



Taw Valley Federation
Curriculum Policy
Policy Agreed by Governors: 20th July 2015

Rationale

In our federation we are firmly committed to raising the attainment and increasing progress of all pupils. In order to achieve this we recognise the importance of a broad, balanced curriculum fit for Taw Valley Federation pupils in the 21st Century and that the National Curriculum forms a part of this.

Our curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We make provision for a daily act of collective worship and teach religious education to pupils at every key stage.

We make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE).

Aim

Teachers will use the curriculum to develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.

Inclusion

Setting suitable challenges

Teachers will set high expectations for every pupil. They will plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard. They will plan appropriately stretching lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers will use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.

Responding to pupils' needs and overcoming potential barriers for individuals and groups of pupils

Lessons will be planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. Invariably this will mean that these pupils will be able to study the full national curriculum. The SEN Code of Practice will include advice on approaches to identification of need which can support this. A minority of pupils will need access to specialist equipment and different approaches. The SEN Code of Practice will outline what needs to be done for them.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress will take account of the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages.

The Curriculum ... What we teach

	Key Stage One (KS1)	Key Stage Two (KS2)
Class	Two	Three / Four
Year Groups	Y1 & Y2	Y3, Y4, Y5 & Y6
Age of pupils in class	5, 6, 7	7, 8, 9, 10, 11
Core Subjects taught	English, Maths, Science	English, Maths, Science
Foundation Subjects taught	Art & Design, Computing, Design & Technology, Foreign Languages, Geography, History, Music, PE, RE	Art & Design, Computing, Design & Technology, Foreign Languages, Geography, History, Music, PE, RE

National Curriculum Content

Language and literacy

Teachers will develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.

Spoken language

Pupils will be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English. They will learn to justify ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary and build knowledge; negotiate; evaluate and build on the ideas of others; and select the appropriate register for effective communication. They will be taught to give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. This will enable them to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

Reading and writing

Teachers will develop pupils' reading and writing in all subjects to support their acquisition of knowledge. Pupils will be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose (both fiction and non-fiction) and be encouraged to read for pleasure. School will promote wider reading. Pupils will develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. Pupils will be taught the correct use of grammar. They will build on what they have been taught to expand the range of their writing and the variety of the grammar they use. The writing they do will include narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations: such writing supports them in rehearsing, understanding and consolidating what they have heard or read.

Vocabulary development

Pupils' acquisition and command of vocabulary are key to their learning and progress across the whole curriculum. Teachers will therefore develop vocabulary actively, building systematically on pupils' current knowledge. They will increase pupils' store of words in general; simultaneously, they will also make links between known and new vocabulary and discuss the shades of meaning in similar words. In this way, pupils expand the vocabulary choices that are available to them when they write. It is vital for pupils' comprehension that they understand the meanings of words they meet in their reading across all subjects.

Phonics: Teaching of phonics follows the 'Letters and Sounds' programme, starting at the Foundation Stage and continuing through Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. This scheme teaches and supports pupils through the phases of phonics.

Home / School: We value the link between home and school and the important role parents play in supporting Literacy development ... especially Reading. It is important that pupils' Reading work is backed up at home by regular contact with books. For younger pupils, it is recommended that a parent reads to a child or the child reads to the parent (or a combination of the two) for at least ten to twenty minutes every day. Older pupils will progress to the point where they are able to read independently for at least twenty to thirty minutes a day, either to themselves or to a parent. It is very useful for the parent to remain involved, even for very able readers as they can ask questions to test comprehension.

Numeracy & Mathematics

Teachers will use every relevant subject to develop pupils' mathematical fluency. Confidence in numeracy and other mathematical skills is a precondition of success across the national curriculum. Teachers will develop pupils' numeracy and mathematical reasoning in all subjects so that they understand and appreciate the importance of mathematics. Pupils will be taught to apply arithmetic fluently to problems, understand and use measures, make estimates and sense check their work. Pupils will apply their geometric and algebraic understanding, and relate their understanding of probability to the notions of risk and uncertainty. They will also understand the cycle of collecting, presenting and analysing data. They will be taught to apply their mathematics to both routine and non-routine problems, including breaking down more complex problems into a series of simpler steps.

Science

Purpose of study

A high-quality science education provides the foundations for understanding the world through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics. Science has changed our lives and is vital to the world's future prosperity, and all pupils should be taught essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science. Through building up a body of key foundational knowledge and concepts, pupils will be encouraged to recognise the power of rational explanation and develop a sense of excitement and curiosity about natural phenomena. They will be encouraged to understand how science can be used to explain what is occurring, predict how things will behave, and analyse causes.

Aims

- Pupils develop **scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding** through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics
- Pupils develop understanding of the **nature, processes and methods of science** through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them
- Pupils are equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the **uses and implications** of science, today and for the future.

Scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding

The programmes of study describe a sequence of knowledge and concepts. While it is important that pupils make progress, it is also vitally important that they develop secure understanding of each key block of knowledge and concepts in order to progress to the next stage. Insecure, superficial understanding will not allow genuine progression: pupils may build up serious misconceptions, and / or have significant difficulties in understanding higher-order content.

The nature, processes and methods of science

'Working scientifically' specifies the understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science for each year group. This is integral to all teaching & learning in science. Types of scientific enquiry should include: observing over time; pattern seeking; identifying, classifying and grouping; comparative and fair testing (controlled investigations); and researching using secondary sources.

Cross-curricular links

Pupils should be able to describe associated processes and key characteristics in common language, but they should also be familiar with, and use, technical terminology accurately and precisely. They should build up an extended specialist vocabulary. They should also apply their mathematical knowledge to their understanding of science, including collecting, presenting and analysing data. The social and economic implications of science are important but, generally, they are taught most appropriately within the wider school curriculum.

Spoken language

The national curriculum for science reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are key factors in developing their scientific vocabulary and articulating scientific concepts clearly and precisely. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear, both to themselves and others, and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions.

Art and design

Purpose of study

Art, craft and design embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality art and design education should engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As pupils progress, they should be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design. They should also know how art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.

Aims

- Pupils produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences
- Pupils become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques
- Pupils evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design
- Pupils know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.

Computing

Purpose of study

A high-quality computing education equips pupils to understand and change the world through logical thinking and creativity, including by making links with mathematics, science, and design and technology. The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, and how digital systems work. Computing equips pupils to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of media. It also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

Aims

- Pupils can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, logic, algorithms and data representation
- Pupils can analyse problems in computational terms, and have repeated practical experience of writing computer programs in order to solve such problems
- Pupils can evaluate and apply information technology, including new or unfamiliar technologies, analytically to solve problems
- Pupils are responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology.

Design and technology

Purpose of study

Design and technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. Using creativity and imagination, pupils design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. They acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art. Pupils learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens. Through the evaluation of past and present design and technology, they develop a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world. High-quality design and technology education makes an essential contribution to the creativity, culture, wealth and well-being of the nation.

Aims

- Pupils develop the creative, technical and practical expertise needed to perform everyday tasks confidently and to participate successfully in an increasingly technological world
- Pupils build and apply a repertoire of knowledge, understanding and skills in order to design and make high-quality prototypes and products for a wide range of users
- Pupils critique, evaluate and test their ideas and products and the work of others
- Pupils understand and apply the principles of nutrition and learn how to cook.

Geography

Purpose of study

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge provides the tools and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and changed over time.

Aims

- Pupils develop contextual knowledge of the location of places, seas and oceans, including their defining physical and human characteristics
- Pupils understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- Pupils are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
 1. collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
 2. interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
 3. communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps and writing at length.

History

Purpose of study

A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

Aims

- Pupils know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
- Pupils know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind
- Pupils gain and deploy a historically-grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'
- Pupils understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- Pupils understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
- Pupils gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

Foreign Languages

Purpose of study

Learning a foreign language is a liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils' curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. The teaching should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing. It should also provide opportunities for them to communicate for practical purposes, learn new ways of thinking and read great literature in the original language. Language teaching should provide the foundation for learning further languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries.

Aims

- Pupils understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources
- Pupils speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and continually improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation
- Pupils can write at varying length, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt
- Pupils discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in the language studied.

Music

Purpose of study

Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. A high-quality music education should engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. As pupils progress, they should develop a critical engagement with music, allowing them to compose, and to listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon.

Aims

- Pupils perform, listen to, review and evaluate music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions, including the works of the great composers and musicians
- Pupils learn to sing and to use their voices, to create and compose music on their own and with others, have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, use technology appropriately and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of musical excellence
- Pupils understand and explore how music is created, produced and communicated, including through the inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations.

Physical education

Purpose of study

A high-quality physical education curriculum inspires all pupils to succeed and excel in competitive sport and other physically-demanding activities. It should provide opportunities for pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness. Opportunities to compete in sport and other activities build character and help to embed values such as fairness and respect.

Aims

- Pupils develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities
- Pupils are physically active for sustained periods of time
- Pupils engage in competitive sports and activities
- Pupils lead healthy, active lives

Literacy across the curriculum

Making links between curriculum subjects and areas of learning can deepen children's understanding by providing opportunities to reinforce and enhance learning. It can enrich the curriculum and support achievement and enjoyment.

Communication is a key cross-curricular skill and opportunities for developing this skill should take place in Literacy and in pupil's use of language across the curriculum.

Learning and teaching literacy across the curriculum has three major aims:

- to broaden and enhance pupils' command of literacy skills by providing them with a range of different contexts in which to use and practise these skills
- to locate the teaching of the literacy skills which are central to the language of a particular subject within that subject
- to enhance the learning of the subject itself and the attitudes of children towards that learning

Additionally, work across the curriculum provides a rich source of experience, language and stimulation to support the development of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Key principles

- Speaking and listening are key skills in their own right and as tools for other learning. As such they must be developed both within the specific context of Literacy and across all aspects and areas of learning
- Successful readers and writers work with a wide range of texts on paper and on screen. Reading and writing opportunities, using a range of media, will occur not just in Literacy lessons but across all areas of the curriculum
- Literacy learning is most effective when it is part of a cohesive piece of work and not just a 'one-off'
- Opportunities to practise and apply literacy skills across the curriculum in order to give context and real purpose to reading and writing will be encouraged
- Literacy skills are enhanced and developed in specific subject areas as part of learning and teaching processes ... Subject knowledge from a range of subjects will be used to inform and develop literacy teaching
- Children will learn how a skill or concept from one subject can be applied to other learning, or in another curriculum area
- Opportunities to apply literacy across the curriculum will extend beyond non-fiction
- Application across the curriculum gives children opportunities to make informed choices and decisions about form and purpose when writing
- Knowledge and experiences from across the curriculum will provide a rich source of experience and stimulation and give real purpose to support literacy learning

Mathematics

Purpose of study

Mathematics is a creative and highly inter-connected discipline that has been developed over centuries, providing the solution to some of history's most intriguing problems. It is essential to everyday life, critical to science, technology and engineering, and necessary for financial literacy and most forms of employment. A high-quality mathematics education therefore provides a foundation for understanding the world, the ability to reason mathematically, an appreciation of the beauty and power of mathematics, and a sense of enjoyment and curiosity about the subject.

Aims

- Pupils become fluent in the fundamentals of mathematics, including through varied and frequent practice with increasingly complex problems over time, so that pupils have conceptual understanding and are able to recall and apply their knowledge rapidly and accurately to problems
- Pupils reason mathematically by following a line of enquiry, conjecturing relationships and generalisations, and developing an argument, justification or proof using mathematical language
- Pupils can solve problems by applying their mathematics to a variety of routine and non-routine problems with increasing sophistication, including breaking down problems into a series of simpler steps and persevering in seeking solutions.

Mathematics is an interconnected subject in which pupils need to be able to move fluently between representations of mathematical ideas. The programmes of study are, by necessity, organised into apparently distinct domains, but pupils should make rich connections across mathematical ideas to develop fluency, mathematical reasoning and competence in solving increasingly sophisticated problems. They should also apply their mathematical knowledge to science and other subjects. The expectation is that the majority of pupils will move through the programmes of study at broadly the same pace. However, decisions about when to progress should always be based on the security of pupils' understanding and their readiness to progress to the next stage. Pupils who grasp concepts rapidly should be challenged through being offered rich and sophisticated problems before any acceleration through new content. Those who are not sufficiently fluent with earlier material should consolidate their understanding, including through additional practice, before moving on.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

Calculators should not be used as a substitute for good written and mental arithmetic. They should therefore only be introduced near the end of key stage 2 to support pupils' conceptual understanding and exploration of more complex number problems, if written and mental arithmetic are secure. In both primary and secondary schools, teachers should use their judgement about when ICT tools should be used.

Spoken language

The national curriculum for mathematics reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are key factors in developing their mathematical vocabulary and presenting a mathematical justification, argument or proof. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as others and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions.

School curriculum

The programmes of study for mathematics are set out year-by-year for key stages 1 and 2. Schools are, however, only required to teach the relevant programme of study by the end of the key stage. Within each key stage, schools therefore have the flexibility to introduce content earlier or later than set out in the programme of study. In addition, schools can introduce key stage content during an earlier key stage, if appropriate.

English

Purpose of study

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to write and speak fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

Aims

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Spoken language

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. 14

Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of speaking and listening across the six years of primary education form part of the national curriculum. These are reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

Reading

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education. 15

Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting. Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and glossary

The two statutory appendices – on spelling and on grammar and punctuation – give an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study. References to developing pupils' vocabulary are also included within the appendices. Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed. This is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons. A non-statutory glossary is provided for teachers.

Throughout the programmes of study, teachers should teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.