



Brindley Heath Curriculum Design

At Brindley Heath Academy, our curriculum intent is to allow children to develop a comprehensive narrative and understanding of the world around us. The curriculum supports pupils to reflect on their own experience and location, as well as providing a window into the wider world – exploring different times, places and beliefs. In understanding the world around them, we will be arming children with the foundation to navigate the complexities of the modern world and prepare them for success in life.

The curriculum at Brindley Heath Academy has been tailored to our pupils and setting. It is designed to be ambitious for our pupils, to impart powerful knowledge, to build sophisticated schemas and to allow children to develop a richer understanding and appreciation of human achievement. A knowledge rich, aspirational core curriculum deepens knowledge and broadens children's experience and understanding of the world.

This enables our children to gain the component and composite knowledge needed, as well as experiencing success as historians, geographers, artists, musicians, athletes, designers, scientists, and theologians.

Rationale

The process of designing the curriculum was required to support and develop teaching and learning across subject areas. The curriculum needed to present a consistent approach across subjects and year groups. The curriculum needed to demand quality outcomes from children and the process of curriculum design and associated CPD needed to raise expectations for all. Underpinned by our values, the curriculum needed to be tailored to Brindley Heath – our community, location and pupil's wider life experiences.

Aims:

1. To provide a coherent, structured curriculum that leads to sustained mastery and depth of understanding for all pupils. 'Be resilient'

Our curriculum promotes a love of learning and sets out a clear map of the breadth of topics that will be covered, and the key concepts pupils should understand.

2. To provide a rich 'cultural capital'. 'Be aspirational'

We believe it is profoundly important that we provide our children with the opportunities, experiences and body of knowledge which level the playing field to reduce economic and social inequality.

3. To develop empathy and understanding 'Be respectful'

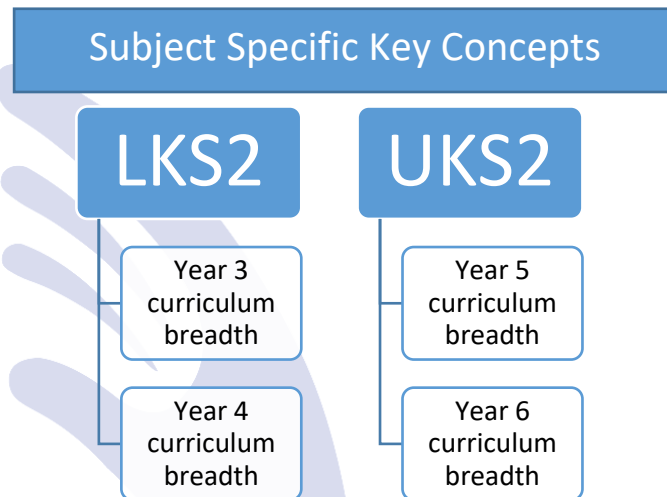
We believe that children can relate to the past, the present and those in different cultures and countries by developing a deep understanding of the links and connections between our universal human experiences.

4. To engender an ethic of excellence. 'Be proud' 'Be you'

We believe in creating outcomes which children are proud of, with the opportunity for children express their individuality. This ethic of excellence is based on quality relationships, modelling and feedback in order to refine and enhance outcomes for children.

Curriculum Design – Key Concepts

Our wider curriculum design is based upon the principles of **Solo Taxonomy**. This is a model of practice that helps develop a common understanding and language of learning for each subject and provides a framework for progression and depth. It provides a simple, reliable and robust model for moving from surface to deep understanding of knowledge and concepts. Children will progress through these concepts, providing time and opportunity for children to master skills across two years.



Each of the key concepts are revisited in each topic and form the foundations of learning for each subject, giving children the opportunity to revisit key concepts in a number of contexts, utilising the spacing effect, to ensure they are retained and built upon in the long term.

Learning is organising into key enquiries which children will seek to answer. These key enquiries are underpinned using the SOLO taxonomy.

Curriculum Design – thematic concepts

In addition to the key concepts which underpin the curriculum using SOLO taxonomy, we also have woven thematic concepts across the curriculum. For example, the concept of ‘change’ is woven across the history curriculum, encouraging pupils to make explicit links between change in the Iron Age, Roman Age, The kingdom of Benin and The legacy of the British Empire.

Curriculum Breadth

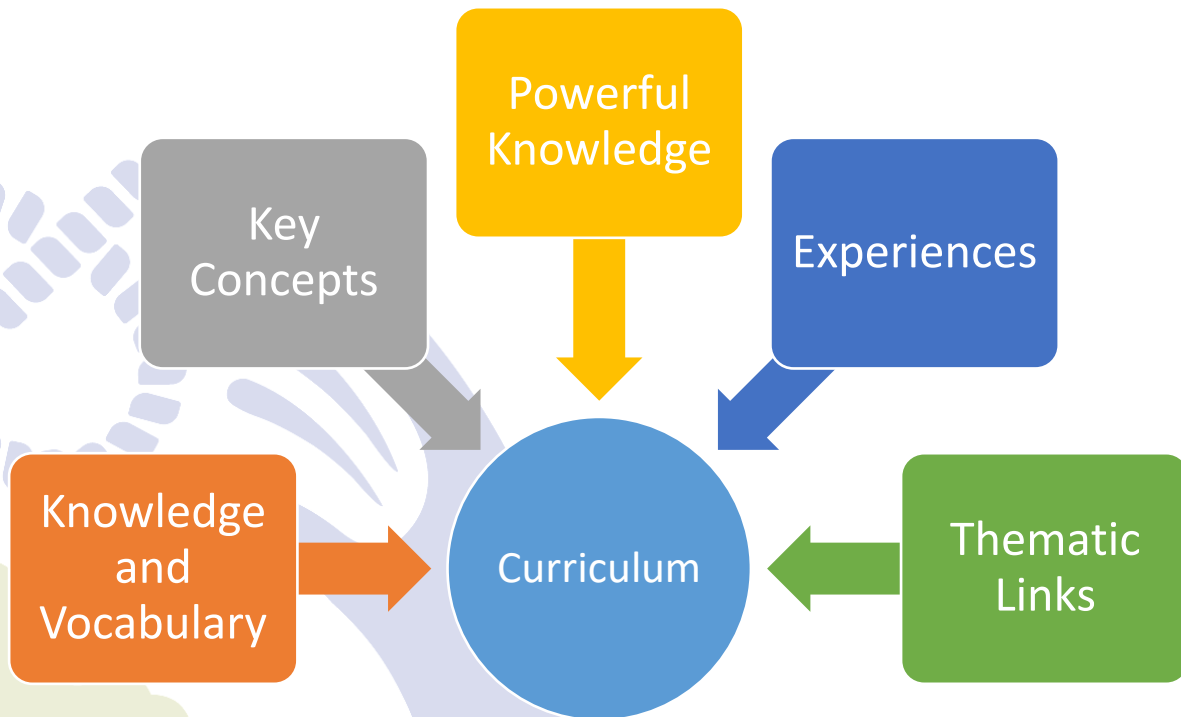
Our curriculum is built through a series of topics in each year group, which make connections in skills and knowledge within a variety of subject areas. We block learning to immerse children fully, but also use evidence from cognitive science to underpin the transfer of deep and meaningful knowledge.

Each term has a focus which has a deeper focus on a core area: Explore (Geography), Discover (History), Create (Arts/ DT). These deeper focus areas are complemented by spaced practised across the year.

Curriculum Design – complimentary units of work

To promote a depth of understanding, the positioning and sequencing of units of work have been carefully considered. We have avoided making tenuous links, which may impede the development of pupil’s schema, instead opting to forge strong links between some subjects and leaving some units as ‘stand alone’. For example, In Year 3 children focus their learning on our village of Kinver exploring the geography of the local area, the history of the village (including the Bronze Age fort on nearby Kinver Edge) and the religions present in the village. In Year 5, Pupils learn about Volcanoes, Mountains and Rivers in Geography and a deliberate link is then made to History, where

pupils study the eruption of Vesuvius and Pompeii. This unit also builds up pupil's prior knowledge and study of Roman Britain.



Powerful knowledge:

Powerful knowledge is the beating heart of each unit, with the core content meticulously curated and itemised to clarify the necessary (but not always sufficient) knowledge necessary to develop a sophisticated schema for each unit of work. Acting as a planning, teaching and assessment tool, the specified powerful knowledge makes it clear to teachers, pupils and parents what is expected to be learnt by the end of the unit and within lessons.

Spaced Retrieval:

We focus on embedding knowledge and to do this we aim to provide pupils with regular 'low-stakes' quizzing for retrieval within topics. This is to ensure knowledge has been retained, utilising the principles espoused by Ebbinghaus' Forgetting Curve, which hypothesises that information is lost over time, when there is no attempt made to retain it.

Enrichment:

Enrichment is a key aspect of our curriculum and is sometimes referred to as the 'hidden curriculum'. As well as motivating students through joyful and exciting experiences, evidence suggests that emotion can be extremely powerful in encoding memories more robustly and add to the content being learnt. These can take the form of trips, visitors, celebration exhibitions and independent learning outside of lessons.

Schema Mapping

At the start and end of each block of work, pupils complete a schema map of what they already know. This allows teachers to identify where there is already knowledge and understanding around a unit of work. At the end of the unit, pupils deliberately recall the topic and create a schema map of their learning.

Vocabulary

Key vocabulary has been identified for each unit of work, often a mix of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary. Pupils review the vocabulary at the start of a unit of work alongside their schema map and then build a collective set of definitions as the unit progresses.

Impact

We will measure the impact of our curriculum in the following ways:

- The quality of standards achieved against the planned outcomes
- Pupil discussions about their learning
- Assessment of the retention and recall of substantive and disciplinary knowledge.
- Progression of the key concepts over time.

This means that:

Our children leave us with a broad, rich and deep knowledge of the curriculum studied, mastering skills and retaining knowledge so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Children leave us as citizens of the future, able to make a positive contribution to our society and the wider world, drawing on their experiences and building on the foundations made during their time at our school.

