



Cheam Park Farm Primary Academy

Creative Themes for Learning Curriculum Policy

1. Aims and objectives

At Cheam Park Farm we aim to foster a lifelong love of learning, through adopting a highly practical and cross-curricular approach to learning. Our Creative Themes Curriculum aims to deliver a 21st century education that will equip our children with the skills required to be an independent and responsible citizen. We aim to deliver this through:

- embedding life skills through teaching units on hygiene, community, finance, citizenship and outdoor education
- developing a sense of community and belonging. Making contributions to our community through direct interaction – including links with local organisations
- equipping children with skills for life, through practical work
- providing opportunities for children to broaden their outlook on life
- making learning more meaningful, through putting it into context
- holding a flexible timetabling approach to make space for true depth of study
- establishing cross-curricular links to foster a broader understanding
- outstanding use of computing
- a supportive and caring ethos underpinned by our Rights Respecting Schools charters
- to embed MFL through providing contexts for learning
- curriculum activities that are both local and global

At Cheam Park Farm we have designed a creative curriculum that equips our children with the skills and personal qualities necessary to lead a fulfilling and rewarding life. As a result, our children:

- develop a sense of belonging to, and play an active role in their community
- develop financial responsibility
- understand how to look after themselves, and their needs
- broaden their outlook on life
- become independent lifelong learners
- have deep regard and sound values for themselves and each other

2. Rationale

We want our children to shape their own lives, and have the skills to be the person they want to be. Our Creative Themes Curriculum is very practical; this serves us well, as it engages all ability levels and can be accessed by children at different stages of English language acquisition. Our learning involves many visits, and opportunities to learn in different environments. Children learn through studying different themes; these are carefully structured to give a balance of learning opportunities, and draw children's ability to make links and find meaning in their learning. At every opportunity, we look to make our children's learning experiences as authentic as possible. Where visits are not possible, computing is used to access high quality images and digital video that help bring each topic to life and make learning

as relevant and as real as possible; we even use video conferencing to link up with speakers and audiences from around the UK and the wider world.

Our Creative Themes Curriculum was developed as an opportunity to answer the differing needs that presented themselves not only to our school but also to education in a wider sense. The curriculum was intended to re-balance previous provision due to an increasingly narrow focus on English and maths. We needed to ensure that children had access to a broader range of knowledge, skills and understanding. At the same time, a new integrated curriculum also allows us to improve standards in reading, writing and mathematics through engaging cross-curricular activities that really inspire learning. Above all the new Creative Themes Curriculum is designed to promote progress and challenge. Throughout the taught themes, as the learner progresses through milestones two and three, children will aim to master skills at an increasingly more demanding level.

Creating a curriculum that was bespoke to our school, enabled us to answer the needs of the children, and essentially support them in taking an active part in – and making sense of the ever-changing landscape of our lives. The children themselves told us through questionnaires and consultation that they wanted a more stimulating curriculum, one that would be relevant to their lives and interests and afford practical learning experiences. Pupil voice was a constant presence in the curriculum design.

Through providing meaningful and exciting learning opportunities, we wanted to ensure raised levels of achievement for our children while at the same time equipping them with twenty first century skills for life.

3. Learner profile and competencies

When creating our previous integrated curriculum, staff, children and governors decided on a key list of attributes that promote excellence, while developing the personal value system of our Rights Respecting Schools programmes. Our Creative Themes Curriculum is driven in the same way; it allows our children to gain the knowledge and skills expected of them in the National Curriculum while also developing a learner profile that will equip them with the skills and attributes needed to thrive in the changing landscape of the twenty first century. **We hope our Creative Themes Curriculum will allow all children to become:**

- a. **Inquirers** – their natural curiosity has been nurtured and they actively enjoy learning
- b. **thinkers** – they exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to solving complex problems
- c. **communicators** – they receive and express ideas and information confidently in more than one language
- d. **risk-takers** – they approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the confidence to explore new ideas
- e. **knowledgeable** – they have explored themes that have global significance and have acquired a critical mass of knowledge
- f. **principled** – they have a sound grasp of the principles of moral reasoning and have acquired integrity, honesty and a sense of justice
- g. **caring** – they show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others, and have a sense of personal commitment to helping others
- h. **open-minded** – they respect the values of other individuals and cultures and seek to consider a range of points of view
- i. **well-balanced** – they understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being
- j. **reflective** – they give thoughtful consideration to their own learning by constructively analysing their personal strengths and weaknesses.

Our Creative Themes Curriculum will allow learners to apply the following computing competencies in authentic learning experiences to:

- Develop **awareness**
- Remain **user focused**
- Focus on the learner as **maker**
- And as an **evaluator**
- While developing a **holistic approach to computing**

4. Teaching and learning style

4.1 We use a variety of teaching styles.

4.2 Lessons do not conform to any particular model of teaching, however will consist of (in no particular order): whole class teaching; the use open ended probing questions; visual stimuli and talk partners; focused periods of learning; independent, pair or group work; plenaries that are planned or/and spontaneous - to address misconceptions, consolidate learning or move learning forward; learner lanyards being distributed and utilised effectively to promote Excellent Learner attitudes.

4.3 We recognise that children have preferred learning styles, and so make allowances for this in our planning and delivery. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability and learning style of the children. We achieve this in a variety of ways by:

- setting common, open ended tasks to elicit a variety and depth of response
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, scaffolding where appropriate
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group
- providing practical opportunities for kinaesthetic learners
- using visual stimuli and artefacts to promote interest
- using Teaching Assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children
- using non-class based teachers and HLTAs to deliver booster programmes and targeted support
- using trips and visitors to further understanding

4.4 We realise the strengths in utilising outdoor space as a learning resource. Teachers are encouraged to deliver the Creative Themes Curriculum indoors and out; both on and off the school premises.

5. Creative themes curriculum planning

We have incorporated the Chris Quigley Essentials learning objectives into our planning. These objectives link specifically to the new 2014 national curriculum objectives and support our new format of assessing the learner's progression of skills. The objectives are succinct and are distinct in teasing out what the children are learning as opposed to what they are doing.

5.1 Long term themes for the year; these are what themes will be taught and when. They are allocated to a half term or termly time period.

Teachers use the objectives, and discuss how they will translate them into meaningful

activities for the children. Each creative theme is driven by, but not limited to, a particular area – history; geography; art; design and technology. Teachers give children the opportunity to identify how the topic links with other areas of the curriculum. These links are explicitly and implicitly made.

5.2 We scribe these ideas onto a ‘topic plan’; this is split into eleven parts – representing each subject taught within our curriculum as well as potential cross curricular links for English, mathematics, computing and Rights Respecting Schools:

- History
- Geography
- Art
- Design and technology
- Music
- PSHE and citizenship
- Rights Respecting Schools
- Global citizenship and sustainability
- Computing links
- English and mathematics links (especially English writing genres where applicable)
- Life skills

The topic plan is displayed in each classroom on the working wall for that term’s topic. While every subject area may not be included on every long-term topic plan, a detailed skills and objectives overview for each subject area and each year group ensures outstanding coverage of all national curriculum subjects and computing.

5.3 Using the brainstorm of activities, we then consider what the best learning sequence would be. We record our medium term plan as a learning sequence for the length of the theme. This has to incorporate:

- a formative assessment of children’s understanding – this is in the form of a knowledge capture (see guidelines and appendices)
- how the theme will be introduced (an interest point - see guidelines and appendices)
- opportunities for trips and visits from external agencies
- what the learning outcome will be – this could be an artefact, presentation, or experience for example
- a final summative assessment of children’s learning (involving a celebration of learning - see guidelines and appendices)

Children’s work is recorded in a single book exercise book that is subject to the whole school presentation and marking policy. One book is used for all subjects – excluding maths. This ensures that written work will be of an outstanding standard. All staff should have the highest expectations of every learner at all times. Reasonable adjustments for pupils to use alternative formats to present work may also be used.

5.4 Year group teams meet weekly to plan the subsequent week’s work from the medium term plan. A digital short term planning framework is used consistently across the school. Smart notebook software is the vehicle used to present and plan lessons taught within the Creative Themes Curriculum. The schools agreed digital planning pro forma should be used (see guidelines and appendices). Subjects such as PSHE, citizenship and music may be taught discretely; separate plans are used in such circumstances. Planning sheets will be shared with support staff as required.

5.5 All plans for every subject and the Creative Themes Curriculum are monitored in several ways:

- by the progress leader weekly
- by the Deputy Headteachers half termly
- and by subject leaders termly

6. Creative themes topics

Each topic in our Creative Themes Curriculum has a subject driver; this is the main subject area that most objectives will be drawn from. Other subject objectives are then used to compliment and broaden the programme of study for the children in engaging and innovative ways. Through our Creative Themes Curriculum, every year group will cover the following topics each year:

- a novel study
- at least one history topic
- at least one geography topic
- a design and technology topic

Throughout each year learners will be taught topics that will link to the following areas:

- life skills topic
- local community topic – giving service to the community and learning about it
- a business enterprise project

7. Computing

Computing skills are applied in a cross curricular approach in every topic within our Creative Themes Curriculum. Computing skills are also taught discretely in a weekly lesson. We deliver the 'Rising Stars' and Havering Council's 'Switched On' computing schemes of work to ensure our children have the computing skills needed for the 21st century. Topics covered in computing skills lessons and then applied through our Creative Themes Curriculum include:

- image library management
- video editing
- eSafety
- MLE
- computing
- programming
- data analysis
- graphics
- research
- presentations
- digital photography
- blogging
- email
- modelling
- geolocation
- spreadsheets

8. Curriculum theme weeks

One week each term is also given over to the detailed teaching, learning and enjoyment of one particular subject or theme. Children are always highly motivated and engaged during our themed weeks and learning outcomes are outstanding. Topics covered include:

- Book Week
- Writing Week
- Junior engineering
- Big Arts
- Design and technology
- Myths and legends
- Parliament and citizenship
- Money
- Science
- National Sports Week
- Olympics
- Day for Change
- Charity events and business enterprise

9. Resources

Each topic theme is resourced with a box containing an inventory. Coordinators review resource needs annually and order as necessary. We value experiences and people as resources, and use them as resources as frequently as possible. At the beginning of a new topic, the Progress Leader is provided with a budget to buy resources.

10. Assessment and recording

- 10.1** Children are given opportunities within and outside lessons to self assess their learning. Each child is issued with a skills booklet that outlines what skills they are aiming to master within a particular milestone. They are given the opportunity to inform a teacher when they feel they have mastered a skill. Through a variety of forms of assessment the teacher will validate the child's observations and record this in the skills booklet. Teachers are constantly assessing the learner's performance and use assessment loops in mark books to record ongoing assessments.
- 10.2** We formally level children's understanding through using statements based on Chris Quigley essentials learning objectives – recording individual children's levels on SIMS Assessment Manager each term for the core subjects and each year for all foundation subjects. All progress is tracked.
- 10.3** Subject co-ordinators collect evidence (data, photographs, work) from year groups to compile a portfolio that allows them to assess how well their subject is being delivered. This is overseen by the SLT.
- 10.4** Year groups collect similar evidence to compile year group portfolios; these communicate the depth and breadth of each theme and subject across the Creative Themes Curriculum. The SLT monitor this process.
- 10.5** Governors are kept informed of developments and priorities through communication between the subject link governors, the subject coordinators and the Curriculum Manager.
- 10.6** Parents and carers are kept informed of developments, through open evenings, end of year reports, and the school newsletter.

11. Monitoring and review

11.1 The curriculum manager is responsible for monitoring and reviewing all aspects of this policy. This process is reflected in the curriculum manager's action plan within the School Development Plan and is achieved through:

- regular observations of lessons
- regular scrutiny of learning journals
- pupil conferencing
- scrutiny of portfolios
- collating data from questionnaires

11.2 The coordinator will amend the Creative Themes Curriculum Policy on an annual basis, responding to data from lesson observations, monitoring planning, work scans, portfolio analysis, SIM reports and discussions with subject co-ordinators and governors.

12. Cheam Park Farm Guarantee

Staff and governors have agreed the Cheam Park Farm (CPF) Guarantee. This is a list of 25 activities, learning experiences and extra curricular opportunities that we guarantee to offer every child during their time at our school. The CPF Guarantee compliments all areas of our Creative Themes Curriculum and ensures that every child has access to the broadest, highest quality education possible; we aim to give our children an education that parents would be happy to pay for.