



Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School (VA)

Curriculum Document 2014

A Vision for Learning

At Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School we provide the 'good earth' for all in our community to flourish; where every member can fully explore who they are created to be, with the high expectation that we, individually and collectively, will bear fruit beyond our wildest dreams. A place where we are ***loving, learning and growing together.***

A learning community: Believing that we all can excel, we are a community that deeply desires to learn. We nurture children and adults so that we are all empowered to be fearless, lifelong learners: embracing challenge, releasing creativity, persisting through difficulty, seeing mistakes as opportunity, discovering for ourselves and responding in wonder to what we find.

Curriculum Aims

At Christ the Sower, children should move on from our school equipped with:

- Core skills in the basic tools for learning.
- Insatiable curiosity for further learning.
- A set of values that carry instinctive respect for others, tolerance of their views, and the ability to make sense of the world they live in.

In order to do this we intend for our curriculum to enable children:

- To seek learning that nurtures risk taking and self –motivation that promotes positive attitudes towards thinking, gaining skills and knowledge now and for the future.
- To foster learning that offers a broad exposure to new experiences that enable children to collaborate and engage in learning opportunities through creativity, imagination and exploration.
- To enable children to know biblical values, helping them to work interdependently. As a result of our curriculum, children will flourish as respectful individuals, fully exploring who they are created to be.
- To empower children to become full, active and contributing members of both a local and worldwide community through collaboration in our diversity and stewardship of the Earth.

Curriculum Principles

Underlying our curricular thinking, and flowing from both the aims and our position as a church school and a local school in a Milton Keynes community, are a number of key principles which teachers must respect and reflect in their planning:

Principle	Explanation
Our agreed theory of learning underpins our curriculum.	Our common and agreed understanding of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Accelerated Learning Cycle, • How Feedback, Challenge, Independent Learning & Pupil Engagement impact on achievement (the Big 4, derived from the work of John Hattie) • How the brain works for learning, and • The importance of helping children have a growth mindset underpins our curriculum.
A rich curriculum is an entitlement for all children, created to engender a love of learning.	Because children have an entitlement to good teaching and a love of learning, it is vital that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our curriculum is taught well • teachers know thoroughly all the subjects they teach, • local and global aspects of learning are incorporated wherever possible
We believe in the power of story to enrich, express and create meaning from life.	Literature is at the heart of each unit or theme. Therefore <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least once per year a high quality book will be the driver of a 2 week theme • In general, each theme will have a story or book of good quality at its heart.
Effective dialogue is at the heart of the curriculum.	Talk is a powerful tool that helps <i>stimulate</i> and <i>extend</i> children's thinking and <i>advance</i> their learning. Therefore children must be able to access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A repertoire for everyday talk, learning talk, teaching talk and classroom organisation on which the teacher draws flexibly according to purpose and situation and which can become dialogic when they are demonstrably informed by 5 principles. Talk must become Collective – Reciprocal – Supportive – Cumulative - Purposeful. • <i>Ideas are not merely exchanged but BUILT upon.</i>
Themes are one way of organising our curriculum to enable the children to understand the big picture of their learning enabling them to make links across subjects (disciplines).	Themes give the school a flexible approach on how to manage the content of the curriculum. However there is no need for all learning to take place within a theme. Subjects can be taught discretely when appropriate. When used, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All themes will lead to a specific outcome as a result of the children's learning. This will usually be a product or performance for a specified audience. (e.g., a class collective worship, a performance for another class, a book, a display, something published to the web etc.) • Theme titles should inspire and motivate children to learn - this could be through the use of a provocative title or question. • A theme is not expected to cover all subjects but focuses on 2/3 subjects. • Themes can be flexible in length: 2 weeks, a month, a half term, longer... • A theme could overarch a holiday if appropriate. 2 weeks before, 1-2 weeks afterwards, for example.

Our Christian values underpin our curriculum	<p>Christian values transform us as humans towards placing a high value on character and the importance of local community but also to a global perspective. Our identity as a Christian school must impact the curriculum through its ethos, subject content and pedagogy. Therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject leaders must consider how our Christian values are represented and taught in their subject, and articulate this for colleagues. • The “What if Learning” pedagogical approach to the curriculum is a good starting point for this (http://www.whatiflearning.co.uk) (This site is for teachers who want their classrooms to be places with a Christian ethos, whatever the subject or age group being taught. It explores what teaching and learning might look like when rooted in Christian faith, hope and love) • Issues at the heart of the Christian faith are developed through our curriculum for example issues of social justice.
Our curriculum is about the whole child.	<p>We are a school that wants to be ready for children, rather than expecting children to be ready for school. In the long term, we intend for all themes to have a strong child-owned element where teachers skilfully weave children’s ideas and passions with the curriculum skills. This enables children to be the drivers of their learning – divergent thinkers pushing the buttons of learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the short term, whilst teachers develop these skills, there will be a child led unit once per term (at least 3 per year).
The taught and hidden curricula are of equal value. The hidden curriculum is taught through relationship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This does not mean that they have equal time. • The hidden curriculum may be seen as teaching the skills which would enable the children to access the taught curriculum and prepares them for adult life as part of a local and world-wide community. • Alternatively it may be seen as the impact our adult relationships and learning has on the children and parents we work amongst.
Skills are at the heart of our curriculum	<p>It is critical that teachers understand that content is always subservient to skills, despite the intent of the 2014 National Curriculum. Thus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All planning must focus on skills first, and then decide the content through which those skills will be taught. We aim to produce historians and musicians, not children who know some history and some music. • Teachers need to think about when they are teaching the skills and when they give children the time to apply them independently. • Skills identified in planning need to be both <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning skills (e.g. EYFS characteristics of learning, Shirley Clarke, BLP, as defined under the section <i>Learning Skills within the Curriculum</i>) and ○ Subject skills (e.g. Chris Quigley & NC Subjects skills) • Both learning and subject skills need to be progressive, building year on year, so the child has a growing repertoire of skills to apply independently and interdependently.
Respect is shown for the distinctiveness and ways of working of domains/subject disciplines	<p>We intend that children become scientists, writers, mathematicians, thinkers, historians, athletes, etc. Thus the skills and disciplines common to a subject or domain must be taught within the context and vocabulary of that subject. Thus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers need to decide the extent that subjects are taught together or in isolation as appropriate, a balance being sought.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be times when we want to teach skills particular to a subject or a subject way of working separately. Teachers are encouraged to do this – skills being at the heart of our curriculum. • Expectations of each unit taught will be stated or published to children so that they know what they are aiming for as historians, scientists, musicians, etc.
Our curriculum is distinctively local and relevantly global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our curriculum must teach children growing up in the distinctive place that is Milton Keynes. Thus we would expect that all local opportunities for learning would be taken, and that 1 unit/theme per year would have a local focus (art/architecture/ museum based/art gallery based/natural world of MK/ Discovery Centre based as well as traditional history and geography opportunities for learning). • Likewise, to help children have a global understanding of our diversity is essential for them to grow a respectful and interested appreciation of other cultures, their histories, beliefs and needs.
Learning outdoors is generally more interesting than learning in classrooms	<p>So as not to bore children unnecessarily, the curriculum must be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rooted more and more in outdoor activities, using the school spaces and wild areas, allowing children to learn in a tangible, immersive and experiential way. • Trips and visits should be incorporated into as much learning as possible.

Organisation of the Curriculum

At Christ the Sower, the curriculum will be taught under the legislative framework set out by the DfE for the Early Years Foundation Stage (for the Foundation Stage) and the National Curriculum (for years 1-6). However, the organisation of the school since 2013 has been in distinct Learning Phases, and the curricular material is adapted so that these phases have similar approaches to the learning inherent in the curriculum, and will grow, from a curricular and cultural standpoint, to have their own identity. They are as follows:

Learning Phase	Year Groups	Legislative Framework
EARLY LEARNING PHASE	Foundation 1	Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
	Foundation 2	
	Year 1	National Curriculum for Key Stage One
MIDDLE LEARNING PHASE	Year 2	National Curriculum for Key Stage Two
	Year 3	
	Year 4	
UPPER LEARNING PHASE	Year 5	
	Year 6	

Pedagogical Approaches to the Curriculum

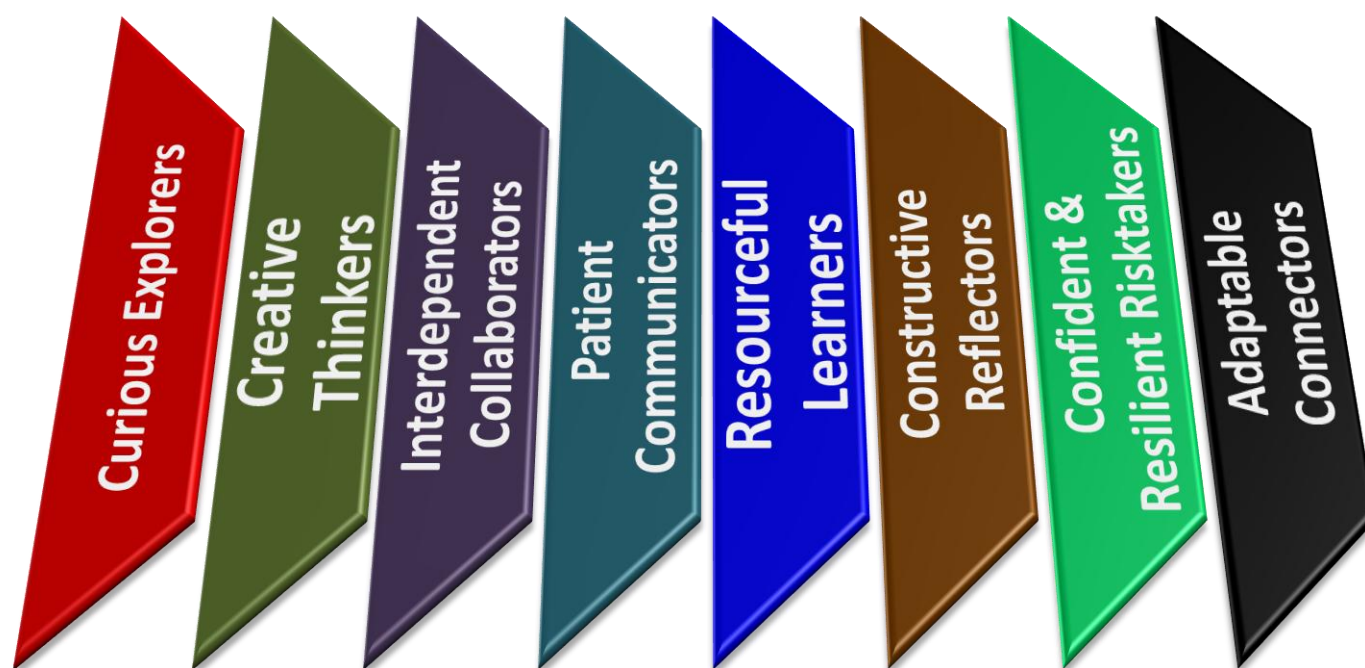
Curriculum content will derive from or reference the 2014 National Curriculum (DfE, Sept 2013). We will use the document as a guide for the core subjects and use the content of the foundation subjects (where clearly defined). However, the key approach must be that the skills of each subject area, and the learning skills that accompany them, will be mediated through the content defined by school or by the National Curriculum. The key metaphor here is that of drinking the body of a Guinness (the skills) *through* the head on the beer (the content)!



The other key metaphor for our pedagogical approach to the curriculum is that of a triple layer chocolate cake. Whilst we can pay attention to our Christian ethos through the values we teach, and highlight content that reflects our Christian character through our planning, it is also necessary to think about the way we teach and the values inherent in our approach. We call this “What if learning” (Cooling, 2010) and it involves us using ethical and spiritual approaches to our teaching. For example, we might inadvertently reinforce a materialistic view of the world for children through our maths teaching by talking about buying and selling when teaching addition/subtraction, whereas an ethical approach might

be served better by using giving or sharing as an approach to the same subject. The aim is to look differently at the subject matter so that we offer a different view of the world to children, subverting the materialistic, consumerist world-view that has caused so much of our present difficulty in society, and reinforcing a view of the world in which God’s love and purpose is active and kind, especially on behalf of the poor and disadvantaged.

Learning Skills within the Curriculum



We want our children at Christ the Sower to be:

- Curious explorers
- Creative thinkers
- Interdependent collaborators
- Patient communicators
- Resourceful Learners
- Constructive reflectors
- Confident & resilient risk-takers
- Adaptable connectors

These skills of learning are not easily acquired, but can be imparted within our curriculum as key elements that will last even when the “taught curriculum” has been superseded. As Einstein said: *Education is what remains after what has been learnt has been forgotten*. The staff at Christ the Sower have used a variety of sources to assemble the following differentiation of the characteristics of the sort of learner that we want our children to be:

Learning characteristic	What this will look like in the Early Learning Phase (F-Y1)	What this will look like in the Middle Learning Phase (Y2-4)	What this will look like in the Upper Learning Phase (Y5-6)
Children as CURIOUS EXPLORERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am interested in and excited about learning • I can get great satisfaction from learning something new • I am willing to find out new information by asking questions, looking in books and using the internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can ask challenging questions to find out new information & skills • I can ask and provide answers to open questions. • I notice things and make comments • I can direct my own learning along my areas of interest • I can say what has been useful in an enquiry • I have a goal in mind for my enquiry • I explore different methods and resources to help me answer questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can ask questions that hold significance for people (“deep and meaningful questions”) • I am able to question other children to get them to explain their reasoning • I can ask and answer “what happens if....?” “why?” (in the context of the world) • I can find real answers to my questions or at least find better questions to ask.

Learning characteristic	What this will look like in the Early Learning Phase (F-Y1)	What this will look like in the Middle Learning Phase (Y2-4)	What this will look like in the Upper Learning Phase (Y5-6)
Children as CREATIVE THINKERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can try out my own ideas I keep trying different methods to solve problems I don't give up I can use previous learning to adapt to new situations I make links between different areas of learning at home and school 	<p>Within concrete experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can try different approaches I can imagine what might be different I can generate a range of different ideas I can look for alternative solutions I know there might be more than one right answer I can choose how to respond to a task or to learning 	<p>Within more abstract learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can try different approaches I can imagine how things might be different I can generate a range of different ideas I can look for alternative solutions I know that there might be more than one right answer I can choose how to respond to or represent learning I can use less conventional ways to respond to my learning and not be afraid to do so.
Children as INTERDEPENDENT COLLABORATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can work on my own and make my own decisions I can listen to others and use their ideas I can add my ideas to a group activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can say that I agree/disagree with...because... I can carry out a given role or task in a group I know how I can help others I can ask for help if needed I can tell other people what I have learnt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once I have decided if I agree or disagree, I can respectfully challenge an idea or viewpoint I can use my dialogic talk to deepen learning I can act upon the advice of others and give advice to others to improve learning I can use and apply what I have learnt in different situations and groups.
Children as PATIENT COMMUNICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can listen and respond appropriately I can speak clearly and confidently about things that interest me (in my mother tongue) I can use talk in my imaginary play, to draw others in. I can show I have listened carefully as I can use new vocabulary in the correct context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can report back what someone else has said I can add to the comment of another person I can give my opinion I can keep ideas in my head until it is my turn to talk I can ask another person a question and listen to the answer I can say how I feel about something 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In class I can listen and respond appropriately, adding on information I can wait my turn, deferring to others when necessary I can challenge others' thinking through asking questions, asking why and offering an alternative view I am confident to learn from other children and not just from adults I can speak clearly and confidently, adapting tone & language for the context

Learning characteristic	What this will look like in the Early Learning Phase (F-Y1)	What this will look like in the Middle Learning Phase (Y2-4)	What this will look like in the Upper Learning Phase (Y5-6)
Children as RESOURCEFUL LEARNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am confident enough to use the resources available to me I am happy to use resources in different ways I am happy to work with peers and adults and learn from them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I know what to do when stuck I can select the right resources from a given range I can explain what resources I need and why. I don't need to have all the resources provided for me and can be discerning in what I choose. I know when resources distract me from learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can choose resources I need without seeing them, imagining them for the task I know which resources will have the impact I require of them I can explain which is the best resource and why, from a range of possibilities
Children as CONSTRUCTIVE REFLECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can talk about my work with an adult I am happy to try different methods to solve a problem I can listen to advice I compare my work to my friends' and can learn from them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can assess my own work against given or shared criteria I can assess others' work against given or shared criteria and identify the next steps in learning I can identify what success looks like in my task and generate criteria for that together I can say what helps me or my friends' succeed I can describe my own barriers to learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can generate my own success criteria for each task and evaluate my work against them. I can independently identify the next steps in my learning and act on these I can confidently reflect on and evaluate what has happened in a task I am able to give and receive constructive criticism and act upon it
Children as CONFIDENT & RESILIENT RISK TAKERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm not afraid to try new experiences. I believe "I can do it" I bounce back after difficulties I am interested in new challenges I try to solve challenges in more than one way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I try things more than once I try things I have never done before I try a different approach if the first one doesn't work I persist and don't give up easily I know mistakes are important in my learning I can celebrate my success and that of others I give and accept encouragement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can use mistakes to help me I can accept constructive criticism positively and use it to improve my learning I know different strategies for solving problems and can apply them properly I can edit what I have written or planned and improve on my learning I know that I will <i>always be a learner</i>
Children as ADAPTABLE CONNECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can talk about my own experiences I can link what I already know to new experiences and learning I can build on earlier knowledge to help me learn more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can make connections within a subject and between subjects I can make connections from lesson to lesson I can connect my learning to something I learnt last year I know how today's learning will be useful for the future I can use what I know to find out what I don't know I can sort/group, explaining reasons I can begin to draw conclusions or notice patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can build on what I already know to hypothesise about things I don't I can name specifically the skills and prior knowledge I need to apply to learning new concepts I can build on my learning skills and experiences, not just on the knowledge I have learnt.

Basic Skills within the curriculum

Besides learning skills and subject- or discipline-specific skills, we hold the basic skills of English reading and writing, oracy, handwriting and spelling, mathematical numeracy, singing, and observational drawing in high regard and these will have an important place in all we do, informing teachers in their assessments and in their planning. Current Basic Skills documentation reflects the content of the DfE 2014 Primary Curriculum particularly in writing and maths. Our common expectation is that these should be part of the daily life of all classrooms.

Subjects within the curriculum

We divide the curriculum into two parts – the **core curriculum** and the **foundation curriculum**, mirroring these concepts from the 2000 National Curriculum document. However, what we consider core and foundation subjects differ from that of the DfE:

Core Subjects	English and Language Mathematics and Numeracy Physical Education Science Religious Education
Foundation Subjects	Art and Design Computing Geography History Modern Foreign Languages Design Technology Music

The difference between these subjects is not in the importance to children's development but in the relative time allocation. It is probably that English and maths will be taught every day in nearly every class, with physical education and science taught for up to two hours weekly. Religious education is a fundamental part of our school curriculum and will be taught weekly or taught in a theme that gives it the prominence it needs to be taught effectively.

The foundation subjects are more likely to be grouped into themes and may not necessarily be as evenly distributed throughout the curriculum. However, teachers should be aware that many aspects of all of these subjects (e.g. singing within music; vocabulary learning in modern foreign languages; observational drawing in art and design) require an approach that is described as "little and often".

Assessment approaches within the curriculum

Whilst we are not yet in a position to agree a full assessment schedule in the new curriculum, certain approaches can be clearly defined at this stage:

- Progress in English, Maths, Science and RE can be judged using the year-based skills criteria for English, Maths and Science, and from the levels in the 2011 Agreed Syllabus for RE.
- We cannot assess progress properly in Science and foundation subjects unless each unit of work has clear end-of-unit expectations based on the **skills** and **understanding** (not knowledge content) that children will acquire as geographers, musicians, scientists, designers, etc. These could take the form:

e.g. “Children will be more competent historians/geographers because they can clearly **identify, compare and explain the differences between** the..... andpatterns of settlement” (where skills and understanding are in bold)