the local area.
- Provide extra-curricular experiences to inspire and engage learners and promote wellbeing. For example, being part of local competitive team sports such as netball, rugby and cricket, where pupils compete within the borough.
- Connect with various local individuals, groups and other schools to provide bespoke learning experiences that reflect our curriculum. For example, through Careers Week and Brynteg Radio Collaborations.
- Live out our school values through our morning thoughts, Religious Education, Values, Personal and Social Education and Concept-Based curriculum.
- Ensure The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is embedded throughout the school community as a common language and all stakeholders understand the importance of upholding these rights.
- Provide constructive feedback to ensure pupils, staff and the school community know the next steps to achieve success.

MOTIVATE

At Oldcastle, we develop independence, resilience, perseverance, enquiry and creativity. We motivate our pupils through engaging, rich learning opportunities within and outside the classroom. We use a range of teaching approaches to facilitate high-quality learning and challenge our pupils to succeed.

Everyone within our school community is encouraged to

- Prioritise high emotional, social and physical well-being levels using our Wellbeing and Learning Champions.
- Commit to prioritising Physical Education and Physical Activity. as an integral part of the curriculum.
- Prioritise outdoor learning to enhance personal and social communication skills to increase physical and mental health.
- Use a cumulative enrichment provision that runs alongside our curriculum that empowers our pupils with life skills, simple life experiences, and learning experiences that expand their academic aspirations and opportunities.
- Develop oracy and presentation skills using our Radio station to create blogs, podcasts, interviews, and radio shows that unite the school community and motivate others to engage.
- Celebrate our Welsh identity through Eisteddfod celebrations, sports, art, drama, music and Welsh language lessons.
- Utilise our positive reward system to promote expected behaviours, values and work ethic, motivating all pupils and staff to be the best that they can be.
- Create a digital environment that is meaningful and purposeful, builds digital skills, and enhances creative learning.
- Provide engaging music that develops self-confidence, behaviour and social skills and improves academic achievement across the curriculum.

EDUCATE

At Oldcastle, we fulfil the potential of all our learners, identifying their needs and providing authentic learning experiences that support and challenge, which brings progress and success. All community members are learners and embrace learning as a lifelong skill. We believe education is a continuous process, and pupils should be equipped with the tools and skills to continue their learning journey for the rest of their lives.

Everyone within our school community is encouraged to

- Engage with our bespoke concept-based curriculum that is broad, balanced, and relevant to the pupils at Oldcastle. The curriculum considers the locality, history and community links within Bridgend and South Wales, as well as international issues affecting our pupils.
- Use the 27 What Matters Statements when planning the curriculum to ensure that children develop the necessary skills to underpin the Four Purposes as they move through their learning journey.
- Challenge all pupils to consider concepts that will develop their understanding of the world around them and create links to the Welsh curriculum, their locality and issues that affect them.
- Recognise the purpose and meaning of a cross-curricular approach, including all areas of learning and experience.
- Enable every child to reach their potential through high-quality teaching facilitated by highly skilled staff committed to professional education.
- Provide equality and equity to create a better society and worldwide democracy.
- Provide knowledge and experiences about how Wales sits within the global context.
- Provide a range of targeted interventions that effectively identify the needs of a broad range of pupils. e.g. Language Links, Numbers Count, Fresh Start.
- Provide high-quality provision for all pupils with Additional Learning Needs.
- Ensure a holistic and continuous assessment process is undertaken, using Assessment of Learning to inform and adjust learning experiences to create progression opportunities.
- Commit to respecting and learning from each other through our Religious, Values and Ethics curriculum, recognising the many faiths and none we embrace within our school community.
- Ensure Relationship and Sexual Education is delivered appropriately and reflects the child's understanding and developmental stages.
- Commit to and embed rich learning opportunities and experiences in every year group that raises aspirations by opening the world to our pupils. e.g. Careers Week.

1.2 Curriculum for Wales

We utilise the Curriculum for Wales framework when planning learning opportunities. The Curriculum for Wales was introduced across all areas of Wales following a review by Professor Graham Donaldson. The curriculum review suggested a purpose-led, progression-based curriculum with a local context to embed real-life, authentic learning experiences. The Curriculum for Wales runs along a 3-year - 16-year continuum.

Subjects within the curriculum have been combined into six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs). These six areas are:

- Expressive Arts
- Health & Well-being
- Humanities
- Literacy, Language and Communication
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science & Technology

There are three cross-curricular skill elements of the Curriculum for Wales:

- Literacy - Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening
- Numeracy
- Digital Competence

Mandatory curriculum elements should be taught across Areas of Learning and Experiences within lessons. The mandatory elements of the curriculum are:

- Values and Ethics
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Diversity
- Careers
- Human and Children's Rights

What are the Four Purposes?

Curriculum for Wales is a purpose-led curriculum, which means that we consider the purpose of education rather than focusing only on what content must be learned.

*“The **four purposes** are the **shared vision** and aspiration for every child and young person. In fulfilling these, we set high expectations for all, promote individual and national well-being, tackle ignorance and misinformation, and encourage critical and civic engagement.”*

Curriculum for Wales

The Four Purposes of Curriculum for Wales underpin our curriculum at Oldcastle and support children to become:

- ambitious, capable learners ready to learn throughout their lives

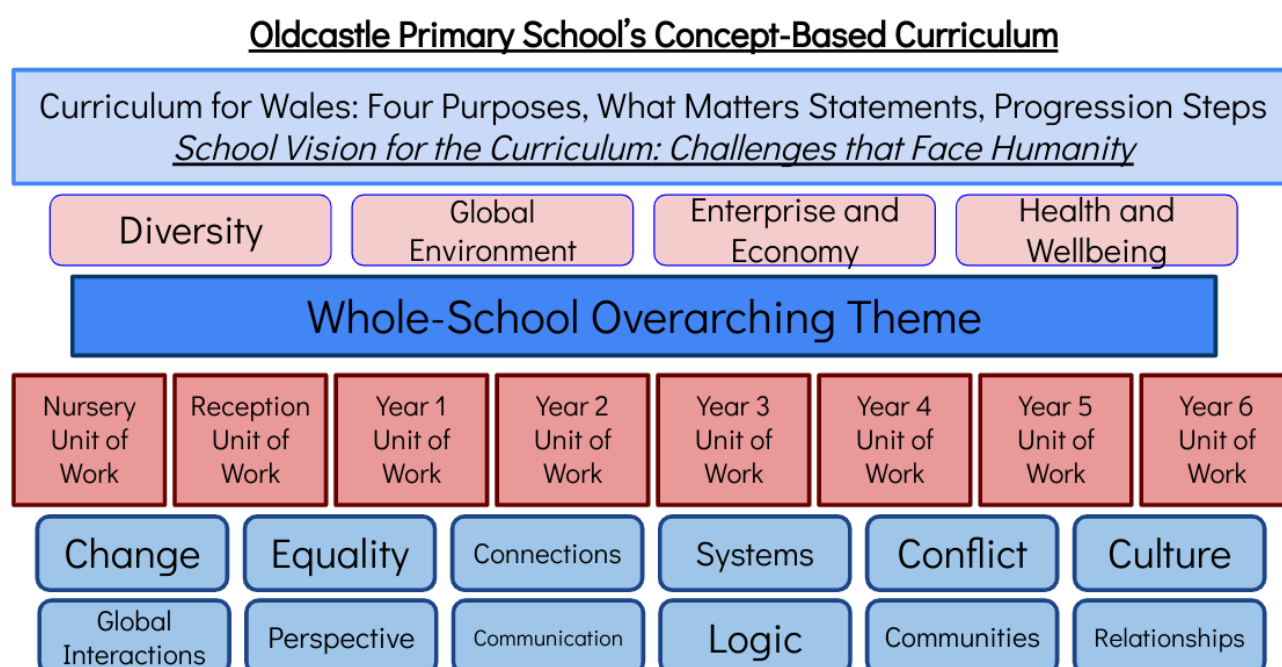
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work,
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

Progression

The progression reference points for the Curriculum for Wales are identified as Progression Steps. As a rough guide, Progression Step 1 will be covered at 5 years old, Progression Step 2 at 8 years old, Progression Step 3 at 11 years old, Progression Step 4 at 14 years old and Progression Step 5 at 16 years old. Progression is based on stage, not age, and pupils will progress at different rates. All assessment forms should inform teaching and learning, ensure that misconceptions are identified and addressed, and progress is made. Formative assessment, that is, assessment *for* learning, is embedded within all classroom learning environments, such as the use of questioning, discussions, written work and peer and self-assessment.

1.3 A Concept-based Curriculum

At Oldcastle, we have a concept-based curriculum. We plan lessons based on twelve key concepts and four challenges. The diagram below demonstrates the structure of curriculum planning:



The 12 concepts that pupils will explore throughout their education at Oldcastle are:

- Change,
- Equality,
- Connections,
- Systems,
- Conflict,
- Culture,
- Global interactions,
- Communication,
- Logic,
- Communities,
- Relationships.

By designing a curriculum that explores concepts, pupils can readily transfer knowledge and skills within and across subject disciplines.

Our concept-based curriculum is planned for each year group into Units of Work.

A brief example of the planning structure is detailed below:

During this Unit of Work, pupils will explore Human Rights and develop an awareness of equal opportunities. Pupils will recognise how the concepts of equality and diversity have changed over time. Research into women who have shaped the society in which they live today will enable pupils to recognise their right to freedom of expression and decision-making.

Overarching Theme: Humankind: A unit about what makes us human, celebrating our diversity and evaluating our impact on the world.

Unit of Work: Women who changed the world.

Key concepts: Diversity and Equality

2 Areas of Learning and Experiences

2.1 Units of Work

Planning of lessons for the Units of Work within each year group brings together elements of the six Areas of Learning and Experience. Each term, teaching and learning will focus on a lead AoLE and be underpinned by one or more supporting AoLEs to ensure a cross-curriculum approach to learning.

Bridgend and the local area are an important part of Oldcastle's history, and we place an emphasis on exploring these areas within teaching and learning. Pupils will be able to explore the local area to support learning, for example, using the local river to explore habitats and wildlife and visiting Porthcawl Lifeboat Centre to bring learning into a real-life local context.

Pupils will be encouraged to think critically, act independently, and conduct investigations to enhance key knowledge and skills. By creating factual, debatable and conceptual questions in the planning phase, teachers allow pupils to consider a range of viewpoints and the impact of key events and make informed decisions based on what they know. Lessons provided ensure pupils become interested participants in their learning and form habits that enable them to become life-long learners.

2.2 Literacy, Language and Communication

At Oldcastle Primary School, we have a holistic approach to literacy, aiming for excellent readers, writers, speakers and listeners. We want all our pupils to become fluent, confident readers who love to read! Communicating thoughts eloquently in written and oral form enables our pupils to be confident, capable learners.

We do this by using a range of approaches, including using:

- Read, Write, Inc.
- Oxford Reading Tree
- The Literary Curriculum
- Fresh Start (Read, Write, Inc. extension)
- Voice 21

Read Write Inc. (RW Inc.) is a complete phonics literacy programme that helps all children learn to read fluently and at speed to focus on developing their skills in comprehension, vocabulary and spelling. The programme is designed for children aged 4-7 years. However, at Oldcastle, we begin the programme in the Nursery and will continue teaching RW Inc. through a Fresh Start programme to children beyond the age of 7 if they still need support in their reading.

Alongside Read Write Inc., pupils in Nursery to Year 2 will access Oxford Reading Tree reading books. These books will be read in school and encouraged to be read at home.

As pupils progress through school, they will access learning through the award-winning Literary Curriculum, a complete, book-based approach designed to teach pupils literacy skills through high-quality texts. Teaching through a text creates a consistent, cohesive approach to literacy across the school and includes teaching spelling, grammar, syntax and editing.

Throughout the school, from Reception to Year 6, we use Literacy Tree to teach Literacy. The Literacy Tree is used across the UK and globally and is an award-winning educational

platform. All of the Literacy Tree resources use high-quality children's books, and for Writing, we follow their 'Teach Through a Text' approach to ensure consistency throughout the school. The Literacy Tree curriculum immerses children in a literary world. Creating strong levels of engagement to provide meaningful and authentic learning experiences. It encourages our pupils to become critical readers and acquire an authorial style as they encounter a wide range of significant authors and a variety of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. The text choices are also an important part of this - many links to aspects of History and/or encourage deep discussions.

Oracy is developed at Oldcastle using the Voice 21 programme. Through a high-quality oracy education, pupils learn *through* talk and *to* talk. This is when they develop and deepen their subject knowledge and understanding through talk in the classroom, which has been planned, designed, modelled, scaffolded and structured to teach them the skills needed to talk effectively.



Welsh Language

At Oldcastle, we pride ourselves on our ability to teach and deliver a high-quality Welsh Language education. We work alongside Central South Consortium and Cluster Network colleagues to achieve the aims and objectives within the Curriculum for Wales and supporting documents.

Siarter Iaith is a project introduced by the Welsh Assembly to all schools in Wales to promote the Welsh language. The Siarter Iaith is for everyone; all school community members have a part to play: the pupil voice, children, staff team, parents, carers, governors and the wider community. The aim of the Siarter Iaith is to increase the social use of Welsh by pupils and the school community.

Pupils participate in daily Helpwr Heddiw lessons, where games and activities develop sentence creation and key vocabulary. During the week, pupils will also participate in Welsh lessons, including reading, writing and developing oracy skills. Throughout the school day, within the classroom, within the school community and outside in the wider community, pupils, staff and visitors are encouraged to use Cymraeg.

Welsh culture and heritage are woven within and throughout Units of Work planned and delivered by staff. Pupils will explore key historical events that have impacted and continue to impact Wales, such as politics, sustainable developments and significant people of Wales and the world.

2.3 Mathematics and Numeracy

We have worked alongside experts and the cluster network of schools to create a robust and progressive mathematics curriculum for all our pupils at Oldcastle.

Mathematical concepts have been planned coherently across year groups, with progression at the heart of planning. Teachers plan lessons based on their pupils' prior knowledge and work towards *mastery* of new learning. Mastering maths means pupils acquire a deep, long-term, secure and adaptable understanding of the subject. The phrase 'teaching for mastery' describes classroom practice and school organisation elements that combine to give pupils the best chances of mastering maths.

Pupils are introduced to stem sentences from Nursery to Year 6. In maths, stem sentences include accurate mathematical vocabulary in a highly structured sentence that allows pupils to communicate their ideas with mathematical precision and clarity.

3 Assessment and Progression

The progression reference points for the Curriculum for Wales are Progression Steps. As a rough guide, Progression Step 1 will be covered at 5 years old, Progression Step 2 at 8 years old, Progression Step 3 at 11 years old, Progression Step 4 at 14 years old and Progression Step 5 at 16 years old.

Progression is based on stage, not age, and pupils will progress at different rates. All assessment forms should inform teaching and learning, ensure that misconceptions are identified and addressed, and progress is made.

Formative assessment, that is, assessment *for* learning, is embedded within all classroom learning environments, such as questioning, discussions, written work and peer and self-assessment.

Teachers at Oldcastle will continually assess pupils' learning based on work completed in class, observations, classroom discussions and questioning. Pupils will be provided clear and concise feedback on a day-to-day basis and have a thorough understanding of how to make progress.

4 Supplementary Curriculum Experiences

At Oldcastle, we run a number of experiences that allow pupils to access exciting opportunities. We offer the following to supplement and enhance the curriculum:

- Careers Week - An opportunity to explore a range of careers, ask questions and learn more about the world of work.

- Enrichment - Every Friday, pupils take part in enrichment activities. This time allows pupils to explore activities not usually part of 'traditional' curriculum content.
- Outdoor Learning - We utilise our local spaces to enhance our outdoor learning offer. Pupils can explore the natural environment within and around the school locality.
- Welsh Week - This week allows pupils, staff and parents to explore Cymraeg, Welsh culture and heritage. Pupils will be immersed in what being Welsh means to them and explore their 'Cynefin'.
- Eisteddfod - The school Eisteddfod allows the pupils to participate in an important historical tradition, incorporating the Welsh arts, music and poetry.
- Discovery Week - Discovery Week allows pupils to explore the world of Science and Technology. Pupils will carry out investigations and experiments and consider cause and effect.
- Community Hub - Our Community Hub continues to grow and develop. We utilise our local and wider community to enhance our pupil's education by drawing on expertise, using local resources and enabling pupils to enjoy all aspects of their community.
- Extra-curricular activities - We have a number of afterschool and lunchtime activities that promote and encourage the development of a range of skills.

5 Supporting Additional Learning Needs

We follow the guidance provided within the ALN Code for Wales (2021) and the Equality Act (2010) regarding supporting pupils with Additional Learning Needs.

Our curriculum planning is tailored to suit all pupils, and staff ensure that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds can access learning and participate in school activities.