



Curriculum Statement

With the likes of Robin Hood, the separatists who travelled on the Mayflower and our important role in the English Civil War, our area knows how to breed characters of grit, determination and a sense of individualism. Here at Ramsden we have developed a curriculum that teaches the children all about our area's rich heritage, the benefits of working as a team and the importance of being an individual and standing up for something you believe in.

Our curriculum, which follows the Statutory Early Years and Foundation Stage, National Curriculum as well as Religious Education, ensures all subjects are recognised for the contribution they make to develop the child. However, we are aware that this is simply the basic 'visible' curriculum and there needs to be a lot more added in order to help grow a person ready for the 21st Century.

Our ever-developing outside areas provide a wealth of opportunities for learning outside the classroom, and we are proud to have been the first school in the country to have been awarded the Gold Standard for learning outside the classroom. Our woodland and outside areas not only 'serve to improve student's self-esteem and academic work' (Hoffman, Thompson, & Cruz, 2004) but also provide opportunities for our pupils to become more ecologically and environmentally aware, something that will become more and more important in the not too distant future.

This also provides a firm basis to form another aspect fundamental to our curriculum: that of STEM. Recent accolades for this area of the curriculum are that we were Highly Commended for our STEM Club in 2018 but then went on to be national winners of the same award in 2020. We have also been awarded the National Business Awards for STEM learning in 2021 and our Science Coordinator has been invited to speak at the Women in STEM Conference on the subject of 'Boosting Engagement in STEM Subjects at Primary Level,' hopefully addressing a question raised by Jim Callaghan all the way back in 1976 of 'why is it that such a high proportion of girls abandon Science before leaving school?' We believe that this shows our commitment to our belief that all subjects should be open to everybody and there should never be barriers to learning, either real or perceived.

Our determination to enable children to read fluently means that unless there are exceptional circumstances, children leave Key Stage 1 with a reading age above their chronological age, with the process of learning to read, in order to read to learn, well under way. However, as well as the measurable skills of reading, we also develop skills of self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-confidence as, 'those with a high sense of self-efficacy have been shown to set more ambitious goals and aims for learning,' (Bandura et al., 2001) and 'invest more effort and persistence even in challenging tasks,' (Schnell et al., 2015).

Our work on the 'Perspectives of Poverty' has ensured that we have a much deeper understanding of how material poverty, a poverty of language, emotional poverty and a poverty of experience can have a negative effect on a child's ability to learn. Hart and Risley's study, the Early Catastrophe (2003) which built on previous studies, shows how children from lower SES backgrounds have a lower vocabulary range from their higher SES counterparts. However, because later studies show that conversational skills are much more important, Greenwood et al., (2011), we ensure that conversational skills are developed from the nursery upwards. Our home learning policy reflects the theories of Pierre Bourdieu's Forms of Capital (1985) in which we try to develop Cultural Capital through 'Branching Out.' This encourages families to take part in days out together, or for children to join recognised organisations such as the Cubs, Girl Guides and Scouts. This not only helps to develop 'Cultural Capital,' but also provides an opportunity to develop 'Social Capital.'

In addition to the 'extended' curriculum we also have what we call our 'Beehive,' which is a dedicated well-being area with a qualified 'Emotional Literacy Support Assistant.' This helps us to respond rapidly in preventing declines in mental health, a problem that has obviously been exacerbated through recent events.

Of course the curriculum is broader than just the academic subjects and we employ two full time specialist PE coaches to ensure the children are given expert training in a range of sports. So effective is their coaching that, pre-pandemic, as well as achieving the Gold Standard for PE, both our boys and girls teams won their respective football leagues. Our girls' cricket team won the Bassetlaw competition, then, representing Bassetlaw, came third overall in Nottinghamshire. Our boys' team also won the Bassetlaw competition and then finished seventh in Nottinghamshire. We also finished runners up in both Handball and Basketball with mixed gender teams.

Similarly, our choir, which has been invited to take part in a host of local celebrations from the re-dedication of a war memorial to a local war hero, to the opening of a garden of remembrance for all those who lost their lives in the local colliery, reflects the quality of our music curriculum.

The *Intent* of our curriculum and our intention every day, is to help our pupils develop into self-actualised people, as 'Self-actualised people also tend to be independent and resourceful: they are less likely to rely upon external authorities to direct their lives' (Martela & Pessi, 2018).

We adopted the Ramsden family motto, *Audaces Fortuna Juvat* (Fortune Favours the Brave) not only because of our historical links with the family, as the Squire Ramsden built our school in 1831, but because it reflects the aims we try to instil in our pupils – go on, have a go!

Or as John Virgo put it more succinctly, 'pot as many balls as you can!'