

Norton Hill Primary School

Curriculum Intent Statement



Intent:

At Norton Hill Primary we are fully committed to understanding and responding to the needs of our children, staff and community in our whole school curriculum. We plan for our own 3i's that underpin our teaching and learning; Inside out, Interactive and Independent. We aim for our children to leave us with: a sense of self and place; understanding how they can contribute to the community and wider world as positive and effective citizens of Britain; and a drive for lifelong learning.

We are dedicated to ensuring our children develop a strong connection to our core value of CREATIVITY (*Creativity is defined as the tendency to generate or recognise ideas, alternatives or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others and entertaining ourselves and others.*) We have broken our core values into separate Values-Curiosity, Respect, Enthusiasm, Achievement, Team Work, Independence, Voice, Individuality, Tolerance and You! We visit each value throughout the year in our classrooms and in Collective Reflection time. Our values run through the heart of our learning.

Our experiences, knowledge and skills rich curriculum sets high academic and personal expectations and is designed to ensure all of our children to not only want to be 'the best they can be' in all aspects of their lives but to ensure they have developed the confidence and resilience to do so.

We teach the national curriculum and our intentions for each subject area are defined by the purpose and aims of study of the national curriculum. The most important subject content is defined in our medium term plans through 'threshold concepts' which organise new knowledge systematically and ensure a logical progression to pupils' knowledge and understanding. We have defined end points through expected standards or milestones in learning by the end of each academic year, or in some subjects by the end of Year 2, Year 4 or Year 6. These milestones also assess the depth of understanding of the threshold concepts. We prioritise reading across the curriculum by making sure that across all subject's pupils read texts which help them to broaden their vocabulary and deepen their understanding of the subject matter. We consider the ability to read with meaning as a basic and fundamental tool to ensure pupils' progress and to closing advantage gaps.

Our curriculum is designed to include the following elements we consider of the utmost importance in achieving this goal:

- Structured, layered opportunities for learning through a clear curriculum map which enables children to make links.
- Understanding of the specific needs, skills and talents of each child in our care, responding and adapting to these.
- Understanding of the Characteristics of Effective Learning-the behaviours children use in order to learn. Playing & Exploring-engagement. Active Learning-motivation, Creating and Thinking critically- thinking.
- Learning is stimulated by first hand experiences (such as visits and visitors) that promote creativity, imagination and wonder, with a focus on building cultural capital.
- Focus on core skills in all aspects of learning through a clearly defined pathway, aspiring for all children to achieve as readers, writers, mathematicians and scientists which also includes commitment to supporting key life experiences.
- Opportunities for everyone to succeed but to also develop the resilience and confidence to try new things that may result in not "getting it right" the first time.
- The promotion of the benefits of considered risk taking to create ambition and aspiration and how the outdoor learning environment and the arts can be used to support this.
- Occasions to promote environmental and community awareness to develop conscientious citizens who have a voice in society.
- Exposure to positive role models and experiences to develop aspirational and ambitious learners.

Implementation:

- Our curriculum is taught according to subject disciplinary knowledge, and making links between knowledge in subjects where appropriate. This helps us to focus on the most important and useful knowledge in each subject and to avoid distractions and irrelevances.
- The curriculum breadth for each year group ensures each teacher has clarity as to what to cover. As well as providing the key knowledge within subjects it also provides for pupils' growing cultural capital and knowledge of the world.
- We have identified in each subject the 'threshold concepts'. These are domain specific concepts which open up new ways of thinking about the subjects and help pupils to link new knowledge and commit it to their long term memories. We consider this to be the most powerful knowledge in each subject domain. Threshold concepts are the key disciplinary aspects of each subject. They are chosen to build conceptual understanding within subjects and are repeated many times in each topic. These concepts also help teachers to present new information clearly and build on what has been taught before.
- We assess the depth of understanding and pupils' mastery to expertise in these concepts through milestones for learning. Each topic, each term, builds towards an expert outcome, or "POP" (proof of progress) task. These tasks check pupils' procedural knowledge, i.e. their ability to apply and reason with knowledge. These

assessments check the progression from novice to expert outcomes, called 'Basic, Advancing and Deep' outcomes. These assessments are used to provide teachers with information for future planning. This helps to inform their future retrieval practice and the planning of tasks by identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge and their skill in the application of it.

- Teachers provide plentiful opportunities for retrieval practice. Our short and medium term plans reflect the research of cognitive science, that progress means knowing more and remembering more. Therefore, teachers use regular assessment in the form of low and no stakes quizzes and spaced practice and repetition of fundamental knowledge. Teachers assess and improve pupils' sustained memory through these low stakes methods as well as plenaries and mini- plenaries in lessons.
- Assessment, therefore answers two main questions: 'How well are pupils coping with curriculum content?' and 'How well are they retaining previously taught content?' Teachers use worked examples and break tasks into component steps to avoid overloading pupils' working memory.
- Teachers expect pupils to solve problems and transfer their knowledge to new contexts when pupils have remembered the knowledge sufficiently. Vocabulary is how pupils conceptualise and express knowledge. Teachers' plans prioritise the acquisition of knowledge through vocabulary.
- We prioritise reading through all curriculum plans, and building pupils' tier 2, or academic and literary vocabulary by access to challenging texts. For pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities or those who need more time to embed fundamental knowledge, key knowledge deficits are identified and tasks planned which avoid overloading pupils' working memory, we also use visual knowledge mats to support a variety of learning styles.
- Retrieval and spaced practice of fundamental knowledge is a priority for these pupils. Teachers plan tasks where modelling and scaffolding of fundamental knowledge are additional provisions. We also have 'sticky knowledge' sessions planned for each week.

Impact:

- We know we are successful through the monitoring procedures we have in place: The impact of the curriculum on pupils' long term memory is checked by our subject leaders who undertake pupil conferencing each term to identify what pupils have learnt and remembered in each year group. This will continue to be embedded as we grow. Even our youngest learners have 'sticky' knowledge time to help them know and remember.
- In addition, subject leaders check pupils' work each term to determine their progress in curricular goals and their depth of understanding. The impact of our curriculum is that by the end of each milestone, the vast majority of pupils have sustained mastery of the content, that is, they remember it all and are fluent in it, or have achieved an advancing stage of mastery. Some pupils have a greater depth of understanding. We track these pupils carefully to ensure they are on track to reach the expectations of our curriculum and are challenged further where appropriate.

