

# COVE INFANT SCHOOL



## A CURRICULUM FOR LIFE

Cove Infant School is a two form entry school in the heart of its community. Although sharing a catchment with two other schools, Cove has always been popular and full. The children are mostly White British with a small percentage coming from an ethnic minority or who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled children and those with Special Educational needs is in line with the national average.

The school had an adequate curriculum which fulfilled the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum but it was uninspired as were the teachers delivering it. The schools end of Key Stage results were either below or just in line with national so Teaching and Learning needed a complete review along with the curriculum. In addition parents engagement with the school was below average.

There was a groundswell feeling that things had to change and we knew that a new approach to the curriculum and to Teaching and Learning would result in higher expectations, better results and improved parental involvement.

Over the next five years we embarked on a journey to write a creative and inspiring curriculum that would challenge and engage our diverse learners. As leaders we chose to work with an external adviser who helped us shape our aspirations for an exciting curriculum. First we worked with the teaching staff helping them

to write creative but focused projects creating an exciting ‘hook’ which gave purpose to the project outcome.

Teachers became highly motivated and knew they had ownership of the curriculum and started to expertly sequence the learning across subjects and across the school terms. This rigorous approach ensured that the curriculum led our children into a world of discovery offering them new and memorable learning experiences.

Underpinning the curriculum were six learning values, Thinking, Collaboration, Emotional Intelligence, Independence, Spirituality and Creativity. Thinking and one other value are planned into every project and these link well to children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The introduction of Home Learning to support each project has had an amazing impact, particularly the engagement of the parents, as each Home Learning has a challenge for the child and for the child and parent together.

Alongside the curriculum development, the Senior Leadership Team worked with all staff to improve the quality of Teaching and Learning





so that teachers became highly skilled and able to ensure each child made excellent progress. Teaching is now flexible and responsive to the needs of children and teachers are confident to adapt their teaching during lessons to ensure optimum learning takes place. We have successfully changed the culture of the school to one where we all believe every child can learn and will learn with the correct intervention and, as a result, the gap has closed between disadvantaged children and their peers.

A rigorous programme of observations, work sampling and Pupil Progress Meetings monitor the progress of all children and the teachers expectations for their class. Coupled with an effective Performance Management system, staff are held responsible for their performance and the achievement and progress of the children they teach.

With levels disappearing and the schools free to develop their own assessment system the school embraced the opportunity to design an assessment



system that measured childrens progress against the new expectations of the 2013 National Curriculum. We placed assessment firmly back in the classroom where teachers assess knowledge, skills and application throughout the day, creating flexible groupings, putting in interventions and using First Quality teaching to ensure all children understand the same concept and keep together, with able children deepening their learning by working in more complex contexts.

The trend data shows that our results have steadily risen over a five year period, with results well above the national average for the past four years and we believe our curriculum, along with excellent teaching, drives the standards in the school.



We see our curriculum as the beginning of a long and exciting journey, full of opportunities that will bring the rewards of personal achievement and fulfilment together with a strong sense of self-belief that will allow the children to tackle the challenges of life and living.

Jan Sampson  
Headteacher Cove Infant School  
[www.coveinfantschool.co.uk](http://www.coveinfantschool.co.uk)