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Be the best you can be

I can do all things through God who strengthens me.

Philippians 4: 13

Every voice heard, every day a new chance, everyone exploring opportunities

13 September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

In the letter I sent out last week, I informed you that we were excited to be starting a new foundation curriculum this year. We are using Cornerstones to help support our delivery of the National Curriculum.

Cornerstones is a fully sequenced and interconnecting curriculum which begins in Reception and is developed across the key stages to Year 6. It is designed to help children build and sequence knowledge. The curriculum begins with a 'Big Idea' or a higher-level concept that links subjects and connects the whole curriculum. The 'Big Ideas' are then broken down into smaller parts which they call 'aspects'. Aspects are then broken down to form robust knowledge and skills. Knowledge underpins and enables the application of skill.

It is important to sequence the delivery of the curriculum so that over time children can build on their knowledge and development of skills and so different engaging topics are used to enable children to revisit and build on their learning in a variety of different subjects. The half termly topics will provide a clear purpose and value to learning, have a variety of different subject foci (Subject Driver) and bring creativity and opportunities for inspirational learning activities.

Cornerstones enables this to happen through a four stage teaching and learning philosophy – **Engage, Develop, Innovate and Express.**

Engage – is the first stage. Children will have memorable first-hand experiences or WOW experiences where they investigate and discover or be introduced in exciting ways to a new topic. I'm sure some of you have already heard about these already.



Develop – during this stage children will dig deeper to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of a topic across the curriculum, practice new skills and maybe even follow new pathways of enquiry based on their own interests.

Innovate – at this stage children will apply previous skills, knowledge and understanding to real life contexts. Be challenged with real or imagined problems and situations to solve using knowledge and skills from earlier stages.

Express – the final stage. Children will become the experts, the informers. They will share their achievements and evaluate any finished products or processes.

As we have a variety of mixed age classes, we have developed a rolling programme covering all of the objectives from the National Curriculum. Using Cornerstones means we can clearly see the coverage in our foundation curriculum and track what has been covered using a gap analysis tool.

Attached to this letter is this half term's curriculum overview for your child's class. It tells you the name of the topic for this half term and what the Driver Subject(s) is, the memorable experience and their Innovate Challenge. There is also a Companion Project which is a mini project which is designed to help children broaden the context of their learning. On the back is a range of optional extra home learning activities that you may choose to do with your child at home to reinforce and widen their learning.

We hope that your child enjoys these new projects and experiences, we are certainly looking forward to teaching them!

Yours sincerely

Jill Watson

Headteacher

