



Curriculum Policy- Junior/ Infant School

Introduction

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning, personal growth and development. It also includes the “hidden curriculum”, or what the children learn from the way they are treated and are expected to behave.

In July 2009, Rossall Nursery, Infant and Junior School was successfully authorised by the ***International Baccalaureate Organisation to teach the Primary Years Programme***. The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is an international curriculum framework designed for young learners aged 3 – 11 years old. Over 450 schools worldwide are currently authorised to teach this Programme, which is developed and regulated by the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO).

The PYP is an education-for-life programme designed to foster the development of the whole child, not just in the classroom but also through all means of learning. The programme focuses not only on academic development but also on social, physical, emotional and cultural needs too.

Aims of the Primary Years Programme

The PYP (Primary Years Programme) offers a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning. It provides an inquiry-based curriculum model that incorporates guidelines on what students should learn, how students should act as learners and as community members, on teaching methodologies and on assessment strategies.

What is Inquiry-based Learning?

The Rossall Primary Years Programme Curriculum is a guided inquiry approach to learning and teaching. Inquiry-based units of study, known as Units of Inquiry,

are the focus for learning in classrooms and when appropriate they are integrated into other curriculum areas. Students experience what it is like to think and act like a historian, scientist, engineer or a mathematician. Within each Unit of Inquiry students and teachers identify together what they want to know, what they already know, what they need to know and how best they might find that out. In the inquiry-based classroom there is increased emphasis on real life situations, decision-making, problem solving, research and action. Students are actively:

- exploring, wondering and questioning
- experimenting and playing with possibilities
- researching and seeking information
- collecting data and reporting findings
- clarifying existing ideas and reappraising events
- deepening understanding through the application of a concept or rule
- making and testing theories
- making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens
- elaborating on solutions to problems.

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE PYP

The PYP Curriculum incorporates five essential elements

1. Concepts
2. Knowledge
3. Skills
4. Attitudes
5. Action

1. CONCEPTS: *What do we want students to understand?*

The PYP programme is a curriculum framework that has been designed around a key set of important ideas or concepts. These concepts are at the core of the PYP curriculum and provide the foundation for exploration across all disciplines.

The PYP has identified eight concepts, all of which join to form a concept-driven curriculum. The concepts are:

Form	What is it like?
Function	How does it work?
Causation	Why is it like it is?
Change	How is it changing?
Connection	How is it connected to other things?
Perspective	What are the points of view?
Responsibility	What is our responsibility?
Reflection	How do we know?

2. **KNOWLEDGE: *What do we want students to know?***

Knowledge in the PYP is developed through Units of Inquiry in each year group from Nursery to Year 6, under the headings of six Transdisciplinary Themes. These themes are used to integrate subject knowledge across the main curriculum areas of: Languages, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Technology, The Arts, Personal, Physical, Social and Health Education (PSHE). These themes are:

Who we are

An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures, rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.

Where we are in place and time

An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.

How we express ourselves

An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.

How the world works

An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.

How we organize ourselves

An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.

Sharing the planet

An inquiry into the rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

3. SKILLS: *What do we want the students to be able to do?*

The skills are those things that students need to be able to do to succeed in a changing challenging world. Students need to master a range of skills to prepare themselves for their future education and for life in general. A comprehensive set of Social Skills, Research Skills, Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, and Self-management Skills are taught through structured inquiry experiences in the Units of Inquiry.

4. ATTITUDES: *What do we want the students to value and feel?*

It is important that they recognise the importance of Attitudes alongside Concepts, Knowledge and Skills as being an integral part of the curriculum. The PYP promotes: tolerance, respect, integrity, independence, enthusiasm, empathy, curiosity, creativity, co-operation, confidence, commitment and appreciation. There are many opportunities throughout the curriculum to develop and promote positive attitudes.

5. ACTION: *How do we want students to act?*

Through the Units of Inquiry we endeavour to create learning experiences which inspire students to actively apply new learning in their daily life.

Students are encouraged to reflect, to choose wisely and to act responsibly with their peers, school staff and in the wider community.

The IB Learner profile

The learner profile describes a list of attributes that promote academic rigour and the establishing of a personal value system leading to international-mindedness. We at Rossall School wish our students to become:

- **inquirers**—their natural curiosity has been nurtured and they actively enjoy learning
- **thinkers**—they exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to solving complex problems
- **communicators**—they receive and express ideas and information confidentially in more than one language
- **risk-takers**—they approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the confidence to explore new ideas
- **knowledgeable**—they have explored themes which have global significance and have acquired a critical mass of knowledge
- **principled**—they have a sound grasp of the principles of moral reasoning and have acquired integrity, honesty and a sense of justice
- **caring**—they show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others, and have a sense of personal commitment to helping others
- **open-minded**—they respect the values of other individuals and cultures and seek to consider a range of points of view
- **balanced**—they understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being
- **reflective**—they give thoughtful consideration to their own learning by constructively analyzing their personal strengths and weaknesses.

Organisation and Planning

We plan our curriculum in three phases. We agree a long term plan for each year group which is called the Programme of Inquiry. This indicates which Units are to be taught in each half term, and to which year group of children. We review this Programme of Inquiry on an annual basis.

Through our medium-term plans and Unit Planners, we give clear guidance on the learning objectives and lines of inquiry for each Unit or topic. Alongside the PYP, we have adopted many aspects of the Primary Strategy for Literacy and Numeracy and our medium-term planning in these stand alone subjects is based on these documents. We do try to integrate Literacy and Numeracy teaching and learning into our Unit of Inquiry work as much as possible.

We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson. Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write or communicate on a weekly or daily basis.

Our curriculum reflects the school's mixed ability intake and aims to provide for the needs of potentially very able students and those requiring learning support. The classes are all mixed ability.

The curriculum and inclusion

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so only after the parents of the child have been consulted.

If a child has a learning support need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. If a child displays signs of needing learning support, his/her teacher makes an initial assessment. In most instances the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's requirements, within the normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe we will involve the Learning support coordinator and/or appropriate external agencies and professional assistance, in close consultation with parents.

The school provides a Learning Target Record for each of the children who are in need of learning support. This sets out the nature of the need and outlines how the school will aim to address that need. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals. The school also has a 'children of concern' list which is updated termly to monitor the progress of these children.

The role of the PYP (curriculum)co-ordinator

The role of the PYP coordinator

- Contribute to the whole School Development Plan
- provide a strategic lead and direction for the programme
- support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the programme
- provide efficient resource management for the whole programme

Concerns and Complaints

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the pupil's Class Teacher. If the issue is not resolved parents should make an official complaint in writing to the Head of Juniors. The school has a Complaints Procedure in place, which can be obtained from the Head of Juniors or the Parents handbook.

Monitoring and review

All teaching staff are responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented. Staff meet regularly to discuss all aspects of the curriculum.

The curriculum policy is reviewed annually.

Signed: S.C. James

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