

Curriculum Statement - Brancaster and Sedgeford

Autumn 2017

Both schools have a long term rolling plan that we work from but, when planning each term, we look at where our need is and plan around the children, including their interests, evidence from assessments, next steps, etc. We also aim to play to teacher strengths and knowledge.

So, for example, Brancaster KS2 uses outdoor learning as a way in for our many SEN children and those who find formal learning hard. Sedgeford utilises the teachers' skills in music and ICT. Seaside and dinosaurs were chosen as topics close to our children's hearts, whereas "London's burning" extends their world.

All parents strongly agreed that learning is good. All but one (who "agreed") strongly agreed that their child enjoys school. Parents often engage by supporting their children to find out more, or by sending books and resources in to school to be shared.

The RE curriculum at Brancaster was originally drawn up with the County/Diocesan RE advisor, based on one theme for a year, with topics gradually extending ideas over the three terms, and introducing religions other than Christianity. This year, we are trialling a new rolling programme, using what we have learnt from our previous plans, and "understanding Christianity", which our RE co-ordinator has just been trained in. Staff and children are enjoying the topics and we have built in flexibility to follow children's interests and needs.

Subjects may be taught on a weekly basis or in blocks, depending upon a variety of factors – children may need time to research further; work may need to be consolidated in other subjects before moving on; if children are very engaged, we may not want to break up their concentration/line of thought; we may need external facilities and be restricted by their availability. We build this flexibility into our plans so that we can work in the way that will have maximum impact at the time.

Over the school, some children still need a younger based curriculum so they may continue with the Foundation Stage curriculum. Other children can work in a different class either up or down to suit their needs. This ensures we are supporting our SEN as well as gifted and talented children. As this has always happened, there is no stigma to being in a group with lower children. Because there is an overlap of staff children feel happy to move up and down and through the different classes

All children are grouped by ability and all groups have an adult working with them at times over the day. Teachers rotate round groups to ensure they work with all children.

Both schools work from maths schemes. Sedgeford use the White Rose Maths Hub (which is a fairly new introduction and is having a clear impact on results). Brancaster uses Maths Makes Sense, supplemented by a range of other activities. Both are happy with the schemes but also bring in different resources, topics, etc. In questionnaires, maths was mentioned as a subject that children enjoy.

Both schools use ReadwriteInc. We are finding this is proving a very good scheme for reading and phonics, with all children making progress. The scheme is not proving so successful for writing so we add to this to ensure children cover all areas and most importantly get excited and want to write. We try to promote writing for a purpose and provide a range of stimuli and resources to inspire all.

We use our outdoor area to support the Foundation Stage Curriculum; we also plan outside activities to incorporate needs of boys in the class who enjoy physical activities e.g. bikes, small equipment, bug hunting, measuring etc. We organise trips to enhance our children's learning as well as meeting all learning styles. Outdoor learning continues in the older classes with Brancaster using Titchwell and Sedgeford using Houghton to support this. Trips and activities were mentioned by most children as something they really enjoy and all parents agreed that the range of activities is good and promotes learning. During a recent seaside topic, the children proved so fascinated by shells that we

arranged a visit to the local shell museum and followed the children's interests, moving away from our original plans. The resultant work (art, science etc) shows the value of this. The two schools often share trips to minimise costs and promote wider social interactions.

Homework is used to consolidate and extend learning. Recently, as part of our work on Harvest, children showed an interest in conkers. Conkers, therefore, became the theme for our next homework and the results were both inspired and inspiring – stories, poems, models, pictures, science etc. A parent at Sedgeford recently said ““The homework is now amazing. It provides a chance for me to work with my child on interesting projects and discuss many wider issues whilst making discoveries together”. Another comment emailed to me this week says “Just to let you know tonight 2 new words learnt from Sedgeford's spellings - Earl and unearth. Unearth led to a good discussion of how secrets could also be unearthed and therefore could be buried!”

Our SEN children are incorporated fully in class; we use adults to provide intervention and support and also to provide extension activities for our more able children. All parents agreed that we meet their child's needs (and, in fact, all but one strongly agreed)

We plan carefully from our rolling programme to ensure all areas are covered. We assess regularly in maths and literacy to ensure all children are making progress to the best of their ability. We then use these results to inform our Pupil Asset assessments. We have regular meetings in school to look at Pupil Progress and analyse how things are going with individual children in class.