



Stebbing Primary School Teaching and Learning

Created/updated October 2015
Ratified October 2015
Due for review 2019

Introductory statement.

In the past schooling has meant learning skills in literacy and numeracy and cultivating an ability to retain information. These skills were considered to be of higher value than creativity, independent thinking, discernment, communication skills, emotional intelligence and technological literacy.

But in a changing world, with technological advancement, and the globalised marketplace in which we must all now compete, we need our children to innovate, be intellectually curious and be revolutionary thinkers, all without losing their creativity, courage and motivation to succeed.

These are the principles which have underpinned our educational practice at Stebbing. We have created a syllabus of topics to be explored. It is a rigorous process of discovering, applying and communicating and its ultimate goal is to prepare our pupils for a lifetime of learning.

Our approach is an inclusive, not exclusive, process encompassing the following approaches:

Letters and Sounds (phonics).
Story telling.
Montessori.
Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
Big Writing
Mantle of the Expert.
National Primary Curriculum
National Literacy and Numeracy Framework.

In conjunction with these approaches we also include:

Stebbing Skills Grids (adapted from paperwork from Bexley LEA, Chris Quigley and Independent Curriculum)

Other approaches and documents used that are explained in other policies:

R.E. matters for every child. Essex LEA Framework
Health for Life PSHE programme of work (Nelson Thorne)
Shirley Clarke AfL
Rising Stars assessment documents
6's and 7's - a scheme to raise children's self esteem
Gym Trail.

In addition, this document needs to be read along with the following documents.

Stebbing English policy
Stebbing Maths policy
Stebbing Assessment policy
Stebbing Handwriting policy
Stebbing Marking policy
Stebbing Discipline and Behaviour policy
Stebbing MFL policy
Stebbing R.E. policy
Stebbing Sex Education policy
Stebbing PSHE policy

Stebbing Homework policy
Stebbing Inclusion /SEN policy
Stebbing P.E. policy
Stebbing Foundation Stage policy
Stebbing Mathematics Calculation policy

Summary of Approaches applied in our curriculum.

Letters and Sounds:

Letters and Sounds is a Government document outlining the process for teaching phonics in Early Years and Key Stage 1. It is divided into 6 phases. From phase 2 phonemes and high frequency words are taught through a systematic approach. Short daily phonics sessions are carefully planned for in both key stages. There are four stages to these lessons. The first stage is to revisit previously taught phonemes and high frequency words. The next three stages are to teach, practise and apply new phonemes. Daily formative assessments are carried out after each session. Next steps are then planned for accordingly.

Storytelling and Talk for Writing:

Storytelling is the process of taking a familiar tale and learning the story through choosing actions for parts of the story, making story maps and participating in creative activities. Through Pie Corbett's principles of storytelling, children begin by imitating the story; innovating it by making changes to characters, setting or events; finally inventing their own story based on the same structure. This initiative has been developed through the training and input of the Essex Literacy team who have taken on board the Government initiative of Talk for Writing. This approach has been adopted in order to raise the standard of writing across the school.

Montessori:

Maria Montessori developed a highly effective method of teaching which could be used with great success with each and every child. Through research she found that children learn best by doing. Children who were given these opportunities became happy, self-motivated learners and formed positive self-images. Underpinning her philosophy is the importance that the child, practitioner and equipment play in a child's education. Fundamentally Montessori believed in giving children the ability to become independent learners. Alongside this, the Practitioner facilitates their learning by presenting equipment and identifying ways in which the child could progress. The equipment is specially designed to teach a specific learning objective. Once a piece of equipment has been presented children have an opportunity to explore it independently with the freedom and security of a control of error. Children are given opportunities to choose and repeat materials as they feel necessary. As stated in our Montessori Accreditation Report (2010) : *'The Montessori approach is strongly adhered to in Reception and Year one where children benefit from a fully prepared learning environment and have access to the full range of Montessori materials...'* The Montessori ethos and in particular the Maths resources are also evident in Key Stage two.

Early Years Foundation Stage:

Implemented in 2008 the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) encompasses a statutory curriculum designed for children aged from birth to five. There are close observations of the child's learning and behaviour which are continuously evidenced. These assessments inform the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) assessed termly. A topic-based approach takes the development matters objectives and uses these as starting points. Carefully planned adult-led and child-selected activities are incorporated into each topic. The Montessori materials are fundamental to developing the key skills. An indoor and outdoor curriculum is provided for to effectively support children in their spontaneous, independent learning.

Early years learning concentrates on 7 areas split between prime and specific areas of learning.

The prime areas of learning are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas of learning are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Teaching is often done through play, where the child learns about subjects and other people through games.

Big Writing

Big Writing is an approach we use to encourage and improve independent writing and to assist with assessing unaided work. Following the literacy strategy it follows different text types over a two to three week period. It also incorporates 'VCOP' strategies covering Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation.

After two weeks of input the learning focus is concluded by 30 minute fast paced, stimulating 'VCOP' activities, led by the teacher. This is followed by a short break and when the children return, a calm environment is created by lighting candles, softening the light and playing relaxing music. The classroom layout is altered and the children have special pens and books to use. The age of the child determines how long they are writing for.

Our children respond well to these sessions, notably children who struggle with focusing in 'normal' class time. The skills the children acquire are seen to be clearly transferred into their everyday writing. Due to the independent nature of the writing, we are able to assess the work using APP, therefore identifying targets to inform the child's future development.

Mantle of the Expert

Mantle of the Expert is 'an imaginative-inquiry approach to learning'. It places children in the roles of experts and it encompasses Enterprise and Drama for Learning.

An Enterprise is planned by the teacher that encapsulates both the current topic and the skills they need to learn. The Enterprise is first introduced in a manner of different scenarios including, from using objects, films and real life situations. The ownership of the sessions is slowly transferred from being teacher led to becoming child led. However the teacher is still a facilitator to ensure the appropriate skills are still being met.

Mantle of the Expert encourages us to introduce topic areas in a variety of ways. It naturally co-exists with our skills based curriculum which enhances children's independent skills. It supports and builds upon the children's natural curiosity to extend and develop their love of learning. It is introduced into KS2 as a way of applying the Montessori ethos to a more mature environment.

The National Curriculum

The National Curriculum is a statutory document introduced by the government to ensure all schools cover all areas of the Curriculum.

At Stebbing we have referred to the National Curriculum by creating topics that include the skills and knowledge required by the end of KS2. By having a three year rolling programme in KS1 and a four year rolling programme in KS2, we have guaranteed that every child will encounter the required learning experiences by the end of their primary school journey.

As a result we can guarantee our children leave with a well rounded education and are well prepared for their next stage of learning. As a school we have designed our own creative skills

based approach to this, which we feel gives our children the important life skills needed to make them lifelong learners.

Mathematics

In response to the new curriculum for Mathematics, we have devised a document to inform our planning which sets out all of the objectives for each year group very clearly. This helps us to achieve a '*creative and highly interconnected discipline*'. The core features of the new curriculum are: conceptual understanding, mathematical reasoning and problem solving. To work alongside this document we have also created a calculation policy enabling continuity of taught methods throughout the whole school. To support mathematical teaching and learning all children will also have open access to the Montessori equipment which is well resourced in each classroom. Finally to ensure that our pupils are assessed within the new guidelines of steps and statements we have purchased Rising Stars tests.

English

In light of the new curriculum changes we have amended our English curriculum and utilised a planning tool purchased from Jonathan Bond, a very experienced Essex-based English consultant. This outlines the objectives which need to be covered each term and clearly shows the progression by year group. It identifies all of the key strands of the new English curriculum and is a framework on which to base our teaching and learning. As well as using this document for planning, we are also interested in the work of Alan Peat and have been trialling this in the later years. We are hoping to roll out this way of teaching English to all key stages in September 2015. We have purchased the Rising Stars Reading assessment. In line with the new curriculum, we are using these assessments as another indicator as to the progress the children have made and their overall attainment. This will remain in conjunction with current teacher assessments too.

Forest School

At Stebbing every child has the chance to take part in Forest School. It is a concept that has been brought over from Denmark by nursery nurses who observed the benefit of an outdoor education for children. Forest School encourages listening and observation skills and has been proven to improve self-esteem, resilience and confidence to name but a few. Alongside all of these important benefits, Forest School also allows the children to have 'quiet' time which is a rarity in such a fast paced and technologically advancing world. Our qualified Forest School leader organises and oversees all of the sessions with adult helpers. Risk assessments are made for the site and all activities are checked and updated regularly.

Computing

Over the past few years there has been an increase of ICT resources used within school to aid pupils learning. In 2014 we moved away from traditional school ICT platforms and have started using Google for Education. This means that each child has their own school email address and access to a range of educational Google apps, all of which are monitored. Each classroom has access to a set of Chrome books as well as 30 school i-Pads which are regularly used in all classrooms in all subjects.

Creative Curriculum Grids.

These contain all the knowledge specified by the National Curriculum for the various age groups across all the subjects we are required to teach.

These topic webs may be subject to change, however any changes must ensure that all the Skills and Knowledge originally planned to be taught that half term will be encompassed in the new topic, for example: 2011/2012 Summer changed from Ancient Egypt and Carnival to Ancient Greece so we could make the most of the 2012 Olympics in London.

(These can be viewed at the school but will not be available online)

Skills Grids.

These contain all the skills we have decided are relevant to each topics section whilst ensuring a good coverage is obtained across all syllabus areas.

(These can be viewed at the school but will not be made available online)