



Curriculum Intent – why we do what we do with the national curriculum subjects!

Whitehall is in an area that has a rich diversity of cultures, religions, ideas and backgrounds.

English is the most important requirement for any child to be able to fully access the curriculum that we deliver. Whether children have English as a first language, as a second language or have not yet been exposed to it, we ensure that all children learn standard English by having a curriculum that focuses heavily on language; hearing it, seeing it, using it, reading it, writing it and especially understanding it.

We want children to succeed in our school, have aspirations for a fulfilling future and succeed in life. Our curriculum opens up the world to them, giving them opportunities to learn, explore, question reason, share and develop resilience and independence while supporting others to do the same.

Across the school we ensure that the curriculum in Reception covers the Governments 2020 Early Years Framework and that in Key Stage 1 the 2014 National Curriculum.

The EYFS Early Years Framework is divided into **Prime** and **Specific** areas of learning. The prime areas are: *Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development* and *Physical Development* are prioritised over the specific areas of learning as these are used throughout the whole curriculum to support learning in all areas. The Specific areas are, *Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World* and *Expressive Arts and Design*.

The National Curriculum subjects are divided into two groups: **Core** subjects and **Foundation** subjects. The core subjects of *English* and *Maths* are given the morning's teaching time along with reading and phonics work. The other core subjects of *Science* and *RE* are used throughout the afternoons in what we call our Creative Curriculum with the foundation subjects: History, Geography, Design and Technology and Art.

To ensure we cover the skills and knowledge in all the **specific** and **foundation** subjects we use a scheme called Cornerstones across the school, from Nursery to Year 2. This gives us project driven activities such as - Paws, Claws and Whiskers, Scented Garden, Bright Lights, Big City. These projects bring different curriculum subjects together for exciting and creative learning opportunities. Each year, when we plan which projects we will be using, we make sure the choices are based around the needs of the children in each year group. This is also true during delivery of the creative curriculum, lessons and content are adapted to ensure individual needs are met and that all children in our care have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed and are ready for their next stage of learning.

To ensure that no children are disadvantaged in accessing the curriculum, we weave in lots of enrichment experiences so that children are able, through visits, out of school experiences, special workshops in and out of school, to fully benefit from the rich content of the learning provided through the Cornerstones projects. We aim to ensure the children have a good understanding of the learning

opportunities the local community offers. For example, in Art each class visits Walsall Art Gallery to develop different skills, working with different media; giving all the children the exposure to real-life art work so that they can be inspired and influenced in their own art. In Geography, the children are taken on visits to explore the local area and to think about how the area can be improved. We are lucky enough to have a range of places of worship within walking distance and each year group visits one place in the year which supports their RE learning.

Each Year group has several trips each year and these are either linked to the creative curriculum that is delivered in the afternoon through the Cornerstones project, or where an immersive experience is needed in English to develop understanding of a book or film that is being used to lead the learning. Often children need first-hand experiences of what they are learning about if they are going to make the most progress they are capable of. These experiences also create brilliant opportunities for children who don't get exposed to a rich range of standard English vocabulary to quickly acquire what is needed for a certain area of learning.

There will be times when some of the learning objectives for some NC subjects don't fit into the projects created by Cornerstones or can be added purposefully to teachers' adapted lessons. To make sure that all NC subjects are covered effectively we will teach these areas of learning as 'stand-alone' lesson. We have found that most of the time it is more effective to teach Music, PE and computing as individual subjects although cross curricular links into the creative afternoon curriculum will be made where purposeful learning is possible.

RE will be taught through the creative afternoon curriculum when the learning objectives can be successfully and relevantly met, incorporated into the timetable via story based sessions at the end of the day, delivered during English lessons as a focus for writing or as a standalone RE lesson. Significant spiritual or cultural celebrations will also be covered in Tuesday's SMSC assemblies (Social, Moral, Spiritual, Cultural) and through Year group celebratory activities.

Education is more than just learning academic, physical and artistic subjects. We want our children to be able to embrace the community they live in, locally and nationally, so they can benefit from the richness around them. Our curriculum ensures that we care for the whole child, supporting them with opportunities to be excited for the success of others, in all aspects of life, whether class-based, home, culture, faith, special interest or achievement. Lessons and activities based around children's Personal, Health, Social and Emotional wellbeing and their Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning are covered in our class-based assemblies where children get to talk about friendships and how to work together and solve relationship problems. Wherever possible we make links to children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development throughout the day so that our children can be healthy, well rounded, educated citizens able to interact and be part of the community around them. These values also help to make our children ready for the world of work.

Books are used as hooks to engage the children in our English lessons with a wide variety of genres and styles and that will support the children in developing a love for reading and books. We use a whole range of books from up to date modern ones and the old fairy tale classics. All books are chosen because of their rich language, opportunities to develop comprehension, inference and deduction, that have interesting characters and story lines that will capture the imagination and enthuse budding writers.