THE HOME SCHOOL PROJECT

CURRICULUM GUIDE

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AND SKILLS CURRICULUM

Author:

Amy Dauris

Introduction

Welcome to The Home School Project, where learning goes beyond traditional academics to foster curiosity, independence, and lifelong skills. Our curriculum is built on the foundation of project-based learning, offering students a unique and engaging approach that integrates core subjects within meaningful, real-world projects. We believe that learning should be an active, exploratory process, where students are empowered to take ownership of their education. Our commitment is to provide an academically rich, skills-based curriculum that nurtures both intellectual growth and personal development, guiding students as they become confident, capable learners who are ready to make a positive impact.
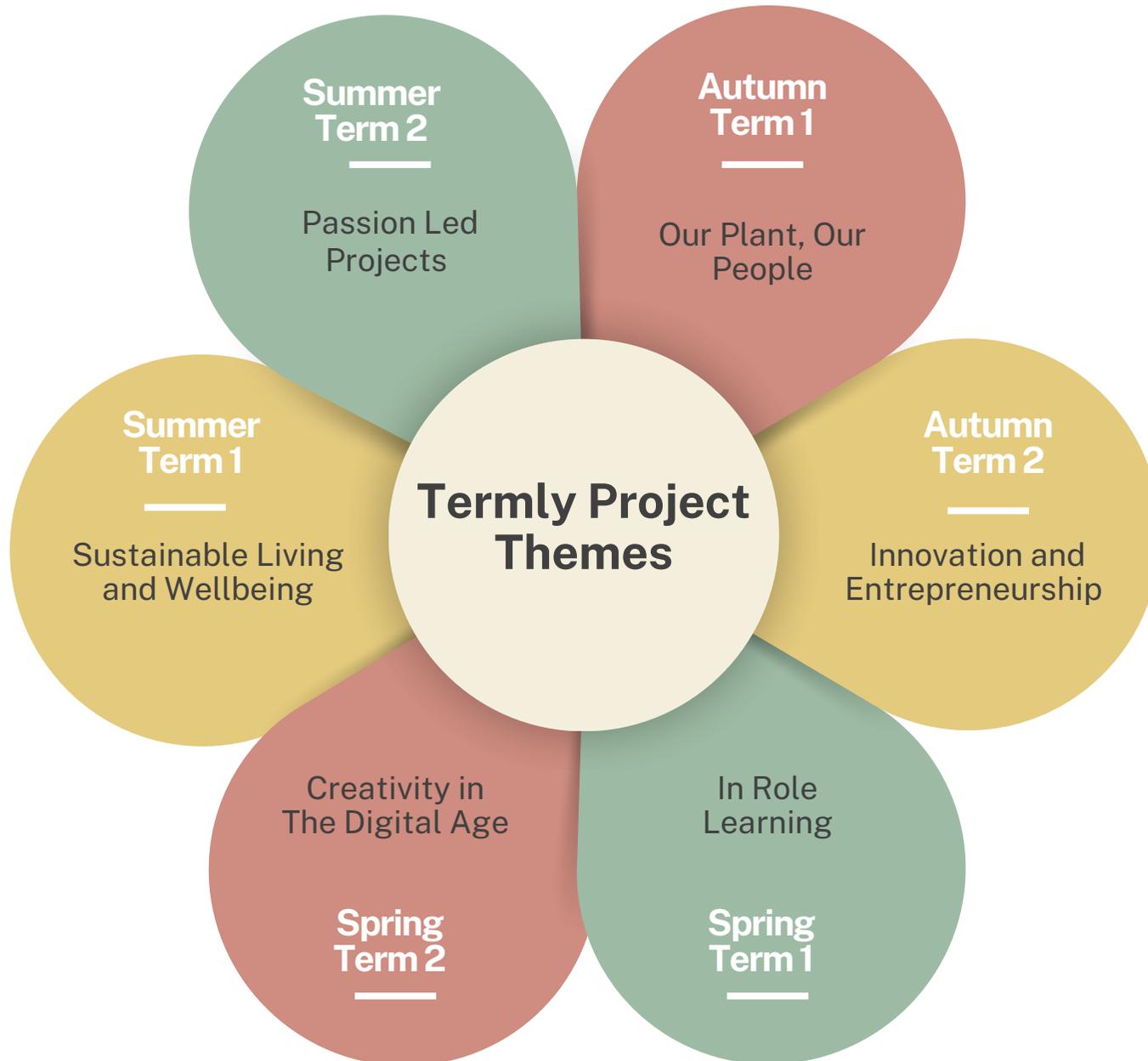
Curriculum Vision

Our vision at The Home School Project is to create a curriculum that is both rigorous and inspiring, cultivating well-rounded learners who are prepared for the complexities of the modern world. By blending project-based learning with our skills curriculum, we ensure that each project is not only an exploration of academic subjects but also an opportunity for students to develop essential life skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and emotional intelligence. The curriculum is structured around broad themes that serve as a springboard for inquiry, creativity, and purposeful learning. Each theme guides students through a six-week project where they make choices about their learning pathways, allowing them to pursue interests and goals that resonate with them personally. Our curriculum is adaptable, evolving each term to meet the unique needs, abilities, and aspirations of our students, fostering a learning environment that is both inclusive and challenging. With a focus on continuous growth and skill development, our vision is to empower students to become thoughtful, resilient individuals equipped to navigate and contribute to their communities and beyond.

Curriculum Aims

Our Curriculum at The Home School Project aims to:

- **Foster 21st-Century Skills**: Equip students with essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and effective communication to prepare them for the complexities of modern life.
- **Promote Collaborative Learning**: Encourage teamwork and collaboration through group projects, enabling students to learn from one another and develop interpersonal skills vital for success in diverse environments.
- **Cultivate a Positive Attitude and Values**: Instil a growth mindset and strong ethical values, encouraging students to approach challenges with resilience, empathy, and integrity.
- **Enhance Communication Proficiency**: Develop students' ability to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and confidently across various mediums, fostering effective dialogue and active listening.
- **Encourage Creative Thinking:** Inspire innovation and original thinking by providing opportunities for students to explore their interests and express their creativity through diverse projects.
- **Integrate Sustainable Development Goals:** Link curriculum activities to the United Nations' SDGs, promoting awareness of global issues and encouraging students to contribute positively to their communities and the world.
- **Facilitate Lifelong Learning:** Encourage self-directed learning and adaptability, equipping students with the skills to continue their education beyond formal schooling and respond effectively to changing circumstances.
- **Develop Holistic Understanding:** Emphasise the interconnectedness of knowledge and skills, ensuring that students can apply what they learn in real-world contexts and recognise the relevance of their education to everyday life.
- **Enhance Critical Thinking Skills:** Develop students' ability to analyse information, evaluate arguments, and make informed decisions by engaging them in thoughtful discussions and problem-solving activities. This aim encourages students to question assumptions, explore multiple perspectives, and construct reasoned conclusions, preparing them to navigate complex issues in their personal and professional lives.

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Termly Project Themes

Summer Term 2
Passion Led Projects

Autumn Term 1
Our Plant, Our People

Summer Term 1
Sustainable Living and Wellbeing

Autumn Term 2
Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Spring Term 2
Creativity in The Digital Age

Spring Term 1
In Role Learning

Theme and Project Examples

Theme	Description	Project Examples
Autumn Term 1: Our People, Our Planet	"Our People, Our Planet" invites students to explore the interconnectedness of human communities and the environment, encouraging them to understand how our actions impact the planet and each other. This theme promotes critical thinking about sustainable choices, social responsibility, and the ways we can contribute to a healthier, more inclusive world.	**Community Service:** research and plan a community service project, and then work to implement it in the community. **Eco-City Blueprints:** design a sustainable city model, focusing on green energy, resource conservation, and community wellbeing. **English as a Second Language (ESL):** create a initiative to teach English to non-native speakers.
Autumn Term 2: Creativity in the Digital Age	"Creativity in The Digital Age" invites students to harness the power of digital media to express ideas, tell stories, and engage audiences in innovative ways. This theme encourages exploration of digital tools and platforms to create meaningful, original works that reflect the possibilities of a connected, creative world.	**Digital Art Show:** use digital tools to create a series of artworks, experimenting with various software and techniques to express unique ideas and perspectives in a virtual gallery. **Video Game Design:** design and develop a video game with a back story, characters and strategy **Stop-motion Animation:** learn the basics of stop-motion animation and create an animated short.
Spring term 2: In Role Exploration	"In Role Exploration" encourages students to step into various professional and societal roles, allowing them to experience different perspectives and responsibilities. This theme helps students gain an understanding of diverse career paths, develop empathy, and recognise the skills needed to contribute meaningfully in different fields.	**Genealogy:** research their family history and create a family tree, making reports of important people in your family from the past. **Meteorology:** learn about weather patterns and create a forecast for the local area. **Textile Design:** learn about textile design and create a collection of original fabric designs.

Theme and Project Examples

Theme	Description	Project Examples
Spring Term 2: Innovation and Entrepreneurship	"Innovation and Entrepreneurship" inspires students to think creatively about solving problems and turning ideas into impactful ventures. This theme encourages them to explore how innovation and business skills can be used to address real-world challenges and contribute positively to society.	**Start-Up Challenge:** Pupils work in teams to develop a business idea, create a simple business plan, and pitch their concept, learning how innovation and entrepreneurship can drive change. **Science Fair:** choose a scientific topic and conduct experiments or research to present at a school science fair. **Industrial Design:** design and prototype a new product or piece of furniture, market it to sell
Summer Term 1: Sustainable Living and Wellbeing	"Sustainable Living and Wellbeing" encourages students to explore ways to live in harmony with the environment and prioritise health and happiness. This theme focuses on building awareness of sustainable practices and personal wellbeing, inspiring students to make choices that benefit both people and the planet.	**Disaster Management:** research and plan for natural or man-made disasters and create a disaster preparedness plan for the community **COP25:** Stage a group COP25 taking on different industries, finding out about their practices and representing them at the summit **Nutrition:** learn about nutrition and food preparation by planning and cooking a series of meals, creating meal plans and calculating the nutritional values.
Summer term 2: Passion Led Project	"Passion-Led Projects" empowers students to pursue their own interests and curiosity, allowing them to dive deeply into a topic that excites them. This theme encourages self-directed learning, fostering creativity, motivation, and a sense of purpose as students develop projects around their unique passions.	**Passion led:** Pick a topic they want to explore, create a driving question and project to showcase your interests and passions

Assessment and Testing

Our curriculum at The Home School Project uses a framework for assessing students through six key competencies, each broken down into specific skills. This holistic approach emphasises skill development over memorisation and formal testing, assessing students based on their progress within each project. Instead of traditional exams, teachers evaluate students' competencies demonstrated through hands-on projects, recognising that skills do not always follow a linear progression and may vary with context and individual wellbeing.

Each term, parents and pupils receive a concise report illustrating the pupil's progress across key skills and identifying areas for growth in the coming term. Assessment focuses on the journey and skill development rather than just project completion, providing insights into pupils' practical application of learning. Our competencies—Communication, Attitudes, Values, Collaboration, Cognition, and Creativity—each contain specific skills with detailed descriptors, enabling teachers to give meaningful feedback. In the following sections, you'll find a full overview of each competency, key skills, and examples of how they guide our assessment process.

Our assessment approach is rooted in research highlighting the benefits of skills-based evaluation over traditional knowledge-focused testing. Studies by Darling-Hammond and Adamson (2014) emphasise that assessing critical skills—such as problem-solving, collaboration, and adaptability—provides a more accurate picture of a child's potential and preparedness for future challenges. Unlike standardised tests, which often focus on memorisation and narrow metrics, skills-based assessments capture a pupil's ability to apply knowledge in diverse contexts and think adaptively, qualities shown to correlate with lifelong learning and success (Heckman & Kautz, 2012).

Research also shows that focusing on skill development rather than test performance enhances pupil motivation and engagement. According to Boaler (2013), children are more engaged and experience greater self-efficacy when learning environments encourage exploration and skill application rather than emphasising high-stakes testing.

Competencies

Communication

The Communication competency assess pupils on the following skills:

- Active Listening
- Verbal Communication
- Written Communication
- Non- Verbal Communication
- Feedback Exchange

Attitudes

The Attitudes competency assess pupils on the following skills:

- Adaptability
- Self Motivation
- Emotional Intelligence
- Resilience and Perseverance
- Time management

Values

The Values competency assess pupils on the following skills:

- Integrity
- Empathy
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Inclusivity
- Fairness
- Global Awareness
- Sustainability Awareness
- Digital Citizenship

Competencies

Creativity

The Creativity competency assess pupils on the following skills:

- Idea Generation
- Curiosity
- Originality
- Creative Problem Solving
- Artistic Expression
- Risk Taking

Cognition

The Cognition competency assess pupils on the following skills:

- Knowledge Gathering
- Critical Thinking
- Cognitive Problem Solving
- Memory and Recall
- Reasoning
- Decision Making
- Metacognition

Collaboration

The Collaboration competency assess pupils on the following skills:

- Teamwork
- Shared Responsibility
- Conflict Resolution
- Compromise
- Supportive behaviours
- Leadership

Knowledge Gathering

The ability to locate, organise, and understand information from various sources. This skill involves verifying the accuracy of information, selecting reliable sources, and synthesising data rather than copying.

Foundational

With support, uses a search engine to find simple information but may struggle to choose relevant sources. Often copies information directly without understanding, relying on teacher prompts to stay focused on the topic.

Mastery

Efficiently gathers, analyses, and synthesises information from diverse, credible sources. Fact-checks rigorously and critically evaluates sources, integrating knowledge into well-rounded, original responses.

Growing

Can use search engines with minimal guidance to find information on familiar topics. Begins to identify basic facts but may still need reminders to verify accuracy or avoid copying information without understanding.

Advancing

Uses advanced search strategies to locate high-quality information, cross-referencing multiple reliable sources. Identifies key points, synthesises information, and explains it in their own words, showing a deep understanding of the topic.

Confident

Independently uses search engines and websites to locate relevant information. Demonstrates understanding by summarising rather than copying, and checks multiple sources for accuracy before accepting information as true.
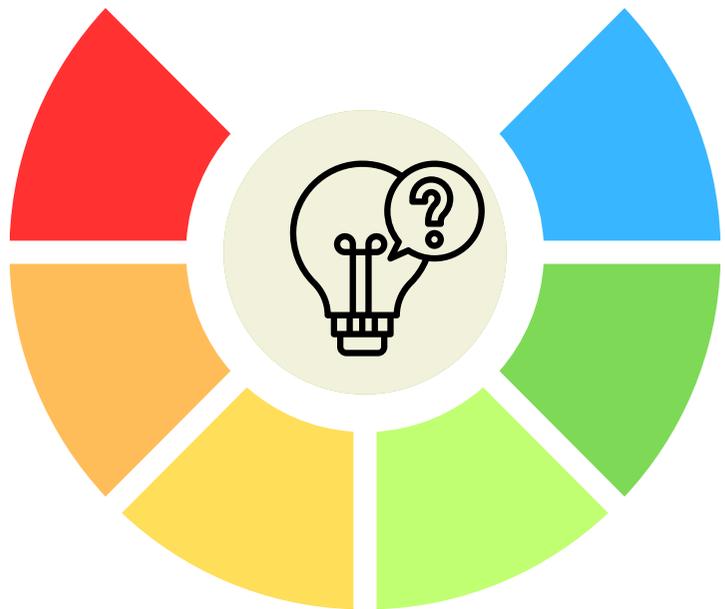
Curiosity

The eagerness to explore, ask questions, and seek deeper understanding across topics, driven by a genuine interest in learning.

Foundational

With guidance, asks simple questions to clarify understanding. Shows interest in exploring familiar topics but may need prompts to deepen exploration.

Mastery

Exemplifies curiosity by continuously exploring new ideas, generating deep questions, and researching independently. Encourages others to be inquisitive, helping to foster a curious and open-minded environment.

Growing

Begins to ask questions about new topics, exploring unfamiliar ideas with some support. Demonstrates curiosity by occasionally seeking additional information independently.

Advancing

Actively explores new topics, asking complex, open-ended questions and pursuing additional information. Engages in research or discussions that expand understanding, often inspiring peers to explore.

Confident

Consistently asks insightful questions, showing interest in deeper exploration of topics. Takes initiative to learn more independently, demonstrating a genuine curiosity about diverse subjects.

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Time Management

The skill of organising and prioritising tasks to make effective use of time, balancing multiple responsibilities and meeting deadlines reliably.

Foundational

Often needs significant support to start and complete tasks on time, struggling to follow routines and estimate how long tasks will take. Relies on reminders and close supervision, benefiting from structured schedules and visual prompts to stay on track.

Mastery

Exhibits excellent time management, reliably meeting deadlines and handling complex tasks. Adjusts priorities fluidly as demands arise, regularly reviewing strategies to improve productivity. Often assists peers, helping others maximise time effectively.

Growing

Begins to manage time with reminders, completing tasks within given timeframes with some guidance. Uses checklists or timers with prompts and follows routines more independently. Needs support to prioritise multi-step tasks but is developing an understanding of pacing.

Advancing

Demonstrates strong time management, independently organising tasks and managing schedules. Sets realistic timeframes, adjusts plans when necessary, and supports peers with time management in group work, balancing multiple tasks efficiently.

Confident

Typically manages time effectively, completing tasks with minimal prompting. Independently uses tools like timers or schedules, prioritising steps in complex tasks. Adjusts time allocations if tasks take longer than expected, maintaining focus on deadlines.

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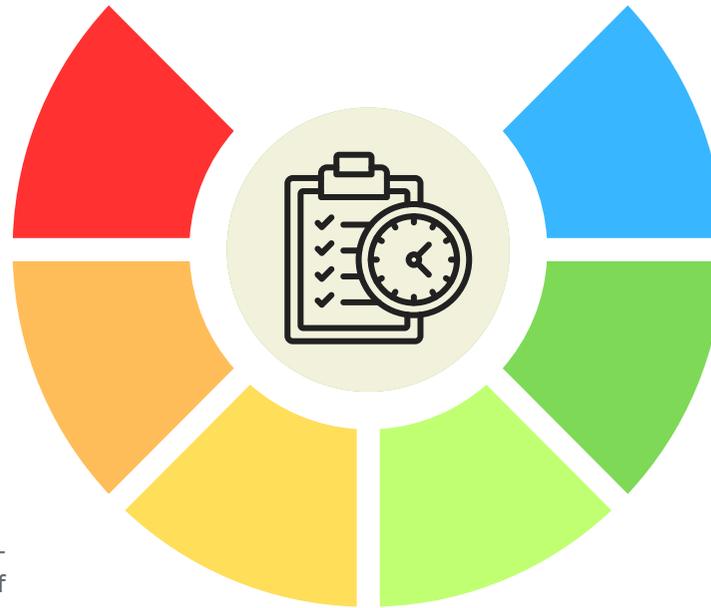
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