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West Dartmoor Federation

Curriculum Statement

At the West Dartmoor Federation, our overall aim is to:

Provide a safe, secure, positive and Christian learning environment where all members of the school feel valued and respected as individuals and learners.

We aspire to provide a high quality education for all of our pupils. We are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children.

Rationale

We believe that children at our schools are entitled to a range of first hand experiences and activities which will support them in becoming active, reflective, lifelong learners and responsible citizens in a modern ever changing world.

We believe that we have a responsibility to educate the whole child. This includes academic subjects and the statutory requirements of the national curriculum but also to prepare them for their role. To this end we aim to provide a curriculum which is balanced and broad-based to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all our pupils. We also aim to offer as wide a range of additional learning opportunities as we can. We celebrate success and develop a 'can't do.....yet' culture based on growth mindset. This we believe will develop resilience, problem solving, curiosity and creativity in our pupils.

Our curriculum is partly determined by the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum including the EYFS Curriculum. However our personalised elements are not set in stone. We strongly believe that our 'topics' can be guided by both the children's interests and can also reflect what is happening in our local area. Children often ask 'big questions' and investigating these can also form part of our work.

All children have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. The curriculum at the West Dartmoor Federation follows the principles that



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- Work in school should be designed to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- The school curriculum should aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve.
- The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.
- Be holistic.

In developing our curriculum, alongside the latest National Curriculum, we have created an exciting and well balanced curriculum by:

- Offering a curriculum with exciting and engaging themes based on learning.
- Offering a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which prepares our children for the next stage of education and their life in the community.
- Nurturing curiosity and a thirst for learning.
- Offering excitement, awe and wonder and foster children's engagement.
- Providing first-hand experiences both in the school, school grounds and wider afield.
- Fostering pupils' independence, responsibility and self-initiated learning.
- Ensuring there is skills progression and a raising of standards.
- Allowing time for work of quality and depth with time to reflect.
- Being responsive to the children's interests and pupil voice.
- Celebrating achievement.
- Creating an environment where all children feel secure and valued.
- Embracing diversity within our own community and beyond and be firmly committed to the principles of equality for all children.

Curricular Aims

As well as providing an exciting curriculum for our children, we place a high value on the core subjects, reading, writing and maths within our topics. We ensure that our children become effective communicators and are confident with numbers.

The main aims of our curriculum are:

- be able to listen and read for a variety of purposes and be able to convey their meaning accurately and appropriately through speech and writing for a variety of purposes;



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- to know how to think and solve problems mathematically in a variety of situations using concepts of number, algebra, measurement, shape and space, and handling data;
- to be developing an enquiring mind and scientific approach to problems;
- to have an opportunity to solve problems using technological skills;
- to be able to use ICT as a tool for information gathering, communicating, problem solving and presentation.
- To be capable of communicating their knowledge and feelings through various art forms including art/craft, music, drama and be acquiring appropriate techniques which will enable them to develop their inventiveness and creativity;
- To know about geographical, historical and social aspects of the local environment and the national heritage and be aware of other times and places and recognise links among family, local, national and international events;
- To have some knowledge of the beliefs of the major world religions;
- To begin acquiring a set of moral values, e.g. honesty, sincerity, personal responsibility; on which to base their own behaviour;
- To be developing the ability to make reasoned judgements and choices, based on interpretation and evaluation of relevant information from a variety of sources;
- To be developing tolerance, respect and appreciation of the feelings and capabilities of others in an unbiased way;
- To be developing agility, physical co-ordination and confidence in and through movement;
- To know how to apply the basic principles of health, hygiene and safety.

The schools' aim to provide a range of activities across all subjects of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage Areas of Learning that will allow each child's potential to be fully developed.

The schools' SEN and Inclusion policies indicate how we intend ensuring access to the curriculum for all

Phonics at the West Dartmoor Federation:

Foundation/Key Stage 1

Children first learn their letter sounds and names then apply these to word building. We use both Letters and Sounds and Jolly Phonics as the basis for our teaching of phonics. These are both recognised as synthetic phonic schemes. In line with Letters and Sounds, the



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children will also learn a variety of tricky words by sight. In Year 2 practice turns more to a spelling focus and we use the Babcock programme “No Nonsense spelling” We believe that reading to children is invaluable. High quality whole class stories are shared with children on a regular basis throughout the school as a topic link, a literacy focus or perhaps most importantly for pure enjoyment. Children read individually, in small groups and as a whole class. A variety of different genres are chosen at an appropriate level of ability for each group of children. As well as being able to read the text, children are encouraged to discuss the content of the book, and their opinions about people, places and events are sought. The more able readers will be asked about the varied themes of different texts.

In the Foundation Stage and Year 1 the children read phonically decodable books at their individual level. As they reach the end of these books they move onto a wide range of colour banded reading books. We supplement this with a huge variety of other literature. Teachers use these resources when they feel it will result in even more progress. Most able children at KS1 are encouraged to keep an individual reading journal where they can reflect on their independent reading.

Key Stage 2:

Through independent reading, shared reading in literacy lessons and cross-curricular sessions, guided reading groups and reading for pleasure, reading in Key Stage 2 develops and extends the skills acquired in Key Stage 1.

Children explore a wide variety of genres, both fiction and non-fiction which allows them to access, input ideas and understand what they are reading. They are given opportunities to speculate on the tone and purpose of texts they explore as well as to consider both the themes and audience.

Children in KS2 are encouraged to keep a reading journal to enable them to document their reading choices and reflect on what they have read in many different ways. Federation, we use a range of resources and activities to support children’s learning of phonics and to engage all learning styles - visual, aural and kinaesthetic.

Diversity and Equality

We embrace the diversity in our schools. We aim to provide high quality teaching that is differentiated to meet the needs of the majority of pupils. Some of our pupils will need something *additional to* and *different from* what is provided for the majority of pupils. In supporting children who require additional support we work to provide a pupil-centred process that engages pupil, family, school staff and other professionals in planning for and implementing high quality, needs led provision that is consistent across the federation.



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We use a graduated response to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). This is achieved through the regular monitoring and reviewing of all pupils' progress. Initial concerns registered by teachers, parents/carers or other agencies are addressed by appropriate differentiation within the classroom. Where pupils continue to make inadequate progress despite support and high quality teaching, the class teacher will work with the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) to assess if a pupil has a significant learning difficulty and agree appropriate support. In some cases it may be necessary to seek assessment by or advice from an external professional such as a speech therapist, specialist teacher or educational psychologist. This will always involve discussion and agreement with the pupil's parents/carers.

We ensure that all staff in the schools are able to identify and provide for those pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) thus ensuring that all of our pupils are able to access the same opportunities for learning and social development fulfilling their potential, promoting their well-being and achieving maximum progress.

Sharing our Curriculum

Before children start at the West Dartmoor Federation, our Foundation Stage staff hold an open evening and several open afternoons to familiarise parents, carers and children with the curriculum offered to FS. During the year, parents are encouraged to get fully involved in their child's learning and send in photos via email and the 'cloud'. These are put into the Learning Journeys and regularly shared with parents. At the end of a theme or topic, we will hold regular open afternoons to keep parents and carers up to date with what children are learning in school and to celebrate their successes.

Details of our topics/themes are shared on the federation website and some of the classes in the lower ages send home a weekly newsletter. The older children have a termly newsletter. This keeps parents informed and involved.

At the end of each term, the children of each class decide how they want to share their learning with parents, carers and the wider community. This is then shared via the Meavy Museum and Lady Modiford's Topic afternoons'. We welcome the community into the school for an afternoon and have fantastic feedback from these events, helping us to shape future ones.



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The Outdoors:

We firmly believe that, as we are living and working in Dartmoor National Park, Learning need not take place solely within educational buildings. The outdoor environment has massive potential for learning. We are extremely fortunate to have such a rich rural environment on our doorstep and our children and young people's learning experiences can be enhanced by maximizing the potential of the outdoors.

Outdoor learning experiences are often remembered for a lifetime. Integrating learning and outdoor experiences, whether through play in the immediate grounds or adventures further afield, provides relevance and depth to our curriculum in ways that are difficult to achieve indoors. Learning outdoors can be enjoyable, creative, challenging and adventurous and helps children and young people learn by experience and grow as confident and responsible citizens who value and appreciate our environment.

We are continuing to refine this area of our curriculum to ensure the experiences we offer remain relevant to our children's learning.

Curriculum Enrichment

The schools believe that the curriculum can be positively enriched by

- Using the immediate environment for research, stimulus and inspiration.
- Encouraging visits from speakers, artists and performers to share their expertise and interest with the pupils.
- Taking pupils outside the immediate environment on field trips in support of their school studies.

Extra-curricular Activities

The schools will strive to provide extra-curricular activities for its pupils. These will vary according to staff expertise and time available. We are clear that the time staff give to these activities is not an expectation and is freely given.

At the West Dartmoor Federation, we run an early morning breakfast club and after school provision. This is centred at Lady Modiford's site and children are driven from Meavy to join in.