



# Curriculum Explanation for Parents



**At Barnston every minute of learning time counts, so we make sure that we provide children with a rich and varied curriculum to enhance their learning.**

Our teachers plan together in phases i.e. the two reception teachers, the three year 1/2 teachers, the three year 3/4 teachers and the three year 5/6 teachers. This means that they can plan to their strengths and share out subject expertise as well as helping each other in the areas of differentiated resources, targets for the children, coverage and pace.

## **Morning curriculum**

### **Phonic groups**

**9-9.30 a.m. (F2 & KS 1 age 4-7)**

The day starts at 9 am when children in the two F2 (reception) classes and the three Yr1/2 classes are all split into ability phonic groups. We call these groups phonic phases and the children work for half an hour on their segmenting and blending sounds with graphemes and learn how to spell, write and read words.

Work is often very practical using 'Disco phonics', different movements for different phonic blends, phonic games and use of white boards to write down phonic attempts in a 'do and show' session with the teacher or teaching assistant. The children are split into 5 phonic phase groups where phase 1 focuses on speaking and listening activities, phase 2 introduces individual letter sounds up to phase 5 which focuses on more complex spelling patterns for those who are advancing in phonics and need to be pushed at a higher level. (See separate phonic and reading information).

### **English**

**9.30 - 10.10 a.m. (break for assembly and break time) then KS1 10.45-11.10 a.m. KS2 9-10 am.**

An English lesson where children will be working through different aspects of relating to the National Curriculum programmes of study for this age group. We plan on a two year rolling programme and the children are taught at the stage that they are at, not their age i.e. work is differentiated within the class to meet the children's needs at the stage that they are at. It is important that English in F2 and KS 1, follows the phonic phase work in order that what they have learnt in phonic lessons can be put into practice in the English lessons, as young children need many opportunities to apply their skills and need relevant reinforcement.

Twice a week in KS 1 we differentiate by taking the more capable writers to access an extra 'big write' session with one of the teachers (free writing session to a particular genre), whilst the other two teachers work on sentence structure and writing at the children's ability levels.

In KS 2 (age 7-11) the children have an hour English where they will be learning spelling, grammar and punctuation, vocabulary building, connectives and openings that apply to different genres of writing. They access a big write once or twice every week. Their writing is also enhanced in the creative curriculum where English standards are expected to be the same – usually 1-2 pieces of writing per week.

Our Cursive style handwriting is taught, continuing on from what the children learnt in reception and the stage that they managed to get to. This is incorporated into English sessions.

**The children have individual next step booklets in reading, writing and mathematics (targets to work on), which the teacher uses to help the children understand how to move on in their own learning.** In KS1 this will mainly be oral feedback to a child from the teacher or teaching assistant. The teacher uses many assessment techniques, one of which is 'two stars and a wish' – two things I have done well and one thing I need to improve. Children can also assess their own work and the work of a peer. The teacher will look at their 'next steps' with them, look at the work they've just carried out and together they will decide if they have achieved their target.

It is important that children learn their spellings every week, understand the words in the context of a sentence and that they read every night at home.

## **Mathematics**

**KS 1 11.10 a.m. - 12.10 p.m. (lunch 12.10-1.20pm) KS 2 10.40 -11.40 a.m.**

The children work in their classes and the teachers work through the national curriculum on a two year rolling programme. The work is differentiated to the children's ability within the class and the teacher works at the stage that the children are at, not their age (as some year 1 children may be working at the same level as some year 2 children and vice versa).

The curriculum incorporates mental strategies and problem solving activities and the lessons incorporate a mix of practical activity in pairs/groups and individual work to demonstrate understanding. All mathematics is constantly related to every day life situations and mastering number bonds is very important at this age.

**The children have individual national curriculum 'next steps' (targets) which the teacher uses to help the children understand how to move on in their mathematical learning.**

**We expect the children to work on their times tables at school and at home as these form the foundation of all mathematics.** They will have regular table tests (not necessarily formal testing) and should know their 2s, 5s, 10s in year 1 and in year 2 building on these by learning their 3s and 4s. Starting at different numbers and going forwards and backwards in 2s (even and odd) and 10s is very important for securing number bond knowledge e.g. 33,35,37,39,41 13,23,33,43 79,69,59,49,39 etc. (see useful parent information maths power points on the VLE and make sure you have a copy of our 'Parent guide to teaching mathematics', which we give out at the year 1 transition meetings in the summer term before they enter year 1.

In KS 2 the children will be expected to learn at home their 6s and 7s (year 3/4) and be working towards their 8s and 9s by the end of year 4. **They should have mastered all tables by the end of year 5.**

## **Reading Time**

**11.40-12.10 KS2 (age 7-11)**

This happens at the end of the morning, whereas in KS1 the phonics starts the day. This is a time where groups are rotated throughout the week and work on spelling, grammar and punctuation, guided reading sessions with the teacher working to the children's individual targets, handwriting, vocabulary building, dictionary work, skimming and scanning skills and note-taking skills. There are usually 5 activities that every child accesses throughout the week and the teacher responds to assessment eg. If a class are all showing a lack of punctuation in the previous weeks writing tasks, a teacher may have 1 guided reading session per group per week and 4 punctuation activities. If this impacts on the children's work the following week, the focus may then shift to grammar exercises.

## **F2 (reception)**

As well as focused groups taken by the teacher and teaching assistant in mathematics and English, the classrooms are set up each week with continuous provision areas. The areas are specific to enhance the learning of the children and the teacher and the TA monitor and assess their learning within these areas throughout the week. The children are taught to think and work independently and activities challenge the children to aim high, no matter what their ability or starting points.

## **Creative Curriculum**

### **1.20pm-3.25pm**

The creative curriculum is topic based e.g. Fire, Castles and Dungeons, Dinosaurs. The topic incorporates many subjects e.g. History, Geography, ICT, Science, Art, Design Technology and provides more opportunities for children to read, write and apply their mathematics and ICT to every day situations. It also provides opportunities for them to use their problem solving skills. The children work individually or in collaboration with others and put their work together creatively in a topic book. The planning for the topic is based on a question/week and the questions are child initiated to engage the children in their learning. The children are given opportunities to assess their work and the work of others and their reading, writing and mathematics 'next steps' (targets) are referred to. Skills for life are developed as the children are encouraged to share and present work and ideas in groups and explain and give reasons for their decisions. The children are encouraged to think creatively about how they want to present their work in their creative books and each piece is taken from children's ideas shared with the class. Many role play days, including parents, are planned throughout the topics eg. An evacuation day, Boudicca's battle, an Olympic day with our partner school and parents and a medieval banquet in the hall!

The children are encouraged to be enterprising in the topics and have run mini-enterprises, working out costs, charges and profit margins. At times, the enterprises raise money for fundraising and charities.

## **Games/PE**

Each class has 2 hours physical activity throughout the week. The teacher takes the class for half a term of PE and half a term of dance and JM Sports partnership run focused age related sessions focusing on developing skills in many different areas of games eg. Football, basket ball, tennis, cricket, multi skills and swimming in KS 2 and Full of Beans provider in KS 1.

## **ICT**

In addition to ICT in the creative curriculum, each class has a dedicated ICT slot in the suite where they work on the national curriculum age related skills. These skills are then practised within the creative curriculum. Children have opportunities to use laptops, I Pads, cameras, visualizers, calculators, audio visual aids to enhance this subject. E-Safety is promoted throughout the school and the children are regularly reminded of how to stay safe on line in ICT lessons and in PSHE/circle times. The school had a completely new ICT suite in 2013/14 and 2 laptop trolleys with 30 laptops and 15 I Pads were purchased in order to enhance the curriculum further.

## **PSHE/Circle time**

Instead of a whole school assembly, each class has either a PSHE or a circle time assembly once a week, where children discuss social, emotional and friendship issues, reflect on their time together and say a prayer. They discuss topics such as safety, bullying, racism, e-safety, homophobia (older children). This helps to remove any barriers to learning and encourages the children to talk about issues. The SEAL activity pack is used, however, the teachers use assessment and judgements to plan to the needs of the class and cover issues and topics that may have arisen in the playground or placed in the rainbow box (a box the children put any worries in).

## **Music**

If music fits into the creative curriculum topic it is included, otherwise we follow the music express and Charanga music schemes which are age related schemes, adapted by the music specialist through assessment. The teacher is advised by the music specialist in school and teachers plan together. Music is enhanced by our many visitors to school in assemblies/concerts and through our peripatetic music teachers and our large number of music clubs available at lunch time and after school by the music specialists e.g. Philharmonic visit and school orchestra, recorder club, choir, ensemble club.

## **Science**

Our Science is taught as a stand alone subject, but related to every day situations. We have changed our scheme to fit in with the New National Curriculum and add to this in each year group to make sure that it is challenging for our children and stretching them. Science is taught every week and is also incorporated as extra Science in our creative curriculum if it lends itself to this. We have Science clubs after school.

## **Art and Design Technology**

Where possible these are fitted into the creative curriculum and whole school art days are organised by the art specialist once a term, directing teachers to focus on different mediums and experimenting and practising skills. Art and DT clubs are available as extra curricular activities also.

## **Modern Foreign Languages**

All our teachers speak basic French or Spanish and from 4-7 years old the teachers will teach the children to say hello, how are you, and some songs. In year 3/4 the children have 1 hour Spanish a week with a specialist teacher and in year 5/6 they have Spanish 1 hour a week with a specialist teacher. The teachers plan a balance of spoken, written and cultural language and this is tied into the creative curriculum where possible. Literacy, mathematics and ICT are also brought into the MFL curriculum where possible eg. A year 5/6 class were learning to tell the time in analogue and then converting it to digital, but in Spanish!

## **RE**

A selection of religions are taught throughout each year group and we celebrate festivals from different religious backgrounds throughout the year in assemblies and PSHE class sessions. RE is taught for 1 hour/week and includes trips, visitors, practical activity, watching video clips, discussions/debates, moral activities and factual knowledge of the main religions, how they have similarities and differences and how they can all provide moral guidance.