



Firfield Primary School

Learn Together, Grow Together, Achieve Together

Curriculum Policy

Introduction:

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning, personal growth and development at Firfield Primary School. 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 the children and build cultural capital. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave.

Our curriculum aims to:

- Fulfil the school's vision and values
- Have high expectations and ambition for all pupils
- Place 'powerful knowledge' at the heart of learning. This is knowledge that 'is powerful because it provides the best understanding of the natural and social worlds that we have and helps us go beyond our individual experiences.' (Young, 2013)
- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment
- Enable pupils to develop rich 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
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life in an ever changing world.
- Develop confident and ambitious pupils who are willing to continue learning well after they have left Firfield with a deep love for learning
- Value the integrity and power of each subject within the National Primary Curriculum
- Build interesting and meaningful connections within and across different discrete subjects, allowing children to think deeply about their learning.



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These curriculum aims are underpinned by our school vision and values:

Our school vision is to empower everyone to be brilliant every day, having ambition and freedom to release their inner superhero, embracing new challenges with drive and determination. We inspire extraordinary learners, by fostering a love and thirst for new skills and knowledge. We encourage our school community to grow and nurture the personal qualities necessary to live happy and successful lives that are both fulfilling and rewarding. Our ambition is to ensure everyone can confidently thrive and flourish to achieve their personal best in everything they do.

The governors, staff and children at Firfield Primary School want all members of the Firfield Family to grow and nurture the following values...

Compassionate, Caring and Kind

Honest and Trustworthy

Polite and Courteous

Determined, Courageous and Resilient



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Curriculum Drivers:

When developing our curriculum, curriculum leaders used our curriculum drivers to underpin the direction and development of all areas of school life and ensure our curriculum is enriched and personalised in order to meet the needs, interests and ambitions of our children and families.

World Citizens

We believe our children need to develop a knowledge and understanding about where they live and the wider world (including preparing children for the digital world). To understand their role in society and develop respect towards the environment and diversity through learning about different communities, religions and cultures.

Healthy Advocates

We believe that it is important to us that all members of our school community are healthy – physically and mentally. Throughout life, we face many different challenges and need to have mental and physical strength to be successful and happy.

Ambitious Thinkers

To have an understanding of the possibilities that are ahead. To learn about economic success, business enterprise and develop computer literacy to be able to adapt to the changing world to achieve our personal best.

Resilient Individuals

We believe our pupils should be ambitious and embrace new challenges with drive and determination so that they can confidently thrive and flourish. To be resilient, have perseverance and grow independence, developing the life skills to allow fulfilling and rewarding futures.

Creative and Curious Minds

Alongside developing the skill and knowledge, foster a love for learning through curiosity and have the freedom to share this creatively.



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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.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold school leaders 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

Deputy Headteacher

The Deputy Headteacher, who is responsible for the Quality of Education, 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
- 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



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- 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

SENDCo

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

- Our curriculum entitlement is for ALL of our children
- Staff are given regular and up-to-date training for support all pupils to access the knowledge rich curriculum
- The curriculum offer for all pupils is inclusive and is adapted to the emerging needs of the pupils

Subject leaders

Subject leaders are responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- Our curriculum entitlement is for ALL of our children
- They become the expert of their subject, acting as a driving force of enacting the curriculum
- They have curriculum oversight of their subject from EYFS through to Year 6
- They are fully aware of the national curriculum requirements
- They have highly specified the knowledge to be taught in their subject area and that this knowledge is sequenced effectively so that it is taught to be remembered.
- They monitor their subject so that the planned curriculum is the taught curriculum.
- They ensure that standards within the curriculum subject are always improving
- They continually interact and engaged in developing understanding of best practice in their subjects

Other staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.



Organisation and Planning

At Firfield, we place powerful knowledge at the very heart of our curriculum. We want to teach our children the very best of what has been thought and said. To do so, we have 3 guiding principles for our knowledge rich curriculum.

Knowledge is **valued** and **specified**
Knowledge is **well-sequenced**
Knowledge is taught to be **remembered**

The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objectives of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to be ready for the next stage of their education and to lead fulfilling lives in an ever-changing world. It is also a key component of achieving the school's vision and values statements.

In 2021, the school began to redesign its curriculum. We value the importance and integrity of each individual subject area and teach them discretely building up the children's understanding of the disciplinary and substantive knowledge of each individual subject as they move through the school. Where possible, links are made between subject areas to encourage the children to build rich schemas. When developing our curriculum, we thought meticulously about what we teach using the latest findings from cognitive research to ensure that the knowledge we teach is specified, sequenced and remembered. The curriculum has been organised and established in consultation with all teaching staff to meet the needs of our children at Firfield Primary School. It is regularly reviewed and developed in accordance with the School Improvement Plan, recommendations from external bodies like Ofsted, the latest educational research and following consultation with Governors and teaching staff.

We use frequent formative assessment to know that children are understanding and retaining knowledge, and that any misconceptions can be addressed.

Subject leaders have carefully selected the curriculum model for their subject ensuring that it is achieving our values and vision statements. Our yearly curriculum map indicates which subjects are taught to which groups of children in which terms. Over each academic year, each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects. Medium term or topic plans are written to ensure coverage of the foundation subjects. They include learning intentions and activities with differentiation identified. Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning intentions for each session and to identify what resources and activities staff will use in the lesson.



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Reading at the centre of our curriculum

At Firfield, we have placed reading at the centre of our curriculum because of its vital role in unlocking the curriculum for all pupils. Children who enjoy reading achieve highly across the curriculum. Developing a love for reading is one of the most effective ways we can create a love for learning and raise attainment. Without a secure ability to read as the children progress through school, the children will struggle to build up a rich schema of knowledge and to access our knowledge rich curriculum. Opportunities to develop reading skills are built in across the curriculum. We learn to read, and then read to learn. Being able to read well is a key life skill for children, whatever their background and every child deserves the chance to become a reader and have a lifetime enjoyment of reading. We have ensured the children have access to a wide range of quality texts across the curriculum. These texts are regularly reviewed and adapted to the needs of the pupils. Every teacher is a teacher of reading.

Vocabulary

An essential element of our knowledge rich curriculum is the development of a broad and rich vocabulary, and the ambitious and explicit teaching of this. Children with a word gap struggle to access the curriculum and develop weaker schemas of knowledge. The vocabulary content of our curriculum has been carefully planned with the purpose of addressing the word gap for children who enter school with a limited vocabulary and to empower all of our pupils to succeed across the curriculum and beyond.

Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for every pupil. They plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is above the expected standard of their age group. They have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so in consultation with the child's parents. If a child has a special educational need or disability, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children have an equal access to the curriculum and are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Our foundation stage curriculum is guided by the EYFS Statutory Framework. We have used the practice and theories embedded in early years practice as a springboard for developing a whole school approach to teaching and learning within the curriculum. Our curriculum starts in EYFS and all topics covered in EYFS link progressively with those taught across school.



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Our Blocked Curriculum

At Firfield, we have moved from a thematic model of teaching our curriculum to discrete subjects. Blocking teaching allows for these individual subjects to be taught in equal equity and have quality focussed time. It ensures that no single subject or subjects are given reduced attention and that no subjects are missed from the curriculum. It also ensures that we offer a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils, so that the children's knowledge can be more deeply embedded to build a rich schema. Science, History, Geography, RE, Design and Technology, and Art form the subjects taught in the blocked curriculum. Some of our subjects are not taught as blocks due to them being provided on a weekly basis. These subjects are PE, French, Maths, English, Phonics, Guided Reading, Spelling, Handwriting and Computing.

Written by: Adam Thurgood, Deputy Headteacher

Ratified by Governors:

Date for review: May 2024

Signed: