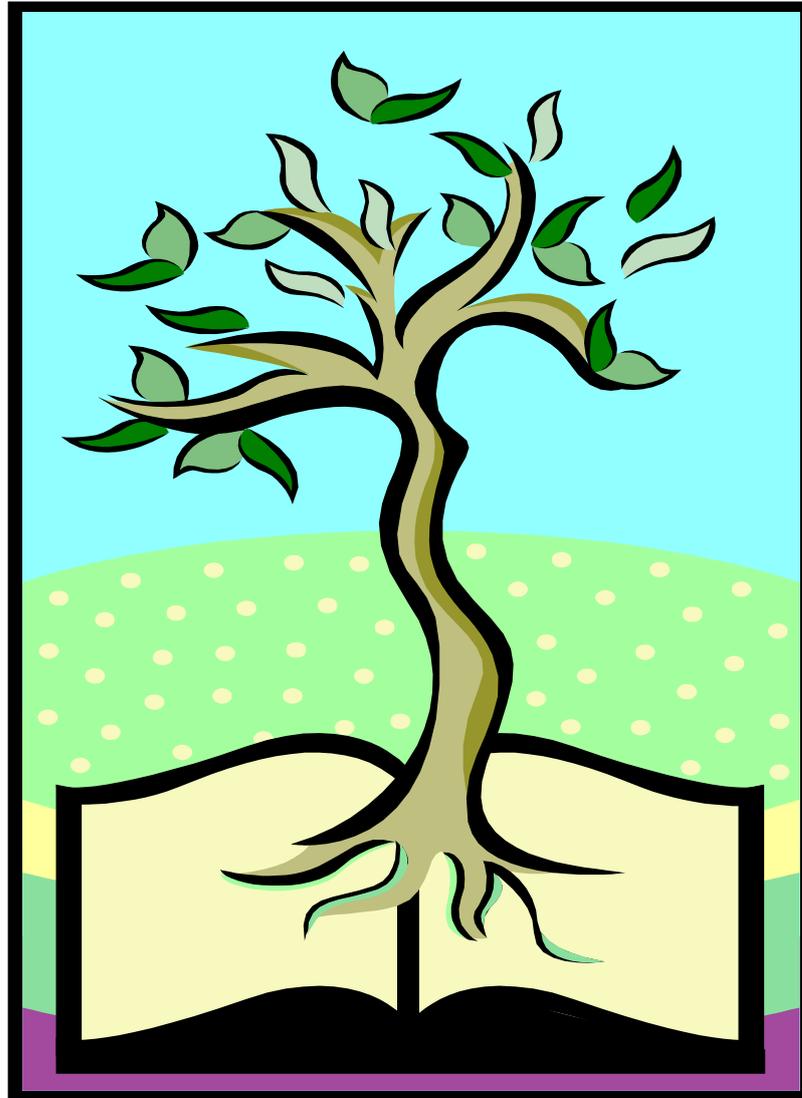


# *The Curriculum*



*'What is put in at the roots  
should come out at the branches'*

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH IN WALES (Aided)  
PRIMARY SCHOOL, KERRY

# The Curriculum

The curriculum is what is taught in school. The curriculum offered at St. Michael's must take account of the demands of the National Curriculum set out by the Welsh Assembly Government and enable all pupils to acquire basic knowledge, understanding and a range of cognitive and physical skills appropriate to their present and future needs. We therefore offer all children a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, differentiated to cater for the needs of the individual.

## Changes

In September 2008 major changes to the curriculum in all Welsh primary schools were implemented.

- All infant children from Nursery to Year 2 are taught from the Foundation Phase curriculum
- The KS2 curriculum has also changed to being skills based rather than driven by content.

Our school curriculum conforms to the legal requirements of the National Curriculum for children in the Foundation Phase (Nursery, Reception, Years 1 and 2) and Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6).

The national curriculum identifies the skills for each subject and the range of contexts, opportunities and activities through which these skills should be developed and applied.

We believe that if children are to learn successfully school should be a happy, ordered place. In order to achieve this therefore the curriculum must be:

**Broad:** Pupils will meet a wide range of experiences, knowledge and skills.

**Balanced:** Each curriculum area must make a contribution to the development of every pupil.

**Relevant:** Pupils achieve more when aspects of the curriculum are linked to the pupil's own experience.

**Differentiated:** Teaching will be geared to the ages, abilities and aptitudes of the pupils.

**Social:** We hope that children from our school will be confident of their own worth, tolerant of others and polite in their behaviour.

**Emotional:** We hope that children will experience affection, tolerance, humour and unambiguous examples of fair criticism and correction.

Pupils are taught mainly through a combination of cross-curricular themes and discreet subject areas. Each subject area / theme is well planned and monitored to ensure progression and continuity of learning for all pupils across the school.

# **The Curriculum in the Foundation Phase**

We place great emphasis on establishing a happy environment in order that young children can settle quickly and enjoy their first experiences in school. A wide variety of interesting and stimulating activities including ICT are chosen to arouse the curiosity of young children. All Foundation Phase pupils are given the opportunity to move, play and build and we make good use of the outdoor environment as an extension to the classroom. There are many well-organised resources, easily accessible to children. The period in the Foundation Phase gives a firm foundation to the education of every child and it is very important that the quality of this education is good and is full of interesting activities and experiences.

## **Language, Literacy and Communication Skills**

Competent use of language is perhaps the most fundamental skill, opening up the world of information and literature. Our main focus for pupils is in obtaining and developing oral skills. Children are encouraged to listen and respond appropriately to others, to talk about their needs, feelings and experiences. These opportunities will form a sound basis for progress in reading and writing. In so doing, we aim to provide a range of stimuli such as stories, role-play and rhymes including Story Sacks, a range of books, ICT and writing materials. In these early years we seek to immerse the children in language experiences.

## **Mathematical Development**

Children develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of maths through a variety of oral, practical and play activities. The language of maths is used in the context of number, size quantity, shape, measures and position.

## **Welsh Language Development**

Children begin to learn how to communicate in Welsh to the best of their ability. We help them to develop these skills by using incidental Welsh in class as part of our daily routines and encourage the children to respond appropriately in different situations. They participate in various activities and have access to different stimuli, such as books, games and ICT.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

We try to create an environment that encourages children to be curious and interested in the world around them. They have opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of people, places, past and present, living things and natural and man-made materials. We aim to develop awareness of the importance of the natural environment and encourage pupils to use their senses to explore, experiment and discover.

## **Creative Development**

Children explore a range of stimuli to enhance their imagination and creativity. They have opportunities to express their ideas through role-play, drama, dance, music, art, craft and design.

## **Physical Development**

Children are encouraged to enjoy physical activities both indoors and out and have opportunities to use small and large equipment to develop their gross and fine motor skills. They are introduced to concepts of personal health and safety through class topics such as Ourselves.

## **Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity**

This is at the heart of the Foundation Phase. The children learn about themselves and their relationship with others and are taught moral values, to show care, respect and concern for others and for their environment. They are encouraged to develop appropriate attitudes and they learn good patterns of behaviour. Their self-esteem is fostered so that they can work towards becoming independent thinkers and learners. Children begin to express their own feelings and to appreciate the feelings of others. We provide opportunities for social interaction in different situations. We aim to give children experiences which begin to develop their knowledge of the traditions of our country and to help them gain a positive awareness of the value of other cultures.

## Core and Foundation Subjects (Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2)

The Curriculum is split into Core and Foundation Subjects.

The core subjects are English, Mathematics and Science and as a Voluntary Aided School, we consider Religious Education to be a core subject also.

Foundation subjects include Geography, History, Welsh as a Second Language, Music, P.E., Art, Design Technology and Information Communication Technology (I.C.T.). Personal and Social Health Education (P.S.H.E.) and Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) are also taught, generally through the other subjects.

### How are they taught?

Subjects are taught both as specific disciplines and through topics and themes. Care is taken by teaching staff to ensure that coverage of the National Curriculum, appropriate to age and ability is achieved. Each subject area is well planned and monitored to ensure progression and continuity of learning for all pupils across the school. A wide range of activities and experiences are prepared to assist the children in their learning and, where appropriate, these may include visits to relevant places. The view of the school is that children learn through 'doing' rather than simply 'being told'. In this way their learning and understanding will be more complete and their time at school more enjoyable.

It is essential that the basic elements of reading, writing and number are covered in detail and at the appropriate level for each child. To achieve this there is a scheme of work (SoW) for each subject. Details of the National Curriculum and school policies are available in school upon request.

Information about the school curriculum in Wales can be found on the Welsh Government's website:  
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolhome/curriculuminwales/arevisedcurriculumforwales/?lang=en>

Pupils are taught according to their ability in different subject areas. As work is differentiated according to need and ability, material may be selected from earlier or later stages to enable children to progress and demonstrate achievement. Such material will be prepared in contexts suitable to the pupil's age. Supply teachers are informed by the Class Teacher of pupils for whom special arrangements need to be made.

Teaching hours in a typical week are as follows:

**Foundation Phase** - 22 hours 30 minutes

**Key Stage 2** - 23 hours 45 minutes

### PPA

All teachers are entitled to non-contact time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA time). By law this must be 10% of their total weekly teaching time. In St. Michael's we are fortunate to have excellent teachers to cover the PPA time who are responsible for teaching a subject area or part of a subject area. This ensures that standards are kept high.

*'The outstanding way in which the school implements and organises PPA time for teachers ensures that very efficient use is made of teachers' time, expertise and experience (and) ensures that high standards are maintained.'* Estyn Inspection Report May 2007.

## English

In Wales it is not compulsory to follow the Literacy Hour. The National Curriculum for KS2 separates the teaching of English into the following distinctive areas:

### **Oracy (Speaking and Listening)**

We encourage children to listen with concentration and understanding and to be able to respond appropriately. We encourage children to express themselves clearly, fluently and confidently in a variety of situations and to different audiences including assemblies and concerts. Children are given opportunities to discuss matters as individuals, in pairs and in groups.

### **Reading**

Reading is considered of paramount importance and our aim is that every child should be able to read confidently, with understanding, fluency and most of all, enjoyment. The children are encouraged to read different types of material and texts and have skills for acquiring knowledge and information from the written word. We have a range of levelled reading books that are used according to the needs of individual pupils. They have opportunities to read individually and in groups and are encouraged to take reading books home.

We would be grateful if all parents would support our Home/School Reading Programme and encourage their children to read as often and as widely as possible right through their school life.

Each class follows a guided reading scheme where the children experience a range of fiction and non-fiction texts in a group situation. Each group has the opportunity to work with their class teacher for a 20-30 minute session each week. The focus during these sessions is on developing and improving reading skills. These may include de-coding, phonics, prediction and character studies

The library has been refurbished and offers a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books which the children can use in school and also lend on a weekly basis; we are fortunate to have the help of Ms Howarth to run this. The school uses the local library Bookrunner service on a regular basis to encourage children to choose their own books.

### **Writing (including Spelling and Handwriting)**

We aim to develop a high standard of written English. Children should be able to convey meaning clearly and accurately through the written word. They are encouraged to write for different audiences and for different purposes, using correct spelling and punctuation with increasing confidence and writing appropriately in the different subject areas.

Throughout the school children have regular handwriting lessons which will enable them to produce a neat, joined, legible style. Children have regular spelling lists to learn and parents are encouraged to support them in this.

Whilst it is important to be aware of these areas when planning work and assessing children it is felt each informs the others and cannot be taught totally in isolation.

**Co-ordinator:** Mr Phillips

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mrs J. Kirk

# Mathematics

Pupils develop their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding through learning about and using Number, Measure and money, Shape, position and movement and Data Handling Skills. We aim to develop their application and understanding of mathematical skills by giving them opportunities to solve mathematical problems and to communicate and reason mathematically.

The school uses the Abacus mathematics scheme as a basic scheme for teaching maths but teachers draw on many other resources to supplement this and so ensure coverage of the National Curriculum programme of study and also progression and continuity across the school. This helps children to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in a well-planned and structured way that is both effective and challenging. In addition we also use a range of equipment and supplementary resources to ensure that children are challenged, supported and given practical experience of mathematical concepts.

We recognise that, to be confident in maths, children must have a sound understanding of basic number facts, multiplication tables and mental maths strategies, so we place great emphasis on these; they are regularly taught, practised and tested.

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of three skills areas:

- To solve mathematical problems
- To communicate mathematically
- To reason mathematically

The range of contexts through which these skills are developed are:

- Number
- Measures and Money
- Shape, Position, Movement
- Handling Data

**We aim to give your child the opportunity to:**

- Become competent in the use of number,
- Develop sound mental strategies in handling number
- See Mathematics as relevant and important part in everyday life
- Apply their mathematical knowledge in other areas of the curriculum and contexts
- Be able to investigate in a mathematical context
- Enjoy and participate in practical activity
- Use equipment to support their learning
- Develop the use of mathematical vocabulary

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs Thomas

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mr Martin Jones

## Science

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of four skills areas:

- Communication
- Enquiry
- Developing
- Reflecting

The range or contexts through which these skills are developed are:

- Interdependence of Organisms
- The Sustainable Earth
- How Things Work

We aim to make science interesting, thought provoking and fun. Science provides a unique opportunity for children to explore their real world in an exciting and meaningful way. Our aim is to retain and develop the children's natural sense of curiosity, awe and wonder about the world in which they live. Practical opportunities for exploration and investigation are provided wherever possible to encourage the children to develop a questioning approach and interpret their results and findings with increasing accuracy and sophistication.

The children are encouraged to become increasingly independent, taking more and more responsibility for their own learning. Communication skills are essential in science and children learn how to communicate their ideas and findings in a variety of ways. Wherever possible, science is taught through first hand experiences, supported by resources and information technology always with a view to safety.

**Co-ordinator:** Ms Sephton

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mr Paul Martin

## Religious Education

As a Voluntary Aided School, Religious Education is a compulsory part of our curriculum. The work we do is based on the Church in Wales Syllabus. The new R.E. core skills syllabus is taught through the following themes - the Bible, Jesus, the Church, Christian Life and Values, Other Faiths and Festivals. We regard Religious Education as an essential part of every pupil's education entitlement, which extends understanding of the world in which they live.

Children are invited to reflect and respond to the Christian teaching and explore their feelings, attitudes and values as individuals and as members of the local community and wider society. They also learn about the attitudes and values of different communities and faiths. Children are encouraged to make use of the central Prayer Space and reflective areas in each classroom.

As part of their work in R.E. the children often visit St. Michael's Church for research purposes and to further their understanding of the Christian faith. This also includes taking part in church services lead by the school and by Father Mark.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from both Acts of Worship and Religious Education lessons. As required by the Education Reform Act, parents should inform the Headteacher in writing at an early date if they wish to exercise this right, so that suitable alternative arrangements can be made.

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs Rendall

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mr R. Saunders

## Welsh as Second Language

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of three skills areas of Oracy, Reading and Writing. The school follows the Powys local authority scheme.

In addition to the teaching of Welsh as a subject by class teachers, we strongly encourage all children and members of staff to use the Welsh language throughout the day e.g. answering the register, making simple requests such as asking for lunch and talking about what they did at the weekend, holidays etc. Awards are presented to pupils for their efforts in using and speaking Welsh in and/or outside the classroom and a weekly award is presented to the class using the most Welsh.

We take advantage of opportunities to create a Welsh ethos in St. Michael's by ensuring that Welsh is given a prominent role throughout the school and that teaching material across the curriculum includes a Welsh element (Cwricwlwm Cymreig), where appropriate.

Pupils take part in singing, reciting, dance and art/craft competitions in the Urdd Eisteddfod where they attain very high standards. Children participate in an annual concert to celebrate St. David's Day. In the Spring term children in Year 5 have the opportunity to go on a residential visit to the Urdd Outdoor Centre in Llangrannog. In exceptional circumstances only, a child may be exempt from learning Welsh as part of the National Curriculum.

**Co-ordinator:** Mr Phillips

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mrs Rendall

## Information & Communication Technology (I.C.T.)

As ICT underpins today's modern lifestyle it is essential that all pupils gain the confidence and ability that they need in this subject, to prepare them for the challenge of a rapidly developing and changing technological world. By teaching ICT / e safety alongside ICT skills, the safe and responsible use of ICT will enhance and extend children's learning across the whole curriculum whilst developing motivation and social skills.

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of two skills areas:

- To find and analyse information
- To create and communicate information

Our vision encompasses the following aims:

- to enable all our staff and pupils to be confident, competent, and independent users of ICT. We aim to use ICT where appropriate to motivate and inspire pupils and raise standards across the curriculum
- to provide an environment where access to ICT resources is natural and commonplace
- to keep pace with educational developments in ICT and have a commitment to teachers having the necessary tools to do their jobs effectively
- to promote effective learning and teaching and to use ICT to extend and develop communication skills
- to extend opportunities for learning through home school links and community development

Therefore whilst at St. Michael's, all children will have the opportunity to gain 'hands on' experience of a wide range of I.T. resources. They will use their I.T. skills in all the curriculum subjects to support and enhance thinking, communication and number skills.

It is the intention of the school that children leave the school with well-developed skills in using software packages such as word processing, graphics, spreadsheets, data handling, modelling and control as well as experiencing a good variety of I.C.T. equipment such as listening stations, digital cameras, camcorders, data capture equipment, cassette recorders and filtered access to the Internet. We also endeavour to recognise the potential of ICT in the role of enabling and extending the learning of different groups of pupils e.g. gifted pupils or those with additional learning needs.

Every classroom has at least one computer and all classes have an Interactive whiteboard and projector. We have an excellent computer suite which contains 15 computers, a projector and interactive whiteboard and laser printer. We are working hard to improve the website so please take a look and make a comment in the Guest Book or Forum.

**Co-ordinator:** Ms Sephton

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mr Paul Martin

## Geography

Geography is concerned with the study of places, the human and physical processes that shape them and the people who live in them. The local area provides the context for much of the work in the Foundation Phase whilst older children compare and contrast this with other localities in Wales, the UK and around the world.

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of four skills areas:

- Locating places, environments and patterns
- Understanding places, environments and processes
- Investigating
- Communicating

The range of contexts through which these skills are developed include studying various aspects of their local area, of Wales and of contrasting localities outside the U.K., carrying out investigations about topical events and fieldwork. The use of ICT via visual and audio sources and as a communication tool extends their understanding and broadens their skills.

Through these studies we aim to foster an understanding of the world around them and an appreciation of other ways of life and cultures. The development of children's awareness of global citizenship and sustainability play a major part in our themes. We plan visits in the local area and further afield to provide pupils with opportunities to develop a range of fieldwork skills, such as first-hand observation and measuring data. Children are encouraged to form opinions about the relationship between man and the environment, to foster a sense of responsibility towards the environment and to gain a greater understanding of the world in which we live

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs Moss

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Father Mark Chadwick

## History

Through the teaching of History we want children to develop a chronological awareness, with an understanding about the past and its influence on life today.

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of five skills areas:

- Chronological Awareness
- Historical Knowledge and Understanding
- Interpretations of History
- Historical Enquiry
- Organisation and Communication

Pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of the history of their local environment and the history of Wales and Great Britain through a series of topics. There is a strong focus on aspects of daily life and children are encouraged to plan and investigate historically by asking questions and suggesting ways of finding answers.

Children's learning is enhanced by the opportunities they have to experience history through visits to places of historical interest such as Chirk Castle, workshops with Powysland Museum and other visitors, looking at historical artefacts, pictures and photographs. The use of ICT via visual and audio sources and as a communication tool extends their understanding and broadens their skills. Pupils are encouraged to use as much evidence as possible to build up a picture of the period they are studying and to use that evidence and information to make informed judgements about why people behaved the way they did.

**Co-ordinator:** Mr Phillips

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Father Mark Chadwick

# Physical Education

As a Healthy School and member of the PESS (Physical Education and School Sports) scheme we place great emphasis on involving all pupils in a wide range of sporting activities and on the value of participation in sport and recreational activities for fun, health and physical development. Physical Education is taught throughout the school. Children have access to a good range of sports facilities and equipment; we have a purpose built sports hall (which now includes a bouldering wall), an outdoor netball court and a football pitch.

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of four skills areas:

- Health, Fitness and Well-being
- Creative Activities
- Adventurous Activities
- Competitive Activities

Health, fitness and well-being activities pervade most P.E. lessons but may also be taught as a small topic-based unit. Creative activities include Gymnastics and Dance which are each taught for at least half a term every year. Competitive activities are Games based and are usually taught weekly. Adventurous activities, including problem-solving, journeying, bouldering and orienteering are becoming a greater part of the curriculum and are taught over the academic year.

Specific skills are taught focusing on a different aspect each term. In the school hall children develop their skills in Gymnastics; and express themselves in Educational Dance and Movement. In games children learn important skills including participation in small team games culminating in recognised games such as football and netball. They also play hockey, rugby, short tennis, Kwik cricket, bowls and athletics. Key Stage 2 children have the opportunity to compete in inter house and inter school sports competitions and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to have a residential trip to Staylitttle Outdoor Centre where they take part in activities such as abseiling, canoeing, problem-solving and orienteering etc.

- If your child is unfit for P.E. or swimming lessons, please send a note to school explaining this prior to the lesson.

## Swimming

All pupils from Years 3 – 6, and also Years 1 and 2 when circumstances allow, have the opportunity to have swimming lessons at Maldwyn Sports Centre during the year. Whilst the swimming tuition is free parents are asked to meet the cost of the coach through voluntary contributions. Children need a swimming costume and towel but may only wear goggles if a letter has been received from parents specifically authorising it. This is for reasons of safety and is a Health and Safety requirement of the Local Education Authority.

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs Rendall

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mrs J. Kirk

## Music

The school offers a range of musical activities for all pupils. All children are encouraged to perform, and to take part in events such as Church services, Chapel Anniversary and annual concerts. The choir performs for the school and the local community and takes part in Kerry Eisteddfod and Urdd competitions.

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of three skills areas:

- Performing
- Composing
- Appraising

Pupils develop their skills through a wide variety of activities. In the Foundation Phase children enjoy reciting and singing songs and rhymes in both English and Welsh. They learn to respond to and enjoy rhythm and music making with their voices, bodies and instruments. In KS1 and KS2 children build on these foundations and begin to make music with a diverse variety of musical instruments, including tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils learn to listen closely to and evaluate different types of music and compose simple tunes on tuned percussion, one of our keyboards or on the computer using a software package.

To encourage children to appreciate and enjoy all musical styles our Collective Worship each morning starts with a piece of music – this can be as varied as Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons' or Johnny Cash.

We offer high quality tuition from peripatetic music teachers for the violin, guitar and clarinet for Key Stage 2 children, for which there is a termly fee.

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs Thomas

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mr M Phillips

## Art and Design

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of three skills areas:

- Understanding
- Investigating
- Making

Pupils have many opportunities to develop their artistic skills in a variety of traditional and digital 2-D and 3-D work. We encourage children to experiment and develop their own techniques and make their own choices of media. Pupils study the work of famous artists, evaluate and find inspiration in their work. The range of different purposes of Art and Craft practice is recognised and compared when pupils study the work of other artists and learn to talk about their own and each other's work.

Children benefit from regular visits to the Oriel Davies Gallery in Newtown to take part in workshops and look at the work of local and other Welsh artists, craft workers and designers. Pupils' work is displayed throughout the school, contributing to a lively, stimulating environment. This not only gives them a sense of identity and ownership but also a sense of pride in their own abilities.

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs E. Holloway

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Ms E. Sephton

## Design Technology

This is a practical based subject that gives children the opportunity to investigate, evaluate, design, plan and make artefacts, pictures and models through the use of focused practical tasks. It involves the use of a variety of materials including textiles, wood, food, paint and paper. At all stages, pupils understand the need to work safely.

The KS2 programme of study is built around the development of two skills areas:

- Designing
- Making

Children develop their skills by studying:

Rigid and flexible materials      Food      Textiles      Systems and Control

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs E. Holloway

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mrs R. Davies

## Personal, Social and Health Education

The aim of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is to promote the personal and social well-being of pupils and enables them to develop a sense of self-worth and relate effectively to others. It is taught both as through PSHE lessons and through the other curriculum subjects and includes learning about aspects such as health, citizenship, caring for the environment and the world of work. It also seeks to develop pupils' emotional, spiritual and moral understanding.

Our health education programme is developed across the school through the delivery of National Curriculum Science and Health, Fitness and Well-being programmes of study and the PSHE framework and is mainly planned to link with other subject areas. It involves pupils in knowledge, skills and understanding of safety substance use and misuse, sex education, family life education, health-related exercise, food and nutrition, personal hygiene, environmental and psychological aspects of health education. We involve the use of outside agencies to support our programme e.g. Police, Nurse and Road Safety Officers. Children in Year 5 are given the opportunity to take a cycling proficiency award.

Our involvement in both the Healthy Schools and Eco-Schools Awards schemes reinforce pupils' learning and understanding of PSHE.

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs Moss

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mrs J. Kirk

# Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship

ESDGC is not taught in school as a discrete subject but it is part of the school ethos and integrated into all aspects of school life. In this way the school seeks to promote active learning to widen pupils' understanding of sustainable development. Children are encouraged to see links between society, economy and environment and between our own lives and those of people throughout the world. The local and global implications of everything we do and the actions that individuals and organisations can take in response to local and global issues.

We aim to promote a culture and ethos which values the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills in pupils to enable them to participate individually and collectively to improve the quality of life in a sustainable way. We respect and value diversity.

School council and eco-committee representatives from each year group are involved in making decisions about the environment of the school and participate in implementing those decisions – the first active steps towards active and responsible citizenship and stewardship.

The school is actively involved in improving performance against sustainability indicators, including waste management, fair trade and a green purchasing policy. Through the development of our school garden, we are supporting learning, promoting stewardship and improving the quality of life.

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs Holloway

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mr Paul Martin

## Eco-Schools

The Eco-committee is made up of a pupil from each class plus the school ambassadors. Mrs Holloway currently leads the committee with Mrs Rendall leading the Healthy Schools element. The committee also has members from the local community and governing body.

An action plan is decided upon each year to address issues in school such as waste minimisation, energy and water conservation and litter control. Each committee member feeds back decisions made at meetings to their class and the issues are addressed through classroom-based activities.



Our aim is to raise awareness in the school community of ways in which we can reduce our impact on the environment by re-using as much as possible and recycling. The school was awarded the prestigious Eco-Schools Green Flag in 2010 and we are currently awaiting news of its renewal.

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs Holloway

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mr Paul Martin

## Fairtrade School



Fairtrade is a strategy for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. It is a tool for development that ensures disadvantaged farmers and workers in developing countries get a better deal through the use of the international FAIRTRADE mark.

In school children learn about how some people are treated unfairly and how we can help others in different countries to get a fairer deal for the goods they sell. We were very proud to have first achieved Fairtrade status in December 2010 and again in 2011 and will continue to work hard to renew this award each year.

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs Moss

**Governor Co-ordinator:** Mrs S. Rendall

# Homework

Homework is any learning activity that pupils are asked to do outside of normal lesson time. The school believes homework is important for the following reasons:

- To bridge the gap between home and school
- To encourage self-discipline and personal organisation, especially in KS2
- To support learning
- To allow parents/ carers to take part their child's education and share in their child's learning

It is a valuable way of providing parents/ carers with an opportunity to know about their child's work in school.

'Well planned homework makes an important contribution to pupils' progress at school and helps pupils achieve high standards.' (*Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and training in Wales – Homework in primary and Secondary school 2004*)

## What homework will be given?

### Reading

This will always be a homework task. We hope that parents will take time to listen to their child/ren every day or at least 3-4 times each week and also to read to their children even in Years 5 and 6.

All families have been given a copy of the Parents-Child Reading Toolkit. This contains useful information and good ideas such as question prompts to help you to help your child become a better reader. A copy is also available on the school website.

Other reading activities may include reading – learning letters / blends, reading aloud to parents, reading for pleasure, reading for information

The setting of tasks to be undertaken at home will usually be linked to current class-work and may include activities such as:

- learning number facts such as number bonds, multiplication tables, doubles and halves etc
- learning spellings and spelling rules
- words / poetry for assemblies / concerts etc, - Church services, Christmas concert, Urdd, Kerry eisteddfod etc
- completion or extension of work begun in class – e.g. finishing off a worksheet
- additional research – e.g. looking for information about stars, people in history etc
- collecting information – e.g. nutritional information on food packaging
- investigations – e.g. shapes of shadows
- discussion – e.g. asking grandparents about their school life,

*We will not set homework for its own sake or because a child is being taken out of school for a family holiday.*

## How often is homework given?

The frequency and length of the homework tasks will vary according to the age and ability of the child and may vary according to the programme of work in class at the time or other activities that are going on.

The following Welsh Assembly guidelines are not rigid but give a rough idea of how much time children should be spending on homework:

Years 1 & 2 – 1 hour per week

Years 3 & 4 – 1-2 hours per week

Years 5 & 6 – around 30 minutes daily

We do understand that there are many opportunities to learn and develop through participation in a wide range of challenging and enjoyable activities such as sport and voluntary or community activities, that children also need time to relax, socialise and enjoy life outside school and that homework should not limit such opportunities. Homework will be therefore be discussed regularly and monitored annually to ensure that it remains relevant and that pupils are not overburdened.

## Feedback

Homework will be marked regularly by the class teacher and helpful feedback given either in writing or orally in class.

We expect parents to sign and date their child's reading book and homework and welcome any comments parents wish to write in reading record books, homework books and on worksheets etc. In this way a valuable dialogue can develop which helps to maintain closer links between home and school. We hope that parents will always feel able to ask for advice about their child's homework or what they can do to help them in other ways.

### **What happens if homework is not completed?**

Homework should be completed and returned to the teacher within the time set. It is important that the children develop good habits regarding this but, given a good reason, teachers will be understanding if this is not possible.

If homework fails to be completed on a regular basis then the class teacher will discuss this firstly with the child. If it continues, the parents will be contacted to establish the reason why and look for a solution to fit that child.

### **Monitoring and Recording Progress**

Teachers make on-going day to day judgements about children's progress in order to plan next steps in their learning. We also use published assessment material to help us check on children's progress and development on a more formal basis - our Baseline Assessment for 4 year olds and a variety of reading, spelling and maths tests all provide useful information. Test results are recorded on class record sheets and updated at least annually or as appropriate. Teachers use the tracking system 'INCERTS' to track the skills progress made by individual children and to plan the next steps.

Individual targets are set within year groups and copies sent to the L.A. for statistical analysis. If a child's progress gives cause for concern parents will be informed by the class teacher. The L.A.'s Special Educational Needs Support Service or Psychological Service may be called upon to confirm the school's assessment and to assist the child in any way deemed appropriate. Parents are always kept fully informed of any dealings by outside agencies with their child.

At the end of each key stage, (Year 2 in the Foundation Phase or Year 6 in Key Stage 2) teachers make assessments to ascertain pupils' achievement and these are reported to parents. In the Foundation Phase the areas assessed are 1.)Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity 2.)Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and 3.)Mathematical Development. In KS2 the pupils are assessed in English, Maths and Science. From 2010 this has also included Welsh as a Second Language for Year 6 pupils. As children progress through school they gain knowledge, understanding and skills in these subjects, this progress is measured in levels.

### **End of Key Stage Assessment**

There are nationally-expected standards for the end of each Key Stage; these are Outcome 5 for Year 2 pupils and Level 4 for Year 6 pupils. Of course, children vary greatly in their skills and aptitudes, and it is not at all unusual for pupils to achieve below or above the expected levels or to achieve different levels in the three subjects. For example, please remember that a child who has reached Level 3 in maths at the end of Year 6 may have actually made far more progress during KS2 than one who has achieved Level 5.

The school holds an open evening and two formal parent consultation evenings during the year. During these evenings the child's class teacher will discuss each child's progress and current learning targets with parents. An annual written pupil report is sent to parents in July. Parents have the opportunity to respond in writing to this report and we hope that you will offer a comment as it is important in helping us evaluate our work with the children.

Subject areas are monitored on a rolling programme basis by subject co-ordinators and governors.

- Information about the National Curriculum for Wales can be found on the Wales Government website.

Useful guidance for parents is available by following the links:

How is my child doing in the Foundation Phase?

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/120829foundationphasesep11en.pdf>

How was school today? Parents' and carers' guide to primary school Ages 7–11

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/120517howwasprimaryen.pdf>

## National Curriculum Levels explained

When they first begin school at age 4, the majority of children are achieving within Level W, which means Working Towards Outcome 1.

During Year 1 and Year 2, most pupils study subjects at Outcomes 4 and 5, with some at Outcome 6 (equivalent to Level 3).

During Key Stage 2, which lasts for four years, most pupils study subjects at Levels 3, 4 and 5.

	Foundation Phase Outcomes	Key Stage 2 Levels	
Very rarely, there are circumstances that prevent a school from having enough knowledge and evidence on which to base a teacher assessment.	<b>N</b>		Very rarely, there are circumstances that prevent a school from having enough knowledge and evidence on which to base a teacher assessment.
In some circumstances the headteacher may decide that all or part of the Foundation Phase curriculum does not apply to an individual, for example because of a child's special educational needs.	<b>D</b>		In some circumstances the headteacher may decide that all or part of the Key Stage 2 curriculum does not apply to an individual, for example because of a child's special educational needs.
For some children, performance below the expected level may be a huge achievement.	<b>W</b>		For some children, performance below the expected level may be a huge achievement.
For some children, performance below the expected level may be a huge achievement.	<b>Outcome 1</b>		For some children, performance below the expected level may be a huge achievement
	<b>Outcome 2</b>		
	<b>Outcome 3</b>		
	<b>Outcome 4</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	
Achievement at Outcome 6 or beyond shows they are achieving above average.	<b>Outcome 5</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	
Achievement at Outcome 6 or beyond shows they are achieving above average.	<b>Outcome 6</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	
Some children might be expected to achieve significantly above the expected level.		<b>Level 4</b>	This is the expected level for children at the end of primary school – most but not all children will achieve this level
		<b>Level 5</b>	Achievement at Level 5 or beyond shows children are achieving above average
		<b>Level 6</b>	Some children might be expected to achieve significantly above the expected level.

## Training

Members of staff are regularly involved in courses provided by the LA, in-service training and staff meetings to improve their subject knowledge and professional standards. There are five in-school training days (INSET) each year.

The school has connections, informal and formal, with Coleg Powys for BTEC students. Placements in the past have proved valuable to both the school and the trainee.