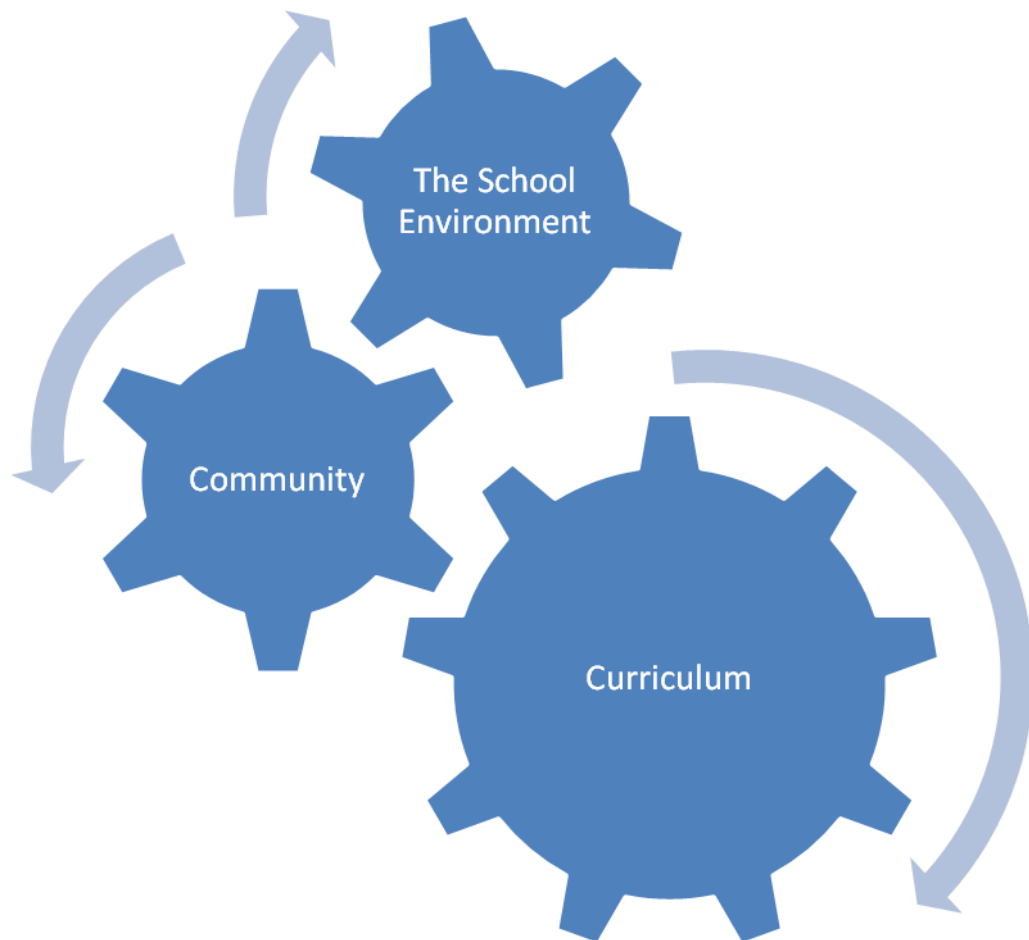


Oakley Lower School



Going Forward...

2011

Curriculum

The school continues to be excited and challenged in its development of the cross curricular approach to learning. The introduction of mixed age events, such as Children in Need, Chinese New Year and World Book Day, gives children the opportunity to work with other ages and different staff members. These events foster key attributes such as tolerance, patience and understanding. Staff also have the opportunity to use their specialist skills and knowledge. Wherever possible we aim to link topic work or mixed age activities to national events of significance and importance, i.e.: The Royal Wedding. Our aim is to increase the number of these successful events so that they occur approximately once every half term.

The Governors are proud that the staff are such pro-active members of the North Bedfordshire Schools Trust (NBST). The opportunities offered by the NBST so far have included:

- Regular opportunities for staff to work with other schools, to share good practice and gain a greater understanding of standards in other schools.
- Regular meetings between staff within specialist areas, for example: Miss Burraway and other maths school co-ordinators from Lower, Middle and Upper Schools meet regularly to develop and share best practice, investigate new approaches and ideas and ensure good continuity and progression. The staff are then able to return to school and cascade new ideas throughout.
- Interschool Key-stage sports festivals - between the links forged by the NBST and the work of the North Beds SSCO (School Sports Co-ordinator) the availability of high quality, focused PE has gone from strength to strength. The variety of after school sports clubs has broadened. Over the past 3 years the opportunity to participate in inter-schools sports competition has gone from being only a select group to the entire key stage. Pupil participation is the highest it has ever been, at 100% in both key stage 1 and 2.
- Staff development - Mrs Lovett works closely with other headteachers within NBST and recently has been part of the e-learning strategy group, playing a lead role in a Dynamic Leadership project. Oakley Lower staff have benefited from working on these projects and this has influenced practice in school.

These relationships that have been built are valuable to the school. They broaden the pool of talents, resources and experiences available to our staff and pupils, so maintaining and building on these links is of great importance. With continued funding for some of these projects being in doubt, we will have to work hard to sustain and progress these opportunities.

Community

We value our place in the community and are keen to extend opportunities to form links between the school and:

- the local community and the NBST lower school community
- the national community and pupils in schools that differ from our small village school experience
- the global community and the lifestyle and educational differences the children experience.

Locally, events such as the apple-pressing day, Macmillan coffee morning, links with sustainable Oakley and offering, or keeping parents informed of, adult education courses, are examples of work already begun. We are keen to maintain and extend these links but also to develop new ones.

Nationally and internationally we have started to form links with children in other schools and have supported children in hospital. We want to encourage and build on our children's awareness of local, national and global events and issues through the continued use of Espresso news (see www.espresso.co.uk for an example), the newsboard in the school hall and topic work. Topic work often offers the chance to extend our knowledge on other children's lives and this is something we are keen to develop. For instance Key Stage 1's Kenyan topic gave the children a chance to find out about the life and education of John, a child in a Kenyan village and be able to identify the similarities and learn from the differences.

We are always keen to hear from parents who can further enhance these areas with their own experiences.

The governors take seriously their part in helping to develop community links and this, along with their other responsibilities in school, is something we are constantly reviewing. As part of this review, the governors feel that it is important to share with parents who we are, what we do and why, and we hope to make this information accessible soon.



The School Environment

We are currently completing an overhaul of our ICT infrastructure, providing all classrooms with fast broadband access, new computers in four classrooms and additional computers in a further two. This has coincided with the exciting launch of the Oakley Lower School Learning Platform, which provides another link between home and school. All parents should have received a user name and password for their child to access the site via the OLS website. Completed over half term was the refurbishment of the cookery area to the rear of the reception unit and adjoining communal area to make maximum use of the school building.



The newly refurbished resources area- March 2011

We also have a "wish list" of large projects that the school would like to undertake, such as improving the playground provision, hall seating, and replacement of porta cabins but, due to the current financial climate, it is not something we can commit to at present. However, it remains a part of our long term plan. If anyone knows of any funding available through grants or their company/employer, such as matching fundraising, we would love to hear from them.

The Governors of Oakley Lower School