



## Bowes Curriculum

### Curriculum Intent Statement

We aim to provide pupils with an **engaging and empowering** curriculum that equips them for today and tomorrow, building on their natural curiosity and thirst for new experiences and knowledge.

We view the curriculum as the **totality** of every planned/unplanned experience and interaction that pupils encounter within our school. It informs every aspect of our practice and culture from **academic content** to the **personal development** of characteristics and virtues.

Our curriculum aims to improve the life chances of all children by ensuring each child becomes:

- **A successful learner**, who enjoys learning, makes good progress and achieves well.
- **A confident individual**, able to live a safe, healthy and fulfilling life.
- **A responsible citizen**, able to make a positive contribution to society.

Our **high academic ambition** for all pupils is delivered through a broad and carefully **planned and sequenced curriculum**, ensuring new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and towards clearly defined end points.

In lessons and outside the classroom, our **broad and engaging curriculum** is designed to ensure **all** pupils are aware of **“cultural capital”** - the "best" knowledge, skills and understandings that have been thought and said, across the world, to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement. We ensure all pupils have access to a **wide range of cultural experiences**, including “live” music and dance performances, visits to the theatre, museums and galleries, places of worship and the Houses of Parliament. We have a strong focus on the **performing and creative arts, public speaking** and **debating** and provide **specialist provision** in Art, Design Technology and Music.

**The curriculum also extends beyond the academic as we support pupils’ personal development**, through our Bowes values (respect, responsibility, collaboration, resilience, safety and success) and the development of character, personal, social and health education, spiritual and cultural awareness, including developing an understanding and empathy for issues and events in the **local, national and international community**. We put a strong emphasis on pupil voice to encourage independent and engaged learners, promoted in lessons, the Bowes Parliament and the development of young leadership skills.

### Curriculum Model

#### Basic Principles

- Learning is a change to long-term memory.
- Our aims are to ensure that pupils experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each key stage, long-term memory of an ambitious body of semantic and procedural knowledge.

#### In Practice

1. **Curriculum drivers** shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from an exploration of the backgrounds of our pupils, our beliefs about high quality education and our values. They are used to ensure we give pupils appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities. The Bowes drivers are: **Values, Opportunity, Inclusion, Community, Enquiry (VOICE)**.
2. **Cultural capital** gives our pupils the “essential knowledge to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement”.
3. **Curriculum breadth** is shaped by our *curriculum drivers, cultural capital and subject topics*.
4. Each subject is organised around a **Schema**, made up of **Threshold Concepts and Knowledge Categories**.

**Threshold Concepts** are the “big ideas” that shape pupils thinking within each subject. The same Threshold Concepts are explored in each subject’s units of work and pupils gradually increase their understanding through continually revisiting them. The **threshold concepts** form the basis for that subject schema and are the big ideas that enable children to progress and develop within that subject discipline.

Concepts need **knowledge** to make sense, which is taught through each subject’s **units of work**.

To help pupils form knowledge in a meaningful, structured, sequenced and coherent way, we present knowledge through “**Knowledge Categories**”. Like Threshold Concepts, Knowledge Categories are revisited, but with less frequency. The **knowledge categories**, enable children to strengthen their subject schema. So, the **knowledge categories** are those important aspects of knowledge that will enable children to organise and articulate their deepening understanding of each threshold concept for that subject.

E.g. History

Threshold Concepts: Investigate and interpret the past; Build an Overview of world history; Understand chronology; Communicate historically.

Knowledge Categories: Settlements; Society; Artefacts.

The same **knowledge categories** will be regularly returned to through the use of subject topics, allowing children to make meaningful links between them and deepen their conceptual understanding.

Each half term, History or Geography topics are planned around the threshold concepts and knowledge categories, relevant for that topic.

The **Knowledge Organisers** define the key **knowledge**, **skills** and **key vocabulary** to be learnt in each topic. Organisers are also used to help pupils assess and support their learning (History, Geography, Science).

5. For each of the Threshold Concepts there are three **Milestones**. Each milestone includes the semantic and procedural knowledge pupils need to understand the Threshold Concepts, providing a progression model. Teacher assessments are made at the end of each unit of work based on children’s performance against the milestones.

#### 6. Memory / Depth of Learning:

Working memory is limited. If cognitive load is too high pupils are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory.

In order for pupils to become **creative thinkers** and have a greater **depth** of understanding they must first master the basics, which takes time.

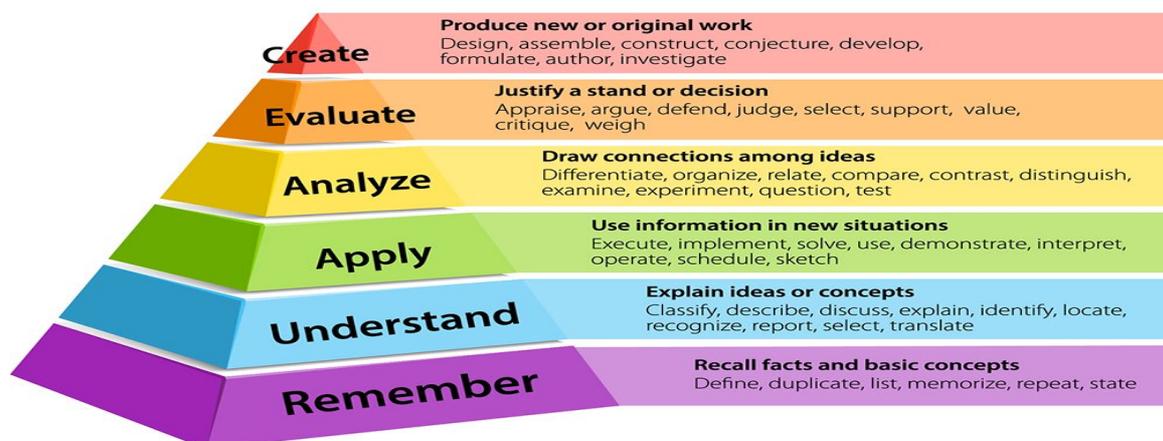
Therefore, within lessons, and within each Milestone, pupils gradually progress in their semantic strength and procedural fluency through three cognitive domains: **basic, advancing and deep**.

**Basic:** Standard. Basic, routine, fundamental foundations (*Blooms: Remember*)

**Advancing:** Application of the fundamentals (*Blooms: Understand/Apply/Analyse/Evaluate*)

**Deep:** Inventive application of the fundamentals (*Blooms: Create*)

## Bloom’s Taxonomy



As part of our progression model we use a different **pedagogical style** in each of the cognitive domains of basic, advancing and deep. For example:

**Basic:** Providing: direct instruction.

**Advancing:** Providing opportunities for pupils to: explain, organise, compare, contrast etc

**Deep:** Providing opportunities for pupils to: Investigate, explore, suggest, consider. develop, etc.

## Implementation

7. Our curriculum design is based on evidence from four main principles from cognitive science:

- Learning is most effective with **spaced repetition**.
- **Interleaving** helps pupils to discriminate between topics and aids long-term retention.
- **Retrieval** of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which increases storage and retrieval strength.
- **Self-regulated learning** (Cognition, Metacognition, Motivation) supports learning, memory and achievement.

8. Our content is **subject specific** and we make links within subjects to strengthen **schema**.

9. In addition, and where appropriate, links between subjects are made to form “themes,” to support engagement, relevance and meaning to the curriculum. We call the thematic approach our “**Learning Quest**”.

10. **Lessons/units of work** are designed to “flow” and build on previous learning, working to clearly defined outcomes, where pupils are able to articulate their learning and recognise and celebrate their achievements. (*“Unit overviews”*)

11. To secure learning, each lesson will be created around the “**4 Fs:**” Focus, Flow, Feedback, Fun.

12. **Continuous provision**, in the form of daily routines compliments the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum and, in other cases, provides retrieval practice for previously learned content (e.g. telling the time; knowledge of the seasons, spelling, phonics, arithmetic, key vocabulary).

13. The teaching, modelling and use of explicit **subject vocabulary** is a key part of every unit of work in each subject, developed over time.

14. **Long term subject maps and long-term year group overviews** identify coverage, structure and sequence of each subject, identifying subject links where appropriate.

15. “**Humanities links**” (**History, Geography**) and “**Science and Humanities links**” identify retrieval opportunities and connections to support learning into long term memory.

## Impact

### Day to day:

Assessment of the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understandings is conducted through a variety of approaches:

- Short quizzes at the beginning and end of a unit of work
- Questioning
- Observation
- Book looks
- Pupil discussion

### End of term:

**Core subjects:** Tests are given at the end of each term to assess standards and progress in reading and maths. Writing assessments are based on a summative evaluation of pupils work over the term.

**Foundation subjects:** In addition to cold/hot informal tasks at the beginning of each unit/lesson, teacher assessments at the end of each unit are made, based on the ‘Chris Quigley Milestones’.