

Growing Strong Roots Curriculum

At Portreath we have three core elements at the heart of our school: **relationships, experiences, and learning**. By building strong relationships, providing thought-provoking experiences and high-quality learning opportunities and texts, we set our children off on a life-long journey of learning. We like the use of visual images to support understanding. We like to imagine us all as trees. We want children to grow strong roots of knowledge, concepts, skills and personal qualities in order to blossom as learners, hence the name of our curriculum. Our intent is to enrich the children's lives, ignite their imagination and spark their interest in all aspects of the world around them. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils and their understanding of the core values of our society are woven through the curriculum, with a focus on our school's key values: honesty, gratitude, kindness, inclusion and empathy. We believe powerful knowledge opens doors and it is through knowledge that children can make sense of and improve the world we live in. We aim to provide a broad, balanced, and creative curriculum that is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills and knowledge. We have devised a curriculum that matches the ambition of the National Curriculum and has 5 key aims that drive our curriculum. We want everyone to be:



a **DEEP THINKER** who is a fluent reader, knowledgeable, creative and that has mastered key skills in range of subjects.



an **EFFECTIVE LEARNER** who demonstrates curiosity and independence, strives to improve and is a problem solver.



a **CONFIDENT COMMUNICATOR** who is a logophile and bibliophile.



a **HAPPY AND HEALTHY INDIVIDUAL** who is inclusive, celebrates diversity and feels that they belong.



a **PERSON** who **MAKES A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE** to others, the community, the environment and the world.

Portreath is a coastal town in a part of Cornwall that is considered to have areas of deprivation. The children are lucky to live in such a beautiful place, and our curriculum is partly about appreciating nature as well as preparing them for a tech-filled world. The school plays a role in ensuring our village is a wonderful place to live now and, in the future. We want the children to take what they learn in the village to make a difference to the wider world. We believe that it is very important to learn about environmental issues. We are passionate about outdoor learning and helping children to learn to manage risk for themselves. We want them to remain in touch with the natural world and we make use of the fantastic school grounds and local environment, including the beach and woods. The curriculum is designed to help the children to have a real sense of Cornwall's heritage, as well as prepare them for life as global citizens. We are guided by the quote, '**A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.**' Marcus Garvey. We want children to grow strong roots of knowledge, concepts, skills and personal qualities in order to blossom as learners, hence the name of our curriculum.

In Portreath there is a strong community spirit, but living in a coastal village also brings its challenges. Aspirations for some may need to be more outward looking. Life in the village can be quite insular for some children; it is our role to build the children's cultural capital. We have designed a curriculum to raise aspirations within our community, as well as foster a sense of belonging. It is designed to enrich the children's lives, ignite their imagination and spark their interest and open the children's eyes to the fascinating wider world around them. We introduce them to a diverse range of art, music, historical events and give them experiences that help shape their lives. The whole school environment is a place to learn, and we have things such as large maps, local artists work, and we have a 'Curiosity Cabinet' to spark talk and enrich the children's daily experiences in school. We explicitly encourage them to value diversity. We believe powerful knowledge opens doors and it is through knowledge that children can make sense of and improve the world we live in.

Our Growing Strong Roots curriculum provides the opportunity to acquire 'essential knowledge'. The curriculum is a progression model; it is carefully and deliberately planned and sequenced in 'small steps' so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before. The architecture of the curriculum helps pupils to build

the strong roots of knowledge and skills that can help the children grow as learners and people. It is not disconnected facts. For each National Curriculum subject the school has identified golden threads that are the key concepts that weave throughout our curriculum starting in EYFS. Within a subject, these threads link the learning across the school together and help the children to make connections. The EYFS team start to 'plant the seed' of these concepts and the rest of the school help these seeds to grow. We provide regular opportunities for reactivation to help pupils transfer learning to their long-term memories. As a school we also recognise the importance of responding to children's interests and needs. We like to take advantage of experiences and opportunities that arise; these might link to local, national, or international events. We have talented and interesting people in the local area and these people can contribute to our curriculum. Although we have adopted a cross-curricular topic approach, we ensure the integrity of individual subjects is preserved. We want our children to act and talk like, for example, scientists, historians, and artists.

We recognise the importance of early language and reading as a vehicle to improve children's communication. The teaching of systemic synthetic phonics is taught from the beginning of reception using RWI, with books that are matched to learning the sounds that children have been taught. We also invest in a rich literary environment and have chosen to embed high quality texts through our curriculum to enrich learning and develop foster a love of language and reading. Texts are carefully chosen to extend vocabulary and to understand the world around us and we have linked these texts to areas of learning across the school. We recognise the importance of securing maths skills and knowledge, then applying these, and developing reasoning skills to help them within school but also as a key life skill. We want to help them make sense of the numbers, patterns and shapes they see in the world around them, offer them ways of handling data in an increasingly digital world and help secure financial security in the long term.

Content and Structure of English and Maths

In Maths we have adopted a mastery approach and use the Whiterose Small Steps scheme of learning as a base, along with NCETM guidance to plan our daily maths lessons. We use the NCETM's Mastering Number programme to compliment this in lower school. There is a focus on using the concrete, visual, abstract system when teaching number. Each lesson will include the following key features: reactivation, fluency, problem solving and reasoning. We have a calculation policy that demonstrates the journey of maths throughout the school. In English we have created a writing curriculum which includes teaching a wide variety of genres and follows the National Curriculum.

We have created our own reading spine. Class Books (novels and non-fiction) are an important feature and some of these are linked to the topic work. The other class books have been selected so we offer a range of high-quality texts from a range of authors, and we have considered things such as having female, as well as male lead characters. We want children to be logophiles and bibliophiles. We recognise the importance of vocabulary to fully access the curriculum and promote a love of language. We develop academic transferable language (tier 2 vocabulary) as well as knowledge of subject-specific language (tier 3 vocabulary) and promote and develop the rich language found in fiction and poetry. Our written work is linked to our topic when appropriate and this enables the writing to have context and purpose. It allows the children to gather information through the texts explored. Modelling writing is a key feature of our writing lessons and we explore great examples of writing to support the children with their own writing. We emphasise the importance of speaking and listening, as we believe great learning 'floats on a sea of talk'. In KS1 we use the 'Talking the Text' approach for teaching some elements of the curriculum, as well as a variety of books. We use Read Write Inc for phonics and spelling across the school. For specific details please see our Reading Journey and Writing Journey at Portreath School documents.

Broader Curriculum

We have created our own unique curriculum to meet the needs of our children. We recognise the importance of having a structure to the curriculum in order for it to be coherent. The subject leads from the Crofty MAT came together and broke the NC statements into smaller progressive steps for the skills, knowledge in each subject and called these 'Crofty Small Steps'. These documents acted as our starting point.

History, Geography, Art and Science: The small steps have been used as a basis for our curriculum and adapted by our staff to meet the needs of our children. We have also used and amended these in Science, with the Plymouth Science Scheme being used to support this. Each half term there is a medium-term planning that identifies the key knowledge and small steps for the unit, the final outcome and the key vocabulary. It also shows how the units fits in with the golden threads and the curriculum

drivers. In addition to this 3 key facts are identified for history, geography and science units. The children learn so much more than the 3 key facts, but these are the 3 key things that we expect all children to recall as they go through the school. These act as hooks for the rest of the learning and are referred back to often across the school. We provide a knowledge organiser for each history, geography, and science topic. These are shared with parents, as well as children, and are used to help learn and reactivate knowledge.

RE: We use the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus and plan through 'Understanding Christianity' scheme, including the 'Curriculum Kernewk' and 'Other Faith Units' from RE TODAY Services. From this we have created a big question and 'footsteps' for each unit.

Music: We have created a long-term plan using the Charanga scheme and we compliment this with a whole school composer of the half-term and opportunities to listen to a range of music, including live music. In addition to a range of percussion instruments, we have class sets of chime bars and ukeleles.

DT: We have a long-term plan based on DT Association projects; these always focus on designing, making, and evaluating something, for someone for some purpose. These are usually linked to another subject.

Computing: We use the 'Digital Learning Cornwall' scheme and 'Project Evolve' for e-safety. Computing is also used across the curriculum, with each class have access to ipads and chromebooks.

PE: We use 'Healthy Movers' in EYFS and then the 'Real PE' scheme. PE is led by our own sports coach. As well as PE lessons, there are numerous opportunities across the week to be active.

PSHE: We have adopted the Cornwall PSHE scheme written by Brook and this complements our 'Culture of the Heart' work.

Spanish: We use the Primary Languages Network Scheme

As a small school we have created a two-year rolling programme for children. This is because children spend 2 years in 2 classes during their time at the school, so we want to build on rather repeat work. As a school we pride ourselves on offering a rich and deep curriculum and we find by linking subjects together when appropriate and relevant this gives context to learning and makes the learning more meaningful and deeper. Although we have adopted a cross-curricular topic approach, ensure the integrity of individual subjects is preserved. We want our children to act and talk like, for example, scientists, historians, and artists. Our subjects' golden threads identify the key concepts in each subject. On our website you can find position statements for different subjects that gives more details about how that subject is taught. A key question for our teachers is "Why am I teaching this?" We ensure that we make the reasons for teaching particular skills and topics explicit to the children, so they understand the purpose of their learning and see how it fits in to the bigger picture. The curriculum documents provide us with the basics for what we will cover, but we do not let this limit us. Rather than cover a wide range of topics superficially, we choose to take our time and cover topics in more depth, usually working on one topic for half or a whole term. We understand the importance of building upon what has come before to create coherence. Reactivation is a key element of our curriculum and time is given to revise previous learning not only from the current year but previous years' too. There are somethings that we teach in addition to the NC because we feel they are important and relevant to us as a school and reflect our ethos and community.

Learning as a Whole School

One of our drivers is to be a happy, healthy individual who feels like they belong. Each child should feel that they belong to the whole school as well as their class and year group. The importance of coming together and learning together is very important to us and during the year we have themed days, and our assemblies help us focus on particular themes as a whole school. To build a feeling of belonging, the school now has four teams: 'Forbidden Forest', 'Farthing Wood', '100 Acre Wood' and 'Enchanted Wood'. We believe there is much to learn from each other, and the older children should play a part in the education of the younger children. Our Year 6 and Reception child buddy system is a core part of this.

Learning Behaviour and Learning to Learn

Our curriculum is designed to foster a love of learning. As well as preparing the children for life in the 21st century, we also want to celebrate the joy of learning. We believe that a child needs to know how to learn and so characteristics of effective learning and behaviours for learning are emphasised. Metacognition is integral to our lessons; we want the children to understand how we learn and use this information. As part of this we promote 5 learning behaviours: Being **brave, ready, responsible, resilient and happy**. We teach our children to become independent so even from EYFS we look at how routines, expectations and the environment enable them to do this. We explicitly teach children that mistakes are not bad but a natural and important part of learning. As a school we advocate everyone developing their growth mindset. Our school motto is: **believe, work hard, succeed**.

Mental and Physical Health

We have designed the curriculum to help the children to be the kind of people who can be happy, fulfilled and successful. Personal, social and health development is a strength of the school because it is interwoven into all we do, as well as through our PSHE curriculum. We live out our five values: **honesty, gratitude, kindness, inclusion and empathy**. We want our children to be happy and healthy individuals who make a positive difference to others. We have a relationship policy which guides how we treat each other, and this influences how the children treat each other. We want our children to understand some of the basic principles behind how the brain works so our curriculum includes learning about emotions. It is guided by Trauma and Mental Health Informed School (TISUK) principles. We want to give everyone the skills and understanding to build happy, healthy and trusting relationships. We teach the children how important it is to have a healthy body and mind. The school is involved in a variety of competitive sporting events but also offers a range of experiences to engage all children in physical activity.

The Arts

Knowledge alone is not enough. Being creative and developing a good imagination are vital life skills; our curriculum includes opportunities for children to experience the creative arts. This links to all curriculum drivers, and particularly to being a confident communicator. We feel the arts help children to understand that things can be expressed in a range of ways. We believe it is important for children to work with professional artists and make use of our creative community. As well as including regular professional theatrical experiences, the school prides itself on the performances the children stage. Each half term a composer and an artist are chosen and work by them is shared in the assemblies.

Conclusion

We understand that a primary school is only one stage of a child's learning journey and, as such, the curriculum, or what a child experiences whilst at Portreath, needs to be carefully thought through, planned and implemented. Through high quality teaching, the aim is for our pupils to develop transferable skills together with the knowledge, enthusiasm, concepts and values that will help them to thrive not only in secondary school but also in life as global citizens. Our curriculum promotes our motto: Believe, work hard, succeed.