

Our 'Expressive Curriculum'

thinking, talking, creating, learning

Milton Abbot School: Curriculum intent, implementation and impact

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Curriculum Handbook introduced: **September 2019**

Reviewed: **Annually**

Next review: **September 2021**

Our 'Expressive Curriculum' – Statement of Intent

"Thinking, Talking, Creating, Learning"

Our curriculum has been designed, organised and planned to ensure every child receives an engaging and purposeful blend of academic and personal development, with a strong focus on communication skills, self-care, ethical knowledge and creative thinking. In practice, this means our curriculum places equal importance on core and foundation subjects, with the development of expressive skills threaded throughout: we want our pupils to speak up, speak out and speak clearly. As part of this, our curriculum teaches pupils, through experience and opportunity, as well as provoking debate, to develop their own ideas, views and opinions. We believe that through the curriculum we can impact on how they feel about themselves, so that they feel clever, confident and ready to tackle any challenge they may face.

Shared Aims: Every Child Achieving

"Talking Learning, Challenging thinking, Deepening knowledge"

The Milton Abbot School curriculum is designed to be **flexible** as we aim to provide **all** pupils, regardless of advantages or need, with a curriculum that is **rich in vocabulary** and well-chosen **knowledge** that is transferable, **empowering pupils** to have the **skills** and capacity to perform. These are the Principle Aims every member of the team is expected to apply to their curriculum thinking, planning and delivery. Our curriculum must:

- Ensure **'Reading for knowledge, reading for pleasure'** is at the heart of our planning and teaching. Every opportunity to promote reading must be seized upon by class teachers.
- Ensure a **love of language and a playfulness with vocabulary** is central to every learning opportunity – *teachers must model, and children must practice*, using a rich, deep, technical, exciting and varied.
- Deliver a broad range of curriculum experiences and opportunities that teaches a **cultural capital of knowledge** whilst developing the skills to apply this knowledge effectively
- Encourage and develop a **confident and positive attitude** in all pupils towards the learning tasks they are set, especially new challenges. To aid this, teachers must be very clear on the purpose of the learning and invite and inspire questions
- Develop **active learners who want to achieve** their potential, and can ask questions and share opinions, becoming increasingly self-reflective and taking responsibility for their own learning, academically and socially.
- Teach children to become **active listeners who can question** and respond during learning tasks and beyond.
- Instruct and support pupils to become **strong team players**, knowing that this is a skill for life and future employment.
- Grant children the opportunity to learn how to **effectively articulate their opinion and feelings** on a wide range of subjects based on knowledge and experience (adapting to different contexts and audiences).

- **Be varied** – no teacher or pupil should be ‘rooted’ to the classroom alone, pinned by electronic chalk and talk with robotic systems that lead to poor learning habits. Our Curriculum must be **alive, active, varied, surprising, multi-sensory**, whilst always leading with purpose and challenge.

Bibliography: We have taken positive points from our research, including:

‘The Curriculum – Gallimaufry to coherence’ by Mary Myatt

‘Closing the Vocabulary Gap’ by Alex Quigley

‘Bringing words to life’ by Beck, McKeown and Kucan

Curriculum Design: ‘what’ will we teach

The Milton Abbot teacher team, in response to the introduction of the *Education Inspection Framework* (EIF, 2019), designed our ‘Expressive Curriculum’ to be aspirational in the breadth and depth of knowledge and experience we offer. We want to develop and embed a rich ‘cultural capital’ intended to last a lifetime for every child. To us, offering a ‘rounded education’ means applying due diligence to the entire National Curriculum content and treating every subject with respect. We believe that the speaking, listening, thinking and exploring taught in Science and the Arts or Humanities and Dance is sure to have a positive impact on English and Maths standards, alongside regular test practice. A ‘rounded education’ also requires teaching the children to explore and learn beyond the National Curriculum.

We believe that ‘Reading and Writing float on a sea of talk’ (James Britton), so across the Expressive Curriculum the agreed expectation is that pupils will be taught and given the opportunity to: ‘talk through their thinking’, explore their views and opinions based on experiences and to learn to express themselves in a range of contexts and audiences (from partner work to whole school collaborative events).

Subjects - Areas of Knowledge: our intentions

Every Area of Knowledge requires a pupil to learn how to express their thoughts, ideas and opinions clearly in a range of contexts and before a range of audiences. We teach the National Curriculum purpose and objectives but have a principle aim for each area of knowledge that seeks to explore deeper than these, i.e., art isn’t just about imitating a style but it is also about forming opinions and preferences that you are able to express clearly. Threaded throughout each area of knowledge is the opportunity for pupils to practice and develop their reading, writing and maths skills, which are the ‘golden blocks’ that form the foundation of our curriculum.

<p>Artistic knowledge and Ingenuity: Art Design & Tech. Music Dance</p>	<p>Pupils will study all the expressive arts (music, dance, art) as they move through the primary phase, making links between different time periods. This is intended to build a comprehensive set of explorations and experiences that will ultimately help individuals to form and express their own opinions about the expressive art they like or dislike. Our pupils should revel in the exciting range of artistic expression.</p> <p>Ingenuity offers pupils the chance to explore inventors and inventions, as well as a wide range of construction techniques that will allow them to complete small scale and large scale projects during the primary phase. The principle purpose is to evaluate and improve their work, as well as exploring the levels of their own creativity.</p>
<p>Ethical knowledge</p>	<p>Pupils will learn to explore and debate their views and ideas. They will learn what it takes to be a local and global citizen, deciphering the rights and wrongs in their world from a current or historical viewpoint. They will learn how to make positive choices with the strength to say ‘sorry’ or ‘yes’ or ‘no’.</p>
<p>Historical knowledge: History</p>	<p>Pupils will consider their view of Britain in the present. They will then explore significant people and events linking back through the past to see what or who has shaped Britain over time. Pupils will revisit time periods to deepen and broaden their knowledge and</p>

	understanding of the significance of this time: we don't believe you can learn everything about Romans in just half a term. Key Stage 2 enjoy weekly History lessons as we believe it has the power to teach stories, engaging language and really strikes at the heart of Cultural Capital.
Human Science/Natural Science: Science	Pupils will gain knowledge across the range of different sciences, whilst working scientifically to gain skills that will help them deepen their thinking and achieving first hand evidence for themselves. Our pupils will explore the different areas of science from zoology to botany.
Relationship Education: Self-knowledge	Pupils will learn about the biology, physiology, psychology and sociology behind what makes them human. They will learn to develop views and opinions and find out what matters to them, building self-awareness and self-esteem. They will explore healthy lifestyles and different ways to make safe choices as they grow.
Artificial intelligence: computing	Pupils will look at computing and how to program. They will consider the value of technology alongside any negative connotations or dangers. They will develop their creativity and ingenuity by considering what the future could look like and how technology could play a part.
Geography	Pupils will explore the local and world geography, using practical fieldwork skills as well as gathering secondary research. They will consider the unique positives and negatives of their surrounding area. Pupils will learn about Britain and compare it with other countries with contrasting geography. They will learn to value local but think global.
Religious knowledge	The principle aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ways of living. <i>We follow a locally designated scheme.</i>
French	Pupils will learn a modern foreign language during regular lessons (French). However, they will also learn the basics of different languages as they compare countries with their own, learning to recognize different geographical features. We will follow Miles Globetrotter, a well-travelled pig who goes on lots of adventures, as he goes up mountain and diving into rivers. Pupils will receive postcards from his French cousin which they will have to decipher.

Pupil progression has been designed for each subject, supported by the online assessment tool 'Tapestry', with an 'end-point' or purpose stated. Teachers are expected to plan and sequence each area of knowledge so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before whilst going deeper during discussions and explanations than the minimum requirements of the National Curriculum.

Where possible, we employ specialist teachers or individuals with expert subject-knowledge to inspire greater depth within the learning experience. Our timetable enables the teacher and learners to invest time and exploration into each subject.

‘The Primary Climb’ – planning a route and building a long-term memory: our intention is that learning lasts throughout the Primary phase and beyond. It is embedded deeper as they move through to the end of Year 6 and beyond. We have ‘end-points’ in mind and planning seeks a path to meet these goals (we call ‘The Primary Climb’. Through research, we know that holding knowledge in the long-term memory requires making links between learning and language. Therefore, each Area of Knowledge is planned to revisit and ‘reuse’ vocabulary and key concepts. Repeating key knowledge is not seen as a ‘waste of time’ but as a fundamental part of laying pathways and strengthening recall of knowledge. Teaching that is engaging and purposeful helps imprint learning in the long-term memory. Finally, a key strategy will be end of term ‘Quick Fact Quizzes’, with revision periods offered, so that pupils are repeatedly asked to retrieve the key facts learnt, which research tells us helps lock these in the long-term memory.

‘Reading for knowledge, reading for pleasure’: at the heart of every subject is reading and a love of language. Teachers are expected to model and share at every stage and within every Area of Knowledge. As part of this, we also intend to close the vocabulary gap and teach ‘words with a bit more dimension to them’ for those children who need it most and in doing so form a firm foundation for social mobility.

Curriculum Implementation: the art and science of teaching – what is ‘necessarily elaborate’?

Ofsted’s *Education Inspection Framework* states that it does not want to see ‘unnecessarily elaborate’ teaching. At Milton Abbot School, we view teaching pedagogy as an ancient Art and a noble Science, with the two elements constantly needing to be blended together to impact on the learner.

Like any great artist, a teacher knows learning can be a messy business requiring reflection and corrections but it is also rich in moments of inspiration. We encourage our teachers to demonstrate their individual flare and creativity to get the best out of every child: we would call this ‘necessarily elaborate’. However, such creativity becomes ‘unnecessarily elaborate’ if it does not possess a clear sense of purpose and direction. So, teachers at Milton Abbot School are required to ask themselves: *Why am I teaching this lesson? What do I expect the children to learn? Where does it fit into the sequence of learning?* Therefore, any such teaching artistry is underpinned by logical systems that plan for progress without short-cuts and assessment that maps progress effectively.

To support this pedagogy, teachers must have enough time to plan. This means reducing the burden of bureaucracy and time taken on other tasks wherever possible. This includes written feedback, especially when all research confirms that verbal recognition and advice is much more powerful. Teachers have time together to share planning thoughts and ideas.

Our **shared pedagogy** consists of the following **shared implementations**:

- Teachers are required to ask themselves: *Why am I teaching this lesson? What do I need to teach, and how best to deliver, to ensure pupils grasp the purpose?*

- Every lesson should have a clear structure: Questioning/Talking through learning, Modelling, Practice. The plenary should ask pupils to share what they have just been learning with a partner and then to the whole class.
- We are teachers not 'content providers': learning is not parroting. Teachers should pose questions, provoke debate and promote curiosity. Teachers should give answers and determine facts.
- Every learning should be supported by the teaching of strong English and Maths skills throughout the curriculum, including reading.
- Assessment for Learning: teachers should be making use of a full range of assessment techniques (whiteboards, fans, thumbs-up, etc.) throughout a lesson to make rapid judgements of any misconceptions across the class.
- Active Learners: every class operates a no hands-up for answering a teacher's question but hands-up for asking the teacher questions, which is intended to ensure all learners are actively listening and thinking of their own answers.
- Active learners: teaching is designed to help learners remember in the long-term and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts.
- Teachers plan for pupils to produce something worthwhile with the knowledge they have gained, including the forming of an opinion which they can express coherently and powerfully as well as something beautiful to take pride in.
- 'To know, to remember': key facts, dates and quotes are captured on knowledge organisers, which allow for reference in lessons as well as supporting the revision of key information for knowledge recall tests ('Quick Fact Quiz')
- 'Up-wording' – teachers put a focus on language and articulation into every lesson, in the same way they do for reading. Up-wording is taking a word and thinking of a different or better examples that the pupils could use. This may be displayed on a Word Triangle for that sequence of learning.

Golden Blocks: Teachers and leaders have agreed the essential knowledge and skills every pupil will need to support strong progress and achievement. Known as the 'Golden Blocks', these are the skills and the knowledge that is given regular teaching and learning time and revised repeatedly, known as 'over-learning'. These are principally:

Reading for knowledge

Reading for pleasure

VIPERS – comprehension

Communication skills

Place value

Times-tables

Handwriting

Spellings

Phonics

More 'Golden Blocks' can be added according to the identified need of our children over time. However, these are essential skills for learning and life that we believe will always stand the test of time and will prepare pupils for the Secondary phase.

Curriculum Impact: answering the right questions!

The best intentions, like the best teaching, count for very little if the impact is minimal or muddled. Muddle can be largely avoided if we are at least asking ourselves the right questions. Key questions that we need to keep asking ourselves as both teachers and leaders include:

- Have we got a clear rationale underpinning our pedagogy?
- Do we plan sequences effectively? Can teachers explain where they want pupils to be at the end of: a lesson? a week? a term? a year? a key stage?
- How do we know if a child is better at X, Y and Z?
- Are teachers implementing effective strategies and pedagogy in the classroom? consistently?
- How can we be sure that the impact is secure and long lasting?
- What more can we do to ensure progress is maintained and/or accelerated?
- Are we using our resources effectively, efficiently?
- Do we communicate effectively with all concerned (pupils, parents, Governors)?
- How do we know if a child is ready for the next phase of their education?

At Milton Abbot School, our intention is for teachers and leaders to have the ability and capacity, through robust but clear systems, to evaluate the impact of our teaching on learning at every stage of the 'Primary Climb'. We have the following systems to support such evaluation.

Base-camp: before we begin the Primary Climb, a number of baseline assessments and measurements are taken. This enables teachers and leaders to measure impact on progress and achievement, as well as identifying gaps. We currently complete baselines for Reception, Phonics, Times-tables and Spellings.

The Headteacher completes an 'Accountability Pack' and 'Action Plan' at the start of the academic year that makes clear the key challenges and targets for the whole school team based on end of year and baseline data. Appraisal targets are based on this and a pupil 'Watch list' is initiated for those pupils most vulnerable to not achieving expected outcomes.

Assessment and Revision weeks: at the end of each term (3 x per year) pupils complete a range of assessment tasks and tests which will allow teachers to make summative judgements of pupil progress and achievement. Retrieving is recognised as a valuable tool in storing information in the long term memory. Pupils will complete NFER tests for Reading and Maths (year 6 will also sit mock SATs tests), as well as Quick Fact Quizzes (QFQs) on the subject knowledge they have covered in foundation subjects. These tests are repeated and added to throughout the year, affording revision time and the use of Knowledge Organisers to prepare and recap key facts. Spellings and times-tables are also tested and compared against the baseline at the start of the year. Writing progress is mapped through independent writing tasks at the end of a sequence.

Tracking progress and achievement: teachers update class trackers that indicate which pupils are on track to be age-related or better at the end of the year. Leaders monitor these trackers and offer challenge and support to the teacher, ensuring effective systems of intervention are in place. The Headteacher holds Pupil Progress meetings after each assessment and revision week to monitor and challenge progress in class.

Reading Scheme: teachers follow a reading sequence that links with phonics and allows for reading comprehension progress

Tapestry is an online tracker that contains the key indicators and objectives within Foundation subjects. Teachers update Tapestry during assessment and revision weeks and/or at the end of a block of knowledge.

Quick Fact Quiz scores are recorded and an increase in pupil scores indicates that knowledge is being retained. Teachers map common themes in the test scores and respond during revision periods. For example, if the majority of pupils cannot recall a key date, then the teacher is expected to make a focus of this in class.

Expressive Curriculum books: pupils record their learning in Expressive Curriculum books, which become a tapestry of the different knowledge they are learning. Some subjects are about breadth, some require depth exploration and others contain both. Our Expressive Curriculum books can evidence learning at the time of teaching; whether pupils retain this learning as 'cultural capital' will be more readily evidenced through the Quick Fact Quizzes.

Expressive Activity: teachers select a block of learning to share as an Expressive Activity – a way for pupils to share their learning before an audience (i.e., to another class, as an art gallery, a fashion show or presentation...). Teachers can assess how much knowledge pupils have retained during this activity and can also judge the level of confidence pupils exhibit as a 'performer' or speaker.

Artistic Portfolio: pupils will present their final pieces of art in a portfolio, which will allow teachers to judge progress of technique and skills during the year, but as the portfolio is added to each year it will serve as a record of progress and achievement from the start to the end of the Primary phase.

Ready for the Secondary Phase: Our Pupil Parliament have agreed a list of skills and attitudes that will be required to ensure pupils are ready for Secondary school. From 2019, pupils will be surveyed at the end of Year 6 to generate feedback on how ready they feel to move onto the Secondary phase of their learning. Academically, we know they are ready if they pass their Reading and Maths SATs tests, and can write several pages in one session that is easy to read and uses a sophisticated level of language and punctuation. Year 7 teachers will be sent a transition survey to ask how ready they felt the Milton Abbot children were for the Secondary phase. Any returned information will form an action plan moving forward to make any necessary improvements.

Pupil Voice: 'Curriculum Council'

Every term a representative from each class meet with one of the Milton Abbot School's Phase Leaders to talk about their topics and how their learning journeys are developing. Each child from the Curriculum Council will have asked pupils, from their class, a series of questions (created by the council) and they will feed these answers back to the Curriculum Leader and other members of the Curriculum Council and discuss any opportunities for change. In addition to this, the Curriculum Council will organise termly topic challenges for pupils and they will gather suggestions for academy trips, learning 'hooks' and 'WOW days' from their peers.

Parent Voice: annual questionnaire

Parents and carers are informed about our curriculum provision via the curriculum maps sent home and made available on the school website. Curriculum opportunities are also promoted via the online classroom platform 'Class Dojo' which includes photographs of activities.

Pupil progress is sent home on a termly basis, indicating to parents whether their child is on track or not to achieve age-related expectations. Parents have a right to reply at this stage. A questionnaire is sent home on an annual basis and from 2019/20 there will be questions on the curriculum provision and will invite feedback on the broad and balanced opportunities we endeavor to offer. All feedback is treated seriously and improvements are sought based on this feedback.

Governors: evidence gathering

The Headteacher reports to the Teaching and Learning Committee who in turn report to the Full Governing Body. Governors on this committee, at least, complete learning walks and meet with leaders to challenge on curriculum provision. The central questions: does our school curriculum inspire a rich and deep knowledge in a pupil that is long-lasting? If so, how do we know? Response to this question is recorded and report to FGB, who can then challenge further as required.