

## Freuchie Primary School and Nursery Curriculum Rationale

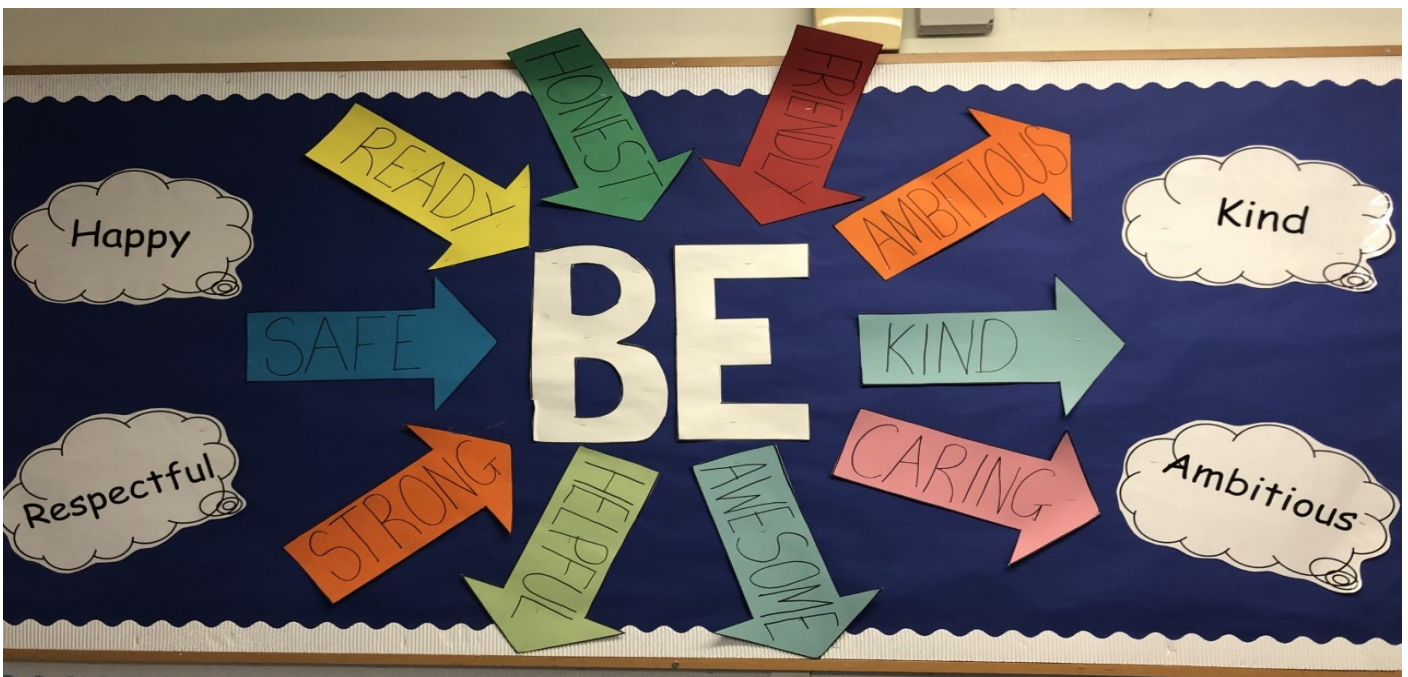
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## Our Vision, Values and Aims

Our Vision, Values and Aims underpin everything we do within school and nursery and relate fully with our curriculum and approaches to wellbeing. They are central to our curriculum rationale and are referred to regularly in our classrooms, assemblies, playground and in relation to the wider school community to ensure that they are known and followed by all.

### Our Vision is:-

**Being Well, Doing Well, Treating Others well**



### We aim to:-

Follow our values of being **Kind, Respectful and Ambitious** in everything we do within our school, nursery, playground and community in order to be **Happy** in our lives.



## **Policy Rationale**

### **Towards a Curriculum Rationale - 'Every present choice has a future consequence.' (Kidd, 2020)**

Freuchie Primary School strives to be a positive, inclusive school, which encourages achievement and attainment whilst having high expectations, creating a basis for participation in life-long learning. The curriculum we provide is at the heart of our practice, being crafted and tailored to suit the unique needs of our children and community. Our whole school community play a part in the development of our curriculum alongside national guidance as detailed in *Building the Curriculum 1, 2 and 3, Towards a Curriculum Rationale, Journey to Excellence*.

At Freuchie Primary School and Nursery we aim to provide a broad, experiential curriculum that meets the needs of all our pupils and which develops skills for life, learning and work. In doing so we will prepare our pupils to take their place in a modern and global society. The curriculum we craft should nurture our children as individuals, help them to appreciate their community so that they learn about their country, the world and the universe and be linked to a Curriculum for Excellence. **(Kidd, 2020)**

This means that every pupil is entitled to a curriculum which is:

- Coherent from nursery through to the end of their secondary education
- Founded on sound learning and teaching practices including well planned learning experiences which are active, engaging and based upon sound pedagogical research
- Based upon developing skills and competences in Literacy, Numeracy and an ability to make informed choices about their health and well being
- Real and relevant now and in the future.

All staff alongside our school families have a responsibility to build our pupil's capacity to become:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens
- Effective Contributors

by developing a curriculum which is based upon the seven key principles of:

- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

Staff knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and pedagogy and a collegiate approach to teaching experiences and outcomes within our school context will underpin development. This in turn will provide learning and teaching of the highest quality for pupils.

*N.B. Over the past year (2020-21) we have experienced a huge shift in the way we learn due to a national lockdown linked to COVID-19. This has impacted on our ability to welcome parents and the community*

*into our school and nursery. We have been able to keep links with our local community but not to their fullest potential. We fully intend to re-establish these links as soon as we are able to.*

## **Aims**

The key aims for our curriculum are:

- To have a clear focus on learning and teaching which is relevant to our pupils and the world they live in
- To provide high quality teaching of core skills in Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing and the Broad General Curriculum.
- To develop the key personal qualities of leadership, resilience, perseverance and a positive attitude to learning
- To engage children in inclusive experiences which promote and give opportunities for attainment and achievement for all where we celebrate success be it academic or as a wider achievement.
- To engage with parents, associated professionals and our local community to ensure a unified approach to learning and care resulting in positive outcomes for all children.

## **What Makes Freuchie Unique?**

There are many things that make Freuchie unique with most linking to our connection and understanding of our history, our local environment and our partnerships with people and our community. The size of our school means that our children and families aren't anonymous and are known by staff and pupils, and parents and the local community are part of the holistic learning approach that we offer.

### Our History

Freuchie is a village that sits at the bottom of the Lomond Hills. The word Freuchie means 'heather' in Gaelic and this features on our school badge. Our school was built in the Victorian era although has had additions built on more recently. Freuchie has strong links with the neighbouring village of Falkland as the royal family used Freuchie as a place of banishment when visiting Falkland Palace. This is where some of our outdoor learning takes place. Freuchie has a strong sporting history with Freuchie Cricket Club known for having won the village cricket championships at Lord's in 1985. This is considered particularly unusual as Scottish teams are not generally prominent in the game. We are fortunate that the cricket ground is right next to our school and the team supports the school to offer pupils little extras over and above the curriculum each year.

### Our Rural Environment

Our school's position close to the Lomond Hills, Falkland estate and within a leafy village surrounded by farms and farmland means we have many opportunities to explore, build team skills, solve problems and persevere outside. Our children and families have a deep-rooted love for Freuchie and the local environment. Children talk of their love of the burn, Tellytubby Hill and the horse's fields and many visit local farms to partake in outdoor pursuits, predominantly horse riding. Our curriculum values the role our environment plays within our learning and all classes use our natural environment for learning in outdoor learning sessions each term. We aim to build on this year on year.

### Our Partnership with People in Our Community

Freuchie Primary School and Nursery has a strong sense of community which is further enriched by the support received from our parent body, local residents, sporting groups and businesses. These partnerships feed into the quality learning experiences that we offer to our children.

Our community is interested in and roots for our school and residents/local businesses are keen to be a part of learning experiences and offer educational and financial support to improve the outlook for our pupils. Our parents care about our school and the progress that we make. They support improvement through the Parent Council and the associated sub-committees. Businesses such as The Spar, Bridgend Garden Centre and Kettle Produce support fundraising and community engagement regularly.

We have sporting links with Freuchie Cricket Club and the Bowling Club, with many of our pupils partaking in these activities whilst also having access to football pitches and our MUGA. We use the community to practise and train in the Bikeability programme. Alongside our Active Schools Coordinator, senior pupils from Bell Baxter High School are active participants in promoting an active lifestyle and a love of sport.

Our children love the outdoors and are fortunate to have a rich outdoor environment in the village and local area. Children of all ages have regular opportunities to experience learning outdoors whether this be in the school grounds or around the village. When possible, Falkland Estate is utilised to explore activities promoting resilience, problem solving, exploration, play, science, nature and the environment.

Alongside local businesses, our Parent Council plans exciting activities for all the children in the village to enjoy during holiday periods or around days of significance. They very much want our school to be the heart of the community and work to support us in our academic and pastoral endeavours. The Community Council are supportive of the school and encourage school participation in local events. We link with our local church and look forward to building this further in the future. The encouragement from these groups ensures that our children are citizens within their school alongside their local community, sharing and displaying the school values in all that they do.

### **What Does Learning Look Like in Freuchie?**

Our learning experiences are centred around a Curriculum for Excellence which is broken into 8 curricular areas (Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing, Expressive Arts, Technology, Science, Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education) and the associated experiences and outcomes. We approach planning with these and the associated skills in mind to ensure learners become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

Each year group and/or class tackles their learning in a way that suits their learning needs and styles. There isn't one strict plan for each year group with the experiences and outcomes spread over several year groups/levels – Early being Nursery to P1, First is for Primary 2 – P4 and Second is from Primary 5-7. Third level learning often starts in S1 however, some of our children have experienced aspects of this before leaving Freuchie P.S. Differentiation plays a key role in how we plan for our learners and the levels at which they work may differ from the national guidelines if they require extra support or challenge *i.e. a P5 pupil one year may have achieved different levels from a P5 the following year*. One size fits all is not how we work in Freuchie. We use fluid/flexible groupings in some areas to ensure learners get the right support, in the right way, at the right time. Personalisation and choice is key to ensuring the children learn in a way that suits them best, including topics that spark interest and ultimately engagement. Our team supports all learners to learn in a way that suits them best so they are able to be the best they can be.

We use assessment to determine the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Our approach to assessment varies across the academic year and features formative and summative methods. Assessment is for Learning principles and the supporting strategies are tools which we are using increasingly in assessing the effectiveness of learning and teaching in our school. Our assessment calendar was designed to provide a baseline in Literacy and Numeracy whilst ensuring opportunities to reflect on learning and wider achievements regularly. Summative approaches support long- and short-term planning, showing where we have added value across a period of time so we shall continue to use SNSA and Base data to audit the pace and challenge we provide for pupils ensuring we support and challenge where necessary to ensure every child has the opportunity to reach their potential. Work on formative assessment continues to encourage feedback on learning and next steps. Gathering evidence is crucial in this process. This allows us to track individual and group achievement and attainment.

The ethos of our school is a crucial element in the delivery of a Curriculum for Excellence. We are committed to ensuring that all children experience a rich and diverse curriculum with experiences both within school and out – regardless of background as explained by Debra Kidd, *'Teachers have to adopt and adapt their pedagogy stances to meet the needs of the students with whom they work.'* (Kidd, 2020)

Crucially, ensuring a sound grounding in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing is always at the fore when planning learning. We balance this alongside and at times in a cross-curricular way to ensure delivery of a broad general education for all. The experiences we deliver that develop these values, principles and educational milestones include but aren't limited to:

- active learning including physical and mental activities
- independent and collaborative learning both indoors and outdoors
- play which is teacher or pupil directed or initiated across the stages
- problem solving through investigating and exploring
- using talking and listening to enhance all aspects of learning

Citizenship, Enterprise, Equality, Creativity, Skills for Life and Work and understanding of Sustainable Development and our Global Goals are core elements, which underpin our ethos.

We promote our school values to ensure that children can learn in an environment which promotes respect, kindness, care, safety and support for all.

### **How Does Play Feature in Our Curriculum?**

We know that children in the early years learn best through play. We have a well-established child-centred approach to learning in our nursery. In recent years, we have introduced playful pedagogy through P1-3 and continue to work on this with our staff and pupils. This balances child-initiated play, teacher-initiated play and direct teaching, and supports the transition process in the early years. Playful Pedagogy is defined as, *'A way of integrating children's play experiences with curricular learning, giving pupils the flexibility to find their own solutions to both new and existing problems. It engages children in personally meaningful activities, learning about themselves and others, and encourages autonomy and their independent motivation-to-learn.'* (Play Scotland, 2020) Play will also support a child to develop skills for life such as cooperation, assessing and managing risks and investigating and exploring the world around them. Effective observation, recording and assessment of play activities supports ongoing planning, learning and achievement across the curriculum.

### **The Development of Digital Literacy and Resilience**

The focus of the way in which we communicate our curriculum was altered suddenly at the start of the pandemic in March 2020. The need to make our children digitally literate and resilient increased at an unprecedented rate and we had to react quickly to ensure barriers to learning remotely were removed.

In the initial phase, pupils, staff and parents were trained to use Microsoft Teams which was followed on the return to school with further training for pupils including completing homework via the platform. We realised that any time spent mastering the use of the online platform would have immediate rewards and long-term gains as we know that these are skills which the children will continue to use throughout their school careers and beyond into the world of work. Our contingency policy details our full approach to remote learning and this will be reviewed if we are faced with remote learning again.

In order to support our pupil's ability to share their learning with us – we focused our classes' ability to use the following platforms:

- Microsoft Teams in Primary 1 to Primary 7 including live meetings
- Internet platforms such as Google
- Educational websites such as Sumdog and Epic Reading
- Word
- Powerpoint
- Seesaw Class in Nursery

Scottish Government funding has resulted in us being allocated 9 Google Chromebooks to support pupils in our school community. These were given out based on need with school ipads used to supplement any requirement for a device.

## **Transition**

We are committed to providing a rigorous transition programme within school to ensure a consistent and effective approach for all pupils. This is the case for key points of transition such as Nursery to P1 and P7 to S1, but also from year to year where our classes move up to their new stage. Our school is predominantly made up of composite classes so the transfer of accurate information to ensure effective support for wellbeing and good progress with attainment is crucial. The pandemic has altered our programmes temporarily so we have adapted them to suit the current restrictions.

The curriculum we offer around Health and Wellbeing and in particular, Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood fully supports the emotional and social wellbeing of our pupils and links directly to the skills our pupils need to understand, reflect on and display during periods of transition. Staff will be given opportunities to share attainment, curricular and wellbeing information with their pupils' new teachers towards the end of the school session. Being a small school, we can also communicate regularly with our teaching team to support the transition of information throughout the school year.

We welcome new children into our school and nursery every year and support these children through a tailored programme which includes:-

- An information pack/Sway about our nursery and school is shared with parents
- Video tours
- Visits to the classroom, school and outdoor area
- Stories with their new teacher
- Stories and activities with their P7 buddy
- Parent and pupil question and answer session with the Headteacher
- Advice from the current nursery and P1 pupils is shared where appropriate

Our oldest pupils take on a new challenge at the end of Primary 7, moving to high school which in most cases is Bell Baxter High School. The experiences we offer to our P7 pupils include:-

- Participation in the Branch Out programme to support mental health and wellbeing
- SHINE survey
- Tailored Freuchie PS programme
- BBHS newsletter and newspaper sent via SWAY
- Visits from BBHS School Captains with question and answer session
- Parents' Evening at BBHS for all P7 parents
- Extended transition programme for some pupils
- Links with Families First for some pupils

Our approach to transition will develop organically depending on the needs of the children in each cohort.

## **In Conclusion**

The Curriculum Rationale is in place to demonstrate how staff at Freuchie Primary School and Nursery will help to prepare all young people to take their place in a modern society and economy. The curriculum we offer provides a framework for all young people from age 3 and through their primary years. Our role in helping children to gain the knowledge and skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work will never be underestimated.