



Achnagatt School—The Rationale for Our Curriculum



Our Vision

A secure, happy place to learn where everyone is encouraged to take pride in themselves, those around them and their work and where everyone's efforts are valued and celebrated.

Our Values

- Show respect for yourself and others
- Have the confidence to tackle new challenges
- Be friendly and welcoming
- Encourage a healthy, active lifestyle

Curriculum for Excellence

To achieve this vision we require a structured curriculum which builds on pupil's personal skills, interests, talents and strengths and helps them to achieve their full potential, academically, emotionally and socially so they can develop the skills needed for today and meet the challenges of tomorrow. The learning and teaching therefore places a strong emphasis on developing the key features of the Curriculum for Excellence - the four capacities - **Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors and Responsible Citizens**. The attributes and capabilities of the four capacities, are at the heart of our planning at all levels of the curriculum and we expect pupils to be actively engaged in their learning at all levels.

Curriculum Design Principles

In all subjects we have an active methodology, always mindful of the Curriculum Design Principles. Ensuring our teaching relates to **challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance** underpins our work at Achnagatt School. Assessment is for Learning techniques, direct teaching, self and peer assessment, individual and collaborative work both within and across year groups, text based work, practical activities, and work in "clubs" are examples of approaches and methodologies designed to engage our pupils in their own learning. When developing a learning experience it is important that activities are constructed as to accommodate the many different, preferred learning styles of children, these are discussed during our annual "Learning to Learn" week at the start of each new session and referred to frequently. The pupils are encouraged to lead their own learning through personal target setting, their work in clubs and groups and work in their cross year group co-operative groups, including work on children's rights.

Curricular Areas and Subjects

In line with the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence, the following eight subjects are taught - **Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing, Expressive Arts, Science, Social Studies, Technologies and Religious and Moral Education**. Progression frameworks are being implemented for the teaching of Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. Other subjects may be taught discreetly or through the grouping of experiences and outcomes in order to expose the children to a meaningful interdisciplinary learning experience.

Inter Disciplinary Learning (IDL)

Inter-disciplinary Learning (IDL) is a key feature of Curriculum for Excellence, which enhances the curriculum and is reflected in our contextualised planning. We believe that this approach towards delivering the curriculum brings about rich rewards, allowing for increased and improved collaboration across subject areas and leads to exciting and challenging opportunities for our pupils to make connections across learning within the context of **Broad General Education**. IDL opportunities exist across two or more subject areas and can involve links with the local community or other partners to support and enhance learning. Links are increasingly being incorporated into planned approaches.

Skills Development

We aim to instil in our children the ability to transfer the knowledge and skills they have learned in one area to another. In our ever changing world, children will be required to apply what they have learned in new and different ways. Work is done in order to develop critical and higher order thinking skills, in line with Blooms Taxonomy.

Ethos and Life of the School

All pupils are encouraged to use and build on their personal skills, interests, talents and strengths to contribute to the life and work of the school and to exercise their rights as members of the school community. The children have opportunities to lead and instigate change and improvement through the Pupil Council, Rights Respecting School Committee, JRSO/DYW and Gardening Club. Shared values are communicated through whole school assemblies and displayed on our School Charter display and Rights Tree. Co-operative Learning weeks and buddy systems are examples of other activities which help to foster the whole school identity. At all stages pupils are encouraged to take on leadership and responsibilities and there are particular, whole school responsibilities which the upper stages pupils take on, these include Young Leaders, working in our monthly Community Café and dinners rota.

Opportunities for Personal Achievement

In order to build confidence, resilience and motivation in our pupils we celebrate pupils' personal achievements both in and out of school through news time, Reflective Journals, Assemblies and our Achievement Wall. Our charity work involves the whole school and develops the concept of giving as well as an awareness of the wider world. Our Community Café and Gardening Club promote social responsibility. These, along with out of school clubs, offer many opportunities for personal achievement out with the classroom.

Assessment

Assessment is a crucial part of effective learning and teaching, we use both formative (on going, often the teacher's professional judgement) and summative (formal and usually identifies whether a child has achieved a particular level) assessment and monitor and track each child's learning three times annually. Through these, and the child's own self-assessment and evaluation, we are able to identify the next steps in a pupils learning.

Transitions

All children have an entitlement to a curriculum which they experience as a whole, with smooth and well-paced progression through the experiences and outcomes, particularly across transitions; pre-school to school, across stages and classes and from primary to secondary school. Staff ensure that curricular and pastoral information is passed on, ensuring the continuity of education, support, understanding and care.

Next Steps

At Auchnagatt School all staff are involved in redesigning our curriculum using loose bundling of experiences and outcomes and of adapting and implementing Aberdeenshire's Progression Frameworks in Literacy and English and Numeracy. As the impact of current changes becomes evident (e.g. Active Literacy, the introduction of clubs and groups), there will also be a greater understanding of and an ever increasing confidence in the development of the curriculum. This will allow for true reflection and the opportunity to refine and further develop our practice.