

White Laith Primary School

Curriculum Policy 2022

Agreed by Governors: October 2022

Review date: October 2025

Safeguarding

At White Laith we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at White Laith. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

We also exercise this responsibility by educating our children so that they grow in their understanding of their rights and responsibilities to themselves and others, in safety consciousness, and, in their maturity and abilities to keep themselves and others safe.

We perceive this to be part of our role in promoting British values

School Aims

Through commitment, determination and a willingness to embrace change we will:

- Develop independent, effective learners who enjoy school and who will become life-long learners
- Create a cohesive school community in which there is mutual understanding, trust and respect
- Empower staff and children by raising confidence, self-esteem and self-belief
- Equip children with the attitudes, qualities, skills and understanding they need for success in our ever-changing, diverse world
- Bring about optimum achievement for every child
- Become an excellent school

Our Curriculum

Our aim is for a curriculum which maintains high expectations and standards, increases motivation and enjoyment of pupils and staff and prepares our children for the future supporting them to be positive, healthy citizens.

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear at our school. We value the importance of each person in our community and recognise the importance of spiritual and moral development as well as intellectual and physical growth.

The curriculum is the means by which we achieve our objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives. All pupils will secure firm foundations in English and Mathematics and this underpins a growing

excellence in other subjects. Our curriculum engages the children's interests, encourages and motivates them to want to learn. It is exciting and offers pupils first hand experience to reinforce their learning and to underpin their growing knowledge, skills and understanding. It opens their eyes to the wonders of creation and causes them to marvel at the incredible and fantastic world in which we live.

Our high expectation of children begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Our Foundation Stage unit includes Nursery (F1) and Reception (F2) classes. Staff use the Foundation Stage Curriculum Statutory Guidance, Development Matters and our Early Reading policy guidance (phonics sequence) to plan, monitor and guide learning.

The unit is designed to promote independence, self-control and cooperation. Within it there are a wide range of exciting and enticing areas of provision (both inside and outside) developed from the children's interests and their learning needs. The curriculum encourages curiosity and individuality so that children ask questions and share ideas. We place great emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills and target children who will benefit from additional support in this area. All Reception children take part in daily Maths, English and Phonics lessons which are reinforced through the challenge activities alongside exploratory play.

For years 1-6 the National Curriculum is used as a framework for teaching. This includes the following subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, Art and Design, Computing, Geography, History, Languages, Music and Physical Education. We also use the Leeds Agreed syllabus to support teaching of Religious Education (RE) and the Leeds Agreed Scheme of Work for Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) including RSE.

Teachers plan creatively, developing exciting and motivating topic-based sequences of learning which take account of pupil interests and always incorporate frequent opportunities to apply basic skills and learn and review key knowledge.

Children have at least one hour of English teaching each day. Additional time is given to extra reading, phonics, handwriting and spelling. In KS1 children take part in daily phonics sessions which are linked to their learning in writing, to allow them to apply and deepen their basic skills.

Children also have at least one hour of Maths teaching each day. In addition, children in years 2-6 complete daily Time Tables Rockstars challenges and a weekly maths basic skills check which is designed to show progress in basic number skills and highlight points to improve on.

Areas of the Curriculum

Reading

Teaching a child to read is vital. We use a range of strategies, in addition to phonics, such as a variety of decoding methods, teaching high frequency words through sight recognition, discussion through picture books and focus interventions. To further develop reading skills, we use high quality class texts as the basis for English and topic learning. These texts are carefully chosen to ensure that there is progression and challenge for all learners. Home readers are carefully chosen to match phonic learning and to inspire a love of reading. Class libraries are organised into author boxes to widen the children's experience of

different genres and writing styles. Non-fiction packs which link to topic learning inspire interest and broaden knowledge. Children are expected to read at home every day and are encouraged to select books of their choice from the class libraries and Home Reading baskets.

In Key Stage 2, some children from each class are selected to take part in Book Club where the children are able to broaden their reading repertoire and have the opportunity to discuss the books with their peers.

One to one daily reading occurs in Reception, year 1 and year 2. During these reading sessions, there is an emphasis on vocabulary, the retrieval of facts and inference as well as improving fluency and stamina. Furthermore, all classes read during 'Morning Work' time and class teachers aim to read with all children across KS2 individually at least once per week with vulnerable readers being heard daily.

Phonics

We use the White Laith Primary School Phonics Progression Chart to inform our teaching (see our Early Reading Policy for more details). Each child in Reception and Yr1 has a daily, minimum 20-minute phonics lesson, following the teaching sequence of revisit/ review – teach – practise - apply. In Yr2, children access a balance of both phonic and spelling punctuation and grammar (SPAG) lessons based on their individual needs and attainment. Reception and KS1 children are either taught as a whole class or are organised into small groups, based on regular assessments so that children's learning needs are accurately matched to the correct provision. Small phonic sessions or interventions are delivered by teaching assistants and overseen by the class teacher, to provide complimentary teaching.

Sessions are lively, fast-paced and fun. In a session, children are taught either phonemes/ digraphs/ trigraphs, high frequency and/or tricky words and these are consolidated through reading and writing. There are lots of opportunities to speak and listen, as well as to read and write the sounds.

At the end of Year 1, children have to take the national *Phonics Test* which tests children's phonic knowledge. Here, they are required to read real and nonsense words, applying the skills they have learnt. Ideally, children will have completed and consolidated Phase 5 during Year 1 and Phase 6 during Year 2, so that they can focus more on higher-level comprehension using increasingly challenging texts. Any child that does not complete the phonics programme will continue learning phonics throughout Year 3/4 during interventions.

Writing

Writing opportunities are planned through carefully selected books linked to topics / themes. Visits and other visual stimuli such as video clips are also used as a stimulus for writing. Challenging texts are chosen to ensure that children have an excellent model for their own writing. We use elements of 'Talk for Writing' throughout school and develop the process of editing as children move through KS2. Precise teaching of grammar is woven throughout the teaching sequence to ensure that children have frequent opportunity to apply their grammar knowledge. Grammar teaching is progressive and children build on what they have learnt in previous year groups as they move through school.

Throughout their time at White Laith children are exposed to a range of classic and contemporary poetry, drama workshops and historical re-enactments and use these opportunities to stimulate, excite and inform writing.

Working with Trust colleagues, we have developed progression documents for staff which cover progression in spoken word, reading and writing. These are used to inform planning and standardise assessment.

Maths

We believe that mathematics should be fun and rewarding for all children. As such we endeavour to make our work in mathematics engaging for all learners.

Our curriculum is mapped by the White Rose Maths Hub scheme of work. We focus on a progression from concrete resources, to pictorial representations and finally into the numerical abstract to aid our children's conceptual understanding. As a result, we are seeing a growth in confidence in all our learners, especially in areas of problem solving and reasoning.

Maths is taught daily and all children take part in whole class lessons. Within these lessons there are opportunities for children to work in smaller groups, guided by an adult, if required.

Teachers use questioning to stimulate thought and support problem solving and children are encouraged to explain their thinking. Teachers also use questioning to identify and address misconceptions alongside strategies such as pre-teaching and 'same-day intervention' which enable more children to progress quickly. Some children benefit from small-group teaching within our SEN provision (Windermere) here they are able to make progress against 'small-steps' and develop confidence and independence.

TT Rockstars is used from Y2 to Y6 to support quick recall of times tables. Children complete daily paper-based 'tests' in class trying to beat their score and time from the previous day. This is reinforced by the use of the online TT Rocks challenges which children complete at home and at school. Some children are invited to lunchtime TT Rocks clubs to further support their learning. Class and school leader boards are used to motivate and reward children. As a result, an increasing number of children are fluent in all their times tables.

Children also complete weekly basic-skills checks – again the challenge is to get one more point. Teachers analyse results and use this to inform starter activities for the following week.

All children from year 1 -6 have access to Mathletics (maths based online programme) and are able to practise their calculation skills at home. Teachers identify and allocate specific activities appropriate to individual's learning and children are rewarded with certificates for completion.

Science

Science stimulates and excites pupils' curiosity about phenomena and events in the world around them. Children learn to ask questions and decide how to find answers to them.

We follow the National Curriculum for science ensuring all pupils develop their scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics.

They plan, carry out, record and draw conclusions from investigations working on their own, in pairs and groups. Science is hands on where possible and pupils are given the opportunities to experience science in the real world

Where possible we use visits to extend and apply knowledge and learning eg pond-dipping at the RSPB, fossil hunting on Ingleborough, apple-picking at the RHS.

Our Victory Garden is now a fantastic allotment space and all children join in with planting, weeding, harvesting, cooking and eating our produce! The Victory garden and wildlife garden also provide lots of opportunities to explore. Our pond, meadow area, bird-hide, bug-hotels and sensory path are becoming a haven for wildlife and we can explore these areas freely at lunchtimes using spotter-guides to help us.

PSHE and RSE

High quality PSHE underpins all our learning and we have dedicated PSHE lessons in addition to informal class discussion, assemblies and/or circle time sessions. Our PSHE curriculum covers identity, society and equality, keeping safe and managing risk, drug, alcohol and tobacco education, careers, financial capability and economic wellbeing, sex and relationship education, mental health and emotional wellbeing and physical health and wellbeing.

These are explored through themes such as: celebrating difference, playing safe, weighing up risk, growing up and changing, friendship, democracy and fun times.

World of Work experiences and saving opportunities through the Leeds Credit Union Schools Saving scheme allow children to find out more about work and finance and develop good habits for the future.

MindMate lessons begin each half term and this is where children learn how to keep themselves mentally healthy - this includes discussion about feelings and healthy relationships.

We also use our grounds to support mental health providing shady areas that are relaxing places to rest and reflect.

Children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 take part in the Leeds Smiles programme brushing their teeth in school after lunch every day. Supporting children's dental health is an important practical part of our work improving children's health. We have also developed links with the Health Visitor service taking part in a pilot system sharing information between the NHS and Education to improve access and support for all children.

RE

We teach RE using the Leeds Agreed Syllabus. We teach about all the major world religions, encouraging respect and understanding. All children take part in a daily act of worship either in class or in assembly. The children are challenged to think about their words and their actions and how we can make the world a better place.

The syllabus provides a broad and balanced programme of RE which reflects three key areas. It will,

- include a study of the key beliefs and practices of religions and other world views, including those represented in Leeds.
- provide opportunities to explore key religious concepts and common human questions of meaning, purpose and value, often called 'ultimate' questions.
- enable pupils to investigate how beliefs affect moral decisions and identity, exploring both diversity and shared human values. These three areas together will nurture pupils' religious literacy and may be called phenomenology, philosophy and ethics.

These are explored through themes including celebrating special events, welcoming new life, creation stories, values for life and how different people show commitment to their religion.

Computing

ICT (Computing) plays an important part in our children's education and pupils are actively encouraged to become confident in using computers to support and enhance their learning from an early age. We have a designated teacher to lead Computing and are excited about the opportunities to introduce new and emerging technologies into school. Children work creatively developing their computational thinking and problem solving skills. Digital literacy also supports learning in art and music and children work as animators, composers and film-makers – it really is exciting!

High profile learning about keeping ourselves safe online is a very important element to children's learning in ICT and this is supported and reinforced with PSHE sessions and in whole school assemblies.

Geography, History, Art, Design Technology and Music are taught within topics which are designed to stimulate questioning, teach and develop new skills, resolve issues, promote creativity and imagination whilst also providing opportunities to develop the key skills of numeracy and literacy.

Geography and History

History and Geography form an important part of our curriculum. We follow the National curriculum and embrace a broad-spectrum of stimulating topics. As a school we aim to wholly develop each child's geographical and historical skills, understanding and knowledge. Consequently, our lessons are well planned, highly engaging and challenge all abilities.

We make sure that children have the opportunity to use their skills and develop their knowledge in real-life situations such as map reading whilst climbing Ingleborough and setting up an Andersen shelter and 'Digging for Victory' in our WWII garden.

Visits and visitors are also a valuable resource which help to deepen understanding and allow children's learning to flourish. Visiting Hadrian's Wall and re-enacting conflicts around it as well as holding a roman brooch just excavated and climbing down endless steps and feeling the temperature drop as you explore a cave bring History and Geography to life.

We teach a knowledge rich curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all learners the skills needed to succeed in life. We teach through Topics (through Literacy where links can be made) as opposed to themes. If an element does not link it is taught as a standalone.

Art and Design

Within Art and Design children have the opportunity to explore and develop skills in drawing, painting, printing, sculpture, collage and textiles and be creative.

In Design Technology, children develop their skills and knowledge in design, structures, mechanisms, electrical control and a range of materials, including food. It encourages children's creativity and encourages them to think about important issues.

Learning in both subjects is linked to topics to help broaden experiences, support understanding and provide opportunities for creativity and individuality. We use a range of artists, sculptors and designers, both modern and historical from a range of different cultures, to inspire our learning and supplement this with focussed visits to art galleries and sculpture parks. Learning is also enhanced by links to digital technology and science.

Skills are taught in a clear, progressive manner building on previous learning so that children can feel proud of what they have created and can improve their control of materials, tools and techniques.

We take advantage of individual staff skills and expertise to team teach particular themes so that children have the highest quality learning experiences.

Music

Teachers and children work with creative partners (dancers, artists, musicians) to develop new skills. Our music provision is developing each year. Our pianist supports our singing lessons and we take part in the Young Voices concert at Sheffield Arena and the Partnership concert at Leeds Trinity University each year. We love singing! We have also introduced whole class recorder lessons and ukulele afterschool club.

We work in close partnership with Leeds Artforms which means that children in year 2, 4 and 6 have a series of weekly drum lessons (equivalent of one term per year). Our year 5 children also visit Bishop Young Academy (our local high school) for a full day of piano, guitar, singing and drumming.

In addition we take part in the Leeds Lieder operatic programme each year where children take part in workshops with singers and attend a live performance in Leeds Town Hall.

Languages

Spain is a relatively popular holiday destination for the children at White Laith. Therefore, children in KS2 learn Spanish. Children learn to listen to and join in with the language in a variety of ways such as through discussion, songs, stories and rhymes, starting with the basics: numbers, greetings, classroom instructions and vowels. As children become more confident and as learning progresses, they will begin to engage in conversations by asking and answering questions, speaking in full sentences and developing their pronunciation. They will learn to write basic phrases and use a dictionary to broaden their vocabulary. Children learn about the culture in Spain and have the opportunity to write and speak to

Spanish adults/children. In addition, children visit the local high school languages department to extend, consolidate and try out the skills we learn in school.

PE

As part of our Physical Education programme children have daily PE lessons taught by the class teacher and also by professional games, dance and gymnastics coaches. Our REAL PE and REAL gym schemes not only focus on physical skills, but also holistically develop our children's multi-abilities (personal, social, creative and cognitive skills). These skills, as well as our PE ethos values, are transferable to other aspects of school and personal life. In KS2 each class undertake a unit of PE linked to whole class competition. We work closely with Leeds Gymnastics Centre who support our weekly gymnastics lessons and afterschool club. This has improved children's fundamental motor skills giving them much more confidence-encouraging many of our children to take up gymnastics out of school.

Throughout the year we offer a range of workshops in a variety of sports and physical activities that children may not usually have access to in order to promote engagement, enjoyment and participation in lifelong physical activity. In foundation stage as well as weekly PE sessions and physical challenges in class, children also take part balance bike sessions.

Children receive the equivalent of one year of weekly swimming lessons (1 hour each week) during year 3 and 4. Some children may attend extra intensive swimming sessions in order to promote meeting required standards of swimming 25m. All pupils receive water safety training each year through assemblies led by the RNLI and during swimming and class lessons.

A wide variety of activities are offered as after school clubs which also support the PE curriculum and encourage children to develop an interest in lifelong physical activity. Clubs offered are chosen as a result of pupil audits at the end of the year. As many places as possible are provided for children free of charge to enable as many children as possible to access clubs. Children who do not take part in physical activity outside of school hours are asked specifically what activities they would like to try and these clubs are offered at lunch time. There are further opportunities for children to take part in competitions with children from our Trust and other local schools.

Children are made fully aware of the benefits of physical activity to their overall health including mental health.

Our outdoor space provides activity, skills and quiet areas. Children are encouraged to be physically active at playtime through the use of Active Playtime resources, climbing wall, Fitness Trail and climbing trees. Activities are designed to develop agility, balance and coordination skills as well as being lots of fun! Class elected Sports Ambassadors lead activities linked to national/international sporting events and School Games competitions. There are also opportunities for quiet play in the picnic and small games area and children are encouraged to develop their imaginative and creative skills through role-play, construction and craft activities.

After School Clubs

Staff run after-school clubs on a termly basis. Clubs are run by staff on a voluntary basis and parents appreciate the wider opportunities clubs offer. These clubs change each term and as a result provide a broad range of experiences for children to select from across the year. For example they may include: green-gang, dance, football, multi-sports, gymnastics, healthy cooking, tennis, craft, art, ukulele or dodgeball.

For further details of cultural enhancement see our White Laith Entitlement Map