

## **The School Curriculum**

We believe that children should achieve their potential through a wide range of experiences. The teachers plan their term's work from a detailed long term school plan. This ensures that the curriculum is fully covered and sensible progression through the subjects is achieved. Teachers are happy to talk about the work they have planned.

In accordance with the National Curriculum the children from Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) and Key Stage 2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) study the following subjects:

### **Core subjects:**

English  
Mathematics  
Science

### **Foundation subjects:**

Religious Education  
Computing  
Geography  
History  
Art  
Physical Education  
Music  
Design and Technology  
Personal Social and Health Education  
Foreign Language (Key Stage 2 only)

Children in the Reception Year follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

## **English**

### **Reading**

From the day children start at Minsterley School they are encouraged to develop a love of reading. Children in the Reception class enjoy taking home 'Story Sacks' to share with their family.

Initially children are introduced to reading through reading scheme books which are linked to the phonic teaching program called 'Letters and Sounds'. A number of reading schemes are used in the Reception Year and throughout Key Stage 1, namely: 'Phonic Bugs', 'Get Reading Right', 'Jelly and Bean' and 'Floppy's Phonics.' In the Reception year the children are taught phonics through a daily phonic lesson. We begin by teaching the individual phonemes (sounds) which make up words through fun games and activities. The children then progress to blending sounds for reading and segmenting sounds for writing.

We encourage parents to support their child's reading by listening to them read regularly at home. Children take home their reading books each evening and parents record their child's reading in their reading diary.

As the children's phonic skills develop they access a wider range of reading material such as books from the popular 'Oxford Reading Scheme' and books from other structured schemes. Children are also encouraged to read factual books as well as fiction. Reading for information is supported by a reference library and through ICT.

## **Writing**

Children in the Early Years are encouraged to begin mark making using different writing materials. In their first year at Minsterley School children learn high frequency words and how to write VC (vowel/consonant) words and CVC (consonant/vowel/consonant) words as specified in 'Letters and Sounds.' Teachers and teaching assistants plan a wide range of engaging writing activities which encourage children to write freely and independently. The children are taught the Early Years Foundation Stage for literacy.

From Year 1 the children are taught literacy in accordance with the National Curriculum Programme of Study. This ensures that the children are taught all of the skills which they need to be confident writers:

Writing Transcription (spelling)

Handwriting

Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Writing Composition (including planning, drafting, evaluating, editing, proof reading and publishing.)

## **Mathematics**

Children in Years 1 to 6 follow the National Curriculum for mathematics introduced in September 2014. Teachers use a wide range of activities and methods to make mathematics exciting. Practical and problem solving activities are included to give opportunities to explore and apply mathematical learning. The curriculum is further divided into medium term and weekly plans for each class according to the school's maths scheme of work. The Busy Ants maths scheme is used as a teaching resource and the children also enjoy using an online maths learning resource called 'Mathletics.'

## **Science**

Science forms an integral part of each child's learning. Wherever possible, children are encouraged to investigate ideas and solve problems in a practical way, building upon the experiences of the children. Science is a core subject in the National Curriculum.

The teaching of Science begins in the Foundation Stage through the Early Years Learning Area 'Understanding the World'. This involves guiding the children to make sense of the physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. These

opportunities are provided through activities which allow the children to play and explore, while developing their own ideas, making links between them and developing strategies for doing this.

In accordance with the National Curriculum, children in Key Stages One and Two, are provided with opportunities to be 'Working Scientifically' through scientific enquiry, including practical work, and developing investigation skills. Each year group has a balanced programme of study to develop knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

**Key Stage 1:**

Plants  
Animals, including humans  
Everyday materials  
Seasonal Changes  
Living Things and their Habitats

**Key Stage 2:**

Plants  
Animals, including humans  
Rocks  
Light  
Forces and Magnets  
Living Things and their Habitats  
States of Matter  
Sound  
Electricity  
Properties and Changes of Materials  
Earth and Space  
Evolution and Inheritance

## **Computing**

The school is proud of its Information Technology facilities which consist of a bank of 62 laptops available for use in classrooms. Each classroom has 10 iPads to use. All computers are linked to the internet via a wireless network system. Digital projectors and interactive whiteboards in each classroom also help to bring learning to life.

The curriculum is split into four areas:

- **Programming:** Children learn coding and make their own programs and apps.
- **Creativity beyond programming:** Using information technology to enhance and enrich our learning.
- **Applying ICT in Society:** Investigating how ICT is used including systems and innovation.
- **Safety:** The importance of keeping safe when online, cyberbullying and identity security.

## **Foreign Languages**

In Key Stage 2 all children at Minsterley School have the opportunity to learn a foreign language. Presently they are learning to speak French through a range of fun activities including songs and games. Pupils also learn about French culture, traditions and lifestyle.

## **Religious Education**

Minsterley is a 'Community' School and is therefore not governed by any specific religious denomination. The RE curriculum is mainly Christian and children are given some insight into other faiths through multi-ethnic themes.

The Governors have adopted the Shropshire Standing Council policy on Religious Education (SACRE) which we believe gives children broad and sensible insights into aspects of this area of the curriculum through its "Agreed Syllabus".

Children meet together for assemblies, either as a whole school or in year groups. These include the sharing of achievements, moral and human themes, birthdays, singing and prayers. The local church lead worship every other Friday through an 'Open the Book' assembly where Bible stories are acted out.

An act of collective worship takes place for a few minutes each day.

Parents may choose to exclude their child from Religious Education and Collective Worship. Any parent wishing to do so should let the school know in writing of their intentions. Alternative provision can then be discussed with the headteacher.

## **Geography**

It is our aim in teaching geography to encourage children to learn about and develop their knowledge and understanding of:

- Places, both local and global.
- Patterns and processes - both human and physical processes.
- Environmental change and sustainable development.
- Geographical enquiry and skills.
- Understanding the world (specifically related to the Foundation Stage).

These skills will help the children make sense of their surroundings and the wider world, its wonders and challenges.

At Minsterley School, geography is fed into our thematic approach to learning and lessons give opportunities for pupils to improve in varying curriculum areas particularly English, mathematics and computing. The curriculum develops pupils thinking skills. It encourages pupils to be active citizens and promote an awareness and understanding of the community in which they live and the varying cultures within it.

In accordance with the National Curriculum we aim to ensure that children:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- 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
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
  - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
  - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
  - communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

At Key Stage 1 and 2 the children develop their knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality through their study of:

Locational Knowledge

Place Knowledge

Human and Physical Geography and

Geographical skills and fieldwork

## History

At Minsterley School we provide topics that stimulate, motivate, inspire and provoke a love of learning and questioning. Children are immersed in their topics and they are provided with opportunities where they are free to explore, discuss, question and learn from events in the past. They foster an interest in the past and develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer.

As specified in the National Curriculum our history curriculum aims to ensure that our 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
- 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
- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'

- 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
- 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
- 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.

## **Physical Education**

We recognise that a high-quality physical education curriculum inspires all pupils to succeed and excel in competitive sport and other physically demanding activities. The curriculum we offer provides opportunities for pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness. Our PE Curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

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

The school employs a sports coach to provide high quality PE and sports teaching for children in Years 1 to 6.

All children have between 5 and 7 swimming lessons per year at Shrewsbury swimming baths. Children work towards achieving Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) awards and attaining the swimming and water safety requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **Music**

Music is taught through a variety of different class and whole school based settings and experiences. Children are taught a wide range of songs that they perform within class groups or as a whole school and we pride ourselves on the quality of singing and the children's enthusiasm in performances.

Children are provided with a range of opportunities to learn and practice playing different instruments both within the classroom and through peripatetic teaching.

All children in Years 4, 5 and 6 learn to play a brass instrument (either cornet, trombone or baritone) during weekly group tuition provided by Shropshire Music Service and funded from the school budget. During their brass lessons the children learn how to play their instrument with increased accuracy, fluency, control and expression and use and understand musical notation. They use their instrument to compose and improvise as well as listening to the performances of others. Each

year the children take part in the Shropshire School of Music Brass Extravaganza at Theatre Severn when they experience playing together with brass players from other schools and listen to the performances of the county schools' brass bands.

Currently we have a peripatetic percussion teacher providing lessons for approximately 20 pupils.

Through class-based music lessons children learn about steady beats, rhythm and pitch of sound. They explore these through a range of instruments and their own voices. We provide opportunities for children to compose simple pieces of music and interpret moods and effects using tuned and untuned instruments. They listen to different composers and discuss their preferences for a range of pieces. The children are encouraged to perform musically through at concerts, assemblies and special celebrations.

## **Art**

We believe Art and Design should be enjoyable and that it plays an important part in the development of our pupils, stimulating their creativity and imagination.

The national curriculum for art and design aims to ensure that all pupils:

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

We have designed our curriculum to enable art to link with other subject areas, especially when studying art from different periods of history or cultures.

The children are encouraged to use colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space using different materials and processes to communicate what they see, feel and think. They explore, through discussion and the making of art, the ideas and meanings in the work of artists, craftspeople, designers and architects. They learn the part that art and craft and design plays in their own and others' lives, now and in different times and cultures.

The children learn a full range of techniques using a variety of different tools and processes. Through the use of drawing, painting, collage, 3D sculpture, architecture, printing, textiles and photography children are able to reflect and be inspired by the world around them.

Children enjoy developing their techniques and ideas with creativity, experimentation and evaluating their work and that of others in a constructive, but critical manner, developing a specialist art vocabulary.

## **Design and technology**

Through the use of 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.

Our curriculum for Design and Technology aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop the creative, technical and practical expertise needed to perform everyday tasks confidently and to participate successfully in an increasingly technological world
- 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
- critique, evaluate and test their ideas and products and the work of others
- understand and apply the principles of nutrition and understand how to cook

Through Design and Technology the children are taught to design, make and evaluate whilst developing their technical knowledge.

If you would like further details regarding the curriculum at Minsterley School, please do not hesitate to contact us.