Laurencekirk School



"Working together to be the best we can be."

Curriculum Rationale

Created in April 2022 in partnership with families, learners and staff

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Our Commitment to Improvement at Laurencekirk School





It is important that everyone within Laurencekirk School is clear about what we are aiming to achieve through the curriculum.

Laurencekirk School community has collaborated to devise a rationale for the curriculum we deliver. This Curriculum Rationale helps to ensure that everyone involved with our school knows what we collectively want for our children and how we will work together to achieve this.

The Curriculum Refresh (2019) and the subsequent global pandemic, provided the impetus to revise what and how we teach to ensure that we are equipping our children with the knowledge, skills and attributes they require in order to thrive in this ever-changing world.

We retain flexibility within our curriculum to ensure that we can respond to the needs and interests of our learners as well as to local and world events whilst retaining a clear focus on core subjects and skills.

We have created a three-year cycle of learning experiences by collating the Experiences and Outcomes from A Curriculum for Excellence in a meaningful way to ensure that all our learners benefit from a broad and progressive curriculum during their time in Laurencekirk School.

This Curriculum Rationale was created in collaboration with our school community to ensure that it meets the needs of our learners and their families and will be reviewed in an ongoing way.

Embedding outdoor learning as part of a wider approach to learning for sustainability has been transformative and helped us to create a wider environment for high quality learning and has transformed our curriculum delivery.









Vision, Values and Aims at Laurencekirk School

Our Vision, Values and Aims were created collaboratively with our learners, staff, families and partners during the session 2018-2019.

At Laurencekirk School, our vision to work together to support our whole school community to be the best they can be is at the heart of all that we do. We use a range of approaches to help all our children to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Our shared values of respect, resilience, responsibility and resilience help to guide and inspire us in school and beyond.



Our Vision

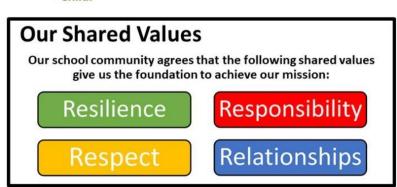
Our purpose is to enable our learners to become:

- successful learners
- · confident individuals
- responsible citizens
- effective contributors

Our Mission

We believe we will achieve this vision by being a school where:

- Everyone has the right to be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.
- Parental and community involvement is actively sought to enhance the life of the school.
- Our children have a voice and we respect that voice in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.





We asked our school community what makes our school great/unique:

Our Children think:





We asked our school community what makes our school great/unique:

Our Teachers think:



What Makes Laurencekirk School Unique

We asked our school community what makes our school great/unique:

Our Families think:





We asked our staff and families what they hoped our children would achieve through engaging with our curriculum:





We asked our pupils what they hoped they would achieve through engaging with our curriculum:



Planning for High Quality Learning Experiences: The 7 Principles of Curriculum Design at Laurencekirk School

Staff at Laurencekirk School take into account the seven principles of curriculum design (Building the Curriculum 3) when planning teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that an appropriate curriculum is delivered:

Principle of Curriculum Design What this looks like at Laurencekirk School **Challenge and Enjoyment** A range of carefully planned activities. Our children are active and engaged in Children and young people should find their their learning. learning challenging, engaging and motivating. Loose parts initiative from Nursery to P7. The curriculum should encourage high A range of different pedagogies utilised aspirations and ambitions for all. At every stage, including outdoor learning, active children should experience an appropriate level learning, play and group work. of challenge. They should be active in their Appropriate differentiation with learning and have opportunities to develop and challenge and support embedded demonstrate their creativity. There should be Growth mindset language is a key support to enable children to sustain their efforts. feature in all classrooms. High expectations for all our learners. KWL grids are used to help teachers to plan engaging lessons which reflect the interests of the pupils and supports child directed learning. A variety of engaging resources are used to engage and sustain pupil interest. A range of whole school projects are planned each year. A curriculum is in place which provides **Breadth** carefully planned learning opportunities All children should have the opportunities for a across all Experiences and Outcomes as broad range of experiences. Their learning defined in A Curriculum for Excellence. should be planned and organised so that they We plan for application of learning in a will learn and develop through a variety of variety of contexts including within contexts within both the classroom and other school, outdoors and within the local aspects of school life. and wider community. We value knowledge acquisition whilst ensuring that we consider the development of skills and attributes in our curriculum. Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are taught through a variety of meaningful contexts. Experiences and Outcomes are grouped in bundles to support curriculum coverage. **Progression** Progression planners are in place for most curricular areas which support Children should experience continuous teachers to plan for continuity and progression in their learning from 3 to 18 years. progression. Each stage should build upon earlier knowledge Planning folders contain the progression

planners for all levels to enable staff to

Assessment evidence is used to make judgements about pupil progress within a Curriculum for Excellence level.

plan more readily for support and

and achievements. Children and young people

should be able to progress at a rate which meets

their individual needs and aptitudes.

We refer to national benchmarks to ensure that our learners are progressing within a level. We explicitly share our next steps in learning with the children so that they have an understanding of where they are heading. We make good use of a highly skilled team of support staff to allow learners to work at their own pace and with appropriate levels of challenge. Transitions are carefully managed in school to ensure progression of learning and experience. Opportunities are built in to revisit concepts to consolidate understanding. Soft start activities are used in some classes to extend and enrich the taught curriculum. Depth Our progressions are structured so that experiences and outcomes are revisited There should be opportunities for children to in greater complexity over a seven year develop their full capacity for different types of programme. thinking and learning, exploring and achieving Pupils are supported in a range of ways more advanced levels of understanding. to master key concepts prior to moving forward with their next steps in learning. Outdoor learning and the adoption of a loose parts initiative provides the context for exploring a range of ideas and concepts in a deeper way. We plan using an inter-disciplinary approach to learning. Maths Mastery influences the teaching of mathematics. Personalisation and choice Our learners are empowered to choose the levels of challenge which they The learning planned for children should respond undertake in lessons. to their individual needs and support particular Our planning within IDL is responsive to aptitudes and talents. It should provide the needs and voice of the learners as opportunities for exercising responsible personal our children lead the learning. choice. Once children have achieved suitable Our curriculum gives children the opportunity to develop their own talents. levels of attainment across a wide range of areas of learning, the choice should become as Opportunities for personal achievement open as possible. in and outside of school are provided. Children are enabled to undertake personal learning projects in school. Children are provided with opportunities for unstructured play each week in both indoor and outdoor contexts in addition to opportunities to be close to nature. Coherence Staff use planning overviews and Aberdeenshire Frameworks to plan for Children's learning activities should combine to progression across a school year, term form a coherent experience. There should be and week. clear links between different aspects of learning. Skills for learning, life and work are promoted specifically through our Such links should be discussed with children in annual enterprise project and within our order to bring different strands of learning day to day work in addition to together. knowledge and understanding. Staff ensure coherence at transitional points through collaboration and targeted information sharing.

	 Three year rolling progression programmes are embedded across the school. Consistent approach to planning is embedded across the whole school.
Relevance Children and young people should understand the purpose of their learning. They should see the value of what they are learning and its relevance to their lives, present and future	 Outdoor learning is embedded from Nursery to Primary 7 and used to teach all areas of the curriculum. Explicit links are made between school based learning and real life contexts so that our learners know why, what and how their learning relates to every day life. There is flexibility for staff and learners to choose topics to be explored which enables teachers to consider the interests of the children when planning contexts for learning. At the outset of a new topic, "Big Questions" are asked to involve the





children in shaping the learning moving

Experiences and outcomes are bundled together to support teaching, learning and assessment.

We share our learning intentions with children and link this to real life as part of our mission to develop the young

We have a range of community

forward.

workforce.

partnerships.

Planning for High Quality Learning Experiences: Learning across the subjects at Laurencekirk School

At Laurencekirk School we prioritise the teaching of literacy and numeracy. These subjects are taught discreetly but also as part of our inter-disciplinary approach to learning across a wide range of innovative contexts for learning. Literacy and numeracy are key subjects and competence in these areas supports wider curricular access and we therefore continually seek to promote these key skills in all we do. Therefore, promoting high levels of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is the responsibility of all practitioners.

Health and Wellbeing is key priority in Laurencekirk School as learning in this area ensures that our children develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and capabilities which they need for good levels of mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. Health and wellbeing is fundamental to effective learning and is therefore a responsibility of all staff.

We each strive to make positive contributions to the wellbeing of every individual pupil in our school by creating a positive ethos, strong relationships and a climate of respect and trust where each child can thrive and achieve their fullest potential.

The curriculum encompasses 8 discreet subjects. Here is how we approach learning across the 8 subjects as defined in 'A Curriculum for Excellence':

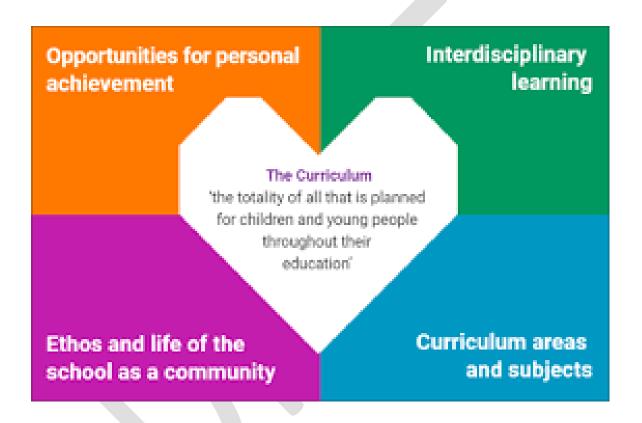
Curricular Area	How do we teach it?	How do we assess the
What do we teach?		learning?
Listening Reading Writing Talking	 We use a range of whole class novels. Children are read to regularly. We make use of our local library. A variety of texts across genres including poetry. Use of moving image. Spelling and grammar is taught explicitly then applied to writing tasks. Jolly Phonics, Spelling Attack and North Lanarkshire are used to teach spelling. A blend of whole class and group approaches are used. Opportunities are created for whole class discussion work to develop talking and listening skills. We promote reading for enjoyment and take part in World Book Day. We focus on developing phonological awareness skills in Primary One to support further literacy development. 	 Ongoing assessments Moderation Seesaw Literacy benchmarks Emerging literacy assessments SNSAs at key stages Spelling placement tests Planned holistic assessment tasks Aifl strategies Writing criterion in some classes Annual poetry competition Tracking and monitoring
Numeracy	 Number talks are used to extend mathematical thinking 	 Numeracy benchmarks
Number	 Teejay is our key resource across the 	 SnSAs
Money	school. This is supplemented in a	 Ongoing
Measure	variety of ways including White Rose	assessment

Angles Shape Position Movement Data handling Mental maths Problem solving	 Mathematics and Scottish Heinemann. We use a range of textbooks and worksheets as appropriate. Concrete materials are provided to support as required. Use of digital technology and the outdoors to support delivery. Games, group and paired challenges are used alongside active stations with maths manipulatives. 	 Seesaw Planned holistic assessment tasks Active listening Aifl strategies Teejay reviews Tracking and monitoring
Health and Wellbeing Rights of the Child Emotional Wellbeing Choices and Changes Food and Health Substance Misuse Relationships	 2 hours of PE using both indoors and outdoors. Frameworks and benchmarks are used to plan for progression and to support assessment judgements. Rights Respecting School activities. Circle Time Annual visits from the ALEC bus. Collective compilation of the class charter. Living and Growing Resource. Consideration of the school values of respect, responsibility, relationships and resilience. Pupil Support Worker supports targeted groups. Visits from the community police to deliver topics such as internet safety and drugs/alcohol awareness. Champion of a cause initiative. Bikeability is delivered to Primary 5-7 pupils. Daily Mile is a feature throughout the school. Handwashing. 	Health and wellbeing benchmarks Observations Planned holistic assessment tasks Aifl strategies Tracking and monitoring
People, past events and societies People. Place and environment People in society, economy and business	 Use of digital technologies. School Eco Group. Child directed approaches. Use of the library. Teachers make use of a wide variety of resources to support teaching and learning. Opportunities for personal projects are created. Taught in a cross-curricular approach to ensure that literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing is a permeating theme. Making Thinking Visible approaches used. We make use of our community to 	 Social subjects benchmarks See, think, Wonder End of topic summary assessments Observations Formative assessment Planned holistic assessment tasks Aifl strategies
Planet Earth Forces, electricity and waves Biological Systems Materials Topical Science	 enhance learning in social subjects. School Eco Group and whole school activities. Whole school approach to the Edible classroom. Curriculum led outdoor learning in all classes. Loose parts initiative across the whole school. 	 Observation Formative Assessment Science benchmarks Planned holistic assessment tasks Aifl strategies Quizzes

STEM subjects	 Construction Club for key children to explore early scientific concepts. Play opportunities are created for children to experiment with early scientific concepts. 	Active Listening
Digital Literacy Food and textile technology Technological Developments in Society and Business Craft, Design, Engineering and Graphics	 Loose parts initiative. Ipads and chromebooks are available to support Use of digital technologies to support learning and to show understanding of key concepts. Interactive whiteboards are available in all teaching spaces in the school. 	 Observation Formative Assessment Technologies Benchmarks Planned holistic assessment tasks Aifl strategies
Computing Science Expressive Arts Art and Design Drama/Performance Music Dance	 Class assemblies and school shows. Annual focus on Scottish country dancing Used as a vehicle to teach key topics. Drama specialist who visits the school. Annual Scots music and dance festival. 	 Observation Formative Assessment Expressive Arts Benchmarks Planned holistic assessment tasks Aifl strategies
Religious and Moral Education Christianity World Religions Beliefs and values	 Assemblies Taught through an inter-disciplinary approach to learning. School values used to underpin approaches and ethos. Stories are a key feature. We teach about key festivals in a timely manner. Artefacts are used to teach about the world religions. All children will learn about the major world religions in depth over a seven year period. Rights Respecting Schools Award Whole school approach to sustainability Engagement in charitable work such as Children in Need and Comic Relief. 	 Observation Formative Assessment Religious and Moral Education Benchmarks Planned holistic assessment tasks Aifl strategies
Languages French Doric Makaton	 Power language platform is used to plan progressive lessons in our second language of French from Primary One to Seven. Target language used in daily routines in school. McCrone teachers delivering discreet inputs. Children in Primary 5 to 7 experience a third language. Games and videos are used to develop language skills. 	 Observation Listening Formative Assessment Languages Benchmarks Planned holistic assessment tasks Aifl strategies

Planning for High Quality Learning Experiences: Learning across the four contexts at Laurencekirk School

Staff at Laurencekirk School use the four contexts (shown below) to plan high quality learning experiences. This ensures that the curriculum offered is varied and coherent and provides opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes required to thrive in the world today. We aim to support our children to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors through active engagement across these four contexts for learning.



Please turn over to see how our staff deliver these four contexts for learning at Laurencekirk School:



Opportunities for Personal Achievement

- Sports Day
- Annual Burns Competition
- Primary 7 Leavers Assembly
- Pupil Voice groups
- Gardening Club
- Extra curricular activities including football, netball and outdoor skills.
- Life skills award
- Rotary Quiz and external competitions
- Residential Trip in Primary 7
- Sponsored events
- Annual Enterprise
- WOW wall and plasma screen
- Instrumentalists performances
- Active schools events and clubs
- Tokens
- Celebrating achievements on the plasma and through Seesaw
- Bikeability
- Links with community organisations such as The Scouts and MHLN.
- Church visits
- Burnside Bowling trip
- Bronze Rights Respecting Award

Inter-disciplinary Learning

- Annual Enterprise
- Outdoor learning
- Loose parts
- Topic work
- Assemblies
- Weekly cooking group
- Annual Scottish Art Gallery Exhibition
- ALEC bus
- Work with local library
- Novel studies
- Edible Classroom
- Planning and assessing across a bundle of experiences and outcomes
- Cooking group and staff lunch
- Links with our local Forest School
- Links with Friends of Denelthen
- Links with the local Fire Station
- Visits to our local coffee shop
- Enterprise

Ethos and Life of the school as a community

- Rights Respecting Schools Award
- Intergenerational work with local care homes and local dementia group.
- Cheery Chums role for Primary 6.
- House Captains role for Primary 7.
- Zone Leaders role for Primary 7.
- Pupil Voice groups.
- Roots of Empathy Groups.
- Seasons for Growth Groups
- Lunchtime Soup Group
- Annual Shoebox Appeal
- Paired Reading
- Poppy Field
- Nurture group
- Work with Laurencekirk Primary Partnership
- Open events in school
- Annual virtual advent calendar
- Carefully planned transition events including P7 Club.
- School uniform swap shop
- Litter picks
- Supporting our local foodbank
- Harvest appeal

Curriculum Areas and Subjects

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Health and Wellbeing
- Languages
- Expressive Arts
- Social Subjects
- Technologies
- Sciences
- Religious and Moral Education
- Learning through Play
- Outdoor Learning
- 1+2 approach to languages learning
- Clear progressions
- Real life contexts
- Subject learning
- Cross curricular themes and topics
- Whole school topics such as Enterprise and Scots
- Professional learning which supports subject delivery. For example, outdoor learning.
- Moderation activities
- Collaboration with feeder secondary school

Our commitment to improvement

At Laurencekirk School we continue to work together as a school community to sustain and develop a high quality curriculum which reflects the needs of our context. In order to achieve this we must engage in an ongoing reflection of what we teach, how we teach it and when we do so to ensure that all our children have an opportunity to maximise success and achievement.

We take account of current educational research and thinking, the views of our stakeholders, legislation and our own evaluations of what is working well in our school for our children. To do so we adopt a looking inwards, outwards and forwards approach.

