

Farming Scheme of Work

Farming sessions take place every day for one hour. These sessions are linked heavily to the seasons and go ahead in all weathers. The focus is to learn about the animals on the farm, and take responsibility for their health and wellbeing. Students will build up their skills and knowledge enabling them to run the farm for themselves, making decisions as a group for the good of the animals.

Each term the students will work on a different project, leading towards AQA unit awards. The projects focus on different aspects of farming including animal care and health, breeding programs, farm produce and running a business.

Cultural capital is included in our Farming sessions in the following:

- Teaching the seasonality of farming and food production and thinking of the ethical implications of eating foods out of season
- Regular visits from a variety of experts to share their knowledge and answer questions the children have with regards to the animals and their care
- Students use and apply the knowledge they learn in order to take responsibility for the running of the farm
- Working together to make the tough decisions required on the farm encourages debate and questioning
- Students develop their resilience through hard work and experiencing setbacks that they can work through and overcome
- Strong links throughout the year to food preparation and nutrition, allowing students to develop knowledge and skills that they can go on to share with others
- Development of empathy towards the animals and a respect for their wellbeing despite being a working farm
- Students consider the business side of farming and how best to sell their products to the local community

The following sessions will take place each week:

1 x full farm feed

- This requires the students to read from the feed board and apply this information to ensure the animals are getting the correct amount and type of food. Some feeds require weighing, others counting.
- Nutritional content of each feed discussed and how the feeding of animals differs based on the time of year and the type of animal.
- How the nutrition that the animal consumes affects their health and ultimately the end product of farming.
- Using body scoring to adjust the quantity of feed.

- Students progress by going from assisting adults with the feeding, to feeding with just supervision, to making decisions about what the animals should be fed by using their knowledge and skills.
- Confidence and resilience develop as students take responsibility and begin to work with less adult support.

1 x site maintenance

- Students take responsibility for the site of their school and the farm by assisting with maintenance and improvement projects.
- Students learn to safely use tools and equipment and to select the right tool for a job
- Projects are planned and undertaken that improve the site for the full school community and that students can feel proud of.
- Skills and knowledge are developed that can be used in all environments not just on the farm.
- Progress can be seen as students take on more difficult projects and work more independently of adults, but as part of a close student team.
- Work will encourage questioning and debate as students decide the best way to handle a task.

1 x animal therapy

- Students will spend reflective time with the animals, thinking about their own and the animal's wellbeing.
- This is to include horse grooming, goat walking, quiet time with rabbits. Doing tasks that have a benefit to the animal and the student.
- Students develop their ability to remain calm and quiet, showing empathy for the animals, for each other and for themselves.
- Develop their ability to take turns and share, thinking of others and their feelings.
- Some sessions led by Dr Abie Alfrey, clinical psychologist.

2 x termly project

- Students will take responsibility for a termly project learning about some of the animals on the farm.
- Projects are based on the seasons and take into account the running of the farm.
- Students must work together to make decisions about animal care, thinking about not only the present but also the future.

Term 1:

Poultry Project

- Collect and incubate eggs from different poultry, learn how to use the incubator, what conditions are needed, hatch and care for the chicks, study the different stages of the life cycle.
- Learn how to care for poultry, what they eat, look after their housing.
- Poultry health check, find and treat bumble foot, mites, crop issues etc
- Collect and sell eggs to the local community, reinvest the money into chicken enrichment.
- Talk from Lohmann about breeding chickens on a large scale.
- (Breed the sheep)

Term 2:

Horse Project

- Learn about horse care including feeding, grooming, mucking out.
- Students undertake horse health check and worm count and discuss how parasites affect animal health and how they can be prevented.
- Visits from the farrier and the equine dentist.
- Study the points of the horse, how to tack them up, different rugs.
- Learn how to safely walk a horse and plan a route to take them around the local area. Consider road safety.

Term 3:

Cuddle Corner Project

- Learn about the smaller animals on the farm including the rabbits and guinea pigs.
- How their needs differ from the larger animals and how to keep them warm and healthy over the winter.
- Breeding rabbits and guineas and caring for the babies. Discuss differences in their pregnancies and how they parent their offspring.
- Animal enrichment activities.
- Study their nutrition and develop a healthy diet for them.
- (Breed pigs in Jan)

Term 4:

Lambing Project

- Learn about the process of lambing, including the signs of labour and the stages.
- Prepare the lambing shed by building individual pens.
- Health check the pregnant ewes and adjust feeding accordingly.
- Implement suitable hygiene procedures, during the birth, caring for the lamb and cleaning up the birth area afterwards.
- Learn the importance of colostrum and how to assist lambs that are struggling to feed.
- Bottle feed lambs and use scales to weigh out the correct quantity of powder.
- Visit from vet to talk about lambing process.

Term 5:**Piglet Project**

- Use knowledge gained from lambing to ensure sows and piglets are happy and healthy.
- Discuss the differences between birth of piglets and lambs - gestation period, number of babies, size of babies, needs of babies.
- Spend time with the piglets to acclimate them to human contact and make them friendly, understand the importance of kindness to animals to develop trust.
- Calculate feed for lactating sows and discuss how good nutrition affects the health of the piglets.
- Visit from Cheryl from the Ethical Fruit Company to discuss where the fruit we feed the pigs comes from.

Term 6:**Goat Project**

- Learn to milk the goats.
- Use the milk to develop different produce including goats' cheese and soap.
- Understand the importance of hygiene in the dairy industry and methods to keep food safe.
- Care for the goats and keep them healthy to maximise yield.
- Sell produce and reinvest profits to create a goat playground.
- Walk the goats and teach them to remain still and calm during milking.
- Workshop on soap making from a visitor.

Differentiation will be by outcome. Students will build skills and knowledge but also confidence, independence, empathy and resilience. Students that are able to will take on more responsibility and will assist other students that require more support. Staff support will be on hand to ensure all students are able to achieve and develop and can see their own progress throughout the year.