



Curricular Aims

At Danbury Park School we aim to develop a child's knowledge, experience and understanding to the best of their ability; to have as much independence as possible; to have an awareness of moral values and to be able to communicate their thoughts and ideas successfully to others.

Our school's Curriculum Policy Statement takes account of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for the teaching of Religious Education. We aim to enable all children in the school to achieve levels of personal development which will permit them to play their full part in the life of the community and assist them to acquire skills and to develop attitudes so that they develop a love of learning and become life-long learners.

We carefully structure the work of the school so as to provide, as far as possible, a smooth progression and development, geared to the requirements of later education and the individual child's needs. We achieve these aims by offering a wide, varied and balanced curriculum, learning by experience and discovery, which occurs alongside a more formal, traditional approach and by providing a stimulating and happy environment for both pupils and staff alike.

Organisation of the Curriculum

Throughout the curriculum we place emphasis upon the children working with meaning, understanding and through first-hand practical experiences. Whilst emphasising basic skills we teach within a coherent framework, which encompasses the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, all the National Curriculum subjects and Religious Education. Integrated into our curriculum are the themes of health, safety, environmental and community education as well as an appreciation of what it means to be British.

The rich local environment and interests of the children are included wherever possible. We aim to stimulate the children's natural curiosity, encourage them to think critically and develop a scientific approach to solving problems.

Our primary school is organised to cater for boys and girls from the year in which they become 5, until they transfer to secondary school at 11 years of age. The children are divided into classes according to age. There is no streaming and children change classes according to age, once a year, in September. The teacher for each class is responsible for most of the children's learning, although specialist teaching in music and French is provided for all classes and for PE in some classes, and the child may, at times, work with other teachers in other parts of the school. Children progress through the whole curriculum on an individual basis. Special care is taken with tailored programmes of work being provided for children with special educational needs and disabilities and those who are exceptionally able. In this way, although children's abilities range over broad areas of experience, they are encouraged to study in depth.



The Early Years Foundation Stage

On entering the Foundation Stage classes (Reception) your child will follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. This is a continuation of the learning that started in pre-schools and continues until your child moves onto the National Curriculum in Year 1. The Early Years curriculum is organised under three prime areas of learning:

- Communication and language e.g. listening with enjoyment and responding to stories, song and other music; talking about what they do and listening to each other;
- Physical development e.g. travelling around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment; handling tools, construction objects and malleable materials safely and with increasing control;
- Personal, social and emotional development e.g. taking turns and sharing fairly, understanding what is right, what is wrong and why.

These prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy e.g. recognising letters, sounds and words, beginning to read and write familiar and simple words;
- Mathematics e.g. counting reliably up to 10 everyday objects, using everyday words to describe position, beginning to relate addition to combining two groups of objects and subtraction to 'taking away';
- Understanding the World e.g. finding out about, and identifying some features of living things, asking questions about why things happen and how things work;
- Expressive Arts and Design e.g. drawing, painting, design, music, dance, imaginative and role-play and stories.



In planning and guiding the children's learning our teachers incorporate different approaches to activities ensuring there are opportunities for the children to play and explore, investigating and trying out new experiences; to learn actively through concentrating and persevering when they encounter difficulties and thereby enjoying their achievements and endeavours; to create and think critically by putting forward and developing their own ideas and strategies. We also ensure that there is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.



The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework identifies stages of progress towards the Early Learning Goals. The Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. However, we are aware that during the Reception year many children will have exceeded the goals and others will be working towards these goals. These differing individual needs are met in all curriculum areas e.g. by providing a wide range of reading material from simple repetitive-word stories to more detailed non-fiction books, by supporting independent writing through encouraging the application of phonics and “having a go” or by selecting a variety of ways in which to record scientific investigations.

Elements of more formal lessons are gradually introduced throughout the year so that by the summer term, the children are prepared for the move to Year 1.

Key Stage 1 – Years 1 and 2

The learning continues in Key Stage 1 at Danbury Park School as the children build on the strong foundations they have acquired. They continue to operate, individually and in groups, to listen attentively, ask and answer questions, respond to complex instructions, describe events and be aware of others. They develop more control of their bodies and are able to use simple games apparatus.

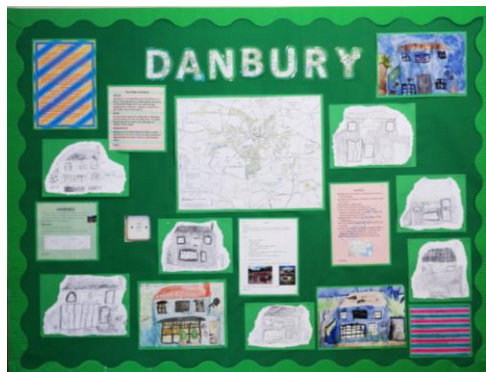


To enhance the topics investigated in Science, Art, History and Geography, visits are made to both the local environment and further afield e.g. Castle Hedingham to find out more about what it was like to live in a castle many years ago. Visitors are invited into school to develop the children’s awareness of other aspects of the world e.g. a guide dog and her owner when learning about the five senses. There are many other activities which are enjoyed by Key Stage 1 including the special Harvest and Christmas Celebrations and the Annual Infant Music Festival for Year 2 children.

In Year 2 (end of Key Stage 1) all the children are assessed against the requirements of the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum. Individual and comparative results are sent to parents.



Key Stage 2 - Years 3 to 6



To make the curriculum more relevant, interesting and challenging for our Key Stage 2 children we have developed our own programmes of study based on the National Curriculum incorporating opportunities to study both local and international elements. This means that our children develop a strong commitment to their local community as well as an understanding of and sense of responsibility to the wider world.

Lower Key Stage 2 – Years 3 and 4

By this stage, children are usually able to be reasonably systematic in their approach to work and sustain longer periods of concentration on an activity. They start to share their experiences with others and become increasingly aware of the differences in people. They become appreciative of the variety of circumstances within the world.

Writing is for a variety of purposes and the children are able to draft and edit their work selecting vocabulary and sentence structure for impact on the reader. Children also have the opportunity to write collaboratively. Increasingly complex stories, poems and reports are read and written. A range of literature and non-fiction material is available to the children for their enjoyment and interest. Simple play scripts are written and performed by the children. Children are encouraged to take an increasing pride in their presentation.

In Mathematics children use the four operations of number (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) confidently and with increasingly larger and smaller numbers including decimals and fractions. They begin to investigate more complex patterns and mathematical problems. Estimating is important. Children's mental calculation becomes more confident and independent with a wide range of taught strategies. Multiplication tables need to be learnt systematically and thoroughly and the children are tested regularly. Children use a range of metric units and select the appropriate ones for the task in hand.

In Science children become independent in the investigative process and have a clear idea of what is a fair test. They make and test predictions, describing and explaining their results. They start to use a range of information sources. Basic life processes are studied, along with the main stages of the human life cycle, which form the basis of our Relationships and Sex Education programme.

Children become more confident and independent using information and communication technology, including programming, data handling and modelling, presenting and communicating software. The



children use the internet and are taught about the dangers and how to stay safe when using electronic forms of communication.

Children use a wider variety of historical sources and begin to distinguish between fact and opinion. They begin to empathise with people who lived in the past. They undertake a variety of geographical studies. Other religions and beliefs are explored and children are encouraged to express their developing thoughts during-discussions through listening, questioning and sharing. They are more adventurous and inventive in their physical games, co-ordinating their movements and devising their own team games. Their artistic skills are developed enough for fabric work, sculpture and pleasing representational drawing and painting.

Swimming is a compulsory part of the primary school P.E. curriculum. We take our Year 3 pupils to a local pool where a variety of swimming skills are taught from learning to swim using a variety of strokes, to improving their techniques, to water safety and survival.

Upper Key Stage 2 – Years 5 and 6

By the time children leave our school we aim for them to take ever-increasing responsibility for their own learning, to tackle assignments with increased independence and raise questions to broaden their experience. We actively encourage them to think critically about their own work and that of others and within this framework they are encouraged to express their ideas confidently, demonstrating sensitivity towards others and an awareness of global issues. Opportunities to celebrate successes, either individually or as part of a team, are considered to be paramount and address both the academic and practical aspects of learning at local and national level.

Children are introduced to sophisticated reading skills such as skimming and note-taking. Writing skills are developed and adapted according to the target audience often using, as a role model, the works of recognised authors to enrich their own work. Through their reading they encounter a wider range of material in both fiction and non-fiction books that encompass both classic and modern writers. Use of appropriate vocabulary, the role of varied phrases, accurate spelling, correct grammar and more complex sentence structure are taught as children become increasingly fluent and able to write effectively at some length. Most will have developed a fluent and mature written script.

In Maths the children use estimation to support increasingly complex calculations that invariably involve more than one process and algebra is introduced. They develop mental strategies even further and explain their rationale. Throughout number and shape work, patterns are sought and theories investigated as formulae are developed. Application is crucial with all elements, for example, percentages and data handling related to everyday life.





The major differences between groups of living things are explored, the key factors in decay and recycling, major organ systems and their processes are studied. Reproduction in plants and animals is revisited and ideas for good health and hygiene are introduced as part of the topic on puberty. Environmental issues are discussed. Materials are compared and their properties related to uses. Changes of state and studies of light and sound also take place. More complex investigations are planned, variables identified and controlled, materials selected with appropriate tools and methods used in a much more systematic and methodical way.

In P.E. the children can exercise greater control over their bodies to produce sequences of movement that are both inventive and adventurous. Team skills are developed with more opportunity to enter sporting tournaments and compete with other schools.



The children are now familiar with a wide range of art media having been introduced to varied craft activities and are able to select and choose techniques to create specific effects. Most will be capable of fine detail and mixing techniques. They are able to design, plan and execute their plans for detailed and complex models, often linked with the computer. They will have been introduced to a range of musical experiences involving composing and playing as well as singing and learning to play an instrument.

Local studies are related to world studies, trips of greater distance and complexity are undertaken, including a week long residential visit in Year 6. In-depth local ecological studies take place. Beliefs and customs are explored in more depth. The social skills associated with good citizenship and British values are developed.

As a vital and integral part of their studies children at this stage are expected to use, with increased independence, up-to-date technology through access to resources in the ICT suite and the many laptop computers which allow use of the internet. The children are able to make informed choices and select programmes to achieve their desired outcomes. They are also taught the basics of programming and control technology.



Homework

At Danbury Park School homework is set to reinforce and extend learning in the classroom. For the infant children they need to read every night, practise their phonics and spellings and learn basic number facts. They are also asked to prepare a presentation twice a year sharing something that is special to them or linked to the term's topic with their classmates. As the children move into the



juniors they are also expected to keep a Reading Journal to record their personal responses to their reading and to prepare increasingly sophisticated and more detailed presentations. They also need to keep practising their spellings and to learn the multiplication tables. Homework becomes more formal in the upper juniors as we prepare the children to move on to secondary school and additional tasks are set.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Gifted and Talented Pupils

All children are special. However, we recognise that the needs of some children require extra attention, which the school provides, whether the need is due to very high ability, a learning difficulty or a physical problem. The school has comprehensive Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Gifted and Talented policies, which clearly outline strategies used to ensure all children achieve their potential as learners.

The school has a full-time SEND coordinator and learning support assistants who work with identified children following the child's individual education plan. The SEND Code of Practice is carefully followed. Parents are involved at each stage of the SEND process with regular parent-teacher meetings to discuss the child's individual education plan and suggestions for parental help at home. The school continually seeks ways to extend and improve its SEND work through close liaison with related outside agencies, in-service training and self-evaluation.

For those children who are identified as gifted, talented or exceptionally able, we assess their needs and plan appropriate support. This may include an additional level of differentiated work within the class, learning challenges, problem-solving and investigative work to deepen learning. The children also have the opportunity to work with children of a similar ability within our local cluster of schools.