

# Merrydale Infant School



## **Recovery Curriculum Catch Up Curriculum 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020**

FGB meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 item 10

## Merrydale Infant School Recovery Curriculum - September 2020

At Merrydale Infant School we understand that following the global pandemic our pupils are returning to school with diverse social, emotional and educational needs following their time in lockdown. There is a need to make specific provision for these unprecedented times and this is our recovery curriculum. The work of Professor Barry Carpenter (2020) "Loss and Life for Our Children and Schools Post Pandemic" has informed the design of our Recovery Curriculum. The five levers for recovery - relationships, community, transparent curriculum, metacognition and space underpin our planning.

### Mental health and wellbeing

Our curriculum will recognise the wellbeing needs of our pupils on their return to school after a prolonged absence. There are four strands to our approach.

#### **1. Building positive relationships with others**

**What will this area help pupils to learn?**

Pupils will be shown how to rebuild relationships and refresh how to interact and build relationships with others including:

- sharing
- turn taking
- greeting and interacting with others positively
- playing alongside and with peers
- responding to adults
- seeking adults to help, support and comfort when necessary
- knowing which adults help and support pupils to keep safe when needed

## **What will this look like?**

There will be opportunities planned that focus on rebuilding relationships with peers and adults. This may be in the form of:

- independent learning to nurture parallel and joint play
- turn taking games and activities
- sharing games and activities
- interaction opportunities using call and response games and songs
- time where adults can facilitate pupils' re-building of relationships
- games and activities where pupils can work together such as board games or outdoor PE games
- PSHE work about who keeps us safe and who can keep us safe at school, at home and in the community
- PSHE work about how adults can help us
- activities that link to children's interests to show we value these

## **2. Managing behaviour and feelings**

### **What will this area help pupils to learn?**

Pupils will be given support in understanding their emotions and feelings so that they are able to start processing the experiences they have had during lockdown. Pupils will refresh some positive behaviours which they may have forgotten whilst outside of the school environment. Pupils will be shown how to engage with self-regulation strategies and tools which help them to feel safe and calm. Staff will help pupils to understand the changed world we live in with tools and strategies to help them process what is different.

### **What will this look like?**

There will be clear routines which are supported by clear communication. This may include use of visual timetables so pupils know what is happening each day and at each part of the day. Some structures and boundaries may be different

in school because of social distancing and other safeguards related to COVID-19. Social stories and use of visual aids and prompts to guide and support pupils with this may be used. We will provide opportunities that enable pupils to express themselves and explore the experiences they have had whilst they were not at school. We will be clear with boundaries that create a secure and open forum for discussion. We will also build in regular circle times and make use of the Jigsaw PSHE scheme. Staff will model processing and talking about feelings and emotions linked to the lockdown experience. We recognise the importance of talking so there will be lots of opportunities for pupils to develop feelings of having had a real voice and been genuinely heard as they express their wants and needs.

### **3. Enjoying and achieving**

What will this area help pupils learn? Pupils will be supported in recognizing their personal successes and in developing feelings of enjoyment and achievement. This will be done with the aims of helping pupils reestablish positive feelings about school, motivation to learn and also qualities such as self-belief and self confidence.

What will this look like? Daily routines and teaching sessions similar to those used pre lockdown will be reestablished as quickly as possible to provide children with experiences that feel like "the norm". This will look like familiar structured sessions in a pupil's day, with opportunities to engage in play as well as different learning activities. We will be designing enjoyable activities so that children can rejuvenate with positive endorphins and reengage successfully. Learning in these sessions will link to previous topic learning or children's key interests and motivators. Children may have missed out on many opportunities at home that they enjoy at school, such as peer play, active opportunities and experiences which develop their cognition and learning. These will be built into each day to support children's experiences of a broad range of activities.

### **3. Physical health and wellbeing**

What will this area will help pupils to learn? Staff will support pupils to re-engage with physical health and wellbeing routines. Pupils will also be taught new routines which will keep them safe and enable infection control. This will include hand washing, social distancing, understanding of new school routines as well as supporting pupils with their personal care. Children will be supported in understanding differences in routines such as the administration of first aid, staggered timetables or being supported in a different way at lunchtimes. Pupils will be encouraged to be independent with dressing and undressing where needed and encouraged to be physically well through active sessions, use of outdoor space and understanding of healthy behaviours.

#### **What will this look like?**

We will be planning in lots of time where children are able to explore and re-investigate their environments to become familiar with what might be different (i.e. one way systems in school, different markings in school, different access to resources in the classroom) and understanding these differences will be supported with social stories, photos and pictures.

Learning about physical health and wellbeing will focus the children on managing and coping with new processes that help keep us safe. This will include:

- understanding what is different about school and how to navigate this environment
- hand washing and hygiene measures
- keeping and maintaining social distancing
- catch it, kill it, bin it messages
- health and hygiene sessions focusing on washing, being independent and looking after oneself

## The "Catch Up Curriculum" rationale

### Creativity

To support pupils' mental wellbeing the curriculum will focus initially on activities that promote self-expression. There will be a focus on art and craft based learning to develop concentration and fine motor skills. We believe that working in small groups will allow children to reengage with their friends and share thoughts and feelings whilst focusing on tasks.

### Activity

Staying physically active during lockdown may have been a challenge for our pupils. Inactivity can have negative effects on quality of life, health and mental wellbeing, particularly for children. A significant part of the school day will promote physical activity, within the social distancing guidelines. Where possible, children will be provided with cross curricular active learning opportunities and learning in the open air.

### Standards

There will be gaps in learning left in the wake of the extended school closure. It is difficult to gauge how much support and learning children will have received during their time at home. Across the school, teachers will baseline pupils during the first few weeks of the new academic year to create evidence that will allow them to accurately assess starting points. These baselines will be directed at key skills in reading, writing and mathematics.

The National Curriculum coverage achieved in the fractured school year 2019-2020 has been identified in detail, with objectives annotated as covered thoroughly, partially covered or not covered. This information is the basis for a "catch up curriculum" that will be carefully planned to ensure gaps in learning

are addressed as much as possible. Priority will be given to objectives that are building blocks to age related learning.

### Pupils with wellbeing, mental health and behavior needs post pandemic

We acknowledge that some pupils may struggle more than others with the return to school and their lockdown experiences. They may struggle to process the changes that are now part of daily life, the adjustment to attending school again, negative experiences during their time at home or their understanding of the expectations and behavior boundaries that had previously been developed. Staff will be vigilant and sensitive to such pupils and seek advice about strategies to support them if necessary from our Inclusion Manager and outside agencies.

The usual National Curriculum will gradually replace our Recovery and Catch Up Curriculums at a time when this is appropriate to the needs and progress of pupils.