



West Dean Church of England Primary School

Curriculum Statement



Intent

We do our best in all we do, with God's love. 'Love one another. As I have loved you, so must you love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.' John 13:24-25

Through our broad, balanced and rich curriculum at West Dean CE Primary School, we want to inspire our children to develop a lifelong love of learning. Engaged in meaningful learning activities, the children will understand the relevance of each aspect of their learning to their own lives, both presently and in their future beyond school.

The West Dean curriculum is child centred, skills driven and accessible to all. We structure learning to progressively build on the children's skill, meeting the children at the point they are at, rather than where their age suggests they should be, and building in support to ensure progress and success, as well as challenge at an appropriate level to stretch every child, regardless of their stage in learning.

Our carefully mapped sequence of learning ensures breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding with core skills in literacy, numeracy and technology taught both discretely as stand-alone subjects and in context with other subjects across the curriculum through topic based learning. The health and wellbeing of our pupils is of the utmost importance, so regular learning about how to keep safe, live healthily and promote emotional and spiritual wellbeing is a key factor in our curriculum.

All children are brilliantly different, with different needs, interests, passions and strengths. Our intention is to ignite that passion and inspire the children to pursue their interests, whilst also encouraging an open mind and a preparedness to try new things and always apply a high level of effort.

Our Christian vision and values underpin every aspect of our curriculum and our pupils are frequently and consistently taught this. The children demonstrate their understanding of this by signing up to our and acting upon our School Charter:

Our School's Charter:

is guided by the teaching of Jesus through the words of John 13:34-35
'Love one another. As I have loved you, so must you love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.'

1. I will always try my best in everything I do.
2. I will ask for help when I need it, and help others when they need help.
3. I will show respect for everyone and everything in our school and in the wider world, in my actions and in my words.

Learning is adapted to suit each child and whilst National Curriculum objectives and statutory expectations are rigorously and carefully taught, teachers have the freedom to present learning in a manner that best suits the needs of each child.

We want all children to become respectful, tolerant and compassionate global citizens, equipped with a broad knowledge of our world. Our curriculum not only embraces the opportunities presented to us by our wonderful rural setting in the South Downs National Park, but also challenges children to consider how others live their lives in contrasting locations and cultures nationally and internationally.

Implementation

National Curriculum objectives and Early Years Foundation Stage standards are mapped across the three terms in the school year to ensure that full coverage of teaching and learning is achieved in each year group from Reception to Year Six. In addition, other key aspects of learning such as RSE and PSHE are built into the curriculum through the use of specific schemes, such as 'Kapow' PSHE 'Teach Computing' Computing and Digital Literacy and a combination of 'Understanding Christianity' and 'The Emmanuel Project' for the teaching and learning of RE.

We believe that in order to excite and engage children in learning, this framework of objectives should be presented through a sequence of imaginative, inspiring and relevant topics or 'hooks'. We plan through a 'learning first – topic second' approach, meaning that the rigour of coverage is always maintained each term. Topics are then planned to creatively link the learning for that term together in manner that will not only engage the children, but also lead them to a deeper understanding of how different aspects of learning inter-relate and are inter-connected.

Rather than identifying a topic theme first, before attempting to fit in learning in each subject that relates to that topic, we look at the learning that is already mapped for each term and plan the best way to present it in a linked topic approach.

Three of our four classes are dual year-group classes, therefore for much of their time with us, the children will be in a class for two years (Apple Class, Beech Class and Chestnut Class). Topics are taught to a whole class and relate to learning objectives for both year groups. This means that a child in Year Three for example, will revisit learning objectives in the same class the following year (in Year Four). However, whilst the mapped curriculum objectives remain the same year on year for each year group, the topic or hook is changed on a two-year cycle. The children therefore revisit the same learning, but in a different, exciting context each year. This planned revisiting of learning supports progression – deepening the children's understanding of a concept each time they revisit it.

Each sequence of learning and individual learning activity is also designed to promote and develop one or more of our identified positive learning behaviours. These are linked to an animal character, helping our younger children particularly, to identify when they demonstrate a particular trait or behaviour.



Specific skills, methods and approaches are taught to support children and give structure to learning, so there will be times when all children engage in a learning activity designed to develop and improve one particular and specific approach. Over time however, the children are encouraged to choose which of these works best for them or applies best to a specific purpose. Choice and creativity in the way the children opt to respond to learning is encouraged. This might be in the method a child identifies to solve a mathematical problem, the medium that they use to express an artistic idea or perhaps the method of presentation (written, verbal, digital) that a child chooses for the presentation of a project, to name just a few.

Real life experiences in the form of trips away from the school site, outdoor and adventurous activity and special visitors to school are a very important element of our curriculum. We regularly use the estate and grounds of West Dean College for whole school 'Wellbeing Walks', to develop the children's sense of care, respect and nurture for their local natural environment and to provide a peaceful, reflective and potentially spiritual experience, which is supportive of everyone's emotional wellbeing.

Trips out are carefully planned to enhance and enrich an aspect of the termly topic and / or to provide specific opportunities to develop learning behaviours such as resilience and collaboration. These will include day trips both as a class or key stage and, in Key Stage Two, a number of short residential trips.

We believe it is incredibly important to learn from other adults in addition to the school teaching staff, who perhaps work in a very different industry, have a particular background or have an interesting life experience to share. We encourage regular visitors to school including medical professionals, authors, scientists, athletes and people representing a variety of faiths. This brings the learning alive for the children, often, we believe, sowing a seed that may grow into a passion, interest or career for them in the future.

Implementation - Assessment

Our pupil's knowledge, skills and understanding of the curriculum content are constantly assessed in a variety of ways. These assessments help to identify each individual's next steps in learning and key benchmark points in their ongoing progress. Assessment is therefore both formative and summative. At the beginning of each term, all children will engage in a formal (written) assessment of writing, reading and mathematics. This will assess the extent of embedded learning from the previous term, as well as inform specific targets for the term ahead.

Throughout the term, each teacher uses a range of evidence including written work, verbal contribution in class and other child responses to learning activity, to produce up to date teacher assessments of each child's attainment in all subjects. The formal assessment at the beginning of the following term helps to validate these teacher assessments in English and maths.

Impact

All children at West Dean CE Primary School benefit from an exciting, broad and engaging curriculum. Children develop a secure skill-set, a breadth of knowledge and a deep understanding of concepts studied during their time with us. Most importantly, children leave our school with a love of learning, a sense of care and respect for the world around them and their fellow citizens and a broad experience of many aspects of learning - academic, physical and creative.

The impact of our curriculum can be seen in the work that the children produce, the enthusiastic manner in which they talk about learning at our school and in the good level of progress and attainment that they achieve.

It is our greatest hope that our children continue to promote the values that supported them at our school in their future lives, as caring, respectful and responsible global citizens.

Whilst we are confident that our curriculum provides a very positive learning experience for all of our children, we embrace a dynamic approach to curriculum planning. Therefore, our curriculum does not stand still and is constantly evolving in response to both children's needs and changing factors in the world around us.