



Blue Sky Federation

Epringham VC C of E Primary School

&

Northrepps Primary School

Our Curriculum Journey

Our Curriculum Vision

Over the last few years, our curriculum has developed, grown and changed. We are passionate about ensuring that the curriculum and learning opportunities we offer are as personalised to the needs of our children as possible.

We want our core values of love, courage, friendship and respect to shine through and, taking the parable of The Lost Sheep as our inspiration, we want to ensure that no members of our communities are left behind. We strive to meet the needs of parents, staff, governors and children however we can.

Over the course of our school year we cover three different types of topic: Create – which has an emphasis on the arts; Discover – with a history focus and Explore – which places the emphasis on Geography. This is not to say that we don't cover all subjects each term – we do! But we have found that placing a real focus on one area of learning each term ensures that children are given the opportunity to linger longer and delve deeper in their learning.

It is very important to us that progression through our year groups is carefully mapped so that we know children are learning in a systematic way which builds on previous knowledge. We use progression maps and skills matrices to ensure that learning in each year group meets the specific needs and curriculum of the children. This is especially important in our mixed-age classes.

Our curriculum is wholly designed to ensure that children move from engagement to investment in their learning. We want children to be provided with opportunities which encourage them to care passionately about the topics they cover, ensuring that they grow up to become empathetic and critically thinking members of society. We believe in a curriculum of hope (*Debra Kidd, 2020*) and seek to ensure that our children feel supported to find ways of solving their own problems and playing their part in making the world a better place.

Children in our schools spend the first part of each day on Key Skills and Maths before moving on to topic sessions which allow children opportunities to wallow in their learning. We do not teach discrete lessons at the same time each week but rather spend days on certain subjects to enable children to learn at a greater depth.

Outdoor learning and Forest School are a big part of the provision we offer and we know that these enable children to broaden their understanding of their learning in class, enhancing this with real-life experiences. We seek to invite visitors into school whenever possible and to take part in visits and events which provide writing opportunities rooted in real world situations.

Nurture is at the heart of all we do and we work hard to meet children where they are and support them in developing their self-esteem and identity.

We hope that this booklet will help you to see the journey behind our curriculum and where we will be heading next.

Blue Sky Federation

Our curriculum journey so far...

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In the 2018-19 academic year, we took part in a project with Chapel Break Infant School in Norwich around an immersive curriculum. Chapel Break are well-known for their amazing classrooms which we are taking on board in our own schools.

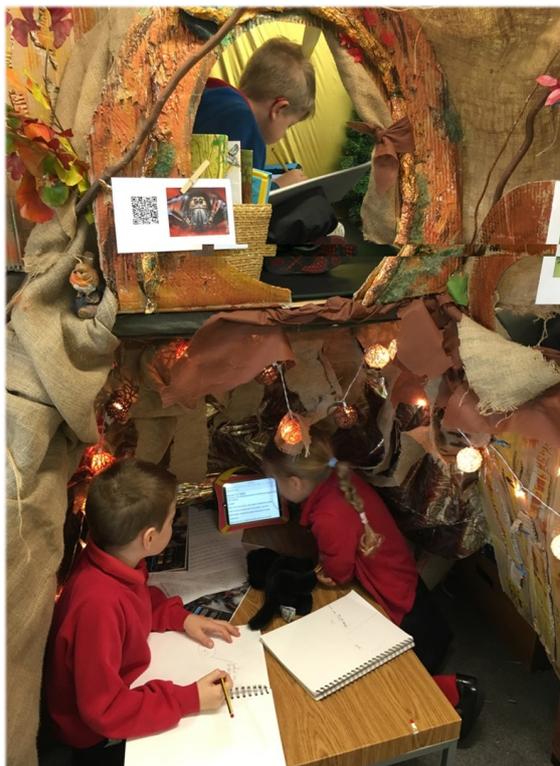


Why?

- To provide first-hand experiences
- To stimulate the senses
- To create learning readiness
- To increase vocabulary
- **To inspire!!**

Why?

- To offer choice
- To give space for movement and flexibility
- To create a relaxed and comfortable feel
- To build independent and responsible learners



We want our teachers to think outside of the box...

- How could you move/remove tables?
- Where could you create cubby holes for children to work in?
- How will you facilitate children being able to choose where they would like to work?
- How could you alter the environment? e.g. lower the ceiling, cover the walls etc.
- How can you change the scenery?

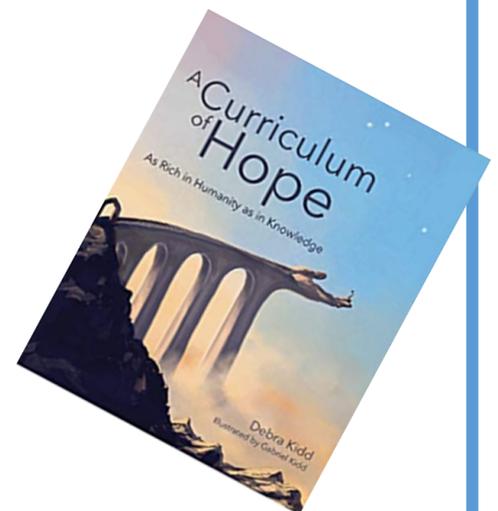
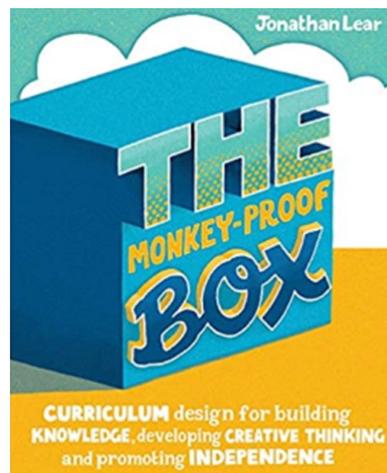
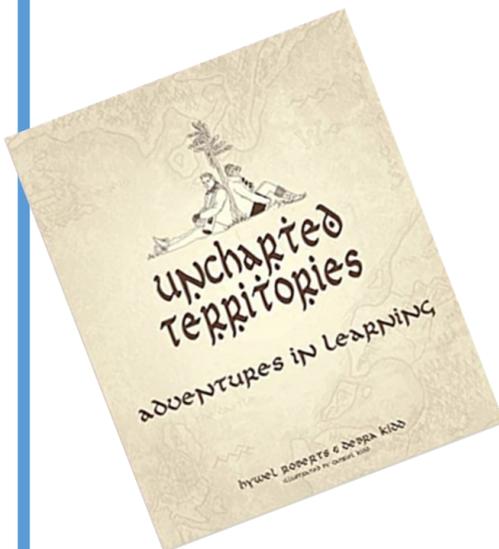
We provide a small budget each term to create these spaces.

Our curriculum is inspired and underpinned by...

Hywel Roberts

Jonathan Lear

Debra Kidd



...and we want to instil 'botheredness' in our curriculum.

We are moving our children from engagement to investment!

This video from Hywel Roberts explains more...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMsvjXXrnvs>

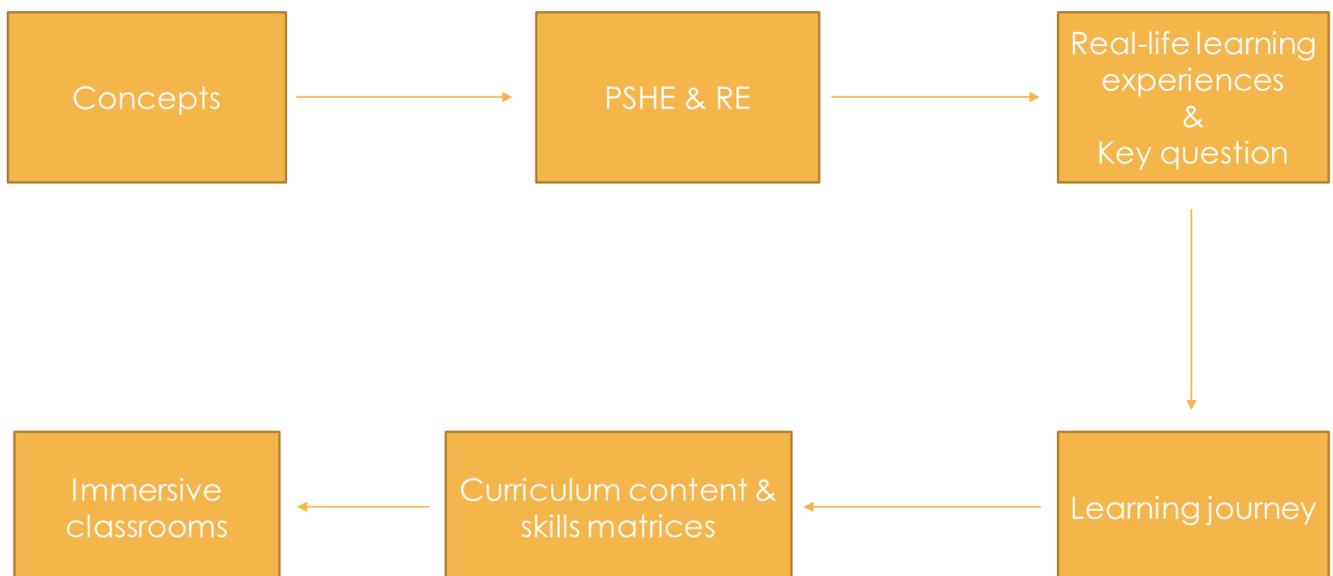
How does this shape our curriculum?

In *The Monkey Proof Box*, Jonathan Lear talks about using concepts as the basis of each topic. These are values or issues which the children need to explore to help them become empathetic, thoughtful adults.

We choose 2 or 3 concepts to use as the basis for each topic. For example...

Resilience	Compassion	Diversity	Wellbeing
Trust	Creativity	Individuality	Belonging
Happiness	Responsibility	Community	Forgiveness

Then we look at possible real-life learning opportunities which we can provide for the children. These form the learning outcomes for our topics. Then we map out our learning journey for the term. This might change and develop over time as we discover what really excites the children in their learning.



We have an enquiry question for each term which might be broken down into smaller questions for each week. Some of our recent questions have included...

- Are we free to roam?
- Does anyone have the right to change the environment?
- What are the colours of Erpingham School?
- What's worth celebrating?

What are we trying to achieve?

We can't expect children to produce incredible work if it's only ever going to be stuck in a book.

...what we're doing is giving the children the opportunity to think rather than telling them what to think...allow them to use that space to...make up their own minds

When I thought about creative teaching, it was linked to engagement and motivation – classrooms full of children having a brilliant time. Actually it's not about making learning or the curriculum fun; it's about making it emotional.

How do we achieve this?

Challenge-based learning

A scenario that demands a response of learning and activity.

- A call to action
- An inspiration
- A provocation

Desirable Difficulty

Deliberately putting a problem in the way...

- setting up a mud kitchen a long way from the tap and only giving children containers with holes in to transport the water!

Critique

Encouraging children to know that their first draft won't be their best.

- Be kind
- Be helpful
- Be specific

If this method of working and planning is going to be successful, it needs to involve all subjects equally.

At Blue Sky Federation, we don't timetable lessons as discrete subjects. For example, you won't see Art every Friday afternoon or Science weekly on a Wednesday.

There should be no discrete subjects except Maths, Key Skills, PSHE & PE. Even in Maths and Key Skills we can make links to our topics. RE can be linked to our concepts.

We passionately believe that teachers should give children time to delve deeper and linger longer.

We also want to develop an Early Years feel throughout the school with child-led learning and enquiry happening at all ages.

Forest School provides many ideal opportunities for children to take this learning outside. For them to deepen their learning and understand through real-life opportunities and to apply what they know to new and exciting situations. It also provides opportunities for risk taking and for children to tackle desirable difficulties as well as learning a whole new set of skills in their own right.



What's next for us?

- Ensure that key skills are embedded and skills matrices are used
- Use phased scaffolding to support all children
- Use real audiences to create investment and raise aspirations
- Development of critique so that children are producing amazing work because they **care**
- Develop children's independence and thinking skills
- Develop a common language across the school for all key concepts
- Embed concepts in the curriculum to develop children's empathy
- Make sure we have ways to measure the impact of our curriculum
- Raise our expectations of **every** child in **every** subject