



Thornhill Primary School

Curriculum Policy

Date Revised	Spring 2019
Governor Approval Date	Spring 2019
Date of Next Review	Spring 2021

Curriculum Rationale

- At Thornhill Primary School the curriculum is designed to: recognise children's prior learning, provide first hand learning experiences, allow the children to develop interpersonal skills, build resilience and become creative, critical thinkers.
- It ensures that academic success, creativity and problem solving, reliability, responsibility and resilience, as well as physical development, well-being and mental health are key elements that support the development of the whole child and promote a positive attitude to learning.
- The curriculum celebrates the diversity and utilises the skills, knowledge and cultural wealth of the community while supporting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Curriculum Aims:

We aim to teach children how to become life-long learners and to develop self-confidence and belief in themselves, in an environment which is stimulating and exciting and rich in opportunities.

We will achieve this by:

- Providing a safe and secure environment where children learn independent skills to look after themselves
- Providing a positive 'can do' culture where praise, respect and encouragement prevail and where self - esteem is high

- Having high aspirations and expectations for all our children
- Focusing on improving standards of attainment
- Acknowledging and celebrating all achievement
- Encouraging self- respect and self –discipline in work and behaviour
- Providing high quality planning, teaching, assessment and targeted interventions from committed and passionate staff
- Listening to our children, valuing their views and reflecting and acting on what they say
- Building good relationships with parents, families and communities and working in partnership with other professionals

At Thornhill Primary School we believe in lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We also believe that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone.

The aims of our curriculum are:

- To promote teacher and pupil ownership of a skills-based thematic curriculum.
- To create and explore knowledge, skills and experiences that give purpose to writing.
- To give pupils opportunities to use literacy, numeracy and ICT basic skills in practical and meaningful situations.
- To excite learners through contextual, memorable and meaningful lessons and themes.
- To embed opportunities for high quality enrichment experiences including educational visits, themed days, parent workshops and visiting speakers.
- To develop pupils' wider learning skills, such as independence, resilience, collaborative working and problem-solving through explicit teaching of non-negotiable learning skills.
- To develop children's understanding of equality and diversity.
- To develop a sense of community and belonging, contributing to our community through direct interaction – making links with local organisations.
- To ensure National Curriculum coverage through a skills-based thematic approach.
- To foster children's understanding of their lives in a global context.

At Thornhill Primary School we offer a curriculum which is broad and balanced and which builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills of all children, whatever their starting points, as they progress through each Key Stage. The curriculum incorporates the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 and other experiences and opportunities which best meet the learning and developmental needs of the pupils in our school. The aim of our curriculum is for pupils to have the necessary skills to be successful, independent and motivated learners in readiness for their next stage of education. It is important that the curriculum considers the development of the whole child and does not just focus on academic success.

Pupils are still working on the Early Learning Goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum as they enter Year 1. There is a period in the Autumn Term where the majority of children progress to the National Curriculum. Throughout this period and beyond all children are still developing their phonic knowledge through the 'Read Write Inc' Programme and developing their fluency in reading through daily supported reading.

The National Curriculum is delivered using a skills-based topic approach and assessed using Target Tracker statements (National Curriculum) as a basis to ensure coverage and progression throughout the school. The more- able children are challenged further in their learning and children who find aspects of their learning more difficult are appropriately supported so that they too are enabled to experience success. National requirements and school requirements are mapped out as a whole school so that individual year groups plan for a range of curriculum experiences. The curriculum is underpinned by the school's Core Values (Peace, Respect, Hope, Friendship, Courage, Pride) and these are taught on their own and through other areas of the curriculum, including assemblies. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils and their understanding of the core values of our society are woven through the curriculum.

This curriculum comprises the core subjects – English, Mathematics and Science and the foundation subjects – Computing (ICT), Design Technology, History, Geography, Art, Music and Physical Education. Personal, Social and Health Education is also taught through our assemblies and our class topics.

Our Curriculum

EYFS Curriculum:

In Nursery and 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

A vital aspect in the development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of continuous provision. This means that children are using and developing certain skills throughout the year on a daily/weekly basis.

Continuous Provision practice and principles begin in Early Years Foundation Stage and support children to develop key life skills such as independence; innovation; creativity, enquiry; analysis and problem solving.

English

Our English lessons develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and grammar and vocabulary. English is taught in a cross-curricular way, linking up with other areas of the curriculum. 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 Read, Write Inc for our phonics programme. Phonic awareness helps the development of reading by segmenting and blending sounds. The children will be heard reading individually and in groups. The guided reading sessions cover both fiction and non-fiction books. Guided reading also develops the children's comprehension skills. Parents are given clear expectations about reading at home.

We develop writing skills so that our pupils have the stamina and ability to write at age expectations. 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 use talk for writing to encourage pupils to express their ideas, exchange ideas and to develop more sophisticated vocabulary. We provide opportunities for writing for purpose and we encourage pupils to see themselves as authors. Handwriting sessions are incorporated into the English lessons. A range of extra activities are used to promote literacy within the school including Story- telling week, World Book Day and poetry days. We also produce our own school newspaper.

Mathematics

At Thornhill Primary School we embrace the Mastery approach to teaching mathematics. Our teachers will ensure that mathematical skills are taught every day following the Maths, no problem programme. They also use cross curricular opportunities 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 each lesson there is a short and simple mental maths session. We build on skills and understanding in a step by step and progressive way and continue to develop place value, the four number operations and the understanding of fractional parts.

We provide additional teaching support for children with special educational needs through a discrete teaching group for English and Maths, all year groups provide small group interventions in order to support pupils in gaining the key skills to become successful readers, writers and mathematicians.

Science

Science is taught as a separate lesson but is often linked to our Topic work where appropriate. We encourage our pupils to be curious about natural phenomena and to be excited by the process of understanding the world around them. Key scientific terminology is introduced each lesson and knowledge is built upon throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to work scientifically and are able to carry out simple tests and experiments using equipment and to gather and record data. Whilst at Thornhill Primary School, children will learn about plants, animals including humans, materials, seasonal change, habitats,

rocks, light, forces, states of matter, sound, electricity, earth and space and evolution and inheritance. Visits by specialists such as Mad Science alongside visits enhance the delivery of our science curriculum. We will also have dedicated science days throughout the year.

Art and Design

Art has an important place in our curriculum. 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. 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.

Computing

We follow a discreet scheme of work for the teaching of ICT skills, Rising Stars, but our approach is to integrate ICT into other lessons where we use laptops and other hardware such as cameras and iPads. Subject specific software, from one-off programmes to learning platforms, 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 coding. Pupils will use technology safely and identify where to go for help and support when they have concerns.

Music

In their music lessons pupils use their voices expressively and creatively by singing songs and speaking chants and rhymes. Assemblies also provide an opportunity to practise singing and we enjoy performing at the local theatre once a year. We encourage listening to a wide range of music with concentration and understanding. Music lessons are linked to Topic work and music is used in a variety of lessons and activities to create, mood, atmosphere and to help thinking.

The Charanga programme supports our teaching of music across the school, this is a skilled based scheme.

Physical Education (PE)

PE is delivered by outside Specialist Teachers as well as by our own teaching staff. Our PE sessions are both indoor and outdoor and focus on mastering basic movements including running, jumping, throwing and catching, as well as developing balance, agility and co-ordination. Pupils are encouraged to participate in team games and to develop simple tactics for being an effective team member. Key Stage 2 pupils will also visit other facilities including the local swimming pool, and local sporting facilities at our feeder secondary schools. Swimming is introduced to the timetable from Key Stage 2. We ensure wider participation in the community by involvement in interschool sports competitions.

PSHE

PSHE, or personal, social, health and 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, PSHE 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. Our citizenship lessons enable our pupils to understand the British democratic process and how to effect peaceful changes in society.

All our year groups have timetabled PSHE time but we encourage a cross-curricular approach to the development of PSHE skills and understanding. Pupils learn about similarities and differences between people and cultures. They participate in a variety of cultural events such as Chinese New Year and celebrate famous people such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela, this is linked to our assembly topics. Planting and growing things are important aspects of our PSHE curriculum and we link this to an understanding of healthy eating. All pupils are taught using the One decision and Go Givers programmes.

Religious Education

We follow the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (SACRE) produced by The Educational Framework for Religious Education in Central Bedfordshire. (Plan B) Religious Education (RE) is taught to all children unless children have been withdrawn 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. We have good links with our local church, which children visit to extend their understanding of the Christian faith. Our teaching enables pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, attitudes, practices and rituals. It also develops their own beliefs and values. We will not convert or steer pupils towards a particular religious' belief.

Topic

We use topics to deliver humanities subject skills and understanding. Our topic programme is carefully balanced and planned to be age appropriate across the years. Topic maps are produced to show how each is taught, the knowledge and skills covered and links to other parts of the curriculum. It is important to us that art, music, literacy and where appropriate numeracy and science are linked in topic teaching. So, for example, a history Romans topic could include urn making in art, catapult construction in design and technology and catapult testing and measuring in maths and science. Our topics have a history and geography base so that we teach location and place knowledge, weather and climate skills and knowledge and about significant historical events, people and places in our own locality. Topic time also provides further opportunities to learn about people and cultures. A timetable of trips to

support pupils' learning and to enhance the curriculum is published as part of our long term planning.

Vulnerable Learners

There are some occasions when children will need special help to overcome a learning or emotional difficulty to ensure that the curriculum fully extends their abilities. Overseen by the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), teachers and teaching assistants support some children in small groups or on a one-to-one basis as required.

Able and talented children

The school is committed to making provision for children who achieve at an exceptionally high level. Opportunities are given for children to develop their talents right across the curriculum. The successes and achievements of all children are celebrated each week in our Celebration Assembly.

Enrichment

We are committed to looking beyond the National Curriculum to enhance our curriculum experiences and understanding. The outdoor environment and the local community are considered an opportunity for active learning for all our pupils. The school grounds have been developed so they can enrich different curriculum areas, particularly science. Our enrichment programme draws upon a range of opportunities including; school trips, visiting specialists and themed days and weeks. The programme is planned throughout the year.

Trips and Visits

We plan a series of trips throughout the year for each year group and these are communicated to parents throughout the year. The trips are usually linked to our topic work and may include a trip to Woburn Safari Park, or the Verulamium Museum as part of our work on Romans. We also arrange for visiting workshops, for example, Ancient Egypt and forensic investigations. We organise residential trips for our Year 4 and 6 pupils. Year 4 will spend one night away in a local centre and this will help to prepare for longer stays in Year 6.

Subject Leaders

'Subject leaders provide professional leadership and management for a subject to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and improved standard of learning and achievement for all pupils'. (DFE)

The Core Purpose of the Subject Leader is to provide professional leadership and management for their subject in order to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and improved standards of learning and achievement for all pupils.

The Role of Governors

Our Governors are regularly involved in monitoring the consistent approach to Teaching and Learning at Thornhill Primary School. Governors monitor practice in the following ways:

- Reports and presentations received from curriculum leaders at Governors meetings
- School visits to observe classroom practice in role as Link Governor;
- Talking with pupils, looking at their work

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a crucial role in helping their child to learn. We do all that we can to inform parents about the progress of their child by:

- Holding regular Parent's Evenings and half termly reports
- Inviting parents in to school to share in their child's learning;
- Holding parent workshops where we explain assessment procedures and teaching and learning strategies;
- Annual report at the end of each academic year
- Early Years Parent Share

Pupils have opportunities to share their learning with each other, their parents and carers, through homework tasks and half termly assignments/projects. They learn from others through school-based and external moderation, through performances, competitions and events involving other schools. These develop their independence and motivation as learners and their sense of responsibility as future citizens which is at the heart of all our teaching and learning.