



# **St. Andrew's Primary School & Nursery Class**



## **Interdisciplinary Learning Policy**



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### IDL Policy

#### **Purpose**

Interdisciplinary Learning enables teachers and learners to make connections across learning through exploring clear and relevant links across the curriculum. It supports the use and application of what has been taught and learned in new and different ways.

Learning beyond subject boundaries provides learners with the opportunity to experience deep, challenging and relevant learning.

Interdisciplinary Learning is an important element within the Curriculum for Excellence. It makes up one of the four contexts for learning.

- Life and ethos of the school as a community.
- Curriculum areas and subjects.
- Interdisciplinary learning.
- Opportunities for personal achievement.

#### **Aim**

We aim to ensure that interdisciplinary learning is

- Planned around clear purposes.
- Based upon experiences and outcomes drawn from different curriculum areas, or subjects within them.
- Ensures progression in skills and in knowledge and understanding.

We recognise the importance of providing our children with a wide range of experiences related to the world around us. We want to ensure that children have the opportunity to learn in contexts that are real and relevant to the learners, the school and its community.

#### **Teaching and Learning - IDL**

Underpinning all good or outstanding teaching in IDL is the expertise and sound subject knowledge of the staff who regularly share successful IDL opportunities with stage partners and departments.

Clear policies and regular professional development from a range of sources will develop the expertise of staff to help:

- in delivering the school's curriculum thoroughly and consistently
- in enhancing staff subject knowledge
- in choosing practical resources, visual images and information and communication technology that promote inclusive teaching and a deeper understanding for all
- in using good Assessment for Learning techniques to listen flexibly to children and to check and probe their understanding throughout



*See also our Teaching and Learning policy.*

### **Inclusion**

The following principles inform and guide our policy and practise:

- meeting the diverse and complex needs of each and every individual is embedded in everything that we do as a whole staff
- it is the responsibility of the school to enable the child to access and make progress through the curriculum
- equal opportunities is not the same as equal provision
- **Bridging the poverty gap through targeted support using informed data and creating next steps**

For every child to be able to participate we must know each of them as individuals. For children with 'Additional Needs' teaching must be closely linked to their ASP targets.

We respond to children's diverse learning needs by:

- Creating effective learning environments
- Securing their motivation and concentration
- Providing equality of opportunity through a range of teaching approaches and modifying these for individual needs
- Using appropriate assessments
- Setting targets for learning
- Teaching more able children with their own class and extending their learning through differentiated group work, extra challenges and opportunities for independent learning.

Where appropriate, special arrangements are made for an exceptionally gifted child e.g. they may be taught with children from a higher age range or may follow an individualised programme with more challenging problems to tackle.

*See also our Inclusion policy.*

### **Curriculum**

Staff plan the coverage of curricular areas singularly but also through interdisciplinary planning generally using Science, Social Subjects, Religious and Health and Well Being as themed approaches.

Plans also include scope for outdoor learning, purposeful play in the infants, and relevant whole school interdisciplinary themes or focus.

Interdisciplinary experiences offer an invaluable opportunity to enhance relevance and coherence for learners. Well planned and managed, it broadens and deepens learning, giving learners the chance to apply their learning in less familiar contexts, promotes understanding and increases challenge. Consequently, it can be a reliable way to assess and evidence breadth, challenge and application of learning. It also provides one form of personalisation and choice.



## **Planning**

Starting with carefully selected experiences and outcomes, from two or more curriculum areas. These should build on children's next steps in learning. Although our science and Social Subject Planners have themes, these are suggested to avoid themes being covered several times or parents being concerned composite classes means certain experiences are not being met.

Planning should show the contribution of different disciplines, knowledge, and understanding and higher-order skills.

Clear success criteria focus the intended learning, within and across the experiences and outcomes. This is used as the basis for assessing and tracking children's progress.

Principles of curriculum design are used to inform teacher's decisions about organising learning and their evaluations.

*See appendix 1*

### **Learners experience of IDL:**

Teachers, children and others should be aware of the role and contributions of the disciplines, or curriculum areas, within the interdisciplinary learning. They should be careful that learning does not become 'lost' within the theme or context.

The context for IDL should enable children to deepen, explore, test out and challenge their knowledge and understanding from different curriculum areas, thus developing higher-order thinking skills. IDL also enables children to consolidate and extend their learning, making concepts or knowledge from different curriculum areas more relevant and meaningful.

Children have opportunities for personalisation and choice within IDL. This can include prior learning, areas of interest, different ways of demonstrating learning, finding different examples and other higher-order skills such as comparing and contrasting the contribution of different disciplines to the IDL. Pupil choice is set within the context of the teacher's planning. This 'freedom within a framework' is planned to ensure appropriate progression and continuity in learning, avoiding complete free choice, which could put learners' progress at risk.

Activities meet the varying learning needs of children.

Our forward planner can be found on firstclass and each teacher's planner stays in their class with guidelines for plans, evaluations and assessments.