



Northowram Primary School

Curriculum Pledge

Inspiring Success Beyond Expectation



Curriculum Intent

*Pupils' progress and attainment in Reading, Writing and Maths at the end of Early Years, year 1 (phonics) KS1 and KS2 will be in the **top 10% of schools nationally**. Pupils in our school will meet the 90% Reading, Writing and Maths combined government target well ahead of the 2030 deadline.*

*All pupils will benefit from a 'Knowledge Based' curriculum which is more **expansive and ambitious** than the national curriculum and, as a consequence, will be very well prepared for Secondary school and possess a store of essential knowledge and the skills to use it regardless of their background or 'ability'. Academic subjects which offer our pupils the most opportunity to develop Cultural Capital (Maths, English, Science, History, Geography, Art and Music) will be prioritised in our curriculum.*

Pupils with SEND and/or EHC plans will make good academic and personal progress and will be supported to become successful, independent learners.

Curriculum Implementation

Daily Maths Lessons are structured to provide regular practice of times tables and arithmetic as well as new learning. The White Rose Maths Scheme is used as a scaffold for teachers' planning and provides consistency and progression in coverage of all Maths skills and knowledge. Children practice their fluency and speed of times tables recall regularly in Maths lessons and through the weekly use of Times-tables Rockstars. Key calculation strategies for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are modelled to parents and families at annual welcome meetings so they support their children's learning confidently at home. Children practice their Maths skills at home due to our consistent practice through school of providing Maths workbooks where work, closely linked to what has been taught and learned, is set each week.

A long-established 'Text-led' English curriculum is in place throughout school. Our literature spine ensures that children are developing reading and writing skills whilst studying the highest quality stories and poems. Progression in content, length and complexity of themes studied is achieved through careful planning from our experienced English leader. We ensure diversity in author, character and theme throughout the texts studied. Texts are carefully selected in each year group for their ambitious quality of tone, vocabulary and visuals. Authors studied include Poet Laureates past and present and Children's Laureates past and present. Authors studied include Carol Ann Duffy, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Philip Pullman and Michael Morpurgo. Themes are carefully selected to contribute to children's understanding of the world and include apartheid, bullying, slavery, conservation, migration and asylum, prejudice and war. Stories selected cover a wide range of genres including horror, adventure and comedy and are set in a range of places and times from Greek myths, tales from ancient Baghdad and medieval-set poetry to stories and poems set in the trenches of world war 1, South Africa during apartheid and modern-day realistic settings.

Phonics and early reading is prioritised in our curriculum from Nursery to KS1. Daily phonics lessons take place in all classes in Reception and year 1 and are continued throughout the first half term of year 2. Our teachers and teaching assistants receive high quality training on the use of our DfE approved phonics scheme (Read, Write, Inc) and phonics is well resourced. Children practice their phonics skills by reading phonetically regular texts (also including high frequency irregular words) which are closely matched to their stage of development. Fidelity to the teaching methods and progression of skills is achieved through strong leadership and quality assurance by our two phonics leaders.

When children's phonics knowledge is complete (usually at the end of year 1 or by Christmas in year 2), they progress onto an incremental, colour-banded reading scheme (Nelson PM). Whilst reading through this scheme, children's phonic knowledge becomes fast and automatic and is combined with developing techniques to tackle longer, multi-syllabic words and stamina to tackle longer sections of text.

When children's reading is assessed as being fluent and competent (usually at some point during year 3) and they are confident tackling short chapter books, children progress onto Accelerated Reader. Their 'free reading' choices are targeted to well-matched books labelled to match their reading level. Children's understanding of the books they have read is assessed and checked through book quizzes following reading. Teachers keep a close track of children's reading comprehension and number and range of books read through an online monitoring system.

Throughout each stage of reading, teachers work with parents to ensure that reading skills are practiced at home. Reading records in all classes maintain communication between home and school and parents are invited to phonics workshops and welcome meetings which go through the reading expectations in each year group.

Spelling and handwriting are taught daily using consistent schemes to ensure progression. Weekly spellings are set to be practiced at home and results of weekly spelling tests are recorded. Children learn to form letters correctly using a clear, printed style in Reception and year 1 and are taught to use a fluent, joined style of handwriting by the end of year two/first term of year 3 which is then practised and refined through key stage 2. 'Penpals' (the only scheme approved by the National Handwriting Association) is used to structure handwriting lessons. 'Read, Write, Inc' spelling is used to structure content of our spelling curriculum in years 2-6 and provides seamless progression from our phonics scheme.

Writing is taught linked to our text-led curriculum and academic writing is taught and practised each half-term linked to learning in Geography, History and Science. Punctuation and Grammar are taught discreetly and practised in consistent weekly homework tasks in years 1-6. These skills are then applied in children's writing. Teachers model writing using visualisers and whiteboards thus demonstrating writerly techniques matched to the year group expectations and purpose of each writing task. Children's writing is robustly assessed twice per half term and feedback provided on successes and next steps. Assessment of writing is moderated within school, at cluster events and through local authority annual moderation processes.

Parents are provided with termly progress reports on children's Reading and Maths attainment using standardised tests which provide information on where children are working against the year group standard. These also provide Reading and Maths ages and a breakdown of children's strengths and next steps based on their performance in termly tests. We are partners with the 'Primary Knowledge Trust' which means we are part of a national network of like-minded schools who aim to go beyond the national curriculum requirements and more fully prepare our pupils for Secondary school and as well-educated citizens of the world. Alongside Maths, English, Science and Computing, our school counts History, Geography, Music and Art as our 'core subjects' as they provide the best opportunities to develop cultural capital and give children access to the best that has been thought and said in the world. We follow the 'Primary Knowledge Curriculum' (PKC) which ensures that children are taught all the learning requirements of the National Curriculum plus additional knowledge in History, Geography, Music and Art. Learning begins in the Early years with units which introduce key historical and geographical content and vocabulary which are then built upon in KS1. In KS2, these core subjects are prioritised in our timetable and weekly lessons in History, Science, Geography, Art and Music take place. Lessons are planned so that children know more and can remember more using a consistent lesson structure which is focused on the retrieval of prior knowledge, the practising of core vocabulary, clear, teacher-taught input and tasks where children can demonstrate their new learning.

All pupils in our school are taught to play a music instrument in years 3 and year 4. A specialist music teacher teaches weekly whole-class lessons. Many pupils (around 50 currently) also enjoy individual and small group instrumental lessons in school. Currently, pupils in our school take lessons in guitar, piano, flute, clarinet and drumming. Children can extend their musical curriculum by joining musical clubs which take place after school – currently Choir and ukulele club.

Pupils have 2 hours of PE each week. PE is taught by our specialist gym coach in years 1-6 and by teachers. Children take part in a range of inter-school events due to our active participation in Calderdale school games. This includes events and competitions which run throughout the year. Children can extend their PE and sports curriculum by joining before and after-school clubs – currently Gymnastics, Indian dance, Disco and Ballroom dance, Netball and Karate.

RE is taught using the agreed syllabus for Calderdale. Our experienced RE leader attends local network meetings to ensure they are wellinformed of best-practice and statutory duties. Collective worship is broadly Christian and occurs daily in years 1-6. Assembly themes cover a wide range of aspects but always include a termly focus on school values and British values. Religious festivals are discussed and all collective worship ends with reflection and/or prayer.

PSHCE (Personal, social, health and citizenship education) and RSE (relationship and sex education) are taught through weekly lessons. Our PSHCE scheme incorporates all the requirements for RSE and also covers drugs education and online safety.

Computing lessons take place weekly in KS1 so that early computing skills can be practised little and often. In KS2, learning is blocked into longer sessions each half term in order to immerse the children in a memorable learning experience.

Design and Technology lessons are blocked into 1-2 day learning experiences each term. Units are carefully structured to ensure progression in children's skills and knowledge in mechanisms, structures, food technology and textiles. Pupils follow the evaluate, design and review sequence to structure their learning within each unit.

Pupils with SEND including those with EHC plans are taught the full curriculum and are rarely withdrawn. Short, focused evidence-based interventions are carefully planned to ensure that learning across the wider curriculum is not missed. We follow the Education Endowment

Fund's (EEF) research-based principles of the deployment of teaching assistants to ensure that pupils' independence in curricular progress is prioritised. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that potential barriers to learning in all curriculum subjects are removed to allow for full inclusion of pupils with SEND.

Forest school sessions are a key part of our curriculum and are another aspect of our curriculum implementation which goes further than the learning requirements of the national curriculum. Pupils in Reception, year 1, year 3 and year 4 have extended forest school sessions throughout the year. In addition to personal development aspects such as team work, resilience, managing risk and problem solving, our forest school sessions also link directly to our in-class curriculum with activities linked to Geography and Science reinforcing and extending classroom learning. Forest school also contributes to a more ambitious Design and Technology curriculum with children learning to use real tools such as hammers, knives and saws and are tasked to work together to build structures and homes for wildlife and enjoy cooking food outdoors. A targeted group of pupils work as 'Forest Guardians' to conserve, maintain and improve our forest school area and our gardening club work with our enthusiastic volunteers to maintain our horticultural areas which include a biodome, raised beds and polytunnels.

Curriculum Impact

The quality and effectiveness of our curriculum is quality assured by regular checks and in-depth monitoring by our experienced subject leaders. Alongside Maths, English and Phonics leaders, we have three department teams who work to audit, action plan and implement next steps in development for their subjects. The teams are The Arts Team (Art and Music), Humanities Team (History, Geography, RE and French), Health and Well-being Team (PE, PSHCE, pastoral) and STEM (Science, Technology and Computing). Subject leaders within these teams monitor children's progress each term by reviewing pupil workbooks and through pupil interviews. This monitoring allows us to quality assure the consistency of our curriculum offer is maintained throughout school and identifies any areas of development for year groups or teachers. Quality assurance checks and monitoring always include a focus on how well pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are progressing in their curricular learning. Our subject leaders provide regular, high quality training and guidance for teachers on the implementation of their subject area and teacher meetings are allocated regularly to support high quality professional dialogue linked to progression and outcomes.

Our subject leaders are all members of their national association for their subject areas which ensures they are abreast of any local or national priorities. Subject leaders for Geography, History, Science and Art have termly subject networks with our Primary Knowledge Trust' partner schools which provides good quality professional development for our subject leaders and also provides us with the opportunities to compare the learning

outcomes from our school in these subjects to schools nationally. Pupil progress in all subjects (apart from Maths and English) is assessed by teachers through ongoing assessment in weekly lessons and end of unit quizzes and tasks.

Annual 'Deep-Dives' in Reading and Maths allow us to quality assure all aspects of the curriculum in these areas. Alongside the headteacher and deputy headteacher, subject leaders examine all aspects of Maths and Reading through school through a series of lesson observations, pupil interviews and pupils work book scrutiny.

Pupil progress in phonics is tracked through regular individual assessments when children are re-grouped accordingly. Our phonics leaders oversee assessments and provide advice on optimum groupings and teaching techniques.

Pupil progress in Maths and English is tracked through pupil performance in termly standardised tests. English and Maths subject leaders analyse data and support colleagues with planning, teaching and learning where there is a need to accelerate progress. Question level analysis of pupils' performance in tests provides teachers with detailed information about strengths and areas of development of individual pupils and groups. Tightly tailored interventions are then provided to support extra practice on targeted areas of Maths and Reading.

Our Governing Board and School improvement Committee receive termly updates on pupil progress in all year groups and on results at the end of EYFS, KS1 and KS2. Governors are linked to school development priorities and meet with school leaders to discuss progress on curriculum developments, progress and attainment. Regular Governor Days provide governors with the opportunity to see the full curriculum in practice throughout school.

We believe that, with our curriculum offer and expert teaching, pupils' attainment should be in the top 10% of schools nationally at the end of EYFS, in the phonics screener in year 1, at the end of KS1 and the end of KS2. We compare our school's performance to that of schools locally and nationally to chart our progress towards this goal.