

Curriculum Design Statement

Rae Snape

2018



An overview and evaluation of the principles, aims, content and design of The Spinney Curriculum and a summary of its effectiveness

The Spinney Primary School
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Curriculum Design Statement - A Big Curriculum for the Whole Child and for Every Child

A little school, with a big heart and big dreams

"The aim of education is to enable students to understand the world around them and the talents within them so that they can become fulfilled individuals and active, compassionate citizens." Sir Ken Robinson

Child Centredness, Teamwork and Community, Excellence, Learning, Improvement, Responsibility, Optimism

Child-centeredness is the first of seven values at The Spinney which guide the quotidian, as well as the long term strategic work of the school.

Childhood is a special time in our lives and as educators we know that we are very privileged to do the work we do. We appreciate that every child is unique, talented and precious and we are thoughtful, reflective and conscientious about the curriculum that we offer. (*The Image of the Child: Where Teaching Begins/100 Languages of Childhood - Loris Malaguzzi*)

The Curriculum is the sum of a child's experience in school, the taught (The National Curriculum and The School Curriculum) and the Hidden Curriculum (*Peter Jackson*) Our curriculum is therefore aspects of instructional content alongside a shared culture, based on a set of beliefs and values. The curriculum intention and how that manifests in implementation has been thoughtfully crafted in order to stimulate, inspire and raise standards for every child in our school as well as giving them the life-long literacies, competencies and qualities to make them successful and fulfilled today and in the future.

At the Spinney we say:

***"The curriculum is a gift that we give our children to take into their future. It is a gift we will never see them fully open but it is one which we hope will serve them well."* Rae Snape**

We describe ourselves as "pragmaticians" We train for the tests and we teach for life. Children in England are the most tested in Europe and so we owe it to them to give them the skills to "ace the tests" so that they can make choices about the opportunities available to them as they continue their learning journey.

To this end essential literacies and competencies are prioritised in our instructional curriculum, reading, writing, mathematics, coding, drawing for example are balanced alongside other essential pro-social skills such as compassion, communication, collaboration, reciprocity, self-agency.

High levels of cultural capital is an important asset in a person's life. Our curriculum offers our pupils key specific subject knowledge so that children learn about people, places and the planet now (through geography, ecology and sustainability) as well as in the past (history, art)

We are familiar with the notion of 21st Century learning ([Andreas Schleicher](#) OECD *Schools for 21st-Century Learners* :*Strong Leaders, Confident Teachers, Innovative Approaches*)

"What do you need to create a responsive 21st-century school? Three key ingredients are teachers who are confident in their ability to teach, a willingness to innovate, and strong school leaders who establish the conditions in their schools that enable the former two ingredients to flourish."

Effective school leaders are those who can make evidence-informed decisions, provide the instructional leadership that teachers need to help all their students succeed in school, and create a collaborative school environment in which teachers take part in school decisions.”

The school’s mission statement is: ‘Teaching and Learning Together’ and this is at the heart of what and how we do things!

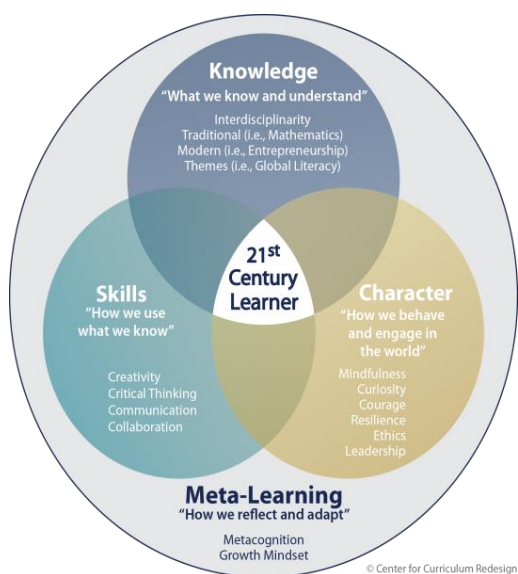
There are three principles that support how we work together as a TEAM to deliver our shared aims: Relatedness, Security & Shared Purpose. Pedagogically & professionally we know the importance of developing and sustaining positive relationships and we are pleased to follow the research and work of Dr Robert Loe of Relational Schools

“At The Spinney, Teaching, Learning and Assessment is an interwoven and reflective practice and implementation. It is a continual process of identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement in an holistic teaching practice that has children’s learning at the core of the work of the school.

The Spinney places great value upon everyone’s development, considering ‘the zone of proximal development’ and for ongoing learning to be essential for the whole school community.” Staff SEF January 2018

As a school we are forward thinking and outward looking connecting with educational thought leaders to inform and enhance our practice and to future-proof our pedagogy and curriculum e.g. Pasi Sahlberg, Valerie Hannon, Andy Hargreaves, Guy Claxton, Carol Dweck, Carol Campbell, Professor Dame Alison Peacock, Professor Dylan Williams, Dr Robert Loe,

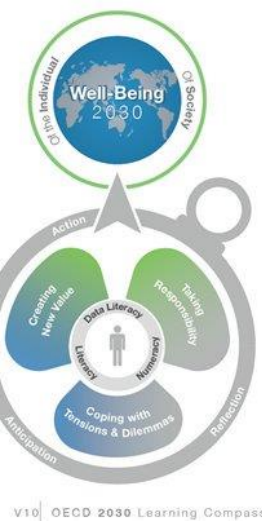
A number of conceptual frameworks and images are useful to underpin our thinking:

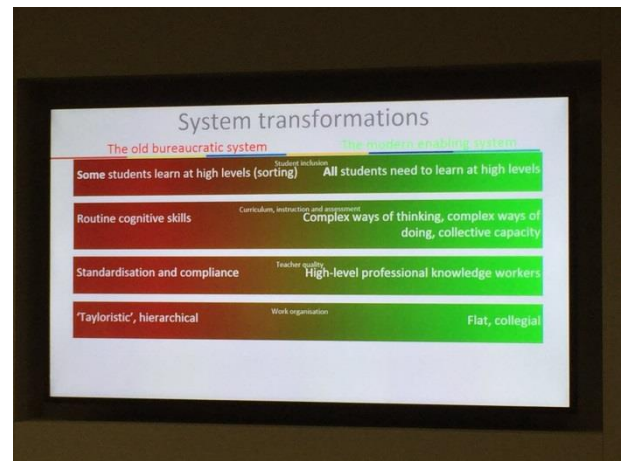
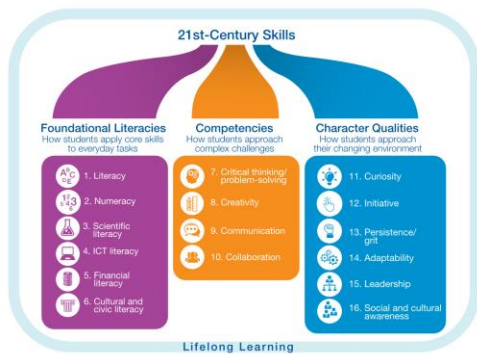


The OECD Learning Compass

Transformative competencies to change the future we want:

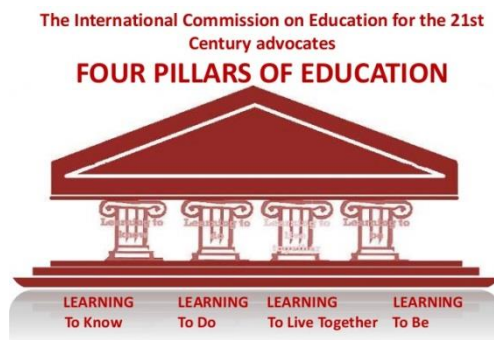
- Creating New Value
- Taking Responsibility
- Coping with Tensions and Dilemmas





Andreas Schleicher November 2017

UNESCO Four Pillars of Education



What are the four pillars of education?

Learning to know	Learning to do	Learning to live together	Learning to be
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning to know implies learning how to learn by developing one's concentration, memory skills and ability to think. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we adapt education so that it can equip people to do the types of work needed in the future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of education's tasks is both to teach students about human diversity and to instill in them an awareness of the similarities and interdependence of all people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The complete fulfillment of man, in all the richness of his personality, the complexity of his forms of expression and his various commitments - as individual, member of a family and of a community, citizen and producer, inventor of techniques and creative dreamer.

Our curriculum offers skills in foundational literacies, personal competencies and sustainable qualities.

It is designed to deepen knowledge, to develop skills and build character.

To this end we prioritise reading, writing, numeracy and oracy across the curriculum to ensure that our pupils achieve a high standard. We also offer foundation subjects including RE, PHSE, Humanities and Physical Education and we value these equally and assess what the children knows and can do in each area.

Specific activities such a The Big Read, The Big Write, The Big Count, The Big Draw and The Big Investigate enrich our curriculum and allow pupils to develop literacies alongside pro-social skills such as team-work, debating, leadership and creativity.

In 2008 The Spinney's was judged to be "Outstanding" by OfSTED and the school was praised for a number of things including leadership, standards and the positive behaviour of the pupils. Of particular note was the lead inspectors comment that "The school is forward thinking and outward reaching."

The Spinney takes a dynamic approach to its curriculum and we make connections to ensure our curriculum is effective, innovative and research informed. This includes making partnerships with a range of individuals and organizations to enhance our curriculum and improve learning opportunities and outcomes for children and colleagues.

These include:

- The Chartered College of Teaching – Rae Snape is a Regional Advocate
- Ashoka Changemaker Schools – A group of just 15 schools in England who promote Creativity, Leadership, Teamwork and Changemaking in the curriculum.
- The Faculty of Education – The Spinney is a Partner School and we are members of the Primary Standing Committee
- Whole Education Network – The Spinney is a Whole Education Partner School
- MindUp - We are a good practice school for Mind-Up
- Random Acts of Kindness – We are one of the Pathfinder schools for RAK
- My Cambridge Cultural Education Partnership - A Cultural educational Partnership initiated at The Spinney
- The Big Draw – We have connections with this charity and annually take part in this
- Math No Problem – The Spinney were early adopters of this programme which is running through the school
- Story Time Phonics – The Spinney were involved in this at the creation and development phase
- PEDAL – Our partnership with PEDAL have enhanced our understanding of the importance of self-regulation
- N2PM – A national Maths organisation that helps to develop pupils’ fluency in Maths through Daily Maths Meetings and Progressions in Calculation.
- SEAS4All – Erasmus+ project with CREA and Barcelona University and Professor Ramon Flecha – Schools as Learning Communities in Europe.
- EmpathyLab – We are in the development phase of this programme

In 2014 The Spinney became a National Teaching School, Rachel Snape became a National Leader of Education and The Spinney is the lead school of The Kite TSA.

The Spinney also benefits from the joint professional development opportunities this offers as well as from the collaboration with other teachers and school leaders.

Our curriculum is unique and bespoke to the needs of our school . . .

The Spinney benefits greatly from a linguistically diverse catchment with over 50% of our pupils speaking English as a second or third language. Some pupils arrive who are new to English so for this reason The Spinney emphasises the importance of language skills and confident communication.

Many of our pupils come from academic and professional households, we are therefore committed to ensuring a high quality academic curriculum that challenges and extends the learning that the children will experience at home.

In addition some of our pupils may have special educational needs; they may be entitled to additional pupil premium funding and may need additional support. The school is committed to assessing individual needs and offering specialist inputs for e.g. literacy, numeracy, social skills, physical therapy, play therapy etc.

Our Curriculum is designed to be holistic and our provision as carefully planned as possible to ensure that children have a positive sense of self-identity, are able to relate and interact well with others and have the skills and talents for now, for the future and to make the world an even better place.

Arts, Creativity, Culture and Connection are also fundamental to our offer. The school works with a number of partners such as the Arts Council, Festival Bridge, Access Art, New International Encounter Theatre Company, History Works and is on the steering committee for MyCambridge.

Educational visits and visitors are key elements in the Curriculum offer as these contribute greatly to a child’s Cultural Capital.

Creativity is important because when you add one thing to another thing you get a bigger thing, a new thing. Friendship is important because when you join other people's teams then you become a big team and you need to be able to work with them. It doesn't matter who you are, or how old you are or what you know, what matters is how you work with other people! What we have at The Spinney is a Happy Spinney Standard School. Pupil aged 7

Well-Being is also given prominence in our curriculum and a number of programmes are offered to develop children's social, emotional, mental and physical well-being

These include: MindUp, Random Acts of Kindness, Empathy Lab, Arts and Crafts, PE and Games. We use the additional Sports Premium Funding to enhance and extend the PE and Games offer and we recognise that this is a key component in a cultural offer. (You can read about this in the Sports Premium Document)

We know that Excellence does not happen by chance so as a faculty of educators we are highly reflective and continually review our offer in the spirit of Kaizen: Good and continuous improvement.

The school faculty plays an enormous part in reviewing the curriculum. There is a highly cohesive team ethos and we work together to identify areas for improvement and to problem solve and find solutions quickly. We work in an agile manner to address any school improvement points as urgently as possible and we constantly review and refine what we are doing in the school.

'Teaching and Learning Together'

At The Spinney, Teaching, Learning and Assessment is an interwoven and reflective practice and implementation. It is a continual process of identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement in an holistic teaching practice that has children's learning at the core of the work of the school.

The Spinney places great value upon everyone's development, considering 'the zone of proximal development' and for ongoing learning to be essential for the whole school's community.

5 LESSONS

- ✓ Humanity at the core
- ✓ Collaborative professionalism
- ✓ Evidence-informed judgement
- ✓ De-privatization of practices
- ✓ Systems for knowledge co-creation, mobilization and use

Carol Campbell January 2018

Our curriculum is successful . . .

Based on performance data as well as what parents and children say about our school we are confident that ours is a rigorous, cohesive and holistic curriculum designed to serve the child well now as well as in the future.

Parents are happy with the ongoing academic success for their children, but have also commented on how happy and confident they are. They recognise that this is not accidental but is a reflection of the values, vision and ethos in the school.

Many of our pupils continue to do well in secondary school e.g. being streamed for "Gifted and Talented" as well as taking on lead roles in Key Stage 3 Theatre Productions

Involving parents: *Active parental involvement is one of the most significant elements in a child's behavioural and academic success in school*

At The Spinney we value the uniqueness of every child. We personalise our approach and provide rich learning opportunities designed to promote pro-social and sustainable "future-proof" skills including communication, cooperation, collaboration, compassion and critical and creative thought. Children are also invited to work with family members on projects at home that allow them to explore, make, bake, design, write, investigate or create as part of personalised blended learning.

There are many ways that we explicitly involve parents as part of the learning in the school, as volunteers, through Open Friday's, sending home Termly Curriculum Maps and weekly plans with the Skills for Life specifically referred to. We encourage Families to learn alongside their children and have a Family Partnership Coordinator who project leads the annual Family STEAM Festival, as well as Termly Stay and Play. A very supportive Friends of The Spinney raises funds so that there are added cultural offers for the children to enjoy such as The Pocket Opera, The Norfolk Puppet Theatre etc.

We take pride in our position as a community school and we reach out to others locally and internationally to add value to our curriculum.

Rae Snape - Headteacher January 2018