

# THE BERRYMEDE JUNIOR SCHOOL CURRICULUM

## ***A Curriculum designed to be fit-for-purpose – Principles of Harmony – Learning Through Nature***

At Berrymede we fully realise the importance of ensuring high standards and expectations in outcomes for all our pupils through a rich curriculum and within a safe, caring environment. We have dedicated time to research the characteristics and qualities of a curriculum that is truly fit for purpose, where children can connect their learning to the wider world and have a more holistic view of how the world works and their roles in it. We want to enable our pupils to understand connections, relationships, actions and consequences, particularly if we want a healthier, more sustainable future, so that children can focus on issues that connect students around the world. If children learn in this way in childhood, it should have an impact on their thinking and actions as adults.

We have embarked upon a journey to use nature's principles of harmony and enquiry-based learning to bring together skills and knowledge from the different subjects, apply them through projects being explored in order to develop children's ability to ask questions, to research and generate useful knowledge and to seek resolutions to the questions raised. This approach, coupled with knowledge of the world of nature, where everything is connected (ref: HRH Prince of Wales book, *Harmony, A New Way of Looking at The World*) tells us how the great traditions, cultures and religions have always understood this need to live in harmony and that principles of Nature teach us how to recreate it.

From our observations at school so far, learning through enquiries is powerful and empowering, pupils have been motivated, creative and the learning has been internalised. Autumn half term 2018 saw the very first series of lessons delivered through a week of enquiry based learning where each year group focussed on an aspect of, [The Principle of The Cycle](#). (The theme of, 'The Principle of Geometry and Beauty – Nature has a Geometry,' will run alongside the enquiry based learning model so that children develop a knowledge and appreciation of the world around them through mathematics in nature and architecture for example):

Year 3 – Life Cycle of Butterflies

Year 4 – the Solar System

Year 5 – Life Cycle of a Plant

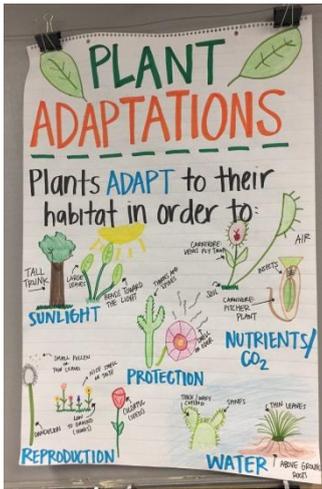
Year 6 – The Cycle of Blood Around Our Body

The following information is based on *The Principles of Harmony* (Richard Dunne, Head Teacher Ashley CofE Primary School, adapted from HRH Prince of Wales, *Harmony, A New Way of Looking at the World*)





## THE PRINCIPLE OF ADAPTATION – ADAPTATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR US TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE



The principle of adaptation teaches us that just as nature has been brilliantly adapted to its place through millions of years of refinement, so it makes sense to adapt our learning or at least key elements of our learning to our place. Through this idea of adaptation, we can find ways to connect learning more fully to the idea of local and the communities in which we live, to learn more about their history and traditions, what it is that we value about them and what we might want to change. It opens up opportunities for our young people to be designers, to consider how our place might be adapted into the future to make it a better place to live. Importantly, it provides opportunities to connect to those in our communities who have wisdom, knowledge and expertise to share with our young people. When this approach works well, it builds a real sense of belonging.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF HEALTH – WE ALL NEED TO BE HEALTHY



Nature teaches us health. We all need to learn what it means to live healthy lives. It therefore makes sense to put health at the heart of all that we do. We can learn about health in our play, in our relationships, in the food that we eat. We can also learn about health in terms of the air, water and soil and what that means in terms of how we run our school. So, for example, in thinking about healthy soil we have made a commitment to

working with local organisations (e.g. Cultivate London, Tress for Cities, Princes Trust Trees) to ensure we recycle as much as possible (currently water, food, clothes, paper), paying attention to our environment and becoming increasingly more organic. If we believe health is fundamental to a good life, we need to find ways to teach health and practise health as much as possible.

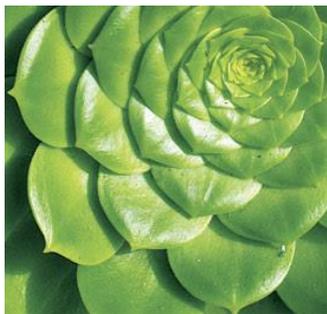
## THE PRINCIPLE OF ONENESS – WE ARE NATURE

The principle of oneness reminds us that in all that we do, we also need to learn how to be, to find a sense of peace deep within us that enables us to live with well-being at the centre of our lives. In nurturing an ability to be still and present, to connect to something deeper, we are building a sense of oneness with the world. In school, we do this through Tai Chi, use of art/geometry/teachers reading to pupils daily. We are developing techniques in Tai Chi for the whole school, staff and pupils, so far it is having a really positive impact on our children. When there are so many reports of stress and poor mental health in our



young people, it is essential that we help them to learn how to cope with the challenges of modern life through times of quiet, peacefulness and presence. We need to nurture them as spiritual beings.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF GEOMETRY AND BEAUTY – NATURE HAS A GEOMETRY



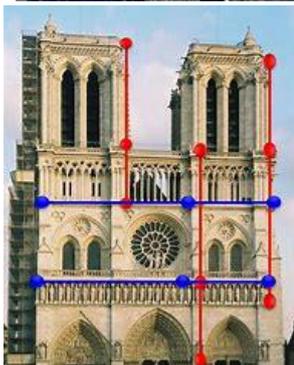
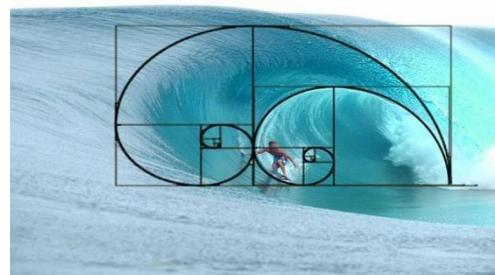
The principle of geometry and beauty is about learning the patterns and geometry of nature that exist in us and around us. This study of the patterns of nature and how they are replicated, for example, in architecture, mathematics and art encourages new perspectives on the world and how we learn about it. Children have begun to develop the skills of geometry, direct by-products have been greater



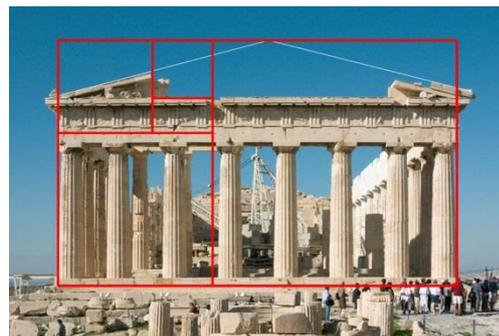
conversation, a very calm atmosphere, student concentration and enjoyment is clearly evident and children are beginning to link this new learning with the beauty of nature and mathematics. Staff too are involved in geometry sessions; an increased sense of well-being is another by-product.



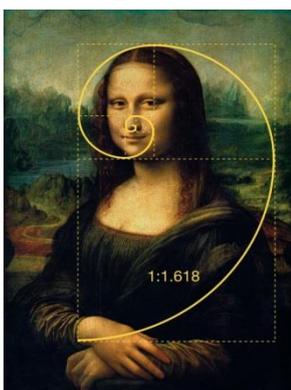
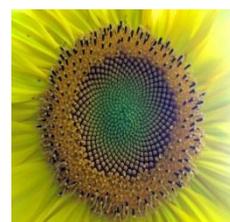
### Geometry in Nature



### Geometry and the Golden Ratio in Architecture



### Mathematics – Fibonacci in Nature



### Geometry in Art

### Architecture inspired by Nature

