



ARK Franklin
Primary Academy

Ark Franklin Curriculum

At Ark Franklin we provide a broad and balanced curriculum, developing the individual child according to their age and ability; we are committed to providing significant opportunities for pupils to master English and mathematics skills, with a strong emphasis on depth before breadth. For we believe that mastery in these core subjects is key to success, determining later access to higher education and increased career choices at 18.

Franklin implements a tailored version of the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum, using a curriculum map to ensure that we cover all the statutory requirements during your child's time with us.

Teachers use a wide variety of teaching methods, adapted according to the subject, age and ability of the individual pupil. At Ark Franklin, we place great emphasis on learning through practical activities, as we believe that it is only by direct experience that true understanding of a specific area, and its relevance to real life, can be gained.

In common with other Ark academies, all the methods we use have been well researched and assessed to ensure a positive impact in the primary school setting and most importantly on the learning experience of our pupils.

Depth before breadth

Our first priority is to build a secure foundation in English and mathematics as the basis for all other learning. Pupils will be taught to read, write and work with numbers fluently and confidently. Where pupils need extra support, it will be provided, to ensure that every child reaches and exceeds nationally expected standards.

Foundation Stage

Reception pupils follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The six areas of learning are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Creative development
- Physical development

We provide a highly stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment where children are motivated to communicate, explore and learn independently. A carefully planned range of activities provide a rich, age-appropriate learning experience across the curriculum.

Key Stage One and Two

Reading

Franklin children are taught to read through synthetic phonics using the Read Write Inc. Programme. As children become confident with decoding, they begin to read in small groups and as a whole class. During this time children are exposed to new vocabulary in order to allow them to develop the skills to read and comprehend independently. Throughout their time at the school, children access a wide range of authors and texts allowing them to speak openly and critically about what they have read, developing their own literary interests. To further foster a love of reading, parents are expected to read for at least twenty minutes a night with their child.

Writing

Our aim is to ensure that every child is able to write at length independently for a variety of purposes. Initially, children are encouraged to write in play situations and, as they become more confident, to write in a more structured way. Grammatical concepts are included within the teaching of writing and as a result children know the technical names for complex grammatical ideas which they are able to fluidly include into their own writing. Using the talk for writing structure, children learn to verbally rehearse their ideas out loud before putting pencil (or pen) to paper.

Mathematics

Mathematics is taught through practical and written activities that have real meaning for the children, enabling them to develop their numerical skills and the ability to solve problems. Combined with this, our mathematics curriculum places a strong emphasis on arithmetic developing mental recall of number facts before introducing written calculations for all of the four operations. Our approach uses concrete manipulatives (such as number lines and bead strings), pictorial representatives (pictures representing mathematical concepts) and more abstract approaches (written equations). This structured support, combined with our high expectations ensures that children make clear connections in mathematics which they can then apply to a variety of situations.

Science

Through the use of the 'Developing Experts' scheme of work, science at Franklin ensures that students learn and develop an understanding of key scientific principles which are imbedded through exciting and engaging hands-on experiments. Throughout the year, Franklin pupils spend time in a purpose built, high-spec science lab which both inspires their curiosity and fosters a love of science which children can take into secondary school and beyond.

History

British history is taught in the autumn term with the chronological development of Great Britain examined from the Stone Age, through the Roman rule of Britain and the Anglo Saxons. In the summer term, the focus of history turns to ancient civilisations and famous individuals with younger children learning about exploration and space whilst Ancient Greeks, Mayans, Egyptians and Aztecs are covered in KS2. Children develop critical evaluative skills as they look at sources and consider the legacy of these elements of history.

Geography

Geography is unashamedly taught as a distinctive subject at Ark Franklin as there are key non-negotiables that we feel are vital children understand before they leave primary school. Key geography skills include understanding countries and cities around the globe, reading maps, using compasses and understanding climates and how human activity impact upon these. Children learn both physical and human geography at Franklin; they develop a detailed understanding of rivers, mountains, volcanos and earthquakes as well as studying countries from different continents around the world.

ICT

ICT is taught through the use of the 'Switched on computing' program which allows pupil to develop their understanding of coding through the use of programmable tools, toys and interactive software. Children also develop key Microsoft Office skills as they create websites, blogs and apps. Additionally, they use other electronic devices including cameras and microphones, the content of which are then edited on laptops.

Religious education

We focus on developing children's social, moral and community spirit, by exploring a range of cultural beliefs. Six full days a year are dedicated to delving in depth into a religion ensuring a progression of knowledge as they move through the school. Pupils learn core facts about each religion as well as examining beliefs, values and key festivals. There is also a wide variety of art and craft activities that the children complete relating to the specific religion. Over the course of their primary education, children attend a variety religious buildings to further develop their understanding of the multicultural world in which they live.

Personal, social and health education

In our drive to foster caring, inquisitive and informed individuals at Franklin, PSHE has three full days allocated to it each year, with each year group examining specific content that is appropriate to their age. Children also partake in weekly phase assemblies with specific foci including values, choices, inspirational individuals, interaction with others and developing the self.

Modern Foreign Languages

Pupils learn Spanish throughout Ark Franklin with our specialist Spanish educator teaching each class on a weekly basis. Children learn to speak about themselves, their families and their likes and dislikes both in and out of school. Pupils experience well-known stories and fables in Spanish using the talk for writing structure. They also develop an understanding of more complex grammatical structures as they move through the school speaking (and writing) in compound sentences with a variety of conjunctions.

Music

Our music specialist teaching our pupils weekly allows them to build an appreciation of different musical styles whilst also developing key musical skills with all pupils able to play an instrument before they make the transition to secondary school. Key elements of music are explored with pitch, pulse, rhythm, tempo, duration and dynamics being discretely studied before children learn to play the ukulele and guitar in key stage two.

Art and Design Technology

Throughout their Franklin experience, children work in a range of different mediums creating a wide variety of two and three-dimensional projects. They examine specific artists that allow them to develop a number of artistic techniques and an appreciation for art more generally. They also create a number of pieces relating to the history topic that they are studying. In addition to the wide variety of skills they develop, pupils are encouraged to be reflective about the art work that they creating, recognising (and celebrating) success whilst also critically evaluating how they would improve their work.

Physical education and healthy living

Physical education is a core part of Franklin's curriculum with children learning a number of team invasion sports (such as hockey and basketball) as well as dance and gymnastics with children developing their own routines using balances and transitions. Pupils are also taught about how to lead healthy lives and in-line with this we ensure that pupils are provided with a nutritious lunch each day, with a number of the ingredients grown on site sourced from our garden.

Outdoor learning

Here at Franklin we aim to equip our pupils with the tools not just to survive but to thrive in the modern dynamic world in which we find ourselves. We strongly believe in the positive benefits of an outdoor curriculum and the potential that it has to develop our pupils socially, emotionally and academically. During the academic year, all pupils sow and grow crops for consumption and engage in outdoor activities that enhance their understanding of the world around them and their place in it. Furthermore, children are taught to recognise the impact that they can have on their local environment and the world at large, both as an individual and as a group.