



# Castle Hill St Philip's CE Primary School

**Caring, Sharing and Learning Together with God**

## **Our Curriculum Statement**

The overarching purpose of our curriculum at Castle Hill St Philip's is to equip children with a firm foundation of knowledge, life skills and memorable experiences so that they are prepared for the next stage in their educational journey and life in general. We aim to make learning exciting and above all, relevant to the needs of our children: academically, emotionally and socially.

While emphasis is placed on children learning core skills of English and Maths, we also place great value on developing the 'whole child'. Therefore, our child-led and knowledge-based curriculum offers a broad range of subjects with the aim of bringing learning to life, both indoors and out, with engaging and purposeful learning.

## **INTENT**

We have designed our curriculum to make it relevant to our children – many of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds and start school socially, academically and emotionally below age-related expectations. We make it our duty to narrow the gaps between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and other children by providing high quality academic teaching and support whilst also ensuring children develop 'cultural capital' through opportunities, experiences and language which they may not encounter at home.

Our curriculum design ensures breadth, balance and coherence are built into all subjects. Connections within and between subjects are identified and new knowledge is linked to previously taught aspects of the curriculum to support children to remember more in their long term memory.

## **Our Intentions**

- To prepare our children for the next steps in their learning journey and life in general.
- To ensure all children, irrespective of their starting points, achieve their potential academically and socially in the wider world to become ambitious lifelong learners.
- To provide a coherent, broad, balanced, skills and knowledge based curriculum.

- To prioritise reading from the start of YR and make it our mission to ensure every child learns to read.
- To support children regardless of their prior experiences and academic attainment to be happy, healthy young people so that they can enjoy emotional well-being throughout their lives.
- To provide high quality teaching for all.
- To ensure children develop the knowledge and skills needed to enable them to keep themselves safe and healthy.
- For children to live out our Christian values (perseverance, respect, responsibility, forgiveness, love and resilience) which are closely linked to British values.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

At Castle Hill St Philip's CE Primary School our curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the statutory framework of The Early Years Foundation Stage.

Our long-term plans have been carefully designed and sequenced so that children can make links between subjects and learning from one lesson to the next, from one term to the next and from one year group to the next. Making links or schemata between subjects and using knowledge and skills in different contexts, reinforces and embeds learning leading to a deep understanding of the content taught. Therefore, children are regularly asked to retrieve prior learning from their long-term memories in order to make connections (schema) between prior learning knowledge and new learning.

### **Areas of the Curriculum**

#### **Reading**

Teaching children to read is vital and is prioritised throughout school. This is because, in our view, all children need to read to access new knowledge and to learn.

We use the Monster Phonics synthetic phonics programme, a highly engaging and structured programme, to teach phonics right from the start of YR and throughout KS1. Children in KS1 have daily phonics lessons which are lively, fast-paced and fun. In a session, children are taught either phonemes/ digraphs/ trigraphs, high frequency and/or tricky words and these are consolidated through reading and writing. There are lots of opportunities to speak and listen, as well as to read and

write the sounds. Children still requiring phonics teaching in KS2 receive daily phonics teaching in a small, targeted group.

When teachers assess individual children to be ready, they move on to Accelerated Reader (AR) which is a reading management and monitoring programme that fosters the habit of independent reading. Children in KS2 have a daily AR session where they read independently and take quizzes on books they have read.

Children who are reading below age-related expectations access intense extra reading sessions in school to help them to catch up. These children are identified early and are carefully tracked and monitored by the Reading Managers.

We use The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) Power of Reading scheme to select class novels to study in detail. This is a proven resource and training programme which uses quality children's literature and creative teaching approaches to enable us to develop a high quality English curriculum and foster a whole school love of reading and writing.

## **Writing**

At Castle Hill St Philip's, high quality texts (the majority of which are chosen from the CLPE scheme) are used as class novels to ensure that children have excellent models for their own writing, whilst motivating pupils to write with enthusiasm and a sense of purpose. We also ensure a range of both fiction and non-fiction texts are used to ensure that all of the necessary writing skills are taught throughout the years, whilst providing children with a variety of text types. In addition to this, children are also exposed to a range of classic and contemporary poetry and provided with the opportunity to use these poems as a model for their own writing. Through all genres and styles of writing, children are taught writing skills in daily English lessons, underpinned by the National Curriculum and encompassed into the creative curriculum where this is suitable.

In YR and Key Stage 1, we incorporate the Talk for Writing model into the teaching of writing. Children are encouraged and supported to learn texts by heart, before trying to innovate them and gradually begin to apply more independent changes to the model, until they can write freely with confidence. In addition, in Key Stage 1, picture books and topic work are used as a stimulus for writing.

Throughout KS1 and KS2, children follow a specific writing structure, concentrating on varied genres of writing throughout the year. All genres are planned to incorporate the five stages of writing: gathering, planning, drafting, editing and revising (which is mirrored on the class Working Wall). In addition to this, short

focussed writing activities and discrete spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting lessons are also taught.

Writing is taught using the mastery approach and teachers differentiate the level of support provided to individuals where necessary to ensure all children can access the learning e.g. using modelling, feedback, same/next day interventions etc. Writing is assessed on a daily basis and future planning is informed through ongoing formative assessments. Pupils acquire a wide range of vocabulary and are encouraged to apply it within various contexts of writing. Children are able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns within their writing and are encouraged to relate their knowledge and understanding of language when spelling unfamiliar words.

## **Mathematics**

Our curriculum is mapped by the White Rose Maths scheme of work. We have worked with our local Maths Hub to embed the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) Teaching for Mastery Approach: we focus on a progression from concrete resources, to pictorial representations and finally into the numerical abstract to aid our children's conceptual understanding. As a result, we are seeing a growth in confidence in all our learners, especially in areas of problem solving and reasoning.

We use a 'Same Day/Next Day Intervention' model in mathematics. This model is designed to enable children to 'keep up' not 'catch up'. The aim is to give extra support to the children who require it, either during the lesson, later in the day or the next day, to ensure all children reach a certain level of understanding. This addresses the achievement gap.

Children in KS1 are currently taking part in the (NCETM) Mastering Number programme which aims to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense for all children from Reception through to Year 1 and Year 2. The aim over time is that children will leave KS1 with fluency in calculation and confidence and flexibility with numbers.

Times Tables Rock Stars is used by all children from Y2 to Y6 both in school and at home. To increase fluency in times tables practice sessions are set on a daily basis for home learning and children compete in National Times Table competitions.

## **The Wider Curriculum**

Children in YR are taught using a topic based approach and make connections between subjects. YR staff plan the curriculum following children's interests using Possible Lines of Development (PLODs). This is a teaching approach which builds children's prior experience into teaching.

Although children from Y1 to Y6 are not taught using a topic based approach, links between subjects are explicitly made by staff when appropriate, and children are actively encouraged to make links between prior learning within the same subject, and between various subjects.

## **Essential Experiences**

We embrace the idea that experience is a great teacher which can equip children with valuable skills and knowledge that helps prepare them for any challenges life may bring. Therefore, our curriculum includes not only the lessons delivered in classrooms but also encompasses a wide range of experiences and opportunities away from the classroom which enable children to experience things they may not otherwise get chance to explore.

We aim to give children opportunities to try things out, to get a taste of the wider world, to see and do things that they wouldn't normally do, to go to places they wouldn't normally go to and meet a wide range of visitors. In order to fulfil this vision we have developed our Castle Hill Essential Experiences – a list of activities intended to introduce children to a wide variety of experiences and fulfilling activities designed to be accessible for every child.

Our Essential Experiences are regularly reviewed and take into account our locality and community, different cultures and religions, and have an emphasis on exploring the great outdoors. The activities are also designed to build qualities of perseverance, confidence and teamwork and improve emotional well-being and mental health.

## **IMPACT**

We are proud that children leave Castle Hill St Philip's ready and prepared with the knowledge, skills, Christian values and experiences to succeed in the next stage of their learning journey.

Considering many children begin their educational journey well below national expectations, our children make expected progress across key stages, and many make accelerated progress. Therefore, this leads to children achieving their

potential academically and the vast majority leave Castle Hill St Philip's with attainment in line with or above national expectations.

Children also achieve their potential socially and emotionally and become happy, healthy young people able to enjoy emotional well-being and make healthy and safe choices throughout their lives.