

Curriculum policy

Whaley Thorns Community Primary and Nursery School



Approved by: [Name]

Date: [Date]

Last reviewed on: [Date]

Next review due by: [Date]

Intent

The curriculum at Whaley Thorns Community Primary and Nursery School is one that seeks to maximise the achievements and progress of all children academically, socially, spiritually, morally, culturally, physically, mentally and emotionally as they move through the school. Our curriculum is designed to ensure our children receive their full entitlement to access a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based whilst being flexible and responsive to the needs the community we live in.

At Whaley Thorns Primary School, our curriculum is designed to:

- recognise children's prior learning,
- provide first hand and practical learning experiences,
- place value on outdoor learning,
- allow children to develop interpersonal skills, language, behaviours and attitudes needed for life-long learning,
- build resilience and become creative, critical thinkers,
- reduce barriers to learning and provide nurture opportunities,
- raise aspiration by providing children with experiences and opportunities outside of the classroom environment.

In daily classroom practice, too many of our children under achieve because they lack the fundamental skills of problem solving and behaviours for learning such as teamwork, sharing, communication and perseverance. Due to low self-esteem, many children give up if they deem the challenge too great or that they are not 'good enough' to rise to it. They are part of a generation that lead indoor childhoods and our curriculum is designed to work with families to change that mindset and improve the mental well-being of our children so that they can be the best version of themselves they can possibly be.

Every child is recognised as a unique individual. We celebrate and welcome differences within our school community. The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We constantly provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that childhood should be a happy, investigative and enquiring time in our lives where there are no limits to curiosity and there is a thirst for new experiences and knowledge.

We use the RESPECT code to promote positive attitudes and behaviours which reflect the values and skills needed to promote responsibility for learning, self-worth and future success.

Community involvement is an essential part of our curriculum in order to raise aspirations and opportunities for our children and their families. We celebrate our local history and values, but aim to provide opportunities to widen their experiences beyond their locality.

Aims

Our curriculum aims to:

- promote high achievement and learning for life
- to be proud of their achievements
- to be happy and know they are valued
- develop enquiring minds, the spirit of curiosity and creativity
- become highly motivated, confident and independent lifelong learners
- have high self-esteem and confidence
- to be caring towards each other and the environment and have respect for themselves
- be able to work independently and collaboratively
- have high expectations of themselves and achieve high standards in all areas of the curriculum
- appreciate, respect and value the multicultural nature of our society
- develop a sense of responsibility and spiritual, moral, social and personal reflection
- develop physical skills to the full
- a broad and balanced education for all pupils
- enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- promote the learning and development of our youngest children and ensure they are ready for Key Stage 1

Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#), which all maintained schools in England must teach.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the [Academies Act 2010](#), and the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#) which the school has chosen to follow.

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#).

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply pupils from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

Organisation and planning

Reception Curriculum

In Reception, we follow the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, published in March 2014 by the DfES. This Framework specifies the requirement for learning and development in the Early Years and provides specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum. These areas are:

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

Free Flow Play is an important part of the weekly timetable. The amount of time allocated to this will reduce as we progress through the academic year.

English

Our English lessons develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary. We teach our pupils to speak clearly, to convey their ideas fluently and confidently and to ask questions. Their vocabulary is developed systematically. Our pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and to read widely. We use the Oxford Reading Tree and Rising Stars Reading Schemes and Letters and Sounds phonics programme. Phonic awareness helps the development of reading by segmenting and blending sounds. The children will be heard reading individually and in groups during Reciprocal Reading. Reciprocal Reading sessions cover both fiction and non-fiction books. They also develop the children's comprehension skills. A range of ICT programmes are used to enhance learning. Parents are given clear expectations about reading at home. We develop writing skills so that our Reception pupils have the stamina and ability to write simple statements and sentences. To support children in moving towards independent writing we provide a wide range of activities including use of film and imagery, modelled, shared and guided writing, peer editing and discussion. We provide opportunities for writing for purpose and we encourage pupils to see themselves as authors. Handwriting sessions are incorporated into the English lessons.

National Curriculum English Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-englishprogrammes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>

Mathematics

Our teachers will ensure that mathematical skills are taught every day. We use the White Rose Maths materials throughout the school. They also use every relevant subject to develop pupils' mathematical fluency. Our pupils understand the importance of mathematics, are encouraged to be confident in numeracy and to apply the skills that they learn to simple problem solving. The activities cover a wide range of mathematical knowledge, many with an emphasis on practical work.

In Reception pupils work on number, place and value, learn how to do basic addition and subtraction, take measurements and recognise basic shapes and their properties. We build on skills and understanding in a step by step way and continue to develop place value, the four number operations and the understanding of fractional parts.

There are extra activities throughout the year to promote mathematical skills and thinking including participation in World Maths Day and NSPCC Number Day.

National Curriculum Mathematics Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-mathematicsprogrammes-of-study-3>

Science

Science will be taught as a separate lesson using Rising Stars Switched on Science. We will encourage our pupils to be curious about natural phenomenon and to be excited by the process of understanding the world around them.

In Reception we start to develop blocks of knowledge and concepts alongside the development of enquiry skills. Key scientific terminology will be introduced each lesson. Pupils will be able to carry out simple tests and experiments using equipment and to gather and record data. Our lessons will include learning about plants, animals and the seasons. Visits by specialists such as Mad Science and The Bug Man will enhance the delivery of our science curriculum. In the spring term we will be looking to hatch and nurture our own chicks and in the summer term we will release the butterflies we have

watched develop from their caterpillar stage. We will also have dedicated science days throughout the year.

National Curriculum Science Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-scienceprogrammes-of-study>

Humanities

History and Geography are taught using Rising Stars Voyagers scheme of work. They form the basis of our termly topics.

Children are taught key skills knowledge and understanding through exciting, practical sessions which make links to art and design wherever possible. Visits and visitors are used wherever possible to make experiences more real for the children e.g. the History van, museum visits, themes days and field trips.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-geography-programmes-of-study>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study>

Art and Design

Art has a very important place in our curriculum and is weaved into our half termly topics. We see art as a vehicle for creativity and individual expression and it provides opportunities for collaborative work. It is an important form of cultural expression and, therefore, has significance and meaning for all our children. Our teaching provides an understanding of all the diverse art forms so that the children experience drawing, painting, collage, textiles, 3D designs, printmaking and digital media. They will be introduced to the Great Masters and a wide variety of other artists and their styles. We have Art Days with a whole school focus on one artist or painting and we include art in our themed weeks.

Our design and technology lessons encourage the designing and making of products to solve real and relevant problems. Our pupils learn to select from and use a wide range of materials and components, including construction materials, textiles and ingredients, according to their characteristics. Our cooking lessons teach the principles of nutrition and our pupils learn how to prepare and make a wide variety of simple recipes. They understand where our food comes from and how it is grown. We believe that by instilling a love of cooking we will open a door to one of the greatest expressions of human creativity.

National Curriculum Art Programmes of Study

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-art-and-designprogrammes-of-study>

Computing/ICT

We do have discreet timetable time for the development of ICT skills but our approach is to integrate ICT into other lessons: the use of laptops and other hardware such as cameras and film cameras is as much part of our learning tools as pencils and pens. Subject specific software, support teaching and learning across all years. The children develop their skills, starting in reception with mouse control, keyboard skills, saving and printing work. They draw pictures, write and use the internet to carry out research. They then progress to more complex skills such as data analysis and coding. Pupils will use technology safely and identify where to go for help and support when they have concerns.

National Curriculum Computing Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-computingprogrammes-of-study>

Modern Foreign Language

From Reception to Year 6 we teach French to all children. Our approach is to make learning a new language fun! Young pupils are very receptive to learning a new language; they like to mimic pronunciation and they can easily pick up and duplicate new sounds. They feel a real sense of accomplishment when they learn to say something new. Repetition and practice are essential in learning a new language so songs and games such as Simple Simon Says and What's in the bag? will be regularly used. We will have discreet lessons on the timetable but we will also integrate the foreign language into the everyday routine.

National Curriculum Language Programmes of Study

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-languagesprogrammes-of-study>

Music

In their music lessons pupils use their voices expressively and creatively by singing songs and speaking chants and rhymes. Assemblies will also provide an opportunity to practise singing. Pupils will also be taught to play a variety of instruments musically and encouraged to play together in ensemble groups through the Music Partnership. We encourage listening to a wide range of music with concentration and understanding. Music lessons are taught following the Changa scheme of work and online resources. Music will be heard every day in our classrooms and in assembly.

National Curriculum Music Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-musicprogrammes-of-study-5>

Physical Education (PE)

Some form of physical activity takes place every day in our curriculum. One of our PE weekly PE sessions focuses on mastering basic movements including running, jumping, throwing and catching, as well as developing balance, agility and co-ordination. This is taught using the REAL PE scheme and resources. The second PE sessions encourages children to participate in team games and to develop simple tactics for being an effective team member as well as music and movement, dance and apparatus work. Swimming is introduced to the timetable from Key Stage 2. We ensure wider participation in the community by involvement in interschool sports and tournaments,

PE Programmes of Study: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-physicaleducation-programmes-of-study>

PSHCE

PSHCE, or personal, social, health and citizenship education, is a planned programme of learning through which children and young people acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives. As part of a whole school approach (Derbyshire approved PSHCE scheme), PSHCE develops the qualities and attributes pupils need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society. It prepares them to manage many of the most critical opportunities, challenges and responsibilities they will face growing up in such rapidly changing and challenging times. It also helps them to connect and apply the knowledge and understanding they learn in all subjects to practical, real-life situations while helping them to feel safe and secure enough

to fulfil their academic potential. In our programmes we actively promote British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs to prepare our pupils for life in modern day Britain.

Circle time and P4C is used to listen to others and to be heard with the help of class friends. Pupils learn about similarities and differences between people and cultures. They participate in a variety of cultural events such as Diwali, Hanukkah, Shrove Tuesday and Shavuot. Planting and growing things are important aspects of our PSHCE curriculum and we link this to an understanding of healthy eating.

All children take part in anti-bullying working and safeguarding links are threaded throughout our PSHCE curriculum and other curriculum areas.

National Curriculum PSHE programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-social-health-and-economic-education-pshe>

Religious Education

We follow the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. Religious Education (RE) is taught to all children except those who are taken out by their parents. Our teaching promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils. It reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of other principal religions represented in Great Britain. Our teaching enables pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, attitudes, practices and rituals. They will also develop their own beliefs and values. We will not convert or steer pupils towards a particular religious belief. They will also be aware that some people have no attachment to religious beliefs and follow secular philosophies.

Religious Education DfE Guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>

Nurture Provision

Nurture Group continues the ethos of an already nurturing environment within our school and provides inclusion for all children. This group supports children to develop extra skills to improve socially, emotionally and independently. The structure and focus helps to boost confidence, self-esteem and individual emotional well-being. The groups run on consistency and positive reinforcement. Praise and encouragement are in abundance.

The Nurture Group is run by two specialist, Nurture trained members of staff. It is a small class of 8 children. The children are carefully brought together to ensure a balanced and functional group. There is much research evidence that children's learning is most effective when they have a sense of emotional well-being, good self-esteem and a feeling of belonging to their school community. The Nurture Group provides children with this opportunity and so helps to develop their maturity and resilience, whilst developing the skills they need to reach their full potential. The Nurture Group is a place of learning.

Our Nurture Group Principles are:

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom/school offers a safe base
3. Nurture is important for the development of self-esteem
4. Language is understood as a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. Transitions are significant in the lives of children

NURTURE IS IMPORTANT...

"By building a child's social and emotional capabilities we enable children to be happily engaged with others and with society, and to learn, to develop fully, to attain and to achieve. In essence, it delivers school ready, life ready and child ready members of society" (The Allen report 2011)

Forest School

Forest Schools further continues the nurturing environment within our School and provides inclusion for all children. Forest Schools encourages children to develop their communication and social skills, alongside developing resilience, independence and perseverance outside of the classroom environment. Each week the children engage in team building activities where they must work in pairs or groups to complete their tasks, through working together it helps support their self-esteem, boost their confidence and emotional well-being which can then be transferred back into school life. Praise and encouragement are in abundance from both peers and adults throughout each session.

"The widest classroom and the richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky."

Margaret McMillan

The Forest Schools is run by a Level 3 Forest School Leader, alongside other teaching staff. We run Forest Schools sessions in Reception, Year 5 and a 'mixed year group session'.

Planning

Due to our mixed age classes we operate on a two year rolling cycle to ensure complete coverage of all National Curriculum programs of study.

As a school we plan Long term curriculum overviews. From these, teachers make their own medium and short term plans.

Senior leaders and subject leaders monitor the quality of planning as part of the monitoring cycle.

Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

Monitoring arrangements

Governors monitor coverage of National Curriculum subjects and compliance with other statutory requirements through:

- Termly meetings with subject leaders and the HT
- Joint lesson drops ins and book scrutiny
- Pupil interviews
- Data analysis and subject leader reports
- Governing body and committee meetings

Subject leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- Lesson observations and drop-ins
- Book scrutiny
- Data analysis
- Pupil interviews
- Planning scrutiny

Subject leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and chair of governors. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- EYFS policy
- Assessment policy
- SEN policy
- Equality information and objectives