



Ark Dickens  
Primary Academy

# **CURRICULUM VISION**

## **2020-2021**

**At Ark Dickens our curriculum is designed to challenge the status-quo in order to balance the scales of economic standing. Through a rich and engaging learning journey both inside and outside the classroom we aim to develop the grit, resilience, endeavour and critical-thinking skills that will see our pupils confidently able to occupy any position in society. We do not make excuses for our students, rather we harness the uniqueness of their position and use it as a catalyst for great things ahead.**

**Subject specialism is at the heart of our curriculum, alongside consistent high-quality teaching. Through a clear progression of skills our programme of study builds upon previous knowledge and creates meaningful links to our local area. We provide opportunities for knowledge-rich content and we expect recall and application of knowledge to support the mastery of skills. Every child will develop their knowledge, understanding and skills through enhancement opportunities, including local trips, 11by11, Forest Schools and our absolute focus on sport and well-being. Collectively this aims to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of every child.**

Our curriculum is designed to ensure that from the moment each pupil enters our Nursery, we start a journey of learning that maps out their path in primary school towards secondary school and onwards to university and beyond. We have to teach our children how to learn first. We invest a lot of time and energy into teaching pupils habits for discussion focussing on how to listen, how to speak with precision and then moving to building on others thinking so we all collaborate and learn together: one team.

Reception is the start of the learning journey where children are regularly assessed throughout the year with the aim of meeting the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception year. There is a focus on continuous provision around topics and texts as well as children's interests. In the morning all children take part in a maths and phonic lesson. Children begin phonic lessons in Reception and these continue into Key Stage 1 and if needed Key Stage 2.

In Key Stage 1 children take part in phonics, writing and mathematics lesson every morning. In year 2 children move away from phonics and access whole class guided reading lessons, which are linked to their learning in writing, allowing them to apply and deepen their understanding. In the afternoon, children access the wider curriculum through carefully planned topics: Science, Topic, Art, Design technology(DT), Religious Education (RE), Information and Communication technology (ICT), Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Music and French are delivered as timetabled discrete lessons.

In KS2, children again continue their daily diet of rigorous teaching, taking part in maths, reading and writing lessons every morning. In Yr5 and Yr6 children are taught by specialist teachers for maths and English, supporting the transition into Yr7. In the afternoon, children access the wider curriculum through carefully planned topics: Science, Topic, Art, DT, RE, ICT, PSHE, Music and French are delivered as timetabled discrete lessons.

## **Areas of the curriculum**

Reading is at the heart of our whole curriculum. Through reading, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally and socially. We believe that by reading high quality texts, our pupils will be exposed to language and ideas that they may not have the chance to experience. We intertwine our English and wider curriculum so as to help build an understanding of the world around them. Alongside encouraging a love of readings, skills are taught systematically. For our early readers, de-coding is taught through our rigorous RWInc programme where children are taught to read accurately and develop pace. Comprehension is taught through our reading lessons where children are taught to retrieve, infer, summarise and ask and answer questions. Developing pupil's vocabulary is at the focus of our teaching.

At Ark Dickens, children are taught writing skills through studying a range of both fiction and non-fiction texts, including teacher produced models. We provide real life experiences, exciting stimulus and meaningful purpose to engage all of our pupils in their writing. We develop a cultural of resilience and determination through encouraging our pupils to edit and improve their work, promoting the desire to achieve their best. Much like reading, writing is integral to our whole curriculum, and children are provided with the opportunity to transfer their skills across a wide range of genres. Each writing unit culminate in an independent write which is assessed against age-related expectations and carefully moderated both internally across the Ark Network and externally through local authority moderations.

We follow the Maths Mastery approach from YR to Y6 with an emphasis on developing a deep understanding of number, fractions, measurement, geometry and statistics. We prioritise the use of mathematical language and help children move from concrete resources to pictorial representations and onwards to the abstract. Our children have an additional 20min every day where we focus on arithmetic skills that will develop the child's ability to recall and apply knowledge rapidly. We base maths lessons on the 5 part lessons with the teacher modelling the learning and then pupils completing independent activities whilst the teacher over the shoulder marks. This structure aims to ensure all children reach a certain level of understanding by the end of the lesson. This prevents an achievement gap from forming. Whilst the teacher addresses misconceptions the teacher assistant supports the rest of the class in deepening their understanding through problem solving and reasoning. We have a Specialist teacher in y6 who delivers training in mathematics.

Science is taught as a discrete subject. Our pupils are scientists and question the world. Every unit has a practical activity where children learn scientific skills of predictions, fair tests, analysing and evaluating results and drawing conclusions.

History and Geography form an important part of our curriculum. We follow the National curriculum and use our local area to develop each child's geographical and historical skills, understanding and knowledge.

The Art and DT curriculum is linked to the English and humanities foci for each unit so children can use their subject specific knowledge in creative endeavours too. Each half term has an art day and a gallery showing to parents every term.

The computing curriculum comprises of different strands: digital literacy, coding, data handling and using technology. Each year group builds on previous skills to ensure that children leave primary school as confident users of technology.

We follow the Hampshire agreed scheme for RE throughout the school. Children investigate beliefs and practices of religions and how religions influence morality, identify and diversity.

The PSHE curriculum aims to equip children with the social and emotional skills they will require to be successful at secondary school, university and beyond. We use 'Jigsaw'. We take part in Anti-bullying week and E-safety week. Assemblies cover elements of current news and British values.

## **Subject specialists:**

The following subjects are taught by specific teachers across the school:

- PE is our specialism. Through PE & Sport our children learn to develop the important qualities of discipline, resilience, communication, team work, and ambition, leading to improve concentration, attitude and academic achievement. We strive to improve and increase the quality and quantity of PE for pupils, to show how PE can enhance pupils' attainment and achievement and to create pathways for them to continue to be active beyond school.
- We teach French to every child from Nursery. Learning an additional language teaches pupils to love language and communicate and to be curious about other parts of the worlds.
- We believe that through learning music, we also learn habits of practice, determination and team work. All children learn to sing from Nursery and have the opportunity to learn an instrument from our dedicated music teacher. Children in Y4 learn to play the drums and perform a year end concert.

The Ark Dickens Curriculum has not been designed as a rigid structure that teachers must adhere to stringently but rather a framework of suggested content ready to be moulded and shaped by teachers and pupils alike. The knowledge base is key in terms of delivery but how this knowledge is explored and is extended upon is very much reflective of individual cohorts. The shifting demographic of our pupils has further highlighted the necessity of having a responsive curriculum in place which responds to pupils individual starting points, existing knowledge and interests. Both teaching staff and the leadership team have contributed, and we have made a commitment as a staff to continue to review and refine this year-on-year so that our pupils are offered an outstanding education of the very highest quality.

The curriculum is driven by the leaders of the school through the embedding of long term curriculum overviews and medium term plans for each and every unit. All curriculum areas have subject teams. All pupils in every class work to achieve the same LO every lesson. Every lesson starts with a DO Now and concludes with an LO review for pupils to evidence their progress in achieving their learning. Teachers assess pupil's knowledge and understanding quickly and adapt teaching effectively at point of learning using over-the-shoulder feedback to pupils and adapt teaching as needed for each individual. Pupils are expected to learn from their team mates as much as from their teacher. Habits for discussion enable our pupils to share their thinking, build on each other's knowledge and act as a team and family.

This year, we use the Ark Curriculum Plus in Years 1 to 6. The curriculum, which has been planned by specialist leaders, aims to create an integrated curriculum and assessment provision which supports effective learning and exceptional outcomes, based upon strong principles of learning and curriculum design.

### **Additional experiences:**

11 by 11 sets out to provide pupils at Ark Dickens Academy with 11 memorable experiences before they end their primary education. It is about getting our pupils out and about, providing them with challenging, exciting and unique experiences that they would not perhaps normally have access to.

Our Forest School sessions help to deliver and support the Natural Curriculum. It's a great way to connect children with nature and develop skills to help them become independent and creative learners.

Our partnership with Portsmouth University has allowed Y6 to spend a day at the University; inspiring our children to become lifelong learners. Our vulnerable readers, read weekly to University volunteers. Coding club was run by volunteers from the University.

We enrich our pupils with a wide range of before school, lunchtime and after school clubs. These clubs celebrate a variety of sports and fitness; the arts – singing, dancing, drama, speaking and listening, homework and computing clubs. There are opportunities for all children.