

### **A Curriculum with HEART....**

Our forest/rural surroundings encourage curiosity and wonder and therefore our curriculum is an adventure that allows our children to explore new things, discover more about themselves and the world around them and create a toolkit of knowledge and skills that mean they are well equipped to face the next stage of their adventure. Our values run through everything we do and mean we face adventures with HEART.

### **English Subject Statement 2024-2025**

*We believe that reading, writing and speaking and listening open up a world of inspiration and creativity. It is our aim to enrich and empower our childrens' vocabulary so they are able to articulate themselves clearly and confidently. We strive for our children to experience people, cultures and worlds beyond our own. This can deepen and enrich a reader's understanding of the world and their place in it. We aim to inspire our children to become fluent readers who develop a life-long love of literature, whilst also giving them the opportunity to develop their own style and expression through writing.*

#### **In line with the National Curriculum, we ensure that all children:**

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding. Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

#### **Phonics and Early Reading:**

We believe that all children should begin to acquire the knowledge of synthetic phonics as soon as it is appropriate for their stage of development. As a school, we commit to one systematic synthetic phonics program; Little Wandle, Letters & Sounds. Daily delivery, along with identified individual support, ensures each child progresses through the program and succeeds in learning to read. All children follow the three practice read sessions using the Little Wandle, Big Cat Collins books. This will match their current phonological awareness enabling them to consolidate and practise their reading skills at home. All staff receive regular training to ensure delivery of the program is highly effective.

### **Reading:**

In all of our classes, reading lessons are planned for and prioritised by class teachers so that children are able to experience and enjoy a wide range of texts that they may not otherwise experience. This includes: books from other cultures, poetry, classics and a wide range of fiction and non-fiction. Our reading lessons are skills based to develop all aspects of becoming an effective reader; there is a focus on fluency while promoting a love for reading. We encourage our children to express opinions and to make connections across their learning whether through cross curricular links or between texts and authors studied. Vocabulary is explicitly taught so that knowledge can be extended and applied across the whole curriculum

All children have access to a reading book from our school library and are encouraged to read both at home and in school. The books are matched to individual children's reading abilities, as necessary. Once they become independent readers then children are encouraged to write their own comments in their reading diaries which are checked weekly.

### **Reading for Pleasure:**

*To support the lifelong achievements of our children, schools and teachers must develop practices that instil a love of reading and encourage future generations to become intrinsically motivated readers themselves (Merga, 2017)*

We believe that books should provide mirrors for the children in which they can see themselves reflected, and windows, through which they can look into the lives and stories of people who are different. Using this approach, we carefully select high quality books from a diverse range of authors. Across school, staff support children to identify books they enjoy by regularly sharing and discussing different texts with their classes that span a range of different genres. Children are encouraged to read regularly at home through the use of reading diaries. As a reading initiative, the school has launched 'We Are Reader' tote bags that include a range of poetry, non-fiction and fiction. The children can respond to these books in journals and enjoy a hot chocolate and blanket!

*'Empowering children with a sense of agency & choice is fundamental to motivating intrinsic readers throughout school (Clark and Rumbold.)'*

All children are able to borrow books from their classroom libraries to read and visit the school library. We regularly hold book fairs with our local bookshop and pre-loved events, where every child goes home with at least one book. Children have the opportunity to take part in 'Reading Buddies', in which they mix with other children from different year groups and share a book together.

### **Writing:**

We plan our writing journeys using the HIAS three-stage approach; 'stimulate and generate', 'capture, sift and sort', followed by 'create, refine and evaluate'. Each stage is of equal importance and through careful consideration of each stage, we aim to develop the appropriate knowledge and skills needed to become successful writers both now and in the future.

We believe that writing should have a purpose. All our writing opportunities are enhanced by rich texts which challenge and inspire the children. Children are engaged in authentic writing opportunities that are linked to our curriculum. Grammar and sentence structure is modelled explicitly using exemplar texts as part of the writing process so that children can learn, practice and experiment with language structures in a wide range of different genres. Our new carefully sequenced progression will ensure that our children develop and practise key grammatical structures with high levels of repetition through school. This will result in children who can write confidently and with a high degree of technical accuracy by the end of key stage 2. Critique has now been built into our writing structure to enable the children to consider and improve the accuracy and effectiveness of their writing through a process of feedback, editing and redrafting. A final draft or presentation piece is created to showcase the children's finished work.

### **Spelling and Handwriting:**

Both spelling and handwriting are taught and modelled in discrete lessons and also practised and applied through writing. We follow the Little Wandle, Letters and Sounds (Key stage 1), No Nonsense Spelling (Key stage 2) Programme and the Letterjoin handwriting programme. This ensures that these skills are developed through carefully sequenced and organised lessons in order to enable our pupils to write with greater accuracy and fluency and therefore build their writing stamina. Emphasis is now being given to maintaining our high expectations for spelling and handwriting across all curriculum subjects.

### **Speaking and Listening:**

We believe that speaking and listening forms the foundation for all other learning. It is central to forming relationships and acting as a cognitive tool. We model language and provide opportunities for our children to practise speaking clearly and confidently. The teaching and learning approach at our school encourages the children to have a voice. During lessons children are actively encouraged to share their ideas and thoughts as well as to question. We understand that an important part of learning is to discuss new or difficult concepts in order to unpick and develop a deeper understanding in all curriculum areas. Staff model how to use a range of appropriate vocabulary for the subject that they are teaching which also encourages high expectations across the curriculum.

