



## **Curriculum – September 2022**

### **Introduction – A Statutory Duty**

*Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:*

- *promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and*
- *prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.*

*The school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that each school plans for its pupils. The national curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum.*

This policy defines the curriculum at Hesleden Primary School. The curriculum evolves with the needs of the children and the opportunities which arise.

This policy is written with consideration to our school being a Rights Respecting: Gold School. Although direct reference to this is not continually made, the policy has been written with full awareness of our commitment to Children's Rights. This policy also complies with Article 28 of the UNCRC 'Every child has the right to an education' and Article 31 'Right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities'.

### **What are we trying to achieve?**

At Hesleden Primary, the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all learners, recognising their wide social and economic backgrounds and the community to which they belong. Long- and medium-term planning is regularly reviewed for relevance and interest, and subject leaders ensure skills are progressive and coverage is consistent. Detailed subject planning sits behind each Subject's own policy

Through a broad and balanced, creative and challenging curriculum, we support our children to develop positive relationships and become critical thinkers. By providing first-hand and enrichment opportunities, we believe children engage with, and become responsible for, their own learning.

Children should be happy and curious, constantly wanting to make new discoveries. Through 'Gem power', children will develop skills of resilience, independence and perseverance and be able to apply these to support their future learning. Reinforced by the well-planned and sequential teaching of basic skills, knowledge and values, we are ambitious for our children's success.

Developing children's self-confidence is an essential part of our curriculum. Children actively participate in Pupil Voice groups to support school, and community, development. Their Rights are respected and sense of belonging enhanced. They are empowered to make decisions and reflect on their actions.

Children leave our school looking forward to their next steps in learning. They look back on their time at Hesleden with positivity and enthusiasm.

## **Subjects and Subject Leadership**

Subjects at Hesleden Primary are led and monitored by leaders who regularly attend networks to update their own knowledge and skills. High quality teaching and learning is a priority and leaders work together to ensure that this is the case across the school. A shared commitment to improvement ensures teachers support each other through joint scrutiny, internal peer reviews and CPD.

## **English**

Writing is taught through a wide and varied use of exciting stimuli, including: text, film, artefacts, visits and visitors. Teachers have engaged in a range of CPD, based on research, that has enhanced their own knowledge and skill in teaching writing effectively. Quality writing is a priority and, as such, there is a significant focus on developing language and vocabulary from the youngest to the oldest children. Independent writing skills are encouraged throughout the curriculum and are modelled by teachers who have high expectations of the standards children will reach. Modelled writing and extensive vocabulary is displayed in every classroom.

Reading is a fundamental part of everything the children are expected to do. We constantly aim to raise the profile of reading. Early reading begins in Nursery, and throughout the Early Years and Key Stage 1, reading skills including decoding and comprehension are taught through Read, Write Inc. Reciprocal reading from Year 1 encourages children to read for meaning and develop skills which include prediction, clarification, questioning and summarising through quality discussion. Children's ongoing discussion, questioning etc. is displayed in classrooms. High quality texts and resources are used, including those linked to topic or themed learning. Reading for pleasure is promoted and a class novel is used to hook children in and encourage them to read for pleasure both in and out of school, many older children choosing to read 'ahead' of their class text.

Communication skills are an integral part of learning and are inherent across the curriculum. Paired and shared talk, elbow buddies and whole class discussions take place both within English and across the curriculum, supporting collaborative skills, decision making and problem solving.

## **Maths**

Our mathematics curriculum equips the children with tools that include logical reasoning, problem-solving skills, and the ability to think in abstract ways. We aim to provide all children with some direct teaching every day, which is oral, interactive and stimulating. Teaching styles and lesson structure provide opportunities for pupils to consolidate their previous learning, use and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills, pose and ask questions, investigate mathematical ideas, reflect on their own learning and make links with other work.

Our approach to teaching mathematics is based on some key principles:

- A dedicated maths lesson each day, or focused activity in the Early Years
- Direct teaching and interactive work including independent, small group and whole class activities
- Activities are differentiated in a manageable way so that all children are engaged yet challenged
- Opportunities for problem solving and investigations on a weekly basis

We ensure that our classrooms are stimulating learning environments where our displays and resources aim to prompt pupils to remember key facts and vocabulary, develop an image of number and the number system by using consistent and progressive models. Displays are often interactive to encourage children to quickly recall mathematical skills.

## **Science**

Children are equipped with the basic Science knowledge to develop their excitement and curiosity of the world. They are encouraged to transfer their English skills into making a detailed prediction and conclusion for practical work. Children are given the opportunity to plan their own investigations and work as part of a group.

High quality resources are used to ensure high quality teaching and learning takes place. Further opportunities to 'work scientifically' are provided during dedicated termly Science days where there is a whole school focus so that children can demonstrate progression of skills and understanding of concepts.

### **Computing**

Our computing curriculum is designed to equip children with the skills and understanding to live in a technological world. We have laptops and iPads which are used to teach aspects of computing. Children are taught basic skills across a range of programs and apps. They are also taught to use computers as a learning and communicating resource.

There is an emphasis on the importance of Online Safety for all year groups.

### **History**

Through the study of history, we aim to inspire curiosity, encourage children to ask perceptive questions and weigh up evidence, to investigate, consider, reflect and review in order to help them develop a coherent knowledge and a chronological understanding of the past.

### **Geography**

Children are encouraged to develop a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people. We endeavour to equip children with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, as well as helping them understand the Earth's key physical and human processes.

### **Art & Design / Design & Technology**

Children are encouraged to become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques. They evaluate and analyse creative work using the language of art, craft and design.

They learn about the work of a range of artists, craft makers and designers, describing the differences and similarities between different practices and disciplines; making links to their own work and understand the historical and cultural development of their form of art.

Children are given the opportunity to use a wide range of materials and to plan, design and make a variety of objects. They are encouraged to review, assess and if necessary, modify their work in order to achieve the planned result.

### **PE**

Children are given the opportunity to develop a wide range of physical skills such as running, jumping, climbing, balancing etc. and to use many different types of apparatus. Movement to music is also taught and P.E. is often linked to other curriculum areas such as drama, science and health education.

Whilst we encourage children to extend their abilities physically, attention is also paid to safety, which we consider to be of paramount importance. Team games are taught and co-operation, sportsmanship and teamwork are encouraged.

Outside partners provide in-school coaching which leads to children's participation in sports festivals and competitions. All children in Key Stage 2 are given the opportunity to take part in a 3-day residential comprising of outdoor and adventurous activities.

### **Music**

Pupils are introduced, and are learning, to explore a wide genre of music from an early age. They are encouraged to work co-operatively to appraise and produce music both as individuals and in groups.

The music curriculum consists of practical music-making such as singing and playing, exploring different types of music and attempting simple composition using percussion, tuned instruments and computer programs.

### **MFL**

Children are taught French across KS2 in attempt to foster their curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. While learning a Foreign Language, children will be able to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing.

### **RE – Durham Agreed Syllabus**

The children learn about major world religions including Christianity, re-visiting and deepening their knowledge and understanding of different faiths throughout the key stages. Children develop their own critical thinking in reflecting on their learning and comparing religions. They progress to consider their own ideas and values through personal reflection.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of key importance. RE lays the foundations for this, alongside devoted teaching time for PSHCE.

### **PSHCE & Relationships Education**

We dedicate allocated time to the teaching of Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship and Relationships education. Children's personal, emotional and mental wellbeing and development are of the utmost importance within our wider curriculum and this curriculum is planned to support the children's ability to be prepared for, and cope in, an ever-changing society.

Dedicated teaching time includes coverage of Relationships Education, Equality and Diversity, Careers and Aspirations opportunities, physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing and online safety.

Within this curriculum, external partners and a wide range of experiences are used to support the delivery of this integral part of the school's curriculum. The children's interest in, and empathy for, others is demonstrated through their discussions on local, national and global issues, through daily 'Newsround' sessions; active involvement in Pupil Voice groups and an understanding of the importance of charity work.

### **Outdoor Learning**

A key element to our curriculum is outdoor provision. We recognise the benefits of exploration and creativity within the Early Years, and try hard to mirror this across the rest of the school. 'Loose parts' play continues to be developed, and supports children's imaginative play, collaboration and problem solving skills during unstructured times.

Our forest schools leader plans and delivers sequences of learning for all classes across the year, developing and improving competence in all Gem power areas.

## **How is our curriculum being delivered?**

At Hesleden Primary School, planning resources and guidance include Development Matters in the Early Years, National Curriculum Statutory Guidance and Durham RE Agreed Syllabus. Additionally, Forest Schools and outdoor learning, enrichment opportunities and a comprehensive PSHCE plan support teaching and learning, and children's personal and academic development.

### **Planning**

Long-term planning is developed by Subject leads in discussion with LA advisory teams and teachers. A 2-year cycle is in place for most subjects, but is reviewed annually to respond to changes in school structure and need.

Long-term plans are translated into medium-term knowledge sequences to ensure that learning opportunities and knowledge are identified for each class. This ensures consistency across the school and supports progress.

Each subject lead produces planning for across to school. This helps the monitoring and evaluation of their subject.

### **Gem powers and the four 'B's**

Staff and children engage in the use of these 'powers' to encourage a range of transferable skills enabling children to become responsible for their own learning. These link closely to the Early Years characteristics of teaching and learning:

- Brain / Diamond power  
Developing independence and problem solving / thinking skills; asking good questions; using taught strategies (toolkit)  
EY CfTL: creating and thinking critically  
"Being responsible"
- Buddy / Ruby power  
Developing collaborative skills; working together to succeed  
"Supporting others"
- Bits & Bobs / Emerald and Sapphire power  
Consolidating independence through resilience; sticking with it to have another go; learning from mistakes  
EY CfTL: playing and exploring  
"Bounce-back-ability"  
Keeping focus – staying on tasks; active listening skills  
EY CfTL: active learning  
"Avoid monster distractions"
- Boss  
Having the courage and knowing the right time to ask for help from an adult

### **Subject specific provision**

Across the school, Y1-Y6 follow a structured timetable to ensure learning time is maximised and all subject content is taught. Opportunities are provided for some cross-curricular learning, however subject specific lessons are the main focus. This enables teachers to plan a range of tasks and activities in line with planned knowledge sequences.

Tasks and activities planned allow children to gain knowledge and understand concepts, including through research and discussion, practical and written tasks. Both collaborative and independent learning strategies are encouraged.

Visits and visitors are planned to enhance children's first-hand learning and extend their experiences outside of the school and their local community. Resources used, or sourced, are of high quality and include those shared with local Partnership schools or the community. The school environment is continually being developed as a learning resource: the Wonder room continues to 'wow' and develop curiosity; outdoor learning develops resilience and creative thinking. The environment is well managed and organised. Staff share best practice and 'what works well' in these areas.

### **Use of Assessment; Marking and Feedback**

Learning opportunities are planned based on what the children already know, what they understand, and what they can do. Assessment in Hesleden Primary is well-embedded, consistent and understood by all staff. A whole-school approach is used to track children's progress against age-related expectations, based on subject specific criteria across the whole curriculum.

Marking is carried out in a range of ways. Relevant and useful feedback is given both throughout a lesson, and following marking in books. Meaningful stamps, defined for use with the children, enable them to identify areas for improvement, or correct their own work. The same stamps are used to praise strengths and recognise understanding.

### **Are we making a difference?**

As stated above, assessment is well-embedded and opportunities to share marking and feedback with the children are taken regularly. Teachers use formative and summative assessment strategies to plan, and to track progress. Termly data is input and all teachers meet to discuss the outcomes of the analysis, planning additional learning opportunities or interventions as necessary to ensure knowledge and skills are embedded and extended.

Lesson observations and book scrutinies are also used to determine whether high quality teaching and learning is consistent. All staff take part in such monitoring tasks, including the use of Video Observation (VO) to ensure best practice is shared and provision / outcomes are constantly under review.

Book scrutinies with children are planned, and VO to observe children's learning (discussion; resilience) is to be introduced.

Parents and children are also involved in evaluating our curriculum's impact. Annual surveys to parents gather their views on their child's progress and their perceptions of the quality of teaching and the standards of behaviour. They are also asked to comment on the information they receive from school about their child. Survey results are overwhelmingly positive.

More importantly, children are asked for their opinion. The majority of children enjoy school, are happy, and find their lessons interesting. They recognise that they have a voice that will be heard, they understand our school rules and behaviour systems, and who will support them if they have a problem.

Parents are regularly invited into school (Family Fridays; Parent Consultations) to allow the children to share their learning, and to speak to teachers formally about their child's progress. These sessions are well-attended and many positive comments are shared.

We take pride in sharing the successes of the children. Our weekly Awards Assembly recognises effort and attainment, as well as behaviour and the use of 'Gem powers'. Our annual achievements day celebrates this further.

Through 'House' time and Pupil Voice activities, whole-school themed days and other organised events, we can see that our children behave well and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and towards others. They engage well in Gem power learning and are confident when moving around school, working with visitors, during transitions into their next class and when moving school.

Adopted by Governors: .....

Date: .....