

## Curriculum Overview

### Curriculum Policy - Approach and Content

Whetley Academy promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all pupils through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum.

There is a very strong focus on language development and the English curriculum as nearly all our children have English as an Additional Language and 30% of the school population are New to English.

Teaching and Learning is highly inclusive so all pupils have access to the National Curriculum with different levels of intervention and support. The progress and attainment of children is tracked forensically to ensure that teaching responds to pupils needs and potential barriers are overcome for different groups and individuals.

### Oracy

Whetley Academy is proud to be part of Voice Bradford Oracy Hub, elevating the teaching of quality speaking and listening across the curriculum so that it has a parity with reading and writing. Teachers are using a dialogic teaching approach to plan lessons that are rich in pupil talk, by considering high order questions, preparing scaffolds for, and modelling skilful talk. Some of the exciting initiatives include:

- Language of Discussion which includes debate competitions across school, with local schools and with schools within the trust. Current and moral issues that are high priority for our students are discussed in depth, promoting skilful talk and deepening thinking.
- The explicit teaching of talk which enables pupils to speak with confidence in more formal contexts. This is taught through an Oracy Framework which helps learners understand the physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional skills needed to communicate effectively.
- Weekly year group Talk Assemblies which are pupil led.
- High level peer evaluation and feedback is promoted in every classroom
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### Phonics

Phonics is one of the key strategies for teaching reading and early spelling successfully. Phonics is taught from Nursery through to the end of Key Stage Two on a daily basis. We use the Letters and Sounds progression document. This is a six phase teaching programme that develops children's phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children starting within the Early Years Foundation Stage, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers and have a basic understanding of spelling by the end of Key Stage One. Phonics lessons also focus on the reading and spelling of tricky words that are unable to be decoded phonetically but are essential for children to read and write. Due to the high number of New to English and English as an Additional Language pupils, phonics is taught throughout Key Stage Two. Phonics interventions are taught in addition to quality first teaching to all pupils who need it. We have developed the Phonics at Whetley, (PAW), document to track the children's phonic knowledge which insures any children who require additional support are given targeted interventions. Parents can click on the link below to find out more about the Letters and Sounds Programme. The website also includes some fun activities to do at home.

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/>

To support this progression, the Academy uses a range of other resources which supports kinaesthetic learning. One of the resources the Academy uses is Letterland which promotes the learning of reading, writing and spelling.

*“Simple stories about the Letterland characters, explain the full range of dry phonics facts so that children are motivated to listen, to think and to learn. These stories explain letter sounds & shapes, allowing children to progress quickly to word building, reading and writing.”*

Please click on the link below to find out more about Letterland resource. <http://www.letterland.com/>

### **Reading**

The teaching of reading is a top priority and is a very well-resourced area of learning where children read for both pleasure and purpose. Throughout their education, children will be exposed to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts including texts that provide a higher level of challenge. All pupils are taught to read daily and have many other opportunities to practise and improve their reading skills throughout the week.

In the early years of reading acquisition, pupils first learn to read by sharing simple texts aimed at developing early phonics and sight vocabulary. Colour banded books are read alongside more challenging ‘real’ books that enables reading comprehension skills to be taught from an early age. As children’s confidence develops through improved sight vocabulary, phonics skills and comprehension skills they will thrive as independent readers.

Alongside developing phonics skills and sight vocabulary, reading comprehension continues to be taught throughout KS1 and 2 using a combination of approaches and resources:

- ‘Think to Read’ strategies ensuring literal and inference skills are fully developed.
- ‘Developing Comprehension’ facilitates deeper thinking and discussion of demanding texts and encourages the children to have confidence to interpret these texts independently as their skills develop.
- Formal comprehension activities [test style] are used in a very similar way to the point above.
- In Year Two and throughout Key Stage Two children access Accelerated Reader which is a successful online reading comprehension programme.

Every child has access to hundreds of books either in their own classroom or in special, designated areas around school. Children have opportunities to continue reading throughout their break and lunchtime, e.g. in the Y6 Reading Room and outside the dining hall. All children take quality texts home to read every day and they also have time to read throughout the school day. Every child in year 6 has recently received a kindle on loan that they use in school and can take home every evening, and we plan to provide all children in KS2 with a loan Kindle in the next two years. We also buy books in school that the children request and enjoy. The Academy has its own book shop and has sold over 12,000 books in the last three years by making this affordable for all our pupils and families.

### **Writing**

As with Reading, Whetley Academy has developed its own strategy for writing over the last few years by recognising the specific needs of our children to maximise their writing potential. All year groups select appropriate resources and provide exciting opportunities to plan writing that is for a purpose.

In KS1 children will write to entertain through story writing, descriptive tasks and poetry. They will also write to inform a reader by writing recounts, letters and instructions. Year 3 and 4 will also write to entertain and inform, building their range of text types to include explanations, biographies and newspaper reports. In addition to this they will be introduced to writing to persuade by writing adverts, letters and posters. The final of the 4 ‘writing for a purpose’ strands is writing to discuss and is completed in year 5 and 6.

To achieve success in delivering the 4 purposes of writing strands the following approaches and resources have been developed:

- WES file [Whetley English Strategy]
- GPS strategy
- Alan Peat Sentences and punctuation
- WASP – Whetley Academy Spelling Strategy
- Writing Progression document from year 1 – year 6
- Editing, re-drafting and slow writing

### **Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling**

Grammar, punctuation and spelling is another of our schools priorities as it is a vital component to successful writing. It is taught throughout school, both explicitly through dedicated lessons and discretely, where appropriate, through all lessons. No Nonsense Grammar is used from year 1 to year 6 to help teachers plan their lessons, along with Alan Peat and Pie Corbett teaching resources.

All year groups use an instructional stepped approach - 'It's Only Words' – to learning tier 2 words appropriate to the year group and children are encouraged to use this language as a matter of course in their every day speech.

Spelling is taught using specific resources:

- WASP [Whetley Academy Spelling Programme] file. This has been developed by combining the 2014 NC and The National Strategies Primary Support for Spelling.
- No Nonsense Spelling
- Spelling KS1 and Spelling KS2 booklets, specifically designed to be used in class every day and taken home for spelling practise

### **Handwriting**

The school has an agreed style for teaching children to form and join their letters and numbers as below.

Most children will be expected to join their writing by the end of Year 2 and to have developed a fluent, confident and individual style of joined writing by the end of Year 6. The Handwriting Policy may be viewed in the About Us>Policy section.

### **Maths**

Our Maths curriculum and calculation policy have been created with the aim that all pupils will achieve mastery of the subject. In order to achieve this, we have focused on embedding basic number skills such as place value, number bonds and times tables throughout KS1 and LKS2. The Whetley Academy Maths, (WAM), file provides clear guidance for the progression of calculation throughout school, which in turn, is moderated during half-termly book scrutinies.

Teachers throughout school deliver mastery by affording children more time to grasp the different skills of numeracy, allowing them to view concepts in as many different representations as possible, and focusing on reasoning and explanation rather than closed-question answers. To support this, we have invested heavily in resources (place value counters, Numicon, Reasoning Cards etc) and have worked alongside Maths Consultant, Roger Bird, to produce high quality teacher models and images that help promote learning through reasoning.

Large amounts of staff training time have been devoted to sharing good practise in each area of Maths (e.g. Fractions, Measures). During these training sessions, staff meet, plan, and produce lessons, resources and strategies with the aim of helping children to achieve mastery.

By participating in the Yorkshire and Humber Maths Hub we have adopted strategies such as Bar Modelling throughout school to prepare children for the challenges of the New National Curriculum. At the same time, we have adopted Same Day Interventions (SDIs) in order to ensure that no child is left behind. These interventions take place during break times and immediately after lessons. They are delivered to children who have struggled during the lesson, only by a teacher, through an innovative break time model which means that teachers are always supporting learning.

In Year 6, this strategy is supported by RAG rating daily tests, which then inform not just break time interventions, but others later in the day and week. These are labelled according to Delta Academy's assessment levels: 1, 2.1, 2.2 and 3. Each level of intervention means that the child increasingly receives more teaching time and aims to close the learning gap.

### **Science, History, Geography and DT**

These subjects are taught in a way that supports our efforts to get as many children as possible to age related expectations, (ARE), in Reading, Writing and Maths. Teachers make sure that there is a variety of opportunities to learn about Science, Geography, History and DT by incorporating it into English and Maths lessons. Topic work will then include researching historical events and using them as a tool for writing. It also comes through in our reading comprehension lessons as we link our reading to our writing to broaden the children's understanding of the topic. Not only does this provide an excellent focus for the topic but also allows them to develop their own knowledge in the foundation subjects.

As well as this, visits and visitors are organised throughout the year to provide much needed experiences for our children. Again these trips are tailored around the topic in class, the knowledge gained can then be easily transferred to the writing that they complete in class. Recent visits and visitors include:-

- Malham (geography)
- Bolling Hall (local history)
- Vikings, Romans and Greeks (Visitor)
- Healthy Lifestyles Trip (Science)

### **ICT**

ICT is used across the curriculum to enhance and support learning. Examples include

- Online Maths Interventions, e.g. Third Space Learning in Y6
- Kindle Loan in KS2
- Accelerated Reader form Y2-Y6 – Online reading comprehension
- Matholia Maths Support Y1-Y6

Children can also access home learning activities such as maths and spelling games on the Whetley Blog.

### **PE and Sports**

Sport and healthy lifestyles is a big focus at Whetley Academy and our children receive a lot of opportunities to take part in a variety of sports in P.E including Badminton, Cricket, Frisbee, Futsal, Handball, Netball and Tennis.

Children in Early Years are provided with a range of physical activities in their ongoing provision that will support and challenge their physical development. Children in KS1 and KS2 participate in two PE sessions taught by teaching staff and or a Sports Coach. Gymnastics, Sports and Dance skills are taught in these sessions throughout the year. Children in Y6 also receive swimming lessons in the Summer Term.

The children also have an opportunity to participate in a wide range of daily after school clubs such as Basketball, Cricket, Football, Frisbee, Tennis and Dance. Our sports coach and staff take children to regular tournaments competing against other schools with great success. Most recently a group of children who are talented in sports were given the chance to go to the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield to compete against other schools in our trust from around Yorkshire.

## **RE**

As a multi-faith school which includes children and adults from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, we value and celebrate the differences and diversity of our setting.

We hold regular International Days in order to teach children about the different religions and cultures within our school, community, nationally and internationally.

Alongside educating children about different religions and cultures, we teach children the importance of British values.

## **The Arts**

**Music** – The children have many opportunities to participate in music based activities, which include:

- Listening to music concerts from visiting performers such as Bradford Music Service.
- Children receiving musical tuition from external teachers eg ukulele and violin.
- Musical productions eg pantomimes, end of year singing and dancing concerts.
- Year group singing sessions.
- Year group visits to musical productions eg Bradford Alhambra.

**Art** – Art activities are incorporated into topic work. We also have an artist working with groups of pupils on topic based projects. The school celebrates art at every opportunity and the learning environment is rich in examples of various works of art.

**Dance** – The children take part in dance activities during PE and after school clubs but are also exposed to dance from different cultures from visiting performers. Examples include; Irish dancers, Indian dancers, Hungarian dancers, African dancers and Street dance performances.

**Performance Poetry** – In order to develop children's confidence and oracy expertise in public speaking, we hold regular Performance Poetry competitions throughout school. Children have opportunities to practise their performances in class and then perform in front of a much larger audience.

## **Languages**

Different languages are explored and celebrated in every day classroom practice and also more formally during International Days. In KS2 the children have the opportunity to learn a Modern Foreign Language.

April 2017

Review date: April 2018

Signed *Steve Allan*

Chair of EAB