



## Curriculum Statement 2024-2025

### Our School Vision

Every single child deserves a first-class education which is built upon a bedrock of values-based concepts which are bespoke to the contextual and inclusive identity of our school. At the heart of the school is our Reading Pledge which sets out our unwavering commitment to ensuring the highest possible outcomes for pupils in reading, no matter what their starting point, in the knowledge that this will be fundamental to unlocking wider curriculum success and personal development. This includes pupils with SEND, disadvantage and multi disadvantage, EAL and behavioural barriers, however complex these may be. Given our demographic, we acknowledge that cognitive overload plays a detrimental factor in our pupils' ability to process and retain learning as often, information is abstract. Therefore, a thematic approach underpins the curriculum design to allow children to build stronger schema, acquire new language and learn knowledge and skills through a clearly articulated, consistently delivered Whaley Thorns Teaching and Learning pedagogy.

All children leave our school ready for their next phase, not only with strong academic foundations, but also knowing themselves and knowing what their unique strengths, skills and attributes are.

### Our School Aims

- Develop oracy so children can communicate their ideas effectively.
- To learn to read in order for pupils to read to learn, hence opening up the wider curriculum.
- To ensure through careful curriculum design, that our children know more, remember more and can do and say more.
- To create an inclusive, purposeful learning environment where vocabulary is promoted and cognitive overload is reduced.
- Create a culture whereby everyone feels safe and happy. A place where everyone is different and everyone is special that is underpinned by our Kindness Curriculum, British Values and Protected Characteristics.
- To broaden children's experiences and cultural understanding of the diverse cultures and societies within Britain and the Wider World through tolerance and respect.
- To remove barriers, so that pupils are able to attain, make good or better progress and engage fully in wider enrichment opportunities.
- To create a thirst for learning and increased engagement through careful planning and questioning, motivating pupils to be independent learners.
- To prepare pupils for all stages of their education as well as equip them with high aspirations for their future.

- To promote co-operation between home and school and the wider community, encouraging high expectations at all times in the pursuit of excellence.
- To be outward facing, engaging fully with TEAM Education Trust to deepen and improve staff practice which, in turn, will impact on pupil outcomes.

## Our School Motto

‘Everyone is Different,  
Everyone is Special.’

## Our Curriculum Intent

At Whaley Thorns Primary School and Nursery our aim is to develop our children into citizens of the future with our carefully thought out content and ambitious curriculum design. Our progressive curriculum is carefully mapped by substantive and disciplinary knowledge; covering fewer things in greater depth so that children know more, remember more and can do and say more. We want our children to produce exceptional outcomes whilst developing their independence, curiosity and resilience. It is our intention to produce collaborators, innovators, leaders and most importantly, good citizens. We understand it is vital for every child to succeed academically, but that they also need to develop well both personally and socially if they are going to lead fulfilled and happy professional and personal lives. Leaders have worked collaboratively to design a progressive curriculum that is well organised, starting with strong links to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. The curriculum is planned to ensure that our teaching not merely covers expectations, but achieves a depth of learning which enables the children to use their knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects through a mastery approach. This ensures that children are able to revisit and retrieve previous learning, which allows them a deeper understanding of the key knowledge, skills and processes within subject disciplines and make connections between them. We take the time to include Trust planned theme weeks/days, which allows children the opportunity to immerse themselves in subjects and to develop their knowledge and skills in depth.

Our curriculum begins in the EYFS with an aim build strong foundations rooted in academic success as well as moral and spiritual development, so that ultimately our pupils can be successful, happy curious life-long learners. They can only do that if we embed the right habits for learning through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning – Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking. Many of our pupils arrive well below national expectations for their age and a high proportion come from disadvantaged backgrounds and some, with complex needs. We have to teach them how to listen, speak and meet the high expectations for behaviour by working together and being kind. As such, we prioritise personal, social and emotional development and communication and language in the EYFS curriculum. Our enabling environment and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration. As the pupils move into Reception, we invest time and energy into helping pupils develop a love of reading, writing, oracy and number. This is delivered through a holistic curriculum which maximises opportunities for meaningful cross-curricular links and learning experiences as well as promoting the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking following children’s interests and ideas. We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through continuous indoor and outdoor provision, alongside trips and visits.

As children progress from Early Years Foundation Stage to the National Curriculum, we continue to place reading at the heart of the curriculum as it purposefully underpins our wider curriculum design. We believe in exposing our children to quality texts, which open up the literary world and the contexts, knowledge and vocabulary within them, enable our children to build a love of reading. Children follow the rigorous and highly successful synthetic phonics program, Little Wandle, so that they meet good outcomes for reading. Our knowledgeable and skilful teachers

ensure that through quality first teaching, every child is included in all subjects by ensuring their needs are met in the classroom and barriers removed. Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together but we have a range of additional intervention and support to enhance and scaffold children who may not be reaching their potential through catch up and keep up interventions. Our teachers have an excellent understanding of our pupils and use careful analysis and discussion about their backgrounds, life experiences and culture to help us to design a curriculum offer that celebrates their strengths and helps to enhance and widen experiences that they may or may not have outside of school. We do not narrow the curriculum at Whaley Thorns Primary School because we believe that every child is entitled to experience both the artistic and physical pleasures that the wide range of curriculum subjects provide.

Our enhanced curriculum goes beyond the classroom through a range of experiences and opportunities to learn and use new knowledge and build cultural capital, inspiring our children to experience new things, building their confidence and raising their self-esteem (Year 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 Residential Program). We believe our pupils will be ready to successfully meet the challenges of the next stage of their education and their lives through our outward-facing approach, equipping our children with the skills and strategies they need to facilitate their own learning. The range of experiences we offer support our children academically, but we also ensure that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are met. At Whaley Thorns Primary School we are privileged to be able to provide a dedicated Kindness Curriculum and World of Work Curriculum which also supports and enhances our Relationships & Health Education underpinned by our PSHE curriculum. We are supporting our children to grow in confidence, self-belief and resilience. This will help them to lead a happy and fulfilled lives by encouraging them to always aim high and work towards achieving their aspirations. Everything we do is underpinned by our vision to inspire, to raise aspirations and to create brighter tomorrows.