

# Southesk Primary School

## Curricular Information for Parents



Dear Parent/Carer,

In Southesk School we work hard to maintain and promote an honest, open, transparent and friendly culture within the school community in which every person is valued.

Pupil, parent and staff views are central to school decisions and several strategies are used to ensure that this happens. We consult with the Southie Parents - our supportive Parent Council, with pupils during focussed discussions or our wider Pupil Forum meetings and of course with all parents/carers through a variety of discussions and questionnaires to gather your views.

We value ensuring that home-school relationships are very positive and the purpose of this booklet is to give you further, more detailed information about the learning opportunities available to your child. Staff use curricular progression pathways and curriculum overviews to ensure that your child learns by building on their prior learning while being challenged to achieve and make progress.

This booklet contains information on the main areas of the curriculum and how it is constructed. Staff also use the National Benchmarks to ensure that there is a focus on achievement and progress at each curriculum level within the school. It is important to remember however that all children have different strengths and needs. What we do strive to ensure is that pupils are constantly challenged to achieve and make progress, that they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and progress and are fully supported at home and at school to do this through demonstrating a growth mindset and a strong awareness of where they are in their own learning journey.

School staff are keen to involve you in supporting your child's learning and I hope that you will contact the school should you feel it is required. The school is also constantly striving to improve opportunities for family learning and with its new Family Learning Lounge is looking at new ways forward to involve you as parents and carers further in the life of the school.

Yours sincerely

Sara Morgan

Head Teacher

# Southesk Primary School

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### Southesk Primary School Vision, Values and Aims

#### Our Vision:

To collaborate with all of our learning community to promote an ambitious, inclusive culture within which we can Light up Learning for our families so they can be Successful learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors and Responsible Citizens.

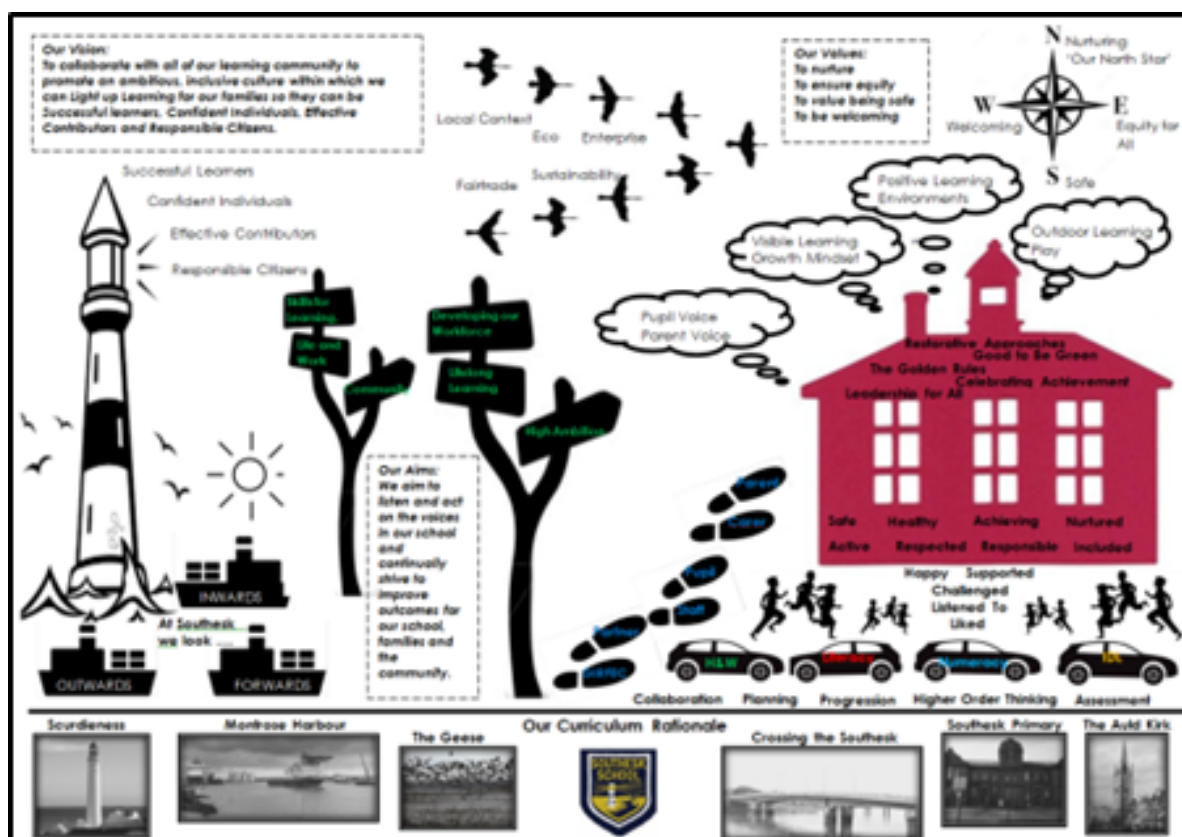
#### Our Values:

- To nurture
- To ensure equity
- To value being safe
- To be welcoming

#### Our Aims:

We aim to listen and act on the voices in our school and continually strive to improve outcomes for our school, families and the community.

#### Our Curriculum Rationale:



Written with pupils, parents and staff in June 2016

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### About the curriculum:

What are the purposes of education in Scotland?

The ambition of a Curriculum for Excellence is that all children and every young person will become:

**Successful learners -learning to learn**

**Confident individuals - learning to be**

**Responsible citizens - learning to respect and co-operate with others**

**Effective contributors to society and work -learning to do**

The 21st century curriculum will provide support, structure and direction to young people's learning so that they can maximise their potential in each of these four areas.

What do we mean by 'Curriculum'?

The curriculum is the complete range of experiences and activities planned for children and young people throughout their schooling. Learning in schools will take place through a wide range of planned experiences and outcomes in the following eight curriculum areas:

- ⇒ Expressive Arts – including art and design, dance, drama and music
- ⇒ Health and Wellbeing – mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing, PE, food and health, substance misuse and relationships, sexual health and parenthood
- ⇒ Languages – listening and talking, reading and writing in literacy and English and modern languages, plus classical languages and literacy and Gaidhlig/Gaelic learners (where available)
- ⇒ Mathematics – including analyzing information, solving problems and assessing risk
- ⇒ Religious and Moral Education (denominational and non-denominational) learning about Christianity, other world religions, and developing values and beliefs
- ⇒ Sciences – understanding important scientific concepts across planet Earth, forces, electricity and waves, biological systems, materials and topical science
- ⇒ Social Studies – understanding people, place and society in the past and present including history, geography, modern studies and business education
- ⇒ Technologies – including computing science, food, textiles, craft, design, engineering, graphics and applied technologies

Sometimes the learning experiences may be linked together through themes and projects covering several areas of the curriculum. At other times learning will take place in individual subject areas. Learning will also be developed through day to day involvement in the life and work of the school community and the wider community. Such activities will include a variety of out of school projects and a range of school or community-based events.

Planned experiences will be designed to achieve specific outcomes in terms of the knowledge, skills and understanding that show how young people are progressing and developing.

### **What will this look like in practice?**

*When planning activities and experiences for young people, teachers will take account of the following seven principles as well as the curriculum level at which the pupils are working.*

Challenge and enjoyment - All young people should be active in their learning and have opportunities to develop and demonstrate their creativity.

Breadth - All young people should have access to a broad range of activities so that they can learn and develop in a variety of ways.

Progression - All young people's learning should build on earlier knowledge and achievement.

Depth - All young people should have opportunities to learn and study in depth. As they progress they should be able to draw different strands of learning together and deepen their learning to the best of their ability.

Personalisation and choice - The individual needs of all young people should be recognised and particular talents and skills supported and developed. Opportunities should be provided for young people to exercise responsible personal choice as they progress through the school.

Coherence - There should be clear links between the different aspects of learning.

Relevance - Young people should understand the purpose of their activities and see the value of what they are learning for their present and future life.



## **Curriculum levels**

As your child moves through the school they will also move through curricular levels. These are:

**Early level** – Pupils in Preschool and Primary 1

**First level** – Pupils in Primary 2, Primary 3 and Primary 4

**Second Level** – Pupils in Primary 5, Primary 6 & Primary 7

**Third and Fourth Level** – Pupils in Secondary 1 (S1) to Secondary 3 (S3)

**Senior Phase** – S4 – S6 & college or other means of study.

## **Growth Mindset and Visible Learning at Southesk Primary School**

As part of our on-going school development we are working towards embedding the principles of both Growth Mindset and Visible Learning across our school. We believe these will support your child to achieve and progress across all areas of the curriculum while supporting their own social and emotional development.

### **Growth Mindset at Southesk Primary School**

Mindset is an idea discovered by psychologist Carol Dweck. In a growth mindset, people believe that abilities can be developed through hard work and dedication because the brain is a muscle that can be trained. Whereas those with a fixed mindset believe that their abilities and intelligence are fixed traits that cannot be altered.

### **Visible Learning at Southesk Primary School**

Visible learners have high expectations of their learning and are not afraid to ask questions or make mistakes; visible learners are guided to self-regulate their learning. Hattie suggests that 'the learning aim of any set of lessons is to get students to learn the skills of teaching themselves the content and understanding' (Hattie, 2012). This requires explicitly teaching students important meta-cognitive skills and strategies; therefore, time spent learning about the learning process and developing a shared language of learning is considered essential in establishing students' ownership of their learning and the ability to drive their learning forward.

Within the wider school context, there are a number of factors which contribute to a Visible Learning School. The climate of the school should be one of trust, respect and integrity. An ideal classroom and staffroom celebrate effort and progress, are dominated by dialogue (rather than monologue!), with a balance of talking, listening and doing for all individuals. School leaders have a central role in building school ethos and on focusing on the quality and impact of teaching in the school.

At Southesk Primary School we are continually working to improve our Curriculum and the learning experiences that we provide for our pupils. To allow us to do this effectively we use the following to guide us in both our planning and self-evaluation.

## The National Improvement Framework:

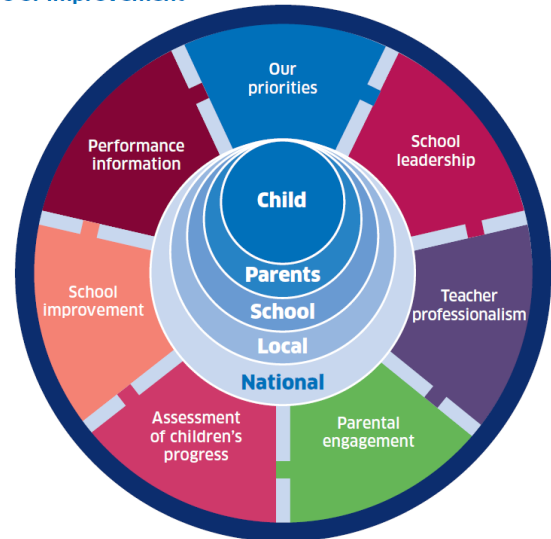
### Framework:

This sets out for us as educators what the main drivers for improvement are:

- parental engagement (your involvement in your child's learning and school-life)
- assessment of children's progress (how are children doing?)
- school leadership (headteacher training)
- school improvement (what else can schools do to help children?)
- teacher professionalism (teachers' ongoing learning and development)
- performance information (qualifications, awards, achievements)

At Southesk we ensure that we are using these drivers to improve our school.

### Key drivers of improvement



## How good is our school?:

[www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/h/hgios4/](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/h/hgios4/)



#HGIOS  
4



At Southesk we ensure that we are working with this document and continually self-evaluating our provision, our progress and our impact.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Head Teacher if you would like any further information on, or clarification of, any aspect of this booklet. Thank you.

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