

Thorn  
Grove  
Primary



*Aim High, Succeed and Fly*

# CURRICULUM POLICY



## Curriculum Policy

At Thorn Grove Primary School, our curriculum is based on the September 2014 National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 & 2 and the Early Years 2012 framework in our EYFS setting

Our broad well-planned curriculum, combined with high quality teaching, supports children's development and helps nurture versatile, considerate young people, who have a genuine thirst for learning. Our pupils are encouraged to embrace daily challenges, develop a Growth Mindset and adopt a strong sense of moral purpose founded in respect for and understanding of people and the local community.

### Introduction

The curriculum consists of all the planned activities that we as a school organise in order to promote learning, personal growth and development. It includes, not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experiences of our children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We endeavour to cultivate children's knowledge, skills and attitudes to learning in all areas whilst also teaching children how to grow into positive, resilient and responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others in order to achieve their true potential.

### Values

At Thorn Grove Primary School we support a Growth Mindset culture and firmly believe that achievement and attainment are not predetermined or 'fixed'. With this in mind, we understand that making learning enjoyable, meaningful and relevant gives all children the best possible chance to develop new skills, knowledge and make progress. We offer all children an excellent education in a safe, inclusive, creative and stimulating environment inside and outside the classroom. The school fosters an environment in which we encourage pupils, staff and the community to be creative, unique, open-minded, independent and respectful of themselves and others in our community and the wider world. We take our responsibility to prepare children for life in modern Britain very seriously and ensure that the fundamental British Values are introduced, discussed and lived out through the ethos and work of our school.

Our inclusive curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual child, as well as for people of all cultures. We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth. We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community. We are fortunate at Thorn Grove to have a spacious learning environment. This is respected and used by all in school and we aim, through our curriculum, to teach respect for our world, and how we should care for it for future generations, as well as our own.

At Thorn Grove our values infuse all areas of school life and are reflected by the schools simple motto: ***Aim high, succeed and fly***

## **Aims**

At Thorn Grove Primary School, our balanced, broad and creative curriculum will:

- Give children real life skills that enable them to go out into the world
- Be focussed on our local area and community
- Be Inspirational and engaging
- Provide exposure to opportunities that develop skills and knowledge that can be transferred to a range of situations
- Grow life-long learners
- Teach children how to learn through the development of keen, enquiring minds
- Give children the opportunity to be creative
- Help children develop physically and learn how being active and healthy can be beneficial.

## **The Curriculum at Thorn Grove**

Children within Years 1-6 follow the New National Curriculum for the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy. Mastery over language and mathematics empowers children to communicate, calculate, solve problems and be creative, imaginative and logical, as well as allowing them engagement with the world at large.

## **Curriculum planning**

Our curriculum is the heart of learning. It is driven by skills which will make our children effective readers, writers and mathematicians and will enable them to progress effortlessly to High School. Each year group's teaching is underpinned by a geography or history based unit. We use this as a base to which all other foundation subjects revolve and build links across curriculum areas where appropriate. Additionally, Literacy is interwoven through the curriculum with our aim to use high quality texts in all subject areas to support the development of literate children. Having the curriculum shaped in this way enables us to embed writing opportunities and experiences through all curriculum areas.

We aim to bring each focus to life by immersing pupils in the topic (prior to beginning the learning), understanding what they already know and developing an idea of what they would like to discover. This provides teachers with a positive platform upon which to plan engaging and effective learning and enquiries and develop experiences for all. An overview of our history and geography units and year group curriculum content can be found within this section of our website.

In order to ensure that our curriculum is broad and balanced we have developed termly focuses alongside in-depth medium term planning which guides our short term planning. This allows us to link skills and ensure we are providing rich and varied learning opportunities in both discreet and cross curricular pathways.

Our curriculum documents enable teachers to plan and develop skills which lead to the achievement of statutory objectives over a term. Skills and knowledge are taught, embedded and then applied throughout the curriculum and throughout learning. Staff are expected to plan in accordance with this document and differentiate learning to meet the needs of all groups and abilities.

At the end of each unit a review of learning is undertaken. Pupils may be asked to: deliver information they have gathered; state their most enjoyable moments; reflect on how they learnt best and what they would like to do again. Staff discussions related to improvements in learning also take place and the feedback is used the next time the unit is delivered to improve units. Teaching staff assess the children against the learning objectives but also against the key skills and knowledge criteria targeted in the unit.

## **Literacy**

### **Speaking and Listening**

Speaking and listening skills are developed as an integral part of our learning in all subjects. Through all our work, we ensure that children's vocabulary is developed.

Talk partners, which are used in each class through school, enable children to practise talk and dialogue for learning. We use drama (particularly role play) to explore different types of talk and our 'Talk for Writing' curriculum (explained below) involves children in learning and retelling stories as well as developing in-depth knowledge of fiction and non-fiction writing.

Speaking and Listening is in everything we do, from taking the register to whole school discussions in assembly. We maximise the opportunities to develop this skill across the entire curriculum.

### **Reading**

Reading at school begins with Read Write Inc. Children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One follow the programme daily. This program continues into KS2 for those pupils that require additional phonics based support.

All children are supported in their reading development by guided reading sessions which take place on a daily basis. Banded books are carefully matched to ability levels and children work in groups with an adult, reading, responding and discussing. Follow up tasks are created and pupils are also required to demonstrate their knowledge independently.

Reading is a focus throughout school. High quality texts and writing are shared with children and each class will absorb high quality novels through our reading spine. Regular discussion surrounding reading takes place so that we can discover what makes exceptional writing and why this is enjoyable.

Pupils also work to decode, read quality examples and are taught skills including skimming, scanning, inference, deduction as well as an appreciation of theme and character development. Reading is an essential life skill and consequently is a part of every lesson.

It is not however limited to the classroom. Pupils have access to excellent home readers as well as; online reading schemes (Bug Club) and a well-stocked library complete with varied fiction and non-fiction titles. We further encourage reading through reading events (World Book Day and Book Fairs)

From Year 2 onwards, pupils are entered into the reading for pleasure programme known as The Reading Passport. The aim is to encourage children to read whenever and wherever for enjoyment, whilst at the same time building mileage which earns them points towards certificates.

Staff at Thorn Grove are passionate about the importance of reading and therefore each classroom has a well-stocked reading corner which enables children to continually develop a love of books and the life-long skill of reading.

### **Writing**

The journey of writing begins the moment a child enters Thorn Grove. We strive to provide all children with opportunities to explore mark making and early writing skills. Pupils progress to experiencing and developing writing through Read, Write Inc as well as developing their writing skills through a tailored programme of development. This includes 'Talk for Writing'.

**‘Talk for Writing’** : There are three key phases in this approach. The first, Imitation, supports children to develop familiarity with quality texts through reading as reader as well as a reading as a writer. During this stage, texts will be shared with the children and they will learn to recite the text accurately with the use of story maps in order to help them internalise the patterns of language involved. There will be opportunities for ‘word games’ and short burst writing in this phase to build confidence with language and create ‘toolkits’.

In phase two, Innovation, the children will use the class toolkits alongside word banks to modify the model text and start to independently experiment with text structure and composition. The children will write regularly during this phase and feedback will be given to help them improve.

In phase three, Independent Application, the children will be given the opportunity to write their own version of the text being studied. They will do this independently using the tools and teaching from the previous two phases.

In addition to this, the children will be given the chance to ‘invent’ during each term. This is where the children can choose their own style and type of writing for a given stimulus.

During the ‘Talk for Writing’ process the children will be involved in shared, guided and independent writing at different stages based on their confidence with the text types and toolkits

The school environment celebrates writing through displays and encourages publication of work. All classrooms should have a Literacy Working Wall, which is linked to the current unit of work. Opportunities for writing are planned for and can be seen throughout the curriculum.

### **Mathematics**

Our core purpose in Mathematics is to promote fluent pupils who can reason and problem solve in all areas. We follow the Focus Education maths scheme to ensure we promote coverage across all strands and use formative assessment alongside pre and post learning tasks to differentiate teaching in all lessons. We place high value on confidence as a key driver to success and continually strive to develop pupils’ understanding and independence as mathematicians.

We place a strong emphasis on the development of basic maths skills (for example learning division and multiplication facts up to 12 x 12 by year four) and we ask parents to support with homework practice to ensure that children have instant recall of these facts which they will need for more advanced problem solving. At home, pupils can access My Maths and Times Tables Rock Stars in order to work on key skills, set by the teacher.

### **Science**

We have carefully followed the statutory documentation in the new curriculum to ensure continuity and progression in our science teaching from year 1 to year 6. Children regularly work scientifically and learn the skills of being a scientist. They focus on the five main areas of enquiry through planning, carrying out and evaluating regular investigations as well as learning about the important science concepts and knowledge. We believe that Science should be experienced and our planning allows pupils to experience science through exciting and inspiring learning opportunities, where possible linked to the current theme.

### **Computing**

Computing is an integral part of learning in school. It is not a one hour a week session in the ICT suite but a learning tool used to develop knowledge through the curriculum. However, computing skills are held in high regard, consequently we follow a computing scheme (Rising Stars ‘Switched On’), but allow for flexibility of delivery to account for changes in software that may develop stronger skills and awareness in this area. This approach enables teachers to effectively plan and develop

units of work which link creatively to themes across the curriculum, promote safe and responsible online use and to develop and provide our learners with the robust skills for the future. We have sets of laptops and Ipads to support learning and develop skills in this area.

### **Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural**

Weekly lessons explore feelings, social situations and aspirations. We aim to support teaching in this area through a 'circles' approach alongside more regular lesson structures. The curriculum is mapped carefully in each year group and there is excellent coverage of the three main areas of: Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World. We are always happy to discuss and share with parents the materials we use for this area of the curriculum and parents are notified in advance when this area of the curriculum is due to be taught.

### **MFL**

Languages are currently taught in KS2. Children currently learn French. We aim for pupils to develop conversational language skills through practical activities in taught sessions which are then reinforced through additional bursts throughout the week where appropriate.

### **PE and Sport**

We understand the importance for children to develop fundamental movement skills and physical literacy and plan two hour long PE sessions a week. In addition to this, we use outdoor learning and organise extracurricular clubs as a vehicle to help the children further develop skills. We place a premium on cooperative work and the development of social skills and work very hard to provide the children with the opportunity to engage in non-competitive and competitive sport to help them experience different environments in which to evolve these skills.

### **Teaching and Learning Styles**

We use a variety of teaching styles. Lessons are tailored to ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved and this is completed in numerous ways eg: An introduction with whole class teaching, using open ended probing questions, visual stimuli and talk partners; split teaching, student led research, challenge by choice. All lessons involve a period of time where children are required to work independently or as part of a group.

### **Enhancing the curriculum**

From Nursery through to Year 6 opportunities will be taken to extend the curriculum beyond the statutory requirements through:

- visitors, including artists, craftspeople, actors, musicians
- the use of the school grounds, the locality and the wider environment
- educational visits
- support of parents
- Theatre groups which provide performances
- Extra-curricular clubs and partnerships with sports providers in the local community

Many of these activities will embrace the cultural diversity of the society in which we live and enhance the aesthetic environment of the school.

**This curriculum policy is the overarching document that provides information on our curriculum ethos and more detailed information for specific subjects can be found in the following policies.**

**Literacy Policy**

**Maths Policy**

**PSHE/RSE Curriculum Maps**

**Art Progression Documents**

**PE Passport Long term overview and plans**