

Updated: September 2021

Next update: September 2022



Curriculum Policy

At Bewdley Primary School, we aim to provide a secure and happy environment where everyone can enjoy learning and be inspired to:

- Achieve their best in everything by being responsible and working hard
- Appreciate their own and others' value and importance
- Be thoughtful, kind, caring and active members of the school and beyond
- Be proud of their achievements
- Develop imagination through creativity and resourcefulness
- Be emotionally resilient and determined and able to overcome any obstacle

Basic Principles of our curriculum

We believe:

- Learning is a change to long-term memory.
- Our aims are to ensure that, within an engaging and exciting curriculum, our children experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each key stage, long-term memory of an ambitious body of procedural and semantic knowledge.

Curriculum Intent model

Curriculum drivers shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from an exploration of the backgrounds of our pupils, our beliefs about high quality education and our values. They are used to ensure we give our pupils appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities.

Cultural capital gives our pupils the vital background knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and believe in British values.

Curriculum breadth is shaped by our *curriculum drivers, cultural capital, subject topics* and our ambition for pupils to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars.

Our curriculum distinguishes between **subject topics** and 'threshold concepts'. Subject topics are the specific aspects of subjects that are studied.

Threshold concepts tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, pupils return to the same concepts over and over and gradually build understanding of them.

For each of the threshold concepts three **Milestones**, each of which includes the procedural and semantic knowledge pupils need to understand the threshold concepts, provides a [progression model](#).

Knowledge categories in each subject give pupils a way of expressing their understanding of the threshold concepts.

The Whole School Topic Overview helps teachers to relate each topic to previously studied topics/key concepts so that pupils can form strong, meaningful schema.

Cognitive science tell us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if pupils are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for pupils to become creative thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding they must first master the basics, which takes time, and direct teacher instruction.

Within each **Milestone**, pupils gradually progress in their procedural fluency and semantic strength through three cognitive domains: basic, advancing and deep.

The goal for pupils is to display sustained mastery at the 'advancing' stage of understanding by the end of each milestone and for the most able to have a greater depth of understanding at the 'deep' stage. **The time-scale for sustained mastery or greater depth** is, therefore, two years of study.

We use direct instruction in the basic domain and problem based discovery in the deep domain. This is called the **reversal effect**.

Implementation

Our curriculum design is based on evidence from cognitive science; three main principles underpin it:

Learning is most effective with **spaced repetition**.

Interleaving helps pupils to discriminate between topics and aids long-term retention.

Retrieval of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which **increases both storage and retrieval strength**.

In addition to the three principles we also understand that **learning is invisible in the short-term** and that sustained **mastery takes time**.

Our content is **subject specific**. We make intra-curricular links to strengthen schema.

Continuous provision, in the form of daily routines, replaces the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum and, in other cases, provides retrieval practice for previously learned content.

Impact

Because learning is a change to long-term memory it is **impossible to see impact in the short term**.

We do, however use **probabilistic assessment** based on **deliberate practise**. This means that we look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long-run.

We use **comparative judgement** in two ways: in the tasks we set and in comparing a pupil's work over time.

We use lesson observations to see if the **pedagogical style** matches our depth expectations.

We use pupil conferencing/questioning to see if the language of Threshold Concepts is used and understood.

We also use hot tasks to check on short term knowledge acquisition and to plan next steps.

Curriculum Organisation

Through a combination of cross-curricular topics and subject specific programmes of study, the National Curriculum statutory requirements are fulfilled whilst, at the same time the 'Bewdley Curriculum' aims to be broad, balanced and most importantly, tailored to suit the needs of our unique cohort of children so that they are fully prepared to be healthy, happy and successful citizens of modern Britain who understand and respect British Values.

We want our children to have a love of books and recognise the importance of reading and, as such, our topics often have a key text which will be used as a stimulus, so that children see the link between language, reading and writing. The Reading Leader ensures

that there is a range of high quality texts available to support learning and deepen pupils' knowledge.

Subject leaders ensure that there is appropriate coverage of their subject across the school and that the principles of learning as stated above are evident through a range of monitoring tools including book and planning trawls, lesson observations and pupil conferencing. They are also responsible for ensuring that links between learning are being made over the year and across years so that knowledge is deepened over time. Subject Leaders ensure that adequate and high quality resources are available to teach each subject and that staff receive training to deepen their subject knowledge.

The Curriculum Leader supports subject leaders in order that they can carry out their role confidently and effectively.