



Church Hill Middle School rationale for curriculum design

At CRST our aim is to improve the life chances of all our pupils through a broad and balanced academic curriculum. Our motivation is to develop confident and creative young people who can thrive in a changing world. Our curriculum vision is inclusive, well -designed and coherently sequenced in order to establish a strong foundation for all our pupils. Our curriculum also provides pupils with opportunities to take Reading within this and interdisciplinary literacy is a key driver of curriculum development. Oracy is also an integral part of literacy; empowering pupils to articulate their knowledge, understanding and thinking. Knowledge acquisition is central to our vision and we provide rich and varied contexts and opportunities for pupils to acquire disciplinary knowledge and then develop and apply this broad knowledge.

This rationale explains the principles of how we have designed the curriculum for our pupils and how these principles underpin how we have selected the things we want them to learn.

Church Hill Middle School is a happy, purposeful, and welcoming school which serves a predominantly white British community. Demographically it is a mixed area within which there are areas of deprivation and a significant number of pupils are entitled to free school meals.

It is essential that our curriculum meets the needs of all of our pupils by ensuring core skills are embedded and applied through foundation subjects and contextualized learning. We seek to provide rich opportunities for meaningful talk and the acquisition of vocabulary so that our children can become confident speakers. For our children to be successful, we ensure that reading is an integral part of our curriculum design. Alongside the explicit teaching of reading comprehension, opportunities to apply these skills are developed throughout the subject disciplines, so that children become fluent and confident readers. We promote a love of reading through developing a strong reading for pleasure culture in school and at home.

We are determined to create an inclusive culture of learning underpinned by our core values, where all children will be challenged in their thinking to achieve the best they possibly can and strive to become successful citizens and lifelong learners. Our curriculum ensures a commitment to learning about the world beyond school, arts and creativity and mental health and wellbeing. We raise long term aspirations for our pupils, making explicit links to life beyond school, allowing children to see the relevance of their learning.

Each subject within the curriculum has a further subject-specific rationale which demonstrates how schools have selected what they want pupils to learn in each subject and how the order has been arrived at so that pupils make progress in their learning. Our curriculum strongly builds from KS2 into KS3 and preparing pupils for the next phase of their education.

Our overall curriculum design is underpinned by our vision for what the pupils in our communities need to thrive and become confident learners. Our curriculum offer identifies the **Knowledge, Skills, Attributes** and **Experiences** we seek to develop in our pupils. We see each component of KASE as an entitlement for pupils and KASE shapes the whole experience within a school. Our Subject Curriculum design is driven by the **Knowledge** aspect of KASE; developing *expert* subject knowledge alongside disciplinary skills in order to encourage critical thinkers who can *communicate* ideas and thoughts with clarity. Key to our curriculum vision is that pupils experience a wide range



of cultural opportunities and materials within school and that pupils are encouraged to communicate and talk about their knowledge, thinking and learning.

Our curriculum design begins with and is driven by subject knowledge. The driver for our subject planning is to develop expertise by ensuring that pupils master, over time, the key substantive and conceptual knowledge within each subject discipline. We think of **knowledge** as consisting of

- **Substantive knowledge** – the substance of each unit of learning and its associated vocabulary, connected through the subject to other units by substantive concepts – the “big ideas” of each subject. Our planning is underpinned by a “big picture” of the subject which includes, but is not limited to the outlines of substantive knowledge specified in the National Curriculum.
- **Disciplinary knowledge** – the way in which the thinking in each subject develops as pupils build more substantive knowledge, what are commonly thought of as the ‘subject specific skills’ of each subject domain.

The design of the curriculum within each subject is characterised by the relationship between **substantive** and **disciplinary knowledge**, interwoven and built over time and developmentally appropriate to age and stage. Knowing more, remembering more, being able to do and demonstrate more is at the core of the sequencing. Making conceptual connections differs in each subject so each subject rationale makes explicit the order and sequence of how this knowledge will be learned and each school has detailed medium term and unit plans. Some subjects are more hierarchal Maths, Science , MFL , Music whereas others are cumulative such as History, Geography and Art.

We want pupils to know and understand more but also to explore and interrogate knowledge. We believe that, for our pupils, we need to design learning opportunities to promote key **attributes** which are associated with developing an appetite and a thirst for learning such as resilience. Pupils need to see models of how these attributes are key to higher achievement and pride in their work. As they gain more knowledge, they are changed by what they learn and they grow more detailed and conceptual connections (“schemata”) within subject disciplines. For the same reason, we have identified a range of **skills** which are characteristics of effective learning. The **substantive** and **disciplinary knowledge** within each subject provides a framework for how pupils get better and make progress in that subject developing subject skills. These characteristics of effective learning are drivers of pedagogical design. We place particular emphasis on the development of exploratory talk and of reasoning to apply the substantive vocabulary pupils are learning in different subjects (fluency and communication).

Experiences of activities, visits to places and encounters with people provide stimulus for and models of how knowledge is gained. The design and planning of our curriculum makes explicit the weaving in of authentic **experiences** and wide range of rich ‘texts’ which give pupils the opportunities to see where knowledge and learning could take them and enables connections and links to be made.