

Primary Curriculum

AN **ark** SCHOOL

Content

The Early Years Curriculum Pg 3

Mastery Approach Pg 5

Inclusion

Lesson weighting Pg

Subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Sports, health and fitness education
- Geography and History
- IT
- DT and Art
- Music
- PHSE
- RE

The Early Years Curriculum

The EYFS Framework covers the development and learning of children from birth to the end of their reception year in school. For us that means that children will arrive into our school having already experienced and developed through many aspects of the Framework. Therefore we aim to build on our children's previous experiences as they enter our school to ensure a happy and fulfilling reception year resulting in our children being ready for key stage 1 and beyond. Our nursery and reception curriculum based on ARK's principles has been devised to specifically meet the needs of young children, the statutory requirements.

At ARK Conway our mathematics curriculum has been tailored to adhere to the EYFS statutory framework. For phonics and reading we follow the Read, Write, Inc. programme. Reading is further developed through a wide range of reading books.

The Curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning; three of which are prime: **Personal, social and emotional development; Communication and Language and Physical Development.** These prime areas of learning are integrally connected and are respected as transcending cultural differences, reflect the beginnings of child development, are critical for influencing later success in learning and emerge as an outcome of early experience.

The specific areas of learning are **Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.**

The early years team's approach to curriculum delivery is through planning teaching, activities and experiences in a way which facilitates progress in learning.

- We aspire to ensure a breadth of balance in the curriculum through carefully planned adult input and sensitive interaction using the EYFS framework whilst also having regard for the skills, knowledge and attitudes the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum will demand. We prioritise enabling all pupils to meet and exceed expected national levels of progress in English and mathematics as the foundation for academic success.
- Appropriate intervention can help children to become more involved in the learning process and provide opportunities for new learning and development, so that they can make progress. Early intervention is a feature of our teaching and learning practice.
- Learning, in the Nursery, is predominately based on child initiated activities, with adult interaction introducing children to new skills, knowledge and understanding as well as extending their existing skills, knowledge and understanding. This approach continues into Reception but with a more formal approach to teaching and learning, in preparation for the beginning of Key Stage 1 in Year 1. This is especially so in the teaching and learning of mathematics and literacy.

At the end of the reception year the statutory assessment against the seventeen early learning goals and the three characteristics of effective learners is collated for each child.

Taking the curriculum outside:

It is important to develop learning opportunities outside because outdoor learning provides the opportunities for:

- the acquisition of gross motor skills
- taking risks
- fostering a love of nature and the environment
- gardening
- large play which is not possible indoors
- learning experiences suited to the outdoor environment
- physical fitness

It is also important to take into consideration the social world we live in which can confine the opportunities which children have to play outside either from a safety point of view or lack of space.

Some crucial aspects of learning can only take place outside e.g. play with large construction equipment, gardening, care of animals, some sand and water activities. It is possible for the child to be more actively involved outside without the restrictions of noise and space.

We aim to provide an outdoor curriculum which is complimentary and is an extension of the indoor curriculum. It is ever changing as it reflects the children's interests and needs.

Mastery Approach

The ARK Conway approach to teaching and learning (from KSI)

Our approach to teaching and learning is based on mastery of skills and concepts. We aim for all of our pupils to have mastered a skill or concept before progressing to the next area of learning.

This approach is based upon the most up to date key educational research and from successful international educational models of education.*

To ensure that all of our students are able to access our challenging curriculum there are a number of key features you will see in the Conway classroom.

- 1) **Mixed ability seating arrangements:** Pupils are not grouped by ability; this has been proven to have a negative impact on lower attaining pupils and no significant difference for higher attaining pupils.
- 2) **All pupils working to the same learning objective or big picture goal:** The expectation is that all pupils will receive sufficient support to be able to achieve mastery of purpose.
- 3) **Sufficient scaffolding and challenge for every pupil:** We rigorously assess the progress of every pupil to ensure that **every** pupil is making good progress and to inform teaching. Teachers provide all pupils with a range of materials to support their learning and pupils are encouraged to choose the level of support they need to achieve success. (This is an approach which Sir Jim Rose commented upon as '*pioneering*' and '*inspirational*') To support and challenge all pupils they will work through a range of activities from the concrete to visual to abstract.
- 4) **Instant feedback:** Where possible teachers and teaching assistants will give oral feedback to pupils at the point of learning. If a pupil does not understand a new concept then there is planned time later in the day for that child to receive small group work or one-to-one tuition with the class teacher
- 5) **Pre-teaching:** We pre-teach some difficult concepts to pupils who are in need of additional support. This takes place through one to one or small group interventions.
- 6) **Use of Talk:** There is a high focus upon talk within lessons and pupils will use appropriate vocabulary to explain their thinking; this is an important assessment opportunity for adults in the classroom
- 7) **Real life application:** We teach real life application of skills acquired as pupils are learning them. We don't just teach an abstract skill and then later ask pupils to apply this skill to a scenario; the application of knowledge and skills are taught at the point of learning.

**(OECD, Hattie, Sutton Trust, Singapore approach to the teaching of mathematics)*

Inclusion

We have high expectations for every pupil. We plan challenging work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard. We have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Parents are welcome to come and discuss the targets set for their child at any time throughout the year.

Responding to pupils' needs and overcoming potential barriers for individuals and groups of pupils

We assess the needs of pupils and continuously monitor the impact of our approach to ensure they are making accelerated progress. Our curriculum includes time each day for class teachers' to work with small groups.

A wide range of pupils have special educational needs, many of whom also have disabilities. Lessons are planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. A minority of pupils will need access to specialist equipment and different approaches. We follow guidance from the new **SEN Code of Practice** which outlines what needs to be done to best support these pupils.

With the right teaching, that recognises their individual needs, many disabled pupils may have little need for additional resources beyond the aids which they use as part of their daily life. Our teachers plan lessons so that these pupils can study every national curriculum subject.

Teachers take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

Lesson Weighting

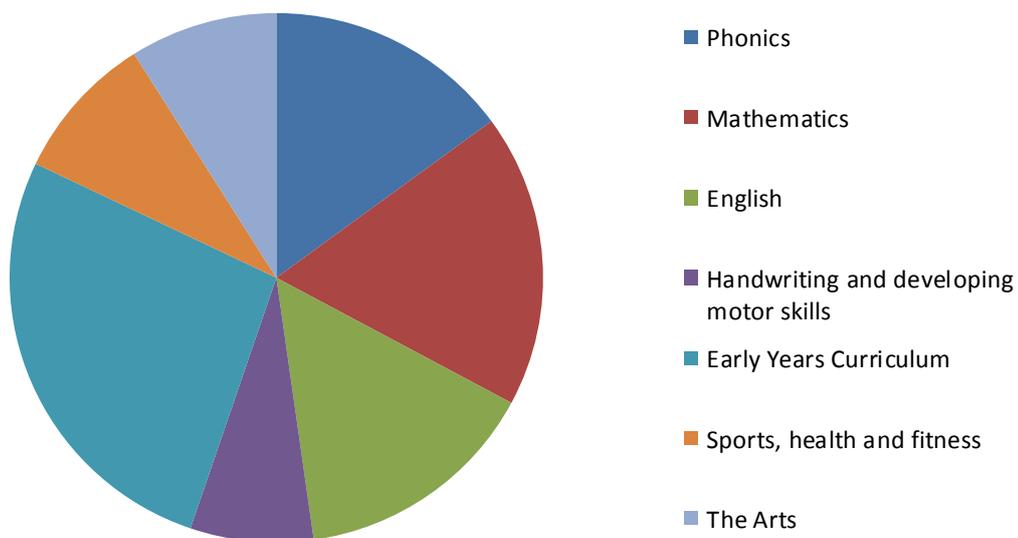
Depth before breadth

When pupils secure firm foundations in English and mathematics, they find the rest of the curriculum far easier to access. That's why we prioritise depth in these subjects, giving pupils the best chance of academic success.

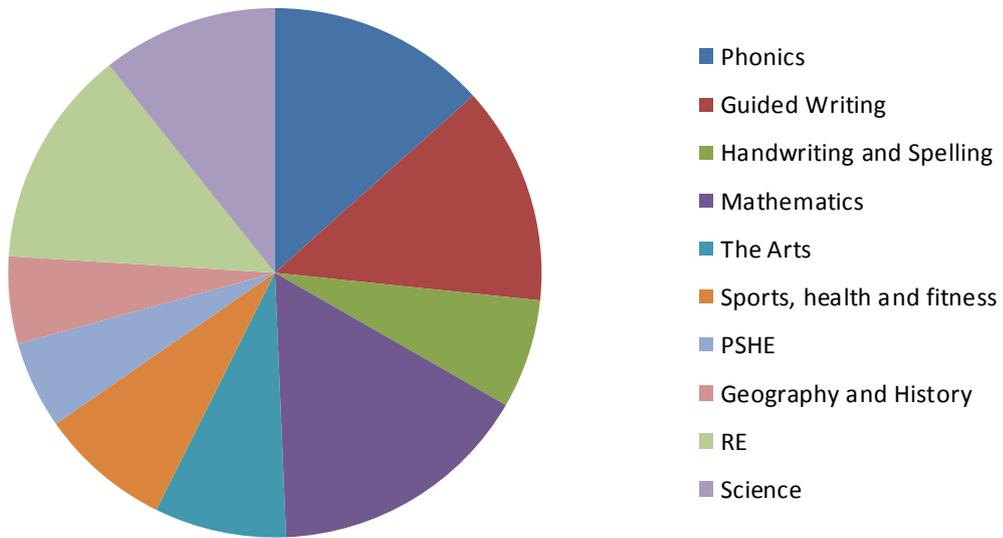
To support fully our pupils' achievement in maths, we have developed **Mathematics Mastery**, a highly-effective curriculum and teaching approach inspired by pupil success in Singapore and endorsed by Ofsted.

We also dedicate **more time to literacy and English** than other schools to encourage a love of reading and develop fluent communication skills. We have two programmes that focus specifically on phonics teaching and early spoken language skills. We also train all of our teachers to be aware of possible barriers to learning and how to support children if more help is needed.

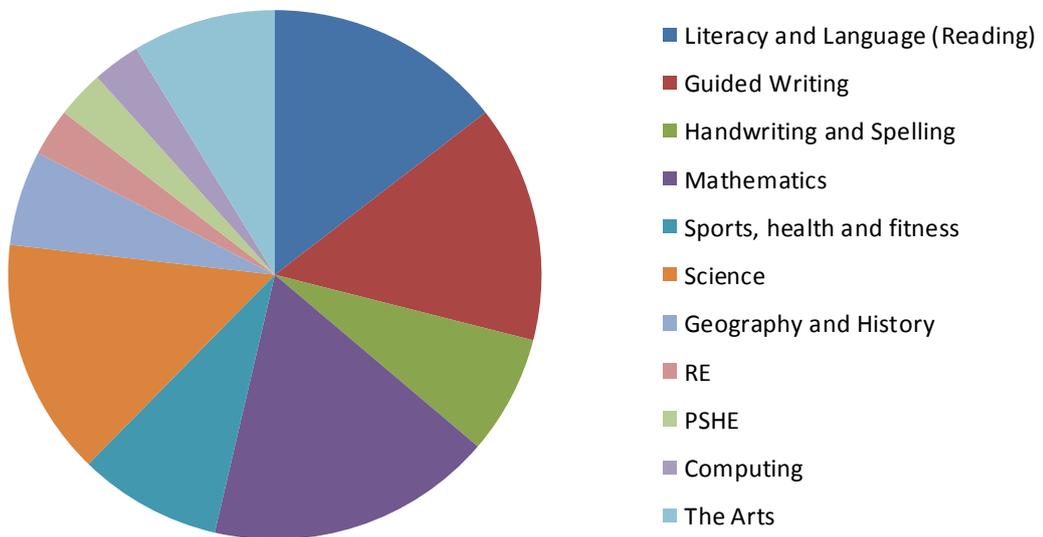
Early Years



KS1



KS2 *(from September 2014 onwards)*



Subjects

English

Learning to Read

We teach pupils to read through **Read Write Inc.** Phonics. Pupils will be part of the phonics programme until they are confident readers; reading around 140 words per minute and have a reading age of seven.

Read Write Inc. Phonics is for four to seven-year-old children learning to read and write, and for seven and eight-year-olds who need to catch up.

It is a complete literacy programme taught for 40 minutes a day in Reception and an hour a day in Year 1 and above. It is proven to develop:

- fluent, enthusiastic readers
- deep comprehension of texts
- confident speakers
- keen writers.

Young readers develop at different rates and the ability of readers in a class can vary therefore we set our pupils by ability for these sessions **only**. Regular assessment allows us to track our pupil's attainment and therefore our phonics groups are regularly reviewed and changed.

We aim to ensure 100% of pupils pass the year one phonics screening check.

Once pupils are confident readers they will progress from Read, Write Inc to Literacy and Language.

Eleven year-old children who read, write and speak to a very high standard love school, love learning and are likely to achieve extremely well at secondary school.

Literacy and Language gives teachers the tools to make this happen for every child.

It is a complete literacy programme rooted in the new national curriculum for children in Years 2 – 6 who can decode fluently. It develops children's comprehension, vocabulary, writing, critical thinking and discussion skills and provides teachers with explicit guidance in how to teach grammar – in a fun and meaningful way.

Children learn what it is to be a real reader and to truly engage in the world of books.

They will have the opportunity to:

- enjoy powerful complete stories, poems and plays by authors both teachers and children love
- learn how to get to the heart of a story or the nub of a non-fiction text
- learn to identify themes and ask universal questions.

Literacy and Language children write confidently and enthusiastically because they have something to say. And they love reading at home – the biggest indicator of success.

Reading at Home

Pupils need to read a wide variety of texts often. We therefore send reading books home every night and ensure that these are checked and changed weekly. Our reading records allow parents to share comments and thoughts with the class teacher.

Learning to Write

Pupils start mark making from an early age and our Early Years develop the gross and fine motor skills needed for pen control. We have a number of exercises and activities that pupils take part in to develop their ability to write.

In Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils learn letter formation alongside letter sounds through the Read, Write Inc programme and start forming words and short sentences by the age of five. In Key stage two pupils are expected to produce an extended piece of writing each week.

Writing is covered through the Read, Write Inc and Literacy and Language programmes however we supplement these sessions to give pupils greater confidence in their writing.

Every day we pupils participate in **guided writing** sessions. During these lessons the teacher will work with a focus group of children on an area of grammar, the building blocks for writing.

Handwriting: All pupils receive 30 minutes of handwriting practise everyday. Our expectation is for pupils to have fluent, legible and neat handwriting before they enter Key Stage 1. We then work on developing style and fluency. Children can earn their pen license once they can demonstrate accuracy in letter formation.

Speaking and listening

At ARK Conway 'speaking and listening', 'reading' and 'writing' are integrated.

In English, during key stage 1 pupils learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

During key stage 1 pupils learn to speak clearly, thinking about the needs of their listeners. They work with partners, in small groups and as a class, joining in discussions and making relevant points. They also learn how to listen carefully to what other people are saying, so that they can remember the main points. They learn to use language in imaginative ways and express their ideas and feelings when working in role and in drama activities.

In key stage 2 pupils learn how to speak in a range of contexts, adapting what they say and how they say it to the purpose and the audience. Taking varied roles in groups gives them opportunities to contribute to situations with different demands. They also learn to respond appropriately to others, thinking about what has been said and the language used.

Mathematics

Mathematics Mastery: A New Approach...

Despite a number of high profile national initiatives in recent years, standards in mathematics have plateaued and pupil attainment has failed to meet the high target set.

ARK School decided that a new approach to teaching mathematics was needed to meet our high aspirations for every pupil. Following a great deal of research into teaching strategies and styles we have implemented an approach based on one of the persistent highest performing nations over the past 30 years, the Singapore approach.

World Class Standards in Mathematics

Prior to educational reform 30 years ago, Singapore was an average performing nation in the core subjects Maths, English and Science. Having combined and adapted best practise from around the World, the Singapore government produced an approach to Mathematics that has seen them amongst the top performers in the World since the early 1980s.

Key Principals of the Singapore Approach:

The Singapore Approach to mathematics differs from the current UK national curriculum in a number of ways;

- An emphasis on pupils mastering the basic knowledge and skills in mathematics. By studying fewer areas of learning pupils develop a greater understanding of whole number, fractions, geometry and statistics.
- Visual modelling helps pupils make the links between a concrete understanding and abstract application of mathematical concepts.
- Excellent teaching; Fewer areas of learning mean that teachers can focus on quality delivery supported by a rigorous scheme of work.

Measuring the Success of ARK Mathematics:

ARK Schools have been piloting the use this approach to mathematics in all of its Primary academies over the last year. The impact upon pupils' knowledge and understanding has been vast (*100% of pupils achieved above age related expectations in Mathematics at Ark Academy, Brent*)

ARK Conway Primary Academy will be one of the first schools in the country to implement Mastery of Mathematics from start-up and we are incredibly excited about the potential this scheme could have on pupil achievement.

At the end of each Key Stage pupils sit national test, the same as any other school. We also track pupil attainment and progression on a half-termly basis to ensure we know exactly what our pupils can do and identify their next steps in learning.

Our mathematics has been developed by identifying and implementing the key principals for teaching mathematics from the highest performing nations in the world. We are extremely excited and proud to be pioneering this approach so that every Conway pupil has the opportunity to achieve excellence in Mathematics.

Science

During key stage 1 pupils **observe, explore** and **ask questions** about living things, materials and phenomena. They begin to work together to collect evidence to help them answer questions and to link this to simple scientific ideas. They evaluate evidence and consider whether tests or comparisons are fair. They use reference materials to find out more about scientific ideas. They share their ideas and communicate them using scientific language, drawings, charts and tables.

During key stage 2 pupils learn about a wider range of living things, materials and phenomena. They begin to make links between ideas and to explain things using simple models and theories. They apply their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas to familiar phenomena, everyday things and their personal health. They begin to think about the positive and negative effects of scientific and technological developments on the environment and in other contexts. They carry out more systematic investigations, working on their own and with others. They use a range of reference sources in their work. They talk about their work and its significance, and communicate ideas using a wide range of scientific language, conventional diagrams, charts and graphs.

The science key stage 1 and 2 curriculum consists of:

- Sc1 Scientific enquiry
- Sc2 Life processes and living things
- Sc3 Materials and their properties
- Sc4 Physical processes
- breadth of study

Sports, Health and Fitness Education

In December 2013 the NHS released the shocking statistics that more than 1 in every 5 children aged 5 years old is overweight or obese. That figure increases through their time in primary school to a shocking 1 in every 3 (33.9%) by the time they reach 11 years old.

In other words, less than 70% of children leaving primary school are considered healthy.

Our aim is that every pupil will leave our schools healthy.

To achieve this ambitious goal we will;

Inspire: We have designed an exciting curriculum to engage children in a wide variety of regular physical activities.

Educate: We give children and families the knowledge and information they need to make healthy choices to live well balanced lives.

Measure: We track the health and fitness of all our pupils; we work with children to set goal to improve their own personal fitness levels.

Inform: We inform parents and pupils of their levels of health and fitness.

Support: We offer a wide variety of club, workshops and master-classes for children and families.

*Target set for July 2018 – when current Year 2 children are leaving the school at the end of Year 6.
100% of pupils will have a BMI in the 'healthy' range*

A brand new curriculum

Working alongside a number of top professionals and experts we have created a brand new curriculum that aims to inspire and inform. We have dedicated a whole afternoon every week to this; our Sports, Health and Fitness curriculum.

The afternoon is split into three different classes;



SPORTS

HEALTH

FITNESS

The children will rotate between all three, giving greater context to the learning. For example: Children will be learning about how their joints and muscles work in health class right after a vigorous aerobic workout in fitness class.

Sports



High-quality sports education inspires all pupils to succeed and excel in competitive sport and other physically-demanding activities. Opportunities to compete in sport and other activities build character and help to embed values such as fairness and respect. This is a progressive curriculum building from the early development of gross motor skills; it then focuses on teaching skills required for a range of sports and then provides opportunity for pupils to apply their skills in competitive games.

The sports education programme is linked to the 2014 National Curriculum ensuring full coverage of all relevant programmes of study.

Health

The health education programme aims to ensure children lead healthy, active lives.

Healthy body: Pupils will learn about their bodies and how to keep them healthy.

Healthy mind: Pupils will learn about the importance of a healthy mind. They will learn about how to keep themselves well and happy.

Healthy lifestyles: Pupils will learn the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle including a healthy diet.

Fitness

The aim of the fitness programme is to ensure that pupils receive regular, sustained physical activities. Lessons are designed to raise the heart rate and improve overall fitness, stamina and flexibility.

Levels of individual fitness will be assessed termly and reported upon to parents and carers.

Flexibility exercise: Children become more agile when they are able to stretch and move their bodies in a full range of motion. Encouraging children to begin stretching in childhood can help them maintain limber physiques throughout life.

Options include gymnastics, yoga, dance, tai-chi and martial arts.

Strength and stamina: Strength exercises can help children build healthy muscles. With an appropriately organised programme, children can advance their strength and stamina. Due to the age of pupils and risk of injury during growth spurts no weights will be used during strength classes; the majority of workouts will focus on non-resistance training and developing stamina.

Exercise include: lunges, dips, press-ups, skipping and sit-ups.

Aerobic exercise: Cardiovascular training is an important component of children's fitness, keeping their heart and lungs strong. Classes may include: Zumba and dance;

Circuit training: Children can apply their strength and stamina, and develop greater levels of fitness through circuit training. Circuit training combines aerobic exercise, strength and stamina and flexibility.

Information technology and computing

At ARK Conway we aim to prepare our pupils for life beyond their school years. In this age of technology it is an essential skill that pupils are literate and confident in using technology to find things out, present their thoughts and explore topics at a greater depth. Our aim is to ensure pupils are confident in using a wide range of different platforms and can choose between a numbers of different devices to perform different tasks.

A high-quality computing education equips pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computing has deep links with mathematics, science, and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work, and how to put this knowledge to use through programming.

Building on this knowledge and understanding, pupils are equipped to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of content. Computing also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

Geography

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

Our curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes
- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
- collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
- interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

History

A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It inspires pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching equips pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement.

History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

Our curriculum for history aims to ensure that all pupils:

- know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
- know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind
- gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'
- understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
- understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
- gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

Art, design and technology

Art, craft and design embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality art and design education engages, inspires and challenges pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As pupils progress, they will be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design. They will also learn how art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.

Our curriculum for art and design aims to ensure that all pupils:

- produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences
- become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques
- evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design
- know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.

Music

Review... Spring 2014

Religious Education

Religious Education at ARK Conway supports the promotion of community cohesion. It plays a major role in helping pupils understand diversity and develop respect for the beliefs and cultures of others.

At ARK Conway we ensure that RE promotes pupils' spiritual development by allowing children to reflect on the implications of religion and belief for their own lives. Learning about religion and belief helps children to explore the nature of religion. Whilst learning from religion and belief allows them to reflect on and respond to their own experiences.

The RE curriculum covers a wide range of religious beliefs including: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Sikhism. Each term the children's learning is focused on a theme such as belonging, relationships or celebration; and children's understanding of different religions will be fitted into this context. The lessons are practical and involve lots of opportunities for engaging discussion. Visits to religious place may be used to enhance learning.