

## Our Vision

Sacriston Academy aims to provide a creative, inclusive, challenging and real-world curriculum that inspires future thinkers, innovators and problem solvers in an immersive environment that stimulates and supports high quality learning. To ensure that all learners exceed their potential academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually with their families, in their communities as in the wider world ensuring that they become ambitious lifelong learners.



## Principles and Purpose

Our curriculum is customised, personalised and structured so that the development of knowledge, skills and vocabulary is completed in a systematic and logical sequence, with big ideas being re-introduced throughout Key Stages in a variety of projects, making links between subjects and content. The curriculum is organised to support pupils growing depth of learning using a project-based, thematic approach, it provides children with a range and breadth of rich and memorable learning experiences which promotes SMSC and British Values.

When designing our curriculum we have ensured a well-planned program which recognises the knowledge and skills, pupils will need for later life taking into account our local coal mining heritage. Sacriston Academy places the community at the heart of all it does, we strive to leave a legacy for future learners and generations to come.

## Aims

- Develop a love for learning
- Opportunities to enrich children's lives through a broad and diverse range of exciting experiences
- Make meaningful links between subjects.
- Develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding of a range of themes and concepts.
- Develop a rich and deep subject knowledge
- Make effective connections to the real world.
- Help children to think creatively and solve problems.
- Develop children's capacities to work independently and collaboratively.
- Enable children to make choices about their learning
- Take account of children's interests and fascinations.
- Understand the purpose and value of their learning and see its relevance in the past, present and future
- Make a positive contribution to the school and local community.

## Our approach:

- Develops children to the best of their abilities
- Helps children to find their passions and interests
- Facilitates children's acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding
- Helps children to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically and morally
- Assists all children in becoming resilient, independent, responsible, useful, confident and considerate members of the community
- Promotes a positive attitude towards learning, so children enjoy coming to school
- Helps children to acquire essential knowledge and skills as a solid basis for lifelong learning
- Creates and maintains an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- Ensures that each child's education has continuity and progression
- Enables all children to contribute positively within a culturally diverse society
- Promotes innovation and entrepreneurialism
- Opportunities to learn in different environments.

## Depth, Balance and Breadth

### **Our curriculum at Sacriston Academy is carefully designed, organised and planned for depth of learning:**

Our definition of progress is; the widening and deepening of essential knowledge, skills, understanding and learning behaviours. We design, organise and plan our curriculum to ensure that children are not merely covering content but achieving a depth to their learning which enables them to use their skills and understanding in all areas of the curriculum.

Our careful curriculum design and planning means that we build in many opportunities for repetition and practise opportunities for essential knowledge, skills and understanding in every subject. This ensures that children are able to revisit previous learning, which allows them to gradually develop a deeper understanding of the skills and processes within subjects, at their own pace and in the best possible way for each individual child.

Our curriculum is meticulously designed and planned to move the nature of children's thinking to a higher order deep level of understanding rather than just acquiring new facts and knowledge.

### **At Sacriston Academy we carefully design, plan and implement a curriculum to provide balance for every pupil:**

It is our underlying belief that every child should feel valued and experience the feeling of success in a wide range of curriculum areas. We believe that through the curriculum we can impact on what is in children's head and how they feel about themselves, so that they feel clever, confident and ready to tackle any challenge they may face.

We have designed, organised and planned our curriculum to ensure every child receives an appropriate mix of academic and personal development which means that in practice our curriculum places equal importance on core and foundation subjects.

At Sacriston Academy we place high priority on ensuring children's physical and mental wellbeing are met. We understand that children will not be successful learners unless they are emotionally secure, therefore we carefully design our curriculum and adopt a flexible approach to timetabling to ensure that we can meet and respond to any issues which may arise. Children's physical and mental wellbeing are as valued and important as academic development.

We carefully monitor children's progress with their personal development and our well planned and thoughtful approach to SMSC helps to ensure that every child is well cared for and supported.

Our balanced approach to the curriculum is not at the expense of high standards in core subject areas. High standards and enabling children to reach national expectations and above is of vital importance if they are to succeed at the next stage of their education and go on to achieve full and happy lives and careers.

Our full and rich curriculum, with its excellent range of experiences, ensures that every pupil at Sacriston Academy makes good progress both academically and personally. Our unique curriculum ensures that every child is given the opportunity to shine and flourish.

### **At Sacriston Academy we carefully design, plan and implement a curriculum which provides breadth for every pupil:**

Through careful discussion and analysis of our pupils' backgrounds, cultures and learning behaviours, we have prioritised the following areas which drive our curriculum design with the intent that children must have the building blocks to become successful adults in terms of being able to gain employment, live healthy lifestyles, be moral citizens and to take opportunities to extend their horizons.

1. **Aspirations** – for some children they have lacked a determination to succeed and they do not have is an appreciation of the range of opportunities and possibilities available to them in later life. Therefore, in every topic we teach we plan in opportunities for children to see first-hand the range of employment and careers available to them.
2. **Learning** - providing a highly inclusive environment where children enjoy their education. All children are challenged to expand their knowledge and skills through varied curriculum opportunities, encouragement and targeted support to embed skills, to develop at their own pace and to learn in a style that best suits their individual needs. Working with children and parents / carers we aim to offer experiences which help them to become independent and resourceful learners.
3. **Community** -We want our children to feel a connection with the world in which they live and a sense of place. We believe this builds a sense of belonging and identity, develops cooperation and friendship, a belief that all people are of value, enhances an appreciation of the natural world, encourages participation and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, responsible and contributing citizens with the belief they can make a difference.

## Entitlement and Enrichment:

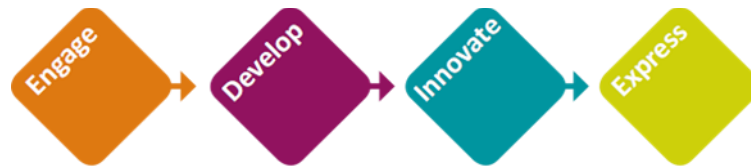
Our rich and engaging curriculum takes into consideration all that children are taught and experience. This includes those activities and learning experiences that take place outside of the classroom and outside the National Curriculum. At Sacriston Academy our pupil offer:

- Provides on and off site subject or topic related activities
- Ensures opportunities for children to learn outdoors
- Develops partnerships with external providers that extend children's opportunities for learning
- Welcomes parents and carers to take part in children's learning experiences
- Holds specialist curriculum days or weeks
- Uses quality resources in and out of the classroom.

Our broad and balanced curriculum takes into account the range and frequency of these activities and experiences and we ensure they are planned for in a rigorous and meaningful way.



## Structure of Our Curriculum



Our curriculum is built on The Four Cornerstones of Learning – Engage, Develop, Innovate and Express. These are four distinct stages that actively promote children’s learning and thinking.

The Four Cornerstones of Learning link explicitly to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The focus for teaching and planning in each Cornerstone is as follows.

### Engage

Getting children engaged in a concept is the first step to learning. We endeavour to hook learners in with a memorable experience. Each memorable experience sets the scene and provides the context for future learning. During the engage stage teachers ask questions to find out children’s interests and spark children’s curiosity using interesting starting points.

Children:

- Take an active part in memorable first-hand experiences
- Begin to read and research about their new theme using a range of source materials
- Ask their own enquiry questions
- Develop spoken language skills in different situations and with a range of people
- Take part in sensory activities
- Identify possibilities for future learning

Teachers:

- Hook learners in with a memorable experience
- Set the scene and provide the context
- Ask questions to provoke thought and interest
- Use interesting starting points to spark children’s natural curiosity



*"Curiosity is the engine of achievement." Sir Ken Robinson*



## Develop

In the develop stage, children explore themes, concepts and subjects in greater depth. Teachers give children the opportunity to gain new skills and knowledge from a range of challenging activities. This enables children to make progress and develop confidence across a range of subjects.

Children:

- Delve more deeply into a theme
- Develop an understanding of new concepts and skills
- Acquire new knowledge
- Practise and master new skills
- Make links between subjects across the curriculum
- Re-visit previously learned skills
- Compose, explore, make, do, build and investigate
- Use transferable skills in different subjects and contexts
- Read and write for different purposes and audiences
- Follow pathways of enquiry based on their own interests
- Explain and describe their learning and understanding
- Complete homework activities to support their learning

Teachers:

- Teach knowledge to provide a depth of understanding
- Demonstrate new skills and allow time for consolidation
- Provide creative opportunities for making and doing
- Deliver reading, writing and talk across the curriculum



*"Many of the things we find interesting are not so by nature but because we took the trouble of paying attention to them." Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi*

## Innovate

In the innovate stage, children are offered a range of rich and stimulating scenarios. These scenarios act as provocations, encouraging children to think creatively. During this stage, children have the opportunity to work both independently and in different groups.

Children:

- Apply skills, knowledge and understanding to real-life and imaginary contexts
- Show enterprise in solving problems and resolving situations
- Use their thinking skills to explore possibilities
- Build on their self-esteem and confidence
- Reflect upon and identify their own needs, skills and understanding
- Work in pairs, groups, as a whole class and independently
- Take on different roles and responsibilities

Teachers:

- Provide imaginative scenarios for creative thinking
- Enable and assess the application of previously learned skills
- Encourage enterprise and independent thinking
- Facilitate group and independent work to solve problems



*"Stand aside for a while and leave room for learning, observe carefully what children do, and then, if you have understood well, perhaps teaching will be different from before." Loris Malaguzzi*

## Express

Finally, in the express stage children reflect on their learning through talk and opportunities for shared evaluation. Children are given opportunity to explain their learning in different ways and identify next steps. The involvement of parents and carers in this stage of learning enables a shared understanding of progress and achievement.

Children:

- Perform, present and become the experts
- Evaluate finished products, processes and progress
- Link what they have learned to starting points or initial observations
- Reflect on their own learning
- Share their achievements with parents, classmates, the community and beyond
- Celebrate their achievements

Teachers:

- Encourage reflective talk by asking questions
- Provide opportunities for shared evaluation
- Celebrate success
- Identify next steps for learning



*"In his mind the whole thought is present at once, but in speech it has to be developed successively. A thought may be compared to a cloud shedding a shower of words." Lev Vygotsky*



## Memorable Experiences

Each project / theme begins with a memorable experience that stimulates children's curiosity and prepares them for a new theme. A memorable experience often involves an educational visit out of school or a visitor coming into school to share their expertise with the children.



Y5 Mini-Police



Parents and Pirates



Nick the Chef making bread



Royal Tea Party

Outdoor learning



Captain Cook Museum



Library research



Animals who help us in our community



Making our school video



Robotic competition



Training with British athletes



## Curriculum design for KS1 and KS2

Our curriculum design gives each year group the opportunity to cover a broad range of themes and subjects. Projects last either a half or full term depending on the amount of content and the children's interests. In some cases, projects may be taught for a shorter period, for example during a science or art week.

Knowledge, skills and vocabulary linked to each theme / project / subject are also planned for to show clear progression and age related expectations.



## Timetables

Each year group has a set of non-negotiable allocations for various aspects of the curriculum, including English, mathematics and PE. Teachers are free to arrange their afternoon timetable to make the most of cross-curricular opportunities and the needs of pupils. Sometimes subjects and activities might be 'blocked' or run over successive afternoons.

## Subject coverage

### English

English is a core subject and is at the heart of our curriculum. Each project covers a range of reading and writing genres and, where appropriate, links to other areas of the curriculum.

Spoken language is promoted throughout the curriculum and across all subjects.

Spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation are promoted throughout all writing opportunities, with each year group following a specific programme.

### Mathematics

Mathematics is also a core subject and is taught discretely using Maths No Problem. Incorporating the use of resources, problem solving and group work, the Primary Series is child-centred and fun to teach and was assessed by the DfE's expert panel, which judged that it met the core criteria for a high-quality textbook to support teaching for mastery. However, where relevant, mathematics is linked to ongoing project work.

### Science

Science is taught as a discrete programme across school and has been written with working scientifically skills underpinning each lesson. Our scheme has a balance of enquiry types and new knowledge is identified and taught through each lesson.

### Foundation subjects

The foundation subjects – history, geography, design and technology, art and design, PE and music – are integrated into each project and provide enrichment across the curriculum.

### Religious education

RE is a statutory part of the curriculum and follows the locally agreed syllabus. The RE curriculum is enriched using the Cornerstones *Love to Celebrate* scheme.

### PHSE and citizenship

PHSE and citizenship are important aspects of our curriculum and are taught both discretely and within our curriculum projects.

### ICT and computing

The core skills of ICT are taught as a discrete programme across school. However, other elements of the computing curriculum are integrated into the curriculum as part of project work. These include e-safety, digital publication and presentation, research, data handling and the use of digital media.