

Kemnay Primary School

Curriculum Rationale and Design



This should be read in conjunction with Aberdeenshire's 3 -18 curriculum Policy <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/14033/3-18-curriculum-policy.pdf>

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to communicate –

- What our curriculum contains
- What learners can expect
- How our curriculum is delivered
- How the curriculum meets the needs of our learners

Curriculum for Excellence

At Kemnay Primary School, we follow the Curriculum for Excellence. This is the national curriculum for Scottish Schools.

The purpose of our curriculum is to ensure that our learners develop the four capacities as described in Curriculum for Excellence. We support the children to develop the skills, knowledge and attributes to become Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors to Society. (See Appendix 1)

Vision, Values and Aim/s

At Kemnay Primary School, our vision, values and aim/s (constructed and agreed by staff, pupils, parents and the wider community) provide the underpinning principles and beliefs for the development of the four capacities.

Vision

Our vision statement is -

Learning Together To Be The Best We Can Be

Values

At Kemnay Primary School we value –

Caring, Cooperation, Respect and Good Manners

Aim/s

Our main aim is to –

Get it Right for Every Child

We use the GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) model to support and guide our practice.

<http://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/>

At Kemnay Primary School, along with parents and the wider community we will work together to “Get it Right for Every Child”.

We aim to -

- keep children safe.
- promote the highest standards of mental, emotional, social and physical health and wellbeing.
- encourage active lifestyles and community involvement.
- provide a nurturing learning environment where children feel cared for.
- promote the highest standards of achievement for all and commit to lifelong learning.
- promote and expect respectful relationships between all in our school community.
- encourage responsible attitudes and behaviours taking account of children’s rights.
- support all to be inclusive and included and promote equality and fairness.

Totality of The Curriculum – Contexts for Learning

Our curriculum is designed to take account of the four contexts for learning. These contexts are – Ethos and Life of the School, Curriculum Areas and Subjects, Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) and Opportunities for Personal Achievement.

Ethos and Life of the School

Aspects of children’s learning are developed through the Ethos and Life of the School. At Kemnay Primary we are proud of our warm and welcoming ethos where all are valued. We work in partnership with parents to instil a sense of pride for our learners and demonstrate mutually respectful relationships. Children learn, that together, we have high expectations of behaviour, good manners, fairness, equality, inclusion and learning potential. Children also have opportunities to learn through a range of annual events that feature in the life of our school. Some examples of these are annual class assemblies to parents and visitors, annual class trips (including a whole school trip to the pantomime at His Majesty’s Theatre), the P4 Parents’ Ceilidh, residential trips at P6 and P7 and First Aid Training from P5 – P7 to name but a few. These experiences are valued by our parents, and support for funding is provided by the PTA.

Curriculum Areas and Subjects

We plan curricular learning under the following subject headings –

- Language and Literacy (including Modern Languages)
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Health and Wellbeing
- Science
- Social Studies
- Religious and Moral Education
- Technologies
- Expressive Arts

Interdisciplinary Learning

At Kemnay Primary School, we provide opportunities for interdisciplinary learning (IDL) which allow children to make connections between different aspects of the curriculum. Carefully planned interdisciplinary learning opportunities, support children to deepen understanding, and develop their skills in relevant contexts.

Some examples of interdisciplinary learning at Kemnay Primary include -

- House Team Enterprise Challenges where learners deepen their understanding of profit and loss using their numeracy skills whilst considering which resources to buy, in order to make attractive products which are cost effective. Interpersonal skills and developing use of persuasive language are also included.
- WWI film project where our P7 class researched the lives of those commemorated on our school memorial board then scripted a drama depicting the feelings of those involved. Media techniques were then used to communicate to an audience.
- In Nursery, our children develop their interpersonal skills whilst problem solving and den building when they visit the woods.

Learning through IDL contexts supports the development of skills for learning, life and work focusing on literacy, numeracy and health and well being. This is a key entitlement of Curriculum for Excellence.

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2008/06/06104407/4>

Opportunities for Personal Achievement

Throughout their time at Kemnay Primary School we place high value on learners' personal successes. Recognising and supporting wider achievement provides children with a sense of satisfaction and helps to build motivation, resilience and confidence. We celebrate successes through assemblies, community gatherings, nursery coffee mornings and barbeques, bulletins, stickers, star writers, certificates and class achievement boards. Our house points system also recognises a wide range of achievements and the house trophy is awarded annually to the house with the most points. Parents also communicate wider achievement via one jotter week jotters.

Design Principles

When planning learning, the following design principles are applied to help ensure that we “get it right” in terms of children’s learning needs.

Challenge and Enjoyment – At Kemnay Primary School we provide our learners with appropriately challenging experiences that are active and engaging for all. We have high expectations of learners’ attainment and achievement taking into account the needs and abilities of individuals.

Breadth – We plan to ensure learners have the breadth of curricular experiences and use our curriculum planning map to help ensure this.

Progression – Taking account of prior learning and specific needs, we plan for continuous progression for our learners. Resources are reviewed and refreshed as part of our self-evaluation process to help ensure ongoing

progress. School tracking and monitoring processes help us focus on continuous improvement and the use of Aberdeenshire's progression frameworks provide benchmarks of learning across the curricular areas. Our transition arrangements also support continuous progression for our learners.

Depth- We provide our learners with experiences that allow them to learn in enough depth across the curricular areas, so that they can confidently apply their learning in different contexts. We encourage our learners to be creative and independent thinkers and use Little Learners, Philosophy for Children, Mindfulness, Visible Thinking and Cooperative Learning techniques to support this.

Personalisation and Choice – Within our curriculum framework, we provide opportunities to ensure that our learners are involved in what they learn and how they learn according to their individual interests and needs. Through topic work in particular, pupils identify what they want to learn and are given choices about how they present their learning, taking account of individual needs, learning styles, aptitudes and talents.

Coherence – We ensure a coherent learning experience for our pupils, linking appropriate curricular areas and deepening understanding e.g. learning about body systems through PE, HE and Art and Design.

Relevance - We ensure that our learners are exposed to relevant curricular experiences, helping them to identify how their learning will provide strong foundations for future life and work. We encourage children to be reflective learners, identifying when and how they will use what they have learned in later life.

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/thecurriculum/howisthecurriculumorganised/principles/>

Transitions

At Kemnay Primary School, we understand that transitions can be anxious times for pupils and parents. We recognise particular anxieties at pre-school, P1 and S1 transition times.

We plan carefully to ensure that transition experiences are positive, that prior learning is built upon, and that any additional support needs are communicated. We work with parents and other agencies to help ensure we "Get it Right" for every child.

For families joining our nursery we hold open days, parent meetings, phased induction and welcome packs.

Prior to starting P1, we visit pupils in their pre-school settings, arrange a series of induction meetings for parents, hold Grow Up Days for pupils and provide cross curricular induction packs. In addition to this, P7 buddies are linked with P1 pupils, and help to explain the day to day life of the school to pupils and parents (playtimes, lunches, lining up etc). P1 pupils also experience a 2 week phased entry into P1.

We begin our transition to Kemnay Academy in Primary 5, where pupils are invited to annual events at Kemnay Academy. The pupils take part in a series of events where they begin to get to know their future peer group from across the neighbouring cluster schools – Alehousewells, Kinellar and Kintore.

Prior to starting S1, pupils, parents and staff (primary and secondary) meet to ensure that learning, and any additional support needs are communicated.

Where involved, other agency partners (e.g. school nurse, educational psychologist) are invited to support this transition process.

Between stages, pupils have opportunities to meet with their new teachers before the summer break. Teachers communicate learning and additional support needs information between stages. P7 pupils also put together a learning profile and learning passport which help S1 staff to provide appropriate support to meet learning and other needs.

At all points of transition, effective partnership working and progression frameworks help to ensure that needs are met, and that learning is a continuous process from 3 – 18.

Learning Teaching and Assessment

Staff at Kemnay Primary School have a shared understanding of effective learning and teaching approaches, and engage regularly in career long professional learning to continually enhance our practice.

We use a wide range of stimulating and supportive learning environments and creative teaching approaches to motivate and enthuse learners and promote enjoyment of lifelong learning. We provide active learning experiences for all children at all stages, encouraging independent thinking and pupil engagement with the learning process. We differentiate our learning and teaching resources and approaches, to provide an appropriate pace and challenge in learning for all.

We set high, yet achievable targets for pupil learning, and closely monitor, assess and track progress. We use school based, authority and other management information systems to support us with the analysis and use of this information. We use a variety of assessment techniques, and focus on providing quality feedback to learners, supporting next steps in learning. We encourage our learners to self and peer assess with an ongoing focus on improvement. Assessment for Learning approaches (AfL) directs our practice. We gather a range of evidence on what learners make, say, write, and do, and this, combined with learning conversations, standardised assessment results and professional judgement, support us to provide reliable evidence for reporting on progress and achievement to pupils and parents. We regularly engage in moderation activities with a range of colleagues to ensure that we are promoting the highest standards in learning. Where there are barriers to children's learning progress, we use GIRFEC assessment tools and provide additional support for learning in line with Aberdeenshire's "Right Support, Right Place, Right Time" model.

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/5854/rightsupportrightplacertime-aguideforparentsproof3.pdf>

Self-Evaluation and Improvement Planning

At Kemnay Primary School, there is ongoing professional dialogue about learning and how we might change aspects of practice to improve outcomes for children. Throughout the year, staff self-evaluate against key aspects of school improvement using a tool called “How Good Is Our School?” (HGIOS 4)

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HGIOS4_tcm4-870533.pdf

Based upon this self-evaluation, we identify strengths and areas for improvement, and produce an annual Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan which are shared and agreed with pupils, parents and senior officers at Aberdeenshire Council. The Care Inspectorate, (Nursery) Education Scotland and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education further support the school in identifying strengths and supporting improvement priorities.

Our Unique Identity

Staff, pupils, parents, (grandparents) and the wider community are proud of Kemnay Primary School. We are a Rights Respecting School and through Restorative Approaches, we promote high standards of behaviour for all. We have a strong community spirit, and make very good use of our local environment for learning. The outdoor learning experience of our nursery pupils in particular, is highly regarded by staff, parents and pupils and has been highlighted by the Care Inspectorate as exemplifying particularly good practice. Our school building is historic and interesting, and we are particularly proud of our WWI memorial board which commemorates the lives of past Kemnay pupils, staff and community members. Visitors frequently comment on our happy and welcoming school and on our well-mannered, engaged and enthusiastic learners. Pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities offered to them, and value their outdoor play area and play equipment. Pupils are involved in school improvement, and often make suggestions regarding this - e.g. for a lego club to be set up or for new carts to be provided in the playground. Pupils and staff thoroughly enjoy their school meals, with Angela’s chicken pie being a firm favourite.

We have a very strong staff team with a broad skills base, who work very well together to support and nurture our learners. Leadership is promoted and recognised at all levels, with all staff sharing responsibility for the leadership of learning. Staff enjoy working at Kemnay Primary School. We are very well supported by our parent body, who help underpin learning through the life of the school in a wide variety of ways. We value our Parent Council, PTA and our host of school volunteers who support us daily in school.