

# Our Curriculum

*Aims to inform the reader about:*

- 1. The principles that underpin our curriculum*
- 2. What we teach*
- 3. The subject overview – separate schemes of work are produced for each subject*

## Section 1: Principles and pedagogy



*Article 28: Children have a right to learn and to go to school*



*Article 29: Each child has the right to become the best that they can be*

### Aims

In the Heathland Whitefriars Federation, the driving principles in our approach to teaching and learning are:

- To provide all pupils with a curriculum of the highest quality
- To have high aspirations for every pupil
- To ensure that, in the way we support children in their learning, we provide a learning culture that is positive, supportive, and engaging
- To equip pupils to be successful global citizens

This document sets out how our curriculum supports these aims

### First Principles

The learning experiences that we organise and offer to our children aim to have the following characteristics:

- Active learning and active teaching
- Language rich learning with lots of spoken language
- An emphasis on social and emotional literacy, team work and respect
- Creative and coherent experiences with sparkle that engage our children
- Development of independence and choice, including play and exploration
- Cross curricular study through enquiry-based topics
- Children involved in choosing topics for study
- Opportunities to solve problems, refine skills and be resilient learners

- Explicit development of skills for thinking and learning
- Next steps teaching based upon secure assessment and high expectations
- Simple next steps targets agreed with children and self-assessed
- Differentiation that includes all learners
- Cultural awareness and celebration of diversity
- Learning outdoors as well as indoors
- Experiences which deepen learning and ensure mastery of key skills

## **Values**

Our ethos and curriculum is underpinned by a set of positive, shared Values which help us to work and learn with one another co-operatively and with respect. We learn the importance of friendship and unity, and how to approach life with positivity and hope. These values make our school community happy and harmonious, a fun place, where children feel secure. Our Values are important to all children, staff and parents.

The whole staff team and all children are involved in promoting values and recognising their positive effects around school. The values have been selected by children and staff as values which are important within the school community and which will be important throughout life.

(<http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/our-values/>)

## **Unicef Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA)**

As RRSA accredited schools, we use children's rights to underpin everything we do and learn. Our pupils explore the rights of every child and how to respect these. Rights are embedded into all areas of the curriculum and are linked to our 'Values'. Pupil Voice enables the children to become well rounded global citizens. Parents and the community are fully included on this journey and are encouraged to use the universal language at home.

(<http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/rights-respecting/>)

## **Section 2: What we teach?**

### **EYFS Curriculum and New National Curriculum**

We fully embrace all the requirements of the new National Curriculum and EYFS curriculum. These include:

- Encouraging children to find out and explore through play
- Confident to try new things and never give up
- Develop motivation and focus
- Nurture creativity and critical thinking
- Recognising patterns and making links
- Child and adult initiated learning
- Providing a broad and balanced curriculum
- Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students
- Fully preparing students for later life
- Providing the knowledge required to be educated citizens and providing access to the best that has been thought and said

- Allowing students to appreciate human creativity and achievement
- Having high expectations to deepen learning and master skills
- Using assessment to set challenging targets
- Removing all barriers to any potential underachievement
- Fully catering for the needs of students for which their first language is not English
- Using every relevant subject to develop mathematical fluency
- Focusing on spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary integral to all aspects of the curriculum

Our programme of assemblies, engaging circle time activities and focus on our values and Rights Respecting education, The requirements for religious and sex education are fully catered for.



*Article 12: Children have a right to say what they think should happen and be listened to.*

## **EYFS**

The Early Years Foundation Stage covers Nursery and Reception where well-planned and purposeful activities engage and ignite the interests of all children. Baseline assessment on entry to Nursery and Reception is carried out through a range of observations providing a starting point for measuring development and progress through EYFS; this allows practitioners to plan activities to support the children in acquiring their next steps. The curriculum emphasises learning through play and exploring new experiences. Activities are planned around the children's needs and interests as they develop skills to become confident learners. Their knowledge, skills and understanding are developed across all the areas of learning. Children are encouraged to explore their ideas, make links and ask questions.

## **Topic learning**

In the afternoons, children learn through enquiry based topics, designed around engaging themes. These are cross curricular linked. Each year group learns through a variety of experiences through trips and visits to enhance children's learning. The topic theme is also linked to a production to support the children in developing their skills within the performing arts.

## **Thinking Skills strands**

Across the Federation, we employ a range of methodologies to support children's thinking skills. These strategies also strengthen our pedagogy and deepen children's learning, including in the EYFS.

[\(http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/thinking-skills4c/\)](http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/thinking-skills4c/)

### 1. Thinking Hats

Across all subjects, Thinking Hats are used to signal the different thinking approaches children might draw upon when exploring different aspects of a new idea or construct.

## 2. Thinking Maps

Across all subjects, Thinking Maps are used by teachers and children to organise ideas and concepts in different ways using a range graphical forms.

## 3. Habits of Mind

Teachers and children also refer to a range of Habits of Mind (such as 'be ready to make mistakes' or 'listen attentively') to describe and signal a range of 'styles' of thinking that can be applied to different learning activities and experiences.

## 4. Bloom's Taxonomy

Teachers draw upon Bloom's Taxonomy to ensure a clear progression of skills is taught and that there are always meaningful opportunities to deepen children's learning. Bloom's terminology finds its way into the Questions for Learning which provide starting points to each lesson (rather than Learning Intentions- see below)

## 5. Philosophy (P4C)

Is an area of learning in its own right and also as a cross-curricular approach to set up inquiries and discuss complex ideas within other areas of learning.

### Questions for Learning and Success Criteria

In the Federation we use meaningful Questions for Learning (QfLs) to provide starting points for learning. Teachers consider the meaningfulness of the questions and the possible answers, and we try to use phrases which create 'open questions' eg:

- 'What makes a good...?'
- 'How does... work?'
- 'What happens when...?'
- 'Why does....happen?'

### Outdoor learning

All children have an entitlement not only to learn outside but to learn from their natural environment. We provide a rich outdoor learning focus in our curriculum in order to inspire and motivate our children to become successful learners. This helps them to develop as healthy, confident, enterprising and responsible citizens.

As a Federation outdoor learning is a vital part of encouraging positive environmental understanding in children and helping them to develop the values needed to manage their future in a sustainable way. Through a wide range of outdoor experiences our children develop an understanding and sense of ownership of the effects of their actions upon the environment in which they live, learn and relax. Children in our school learn that we all need to have a sense of responsibility and care for the world in which we live.

### Educational Visits

- Children further explore their learning opportunities outside the classroom
- Children further develop their understanding of a topic through the involvement of an enriching educational visit
- Children transfer their bank of skills learnt within the classroom and apply them in external settings

## **Curriculum Leadership**

Faculty leaders create action plans for each subject, ensuring coverage and high expectations are maintained throughout the Federation. They implement change and monitor the impact.

## **Section 3: Subjects**

### **English**

#### **Spoken Language**

Children develop oracy from EYFS to Y6. This is essential to learning to communicate in English and to learning the skills of reading and writing. We develop spoken language by creating a wealth of opportunities for structured and unstructured talk through which children are able to develop their skills including questioning, explaining, describing and evaluating their experiences. This aspect of the curriculum widens vocabulary and enables EAL learners to deepen comprehension of standard and dialectical English. Children are provided with a wide range of opportunities to refine oracy skills in all areas of the curriculum.

#### **Reading**

The Federation uses the Bug Club reading scheme which is a highly engaging whole-school reading programme with print and eBooks, featuring well-loved characters. The Federation also follow the 'Letters and Sounds' phonic programme.

Children are encouraged to develop the habit of reading widely and often for pleasure and information, as well as being provided with opportunities to appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage. In EYFS, children are taught phonics which supports them in reading and understanding simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate an understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

All children should have access to a reading area which is filled with a wide range of enriching texts that support current events as well as a variety of genres to stimulate imagination in reading.

Children should be able to become independent users of information during weekly guided lessons, where they are taught the skills to learn how to find this information, how to select what is relevant and how to use it in the best way for their own particular needs.

#### **Writing**

Children learn to write accurately and support pupils to master: transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition and oracy (articulating ideas and structuring them into speech and writing).

EYFS children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words which then lead on to writing simple sentences. During this key stage some words might be spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

As children' progress through the school they are taught to plan, revise and evaluate their writing.

Children learn to understand the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words.

Children learn to understand that effective *composition* involves articulating and communicating ideas and organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, as well as an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and eventually, speedy handwriting.

<http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/English-Policy-Feb-2015.pdf>

### **Maths**

Children develop confidence and mental fluency with whole numbers, counting and place value through working with numerals, words and the four operations. They learn to read, spell and pronounce mathematical vocabulary correctly.

Children learn to develop their skills in written methods for calculations including working with fractions, decimals and percentages.

Children learn to solve a range of mathematical problems which reflect the relevance of mathematics in everyday life. They develop mathematical reasoning skills which can be applied to calculations and the analysis of shapes and their properties. They learn to use measuring instruments and make connections between measure and number. Children will develop an understanding of how time is measured and learn to accurately read digital and analogue time. Children learn to apply their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum to enhance their understanding in other subjects.

<http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Maths-Policy-Feb-2015.pdf>

### **Science**

Children use first-hand observations and experience to enable them to ask questions and develop a line of enquiry. They closely observe and gather evidence through fair testing and comparing their findings with their original predictions.

Children suggest answers to scientific questions based upon their own experiences and prior knowledge. Children evaluate their investigations and discuss how their results could be affected by test conditions of different variables.

Children learn to select appropriate scientific apparatus to carry out their observations to identify and classify.

<http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Science-Policy-Feb-2015.pdf>

### **ICT (Digital learning)**

Children will learn to use technology and software via iPads and laptops. E-safety is revisited regularly to remind children of the risks. They will learn to create, store, retrieve and manipulate digital content. Children will learn coding through use of selective commands utilising different software. Students will be able to use search results effectively to locate the information they are looking for.

[http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/E\\_SafetyPolicy.pdf](http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/E_SafetyPolicy.pdf)

### **Art**

- Children use sketchbooks to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas.
- Children can learn to use a range of techniques, including painting, and handle a variety of different materials.
- Children use skills to experiment, invent and create own works of art using craft and design.
- Children can greatly develop their creativity and ideas through studying a range of artists.

## **PSHE**

Children learn about the rights of children and how to respect all rights through use of class charters and circle time. Children use thinking skills to discuss and share ideas related to PSHE and citizenship learning. Children learn about British values, as well as British and Global citizenship through working together to improve their local community. Children learn about the value and functions of money to become responsible adults.

## **DT**

- Children learn through a process which enables them to design their own products with designer specifications.
- Children use specialist tools to develop the designing and making process.
- Children learn to test and evaluate their products against specifications and suggest improvements for further designs.

## **RE**

Children learn about different world faiths; Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism and Buddhism, along with inclusive British values. Children develop an awareness of spiritual and moral issues in their life experiences. They gain knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions and value systems found in Britain. They have an opportunity to reflect on their own experiences and to ensure a personal response to the fundamental questions of life. RE learning is linked to the school values and their learning in Rights Respecting.

## **Geography**

- Children develop a fascination with the world which values diversity and an understanding of the importance of the Earth and its people.
- Children have the opportunity to use data and a range of sources to develop their understanding about human and physical geography.
- Children build an understanding of what the United Kingdom looks like and expand their knowledge of the wider world and how it is made up.
- Children develop a more sophisticated understanding of local and world history which is supported by fieldwork, research and enquiry opportunities.

<http://www.whitefriarschool.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Humanities-PolicyMAY2015.pdf>

## **History**

- Children will develop their understanding of the history of Britain and the wider world where they begin to place and understand periods of history and the order in which they took place.
- Children will also develop their critical thinking skills through questioning and an analysis of sources which allows them to create their own perspectives on history.
- Children build their vocabulary in order to discuss the past, explore change, key events and people.
- Children secure their understanding by addressing and challenging historical perspectives through their verbal and written responses.

<http://www.whitefriarschool.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Humanities-PolicyMAY2015.pdf>

## **Music**

- Children learn to play and perform confidently in a range of solo and ensemble contexts using their voices and a variety of instruments which they play fluently with accuracy and expression.
- Children develop their ability to improvise and compose by learning about a range of musical structures, styles, genres and traditions.
- Children listen to a wide range of music from great composers and musicians.
- Children develop a deepening understanding of the music which they hear and perform, including its history.

## **Physical Education**

- Children develop an understanding of how to play a wide variety of different sports, be able to choose the tactics they need to win both in a team and individually.
- Children in Nursery and Reception begin to move with growing confidence, handle different equipment and develop an awareness of how we take part in sport.
- Children develop skills which enable them to take part in competitive events with peers in school and the local area.
- Children use gymnastics and dance to present to the school and the local community.
- Children have the opportunity to take part in unique outdoor and adventurous activities that will challenge them physically and develop their team-work skills.
- Children learn to reflect on what aspects of a sport they can do with success and identify what they will need to do develop their skills further.

<http://www.whitefriarsschool.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/PE-Policy-2014-FINAL.pdf>

## **Modern foreign languages**

- Children learn key vocabulary in French; where appropriate these will be linked to topic.
- Children listen to a variety of forms of spoken language to obtain information and respond appropriately.
- Children are encouraged to speak confidently in French.

## **Further parent information**

*For further information please refer to curriculum newsletters and other areas of the website. Hard copies are available upon request at the school office.*