

OUR CURRICULUM



The Curriculum at Hillside Primary School provides opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve. Its focus is to engage and enthuse, developing an enjoyment of and commitment to learning as a means of encouraging the best possible progress and highest attainment for all pupils. We are preparing our pupils for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of both the next stages of their education, and for their future lives.

Our curriculum builds progressively on our pupil's strengths, interests and experiences and develops their capacity to work collaboratively and independently.

Our broad and balanced curriculum aims to '*develop the individual*' and contribute to the child's sense of identity through knowledge and understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural heritage of our diverse society. We aim to develop an understanding and appreciation of pupils own and others beliefs and cultures. We aim to develop integrity and autonomy, nurturing our pupils into responsible and caring citizens, who contribute to the development of a just society.

Embedded within our curriculum is our aim to foster and build enduring values. Hillside has adopted the values of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games (Respect, friendship, determination, equality, excellence, courage and inspiration) and these are weaved within and promoted through our curriculum

With the implementation of the new (September 2014) curriculum, we completed a full review of our curriculum. We worked hard to use the statutory framework to build a curriculum which was exciting and relevant to pupils at Hillside and suited the needs of our children.

At Hillside we want our pupils to foster a love of learning and a thirst for knowledge- building the foundations for lifelong learning. We want our children to be inquisitive, to ask questions and develop an enquiring mind. We want them to explore and take risks. Our Foundation subjects are taught through a thematic Learning Challenge approach. The Learning Challenge concept is built around the principle of greater learner involvement in their work, resulting in a more meaningful curriculum which promotes high standards.

The New curriculum tells teachers what to teach. The Learning Challenge approach focuses our teachers on the way they want to deliver it. The key drivers of our approach are:

Planned around the distinctive needs of our children	Allows writing to be meaningfully embedded
Cross-curricular (where meaningful)	Outcome driven to raise standards
Interesting for the teacher as well as children	Integrates empowering learning ('learn to learn')
Enquiry based to promote curiosity	Embeds the application of basic skills

The design of our Learning Challenge curriculum is based around a series of prime and subsidiary learning challenges – all expressed as questions. To begin, Pre Learning activities, tasks are used to ensure that learners are building on their prior knowledge and are fully involved in the planning process granting them ownership of their learning. To ensure that learners are 'hooked' by the theme they are exploring, we plan for a powerful stimulus that grabs the learner- often this is an off-site educational trip. A critical part of our learning challenge approach is ensuring that children understand what they are working towards, i.e. knowing the bigger picture. Careful reflection and reviews of learning help to cement the learning.

Below is an outline of the Hillside Curriculum:

English

Speaking and Listening

Pupils at Hillside are taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using standard English. We encourage children to justify their ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary; negotiate; evaluate and build on the ideas of others and select the appropriate register for effective communication.

It is evident to anyone who visits Hillside that there is an ethos where children feel safe and valued, thus encouraging them to interact in a respectful and expressive manner. The classroom environments are stimulating and creative and there is a rich diet of vocabulary in and around the school which enhances the speaking and listening skills being taught.

Reading

Our reading curriculum is designed to produce productive, creative and well educated students. The challenging and ambitious expectations of the new National Curriculum are reflected in our aims and beliefs of how reading should be taught at Hillside. Pupils within our school are taught to read fluently and encouraged to read for pleasure. To promote reading at Hillside we use a variety of strategies and resources including:

- A wide variety of fiction and nonfiction books to ensure children read a variety of genres and text types.
- Decodable books for children learning to read.
- Synthetic phonics programme to support the teaching of reading.
- Excellent use of the library area where children are encouraged to read in their own free time.
- 'Author of the Term' initiative used in all classes to develop the children's love of reading.
- Reading log's used by 'Independent readers' to ensure they are reading a wide variety of texts.
- Reading promoted in the form of visits from authors, book weeks, book fairs, drama workshops and theatre visits etc.
- 'Reading for pleasure' units of work integrated into English teaching to encourage more flexibility with the types of texts read in class.
- High quality texts used in school across all subjects.

Guided Reading

Comprehension is a key feature of guided reading sessions and an integral part of the new National Curriculum. Teachers at Hillside provide pupils with the progression in comprehension through the increasing challenge of the texts they read. In addition to the difficulty of the text, the level of challenge also comes from the complexity of the questions or the tasks that the teacher sets.

Phonics

Daily discreet phonics lessons are taught in differentiated groups which are suitable for the child's phase of learning. A systematic scheme is used in school which is a fun and interactive way to support children in learning how to read and write. To promote high quality phonic teaching at Hillside we use a variety of strategies and resources including:

- Quality daily phonics lessons that last between 15-20 minutes.
- Careful differentiation for all ability groups, addressing the needs of children with special educational needs, including gifted children, based on ongoing formative assessment and teacher judgement.
- Well planned interactive lessons, delivered at a brisk pace, that keep children engaged and focused.
- Opportunities to reinforce and apply acquired phonic knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- Additional decodable reading books for children to apply their phonic knowledge in phases 2-5.

Writing

We aim to inspire children and encourage the development and application of imagination. We develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Teachers model the 'craft of writing' and the use of phonics and spelling strategies are a focus of shared writing sessions.

The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts and for a variety of purposes and audiences, using quality texts as a model. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by drama techniques and film clips.

Extended, independent writing takes place at least weekly in every class, often linked to the topic being studied. These pieces of writing help to provide a clear assessment of the children's current writing stage and their areas of development within writing.

Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation

At Hillside we have a clear programme of study for the introduction and acquisition of knowledge about grammar and punctuation. Our English sessions are well suited to the practical development of this knowledge through the word, sentence and text level work provided in class. Teachers turn every available minute of teaching into valuable learning time. The first few minutes of the day or English lesson is given over to the practice of essential language skills.

In spelling we value and encourage children as they move through the developmental stages of learning to spell, but we also recognise the importance of mastering and using accurately conventional spelling in order to convey meaning clearly in writing.

Handwriting

Presentation of written work reflects the awareness of the writer to the needs of his or her audience. Our ultimate goal is for pupils to achieve a fast, flowing, legible style of writing. In order to achieve this, we are aware of the need for a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting across the key stages. We use the Penpals handwriting scheme to support our delivery of a structured teaching programme.

Mathematics

The children at Hillside develop their mathematical skills through a daily mathematics lesson and cross curricular learning.

The national curriculum for mathematics, and therefore, mathematics at Hillside, aims to ensure that all pupils become fluent in the fundamentals of mathematics, can reason mathematically and can apply their skills to problem solving. Primary school mathematics includes, for example, number and calculations and measure. More challenging topics, such as statistics and geometry are introduced as children move through school. We believe in regularly practising key skills and applying them in as many different ways as possible. At Hillside we use our mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum too. For example, we might prepare a graph in a science lesson, or weigh ingredients in a topic lesson. This brings the mathematics to life.

Science

At Hillside, Science is taught as part of the Learning Challenge curriculum. The national curriculum objectives are delivered through exciting and stimulating learning challenge questions. Although the learning challenges are taught separately from the main topic, they are purposefully planned alongside topics which provide cross curricular opportunities and links between them.

The learning challenges enthuse, stimulate and excite the children's scientific minds, posing questions to promote thinking and enquiry, enabling questioning of the world around them. Lessons are delivered to provide a range of opportunities for the children to gain hands on experiences, plan and carry out practical investigations and gain answers to phenomenon that is observed.

Delivery of lessons is provided within a range of settings, including within the classroom, within the wider school and grounds and through educational visits both off site and visiting groups within school.

During the spring time we hold a science week where all classes are immersed in scientific investigations and experiments, providing a showcase of opportunities for the children to enjoy.

Geography

At Hillside, Geography is taught through the Learning Challenge curriculum. The national curriculum objectives are delivered through each class's exciting learning challenge questions, generated from the children's own enquiring mind. As the Learning Challenge questions are cross curricular, Geography becomes embedded into the challenges, sometimes as the main drive behind the topic or supporting the topic with the development of geographical skills for the children. For example, the use of European maps to answer the questions of 'Which countries were in the Roman Empire?'

Geography is delivered through a variety of exciting lessons from class based learning incorporating ICT, fieldwork within the school grounds, local area and further afield on school day visits and the Year 6 residential to Stanley Head.

History

The learning and teaching of history at Hillside Primary school provides opportunities to understand, appreciate and enjoy the world in which we live and to celebrate its rich diversity. We deliver a high-quality history education which helps pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world, In designing the curriculum teachers and learners use a prime learning challenge, expressed as a question, as the starting point. This question inspires pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. It equips pupils to think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, ask perceptive questions, and to develop perspective and judgement.

History at Hillside involves taking pupils through British history from the Stone Age to the Normans. The children focus on recent eras of history, significant individuals, Ancient Civilizations and local area studies to name a few. When teaching these topics we utilise many learning and teaching styles. We place a great importance on visits and visitors to enhance the History curriculum. Educational visits provide a focus and resource for lifelong learning and allow our children to think for themselves and make connections to what they've learnt in the classroom.

Computing

The computing curriculum at Hillside Primary covers three aspects: computer science, information technology and digital literacy. Creativity is encouraged and children learn different ways of using technology to communicate. Where possible, our approach to using technology is linked to other areas of the curriculum. The responsible use of technology and safe use of the internet is central to our practice at Hillside and each class has an agreed e-safety code.

Art

At Hillside our aim is to engage, inspire and challenge pupils within our Art curriculum. Through high quality planning and teaching, our teachers strive to deliver a curriculum that will equip the children with the necessary skills and resources to invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As pupils progress they will be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design. Pupils will learn how art and design both reflect and shape our history and how it contributes to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.

Pupils will develop vital skills as they progress through Hillside Primary School, which will ensure that they are able to produce high quality, creative work linking into all areas of the curriculum. Pupils will become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft, design techniques. They will study a variety of famous artists and their works, allowing them to evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design.

Design & Technology

At Hillside we aim to offer an exciting and inventive design and technology curriculum. Using creativity and imagination, pupils will design, create and evaluate products that solve real and relevant problems in a variety of contexts, such as creating packaging. Pupils will develop the ability to consider their own and other's needs, wants and values.

In addition to this pupils will learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens. Pupils will progress through the school learning a range of vital skills such as cooking and nutrition, understanding the skills needed to create a high quality prototype and develop technical and practical expertise to enable them to participate successfully in an increasingly technological world.

MFL

Throughout Key Stage two children at Hillside are taught French. Through the teaching of a Modern foreign language our children broaden their understanding of countries, communities, culture and people. We believe that the teaching of Modern Foreign Language at our school will inspire, enthuse and lay the foundations for further Foreign Language learning at Key Stage 3. The children at Hillside have the opportunity to take part in many practical activities such as games, songs and role-playing. The teaching provides an appropriate balance of spoken and written

language. By the end of Key Stage two our children will be able to communicate facts, ideas and feelings in speech and writing.

Music

Our Music curriculum is designed to encourage both appreciation and enjoyment of music. Our music curriculum is delivered by highly experienced music teachers.

The curriculum incorporates singing, listening, exploring and creating sounds and playing tuned and untuned instruments. It progresses to composing music, using musical notation, and using their voices and instruments with increasing accuracy, fluency, control and expression.

We have a Songbirds group (KS1), a school choir and a Recorder group (KS2) who practice weekly and perform at numerous events throughout the year.

PSHE

Whilst PSHE education remains a non-statutory subject, section 2.5 of the National Curriculum framework document states that: 'All schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice.'

At Hillside we have a comprehensive programme of PSHE education in place. It meets pupils' needs and prepares them for the challenges and opportunities of adult life. It promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at our school and of society and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

PE

The national curriculum, and therefore our curriculum for physical education will ensure that all pupils:

- develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities
- are physically active for sustained periods of time
- engage in competitive sports and activities
- lead healthy, active lives.

Throughout the school our pupils master and develop movements including running, jumping, throwing and catching, as well as developing balance, agility, flexibility, strength and co-ordination, applying these in a range of activities. They participate in team games, developing tactics for attacking and defending.

Our children perform dances using increasingly challenging movement patterns. Throughout all activities they are encouraged to self and peer-assess performances, compare these performances with previous ones and demonstrate improvement to achieve their personal best. In key stage 2 our pupils take part in outdoor and adventurous activity challenges both individually and within a team

The new Curriculum places great emphasis on competitive sport and we at Hillside strive to provide the children with as many opportunities as possible to participate in Intra-School (in school) and Inter-School (against other schools in the area) competitions. In school we hold regular School Games Days, where the children compete against each other in a variety of sports. At an Inter school level, we compete in Football, Hockey, Cross-Country, Swimming, Athletics and a number of other sports.

We also have a very active extra-curricular timetable which all children are encouraged to access. On offer currently there is Tae Kwondo, Dance, Football, Fizzy Totz and Multi-Skills.

At Hillside we have Sports Leaders. This is a responsibility given to a group of Year 6 pupils who take an active interest in sport and become ambassadors for sport. These children support, plan and organise a range of sporting activities, developing their leadership skills.

R.E

RE is an essential part of the curriculum at Hillside and contributes to pupils' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in our diverse society. At Hillside we follow the Learning Challenge approach in conjunction with the Stoke-on-Trent Agreed Syllabus for R.E. This Syllabus takes

into account the cultural diversity specific to Stoke-on-Trent, thus ensuring that the needs of each individual are provided for. We want our children to have knowledge and appreciation of a range of beliefs and faiths including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism.

Our school has very close links with Milton Church and The Reverend Brian Statham, who is one of our Governors. We hold twice yearly services at the Church usually with a Christmas and Easter theme. These services are run by the children and have proved to be an enjoyable occasion for all.

Assessment

At Hillside we have rigorous assessment procedures in place to ensure that both teachers and pupils have a clear picture of what has been learned and what the next steps are. This assessment is both formative and summative.

Children receive daily imperative feedback on their Maths and English work. They respond to this and make improvements to their work in dedicated Fix-it time.

We believe that communication between parents and teachers is fundamental to pupil's progress and attainment. Parents receive an end-of-year report and meet teachers at Parent's meetings scheduled twice a year.

Parental Involvement

At Hillside we understand the positive effects of parent involvement on pupils, families, and the school. We want the school and parents to continuously support and encourage the children's learning and development. This is achieved through clear lines of communication and high levels of parental engagement and involvement. Twice a year parents are invited into school to view their children's work and discuss progress and attainment with the class teacher. A written report is sent to parents at the end of each academic year.

Class teachers welcome and dismiss the children on the playground each day and are available for short, informal chats. Both the Headteacher and other teaching staff are available to meet parents more formally at other mutually agreed times.

Throughout the year, parents and other family members will be invited into school to engage in a range of activities ranging from lunches, assemblies, productions, and other 'showcase' events.

Pupil voice

The children in our school are the most important people. As such, they have opportunities to share their thoughts and opinions both formally and informally.

School Council

The main aim of the School Council is to help to make our school a better place for our children and to give them an opportunity to have opinions and ideas heard. Each class from Year One upwards has two representatives who are elected every year.

At the first meeting of the year the important roles and jobs are selected and regular meetings take place throughout the year. The class representatives tell the children in their classes what has been discussed at each meeting and the children can ask the representatives to take forward their ideas to the next meeting.

Roles and responsibilities

At Hillside we believe in empowering our pupils trusting them with different roles throughout the school. These include Head Boy/ Head Girl, House Captains, reading buddies, number buddies, playground leaders, sports leaders and many others.

Playtimes

Playtimes are beneficial not just for enjoyment and health but also to encourage children to develop independence and social skills. We encourage children to play interactively and to create and develop games and activities. In addition, we zone each playground to enable more structured play. Across our two playgrounds (KS1 and KS2) we offer:

- games and activities led by trained playground leaders
- scooter area
- football area
- play trail

Educational Visits

Educational visits are a valuable part of the delivery of our curriculum. They are carefully planned to enhance and support our pupil's learning- often they are used to create a 'Wow' starter as a hook to enthuse and motivate. These visits are varied and give our children first hand experiences and a deeper insight into the topics and themes they are studying.

Parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution to subsidise the cost of these visits. Our charges and remissions policy can be found on the school website or is available from the school office.

Homework

At the Hillside we view homework as being a supported or independent task undertaken outside of curriculum time which reinforces, extends or enriches current learning.

The purpose of homework at Hillside is to provide opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning. It enables children to practise and consolidate skills and aims to broaden the context of learning and provide enrichment and extension. Finally, it aims to enable children to take responsibility for their own learning, to become independent learners and to develop perseverance.