

Curriculum

The curriculum is divided into three stages:

Early Years Foundation Stage: from ages 4-5

Key Stage 1: from ages 5-7

Key Stage 2: from ages 7-11

Reception

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is based on seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Key Stages 1-2

Areas of the curriculum are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Art and Design
- Computing
- Design and Technology
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- French and Spanish (KS2 only)
- PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education)



We adopt a topic based approach to learning. Topics are usually taught for a half term or term. They cover a number of curriculum areas and often involve trips and visitors. Teachers use their strengths to deliver lessons in other classes throughout the week; we call this our rotation lesson. In addition we hold specific themed days and weeks such as Health Week, National Science and Engineering Week, Anti-Bullying week and arts days where the whole school is involved.

Susan and Howard believe an open approach and a friendly ethos encourages children to reach their full potential at Allendale Primary School

Susan and Howard Robson live in High Staward with their sons Harry and Jake, aged eleven and nine.

Power to build confidence

When Harry first started school he was shy for a while. "As the school is small the teachers have been able to get to know Harry's individual personality. As a result, his confidence has grown so much during his time there," says Susan. "The teachers have really got the best out of him!"

Whilst both children are thriving at Allendale Primary School, Jake and Harry, according to Susan, have very different characters. Jake is very competitive and has really enjoyed the sports and outdoor learning opportunities available. "Jake has got a lot from the outdoor learning days," says Susan. "It's great that different learning styles are catered for. And Jake has responded really well to having a male teacher."

Hopes and Expectations

When Susan and Howard learned that the school was to change from a three tiered school to a primary school they had some initial concerns. "We wondered whether Harry might not be pushed or prepared for secondary education in the same way that a middle school would prepare him," explains Susan. "I was concerned it would be like stepping back a year, but it's not been like that at all!"

The older children have maintained a level of responsibility and independence which Susan feels is important for preparing them for secondary school. "Years, 4, 5 and 6 still get to do things as a group of 'older children'," says Susan. "Both of my boys have had the opportunity to be on the school council which they've thoroughly enjoyed! And it's given them a good level of responsibility, which I think is valuable for the future."

Approachable and open

"As well as taking on board any concerns I have had, the Headteacher asked Harry for his suggestions on how to ease the transition for the move to a primary school structure. The Headteacher personally responded to his suggestions. He was so pleased as he felt his views were respected, which I think is really important."

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Children say

Harry says:

"I've really enjoyed my time at Allendale Primary School. I've made some great friends and the teachers always recognise when you work hard."

Jake says:

"I really like the outdoor learning days we get to do! They're really good!"

An Enriched Curriculum

Artsmark Gold School

We are an Artsmark Gold School, and nationally recognised as demonstrating excellence in arts and cultural provision.

We run themed arts projects in which the whole school is involved, the results of which can be seen on display in the hall and around the school. We encourage the children to develop their performance skills whether it is drama, singing, music or dancing and showcase their talents during whole school and class performances.

Links with the Community

We have strong links with our local community. We hold harvest celebrations in the Methodist Chapel or St Cuthbert's Church. We work closely with local businesses such as The Forge Arts Centre and the Co-op. They are a valuable resource, providing practical support and learning opportunities which enrich our curriculum. In addition, local people work with school by offering their time and expertise to help us to stage performances and special events.

Reading Connects School

We are a 'Reading Connects School' and are passionate about developing a whole-school reading culture. We have volunteers who come into school to run library sessions for the children and encourage all children to read for purpose and pleasure.

Eco Schools

We hold the Green Flag Award from Eco Schools. Since moving to the Primary site we have been developing plans to reduce our carbon footprint with such initiatives as recycling and solar energy. Our Eco Committee is comprised of 2 representatives from Y1 up to Y6 and they look at the school environment and sustainability. We are planning a new wildlife garden to be located in our extensive green spaces.

Healthy Schools

We hold the Enhanced Healthy School Award. Every year we hold Health Week focusing on Healthy eating and lifestyles or healthy physical activity. Our Y5 and Y6 children can participate in the BikeAbility cycle safety training each year, using the school playgrounds and roads around Allendale. Sport is an important element of school life; having the Community Sports Hall means that all our children have access to high quality PE lessons and after school activities no matter the weather. We also hold the Anti-Bullying Award recognising our commitment to raising awareness of different forms of bullying and having high expectation of behaviour in school.

Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning sessions form an important part of our curriculum. Each year we have a different topic and focus; these activities are always amongst the most popular sessions every year for the children. Examples of activities include beach studies, survival challenge in the woods, shelter and den building, going down the mines, waterfall walking, lots of art and craft activities using natural materials, investigating animal tracks, digging fire pits, lighting fires and using them to cook bread, toast marshmallows and make hot chocolate. These sessions help the children to develop resilience, independence and problem solving skills as well as self-esteem and confidence when they rise to challenges and do things they didn't think they would be able to.

A great education and a nurturing environment - Mary couldn't ask for more than she has found at Allendale Primary School

Mary and Colin Potsig live in Allendale with their children Grace, six, Ophelia four, and Arwen, one.

Nurturing environment

Mary felt the nurturing environment of a smaller school would be beneficial for Grace's additional needs. "Grace suffers with anxiety so she finds changes very difficult to deal with," explains Mary. "For the first six months or so, Grace was unable to even respond to the register on a morning, but with Allendale Primary School's support, and the patience of the teachers, Grace has settled into school life well."

Impressed

Mary has been impressed with the tools implemented by the school to help Grace's development and to aid her ability to focus on school work. "They've incorporated things like a smaller room for her at lunch time and a glitter bottle to help her feel calm," says Mary. "And they've recently added a number scale so that Grace can communicate how she is feeling about something by giving it a rating," says Mary. "The teachers can then give her some strategies to use when she is starting to feeling anxious. They're all really helpful things which have made school life easier for Grace."

Motivating and encouraging

Currently in Year 2, Grace is, according to Mary, achieving well: "Academically, Grace is where she needs to be for her age and progressing well. Her needs are very much emotional ones. Having said that, she doesn't like writing and the school has shown great support here too."

To encourage Grace to write, the teachers introduced a free-writing book where she can write about whatever she likes, rather than a set topic. Mary believes this has really helped to motivate and encourage Grace with her writing and spelling. "It never feels like a problem to speak to any of the staff at Allendale Primary School. They're all so approachable and willing to help. I know Grace's needs are well-cared for - her confidence has grown so much! I couldn't ask for more!"

Children say

Grace says about Allendale Primary School:

"My favourite experience at school has been going on school trips like the one to Adventure Valley. And I like my teachers because they are nice to me and they are friendly."

Inclusion: a curriculum for all



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

We are a very inclusive school and modify tasks where needed to ensure that all children can access the curriculum and achieve their full potential. Children may be included on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities register and may have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which sets targets and outlines actions to support them. Where appropriate, a referral to an external support agency may be made. We support children and parents in addressing behaviour issues and will put strategies in place to support children in gaining the skills to manage and be responsible for their own behaviour. Above all, we want to raise the self-esteem of all our children and give them the skills to enjoy life in and out of school.



More Able Children

Children who are identified as being exceptionally able or talented are supported in various ways. They are challenged academically and provided with stimulating and enriching lessons appropriate for their needs. Art Club recognises those children who have a particular talent and they work towards the Artsmark Discovery Award. Themed weeks enable children to develop a wider knowledge in subject areas such as Science and Technology and participation in intra school and inter school competitions showcases individual sporting talents.

Lindsay and Calum have appreciated the dedicated and supportive approach Allendale Primary School has provided to meet their daughter's additional needs.

Lindsay McCulloch and Calum Nicholson live in Allendale with their daughter, Sarah, five in Year 1. Sarah has Down Syndrome and she has a number of additional needs.

No regrets

Lindsay and Calum always wanted Sarah to attend a mainstream school. After looking at Allendale Primary School, they knew it felt right. "We just got an instant nice feeling when we looked around that it was the right place for Sarah, and so far, the school have given us fantastic support. We have no regrets."

Fantastic support from the very beginning

"We first looked at Allendale School a year before Sarah was due to start. She couldn't walk at the time, but the school just wasn't fazed by that or any of her additional needs," explains Lindsay. "The staff undertook Makaton and Ipad training so they could communicate better with Sarah as her speech is delayed."

Lindsay is really appreciative of the processes put in place to support Sarah's learning. "Children with Down Syndrome are visual learners," explains Lindsay. "The school has had to adapt work for her so that topics are more user friendly for her. They'll use pictures and when she's learning her different sounds they'll use sensory objects to assist her."

Nothing is too much trouble

"Nothing is ever an issue for the staff. They've been willing to adapt their learning processes to incorporate Sarah's needs. Sarah's speech in particular, has been delayed so the staff learning Makaton and teaching it to the other children has been brilliant!" says Lindsay. "It has made school so much nicer for Sarah. Her friends and the teachers are able to communicate with her, which is so important and makes such a huge difference."

Recognition for individual achievements:

Lindsay feels confident Sarah is happy and content at Allendale Primary School. "She just loves going to school every day," says Lindsay. "She recently got a certificate of achievement in assembly for good listening and for making brilliant progress with her speech and language. Sarah was so chuffed about that!"



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