



# **Whitehouse Primary School**

## **Curriculum Policy**

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# Curriculum Policy

The Northern Ireland Education Order (2006) sets out the minimum requirements that should be taught at each key stage. In Whitehouse Primary School, we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. We strive to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. This commitment is best articulated in the vision statement, values, mission statement and aims.

## **Vision: ‘Learning to Live’.**

We aim to provide an education that is more than a means to an end. High academic achievements are important but they are only one part of the wider education we provide. If a child leaves our school highly literate and numerate without developing a joy of learning and the ability to see the value in themselves and others we have not achieved our goals.

Our inclusive ethos and wider curriculum have a dual purpose. We want pupils to be successful children today as well as accomplished adults in the future. Each pupil through their Whitehouse ‘journey’, we hope, will learn much, but live more.

## **Our Values:**

Underpinning our vision are four key values. These values influence the ‘why’ of what we aspire for and do.

These key values are:

1. To be a Happy & Healthy Environment
2. To develop Skilled Learners & Flexible Thinkers
3. To value Partnerships both Locally & Globally
4. To inspire High Aspirations and Achievements

## **Mission Statement:**

Our values feed into our everyday practice through our commitment to our mission statement. At the centre of all we do are the **CHILDREN**.

Care & Wellbeing Central  
Health & Sport Promoted  
Involving Parents & Community  
Learning & Teaching Focused  
Developing Technology & Creativity  
Raising Expectations & Standards  
Excellence & Innovation Pursued  
Networking Locally & Globally

## **Aims:**

Whitehouse Primary School's commitment to its **CHILDREN** is reflected in the following agreed aims. The school works with children to:

- fully develop their academic potential
- promote high achievement through recognising and developing their physical, emotional, intellectual, cultural, creative, spiritual and moral skills
- develop the qualities of a responsible citizen and to foster positive personal attitudes towards themselves, others and the environment
- be equipped with knowledge and skills and be able to use them in the world in which they live and work
- become problem solvers, independent thinkers and decision makers
- be able to work both independently and with others
- nurture a desire for life-long learning

## **School Culture**

We believe that children will succeed through experiencing quality in:

- a broad and balanced curriculum, sensitive to the needs of the individual
- a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment
- a variety of teaching and learning approaches
- provision of resources and experiences
- reinforcement of achievement, positive behaviour and attitudes

We demonstrate our commitment to working as a learning community by:

- continuing our own professional development
- working together as a team to develop a progressive learning environment by sharing expertise and good practice
- monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning
- maintaining high standards of teaching and high expectations for all pupils
- working in partnership with home, the local community and external agencies

### **Areas of Learning**

The curriculum for the three stages is set out in six Areas of Learning. Although the Areas of Learning are set out separately teachers should, where appropriate, integrate learning across the six areas to make relevant connections for children. Teachers have considerable flexibility to select from within the learning areas those aspects they consider appropriate to the ability and interests of their pupils.

The Areas are:

1 Language and Literacy (including Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing; schools are also encouraged to teach additional languages);

2 Mathematics and Numeracy (focusing on the development of mathematical concepts and numeracy across the curriculum);

3 The Arts (including Art and Design, Drama and Music);

4 The World Around Us (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in Geography, History and Science and Technology);

5 Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (focusing on emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, health, relationships and sexuality education and mutual understanding in the local and global community);

6 Physical Education/Development and Movement (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding through play and a range of physical activities).

The Northern Ireland Curriculum sets out the minimum requirement that should be taught at each key stage this will be followed and used as a starting point for teacher planning.

Religious Education is provided for all pupils and teachers use the core syllabus as the starting point for planning.

## **Skills and Capabilities**

In Whitehouse we place an emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and for operating in society. Within lessons we provide the opportunities to engage in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum and progressively develop:

### **Cross - Curricular Skills**

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using information and Communication Technology

### **Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities**

- Thinking, problem-solving and decision making
- Self Management
- Working with others
- Managing Information
- Being Creative

## **Equity of Access**

In Whitehouse Primary School, teachers are aware that pupils have different experiences, interests and strengths, which will influence the way in which they learn.

In planning curriculum and assessment activities, teachers are aware of the requirements of the equal opportunities legislation and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO) 2005 and have high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities, pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds, pupils of different ethnic groups including travellers and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Approaches to learning and teaching provide suitably challenging opportunities for all pupils to take part in lessons fully and effectively. They enable all pupils to achieve. For pupils with special educational needs the staff take account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child. For those pupils whose attainments fall significantly below the levels expected at a particular key stage, degrees of differentiation of tasks and materials appropriate to the age and requirements of the pupil will be provided. For pupils whose attainments significantly exceed the expected levels of attainment during a particular key stage, teachers plan suitably challenging work by extending the breadth and depth of study across Areas of Learning.

## Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Within the school a variety of formative and summative assessment methods are used. Our Assessment and Learning Policy outlines in detail why, how and when these are used across the year.

In summary, the following are the main assessments tools help us ensure a quality curriculum and maximise pupils' learning. These tools complement teachers' ongoing assessments and observations.

Assessment Tool	Year Groups	When
Primary 1 School Baseline Assessment	Primary 1	Sept.
Pupil Profile Folder (Teacher Levelled Literacy, Numeracy & ICT Tasks)	Primary 1 to 7	Ongoing
Progress in English	Primary 3 to 7	May
Progress in Mathematics	Primary 3 to 7	May
CAT4 (Potential Assessment)	Primary 3 & 5	May
CCEA Levelled Literacy Tasks	Primary 4 & 7	Ongoing
CCEA Levelled Mathematics Tasks	Primary 4 & 7	Ongoing

## Roles and Responsibilities

The principal has overall responsibility to ensure the curriculum is delivered effectively. The SLT plays a vital part in supporting and sharing this responsibility. The departments are delegated across the team to maximise the effective leadership of the curriculum.

Name	Title	Curricular Leadership
F. Bailie	Principal	Whole School/SDP
J. Campbell	Assessment Leader	Key Stage 2 and Assessment Coordinator
F. Bailie	Nursery Leader	Nursery Curriculum
D. Blain	Foundation Stage Leader	Foundation Stage Curriculum
L. Weir	Key Stage 1 Leader	Key Stage 1 Curriculum
K. Kennedy	SENCO	Learning Support across the school

Overall curriculum leadership is supported by teams of teachers led by a Skill or Area Leader. All these team leaders are members of the Learning & Teaching Team. This team is chaired by the Vice Principal. Its purpose is to create a consistent and dynamic curriculum across all aspects of pupils' learning.

Team	Leader	Areas of Learning
Communication	C. Hasson & D. Blain	Literacy & English
Using Mathematics	J. Campbell	Numeracy & Mathematics
Using ICT	Janine McNevison & S. Richmond	ICT
The World Around Us	L. Weir	Science, Geography & History
Creativity	I. McClurg	Art, Music, Drama & P.E.
P.D.M.U.	H. Clifford	P.D.M.U. & R.E.

## **Monitoring & Evaluating the Curriculum**

The pupils are the key stakeholders of our school. The delivery of an effective curriculum is central to them. As part of the school development plan process they are consulted about the quality of the curriculum. Every year the principal conducts a pupil audit of their wellbeing. Part of this survey asks pupils about their experience of learning.

Parents likewise are crucial stakeholders of our curriculum. Every three years they participate in a whole school audit that looks at all aspects of our curriculum. Parents are also invited to regular curricular workshops and are encouraged to play an active part in our innovations.

The Governors have a legal responsibility to ensure pupils receive a quality curriculum. They are supported in this role by the school principal. The Governors endeavour to monitor and evaluate a quality curriculum by:

- Engaging in a self-critical and data rich school development plan process.
- Every November the Governors' Meeting is dedicated to learning and teaching in the school.
- In June every year every curricular team leader presents a written or/and oral report of the progress of their area of responsibility.
- Each June the SLT will compile a School Data Report. This will evaluate the success of the school's work in Literacy and Numeracy.

The principal and the SLT use the PRSD process as a vehicle to monitor the teaching of the curriculum. All teachers are formally observed twice per year. Opportunities are created for dissemination of good practice. All teachers are interviewed three times per year by the principal to discuss the progress of their teaching.

Curricular Leaders will also have termly meetings with their teams. Part of their role is to monitor planners, teachers' evaluations and samples of work/end of year data.

Each teacher is professionally accountable for their practice. Our teachers are trained and encouraged to be self-critical. This process is aided by opportunities for dissemination of good practice within year groups, key stages and across the school.

## **Complaints Procedure**

In the event of a complaint concerning the curriculum, parents should in the first instance write to the principal. The principal, in liaison with the S.L.T., will seek to bring about a resolution of the matter.

If such a resolution does not emerge, parents should write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors. The Chairperson will raise the matter at the next governors meeting. The Chairperson will hand the matter to the curriculum complaints tribunal panel within the Board of Governors. They will arrange a hearing for the complaints and reach a decision on whether or not to uphold a complaint.

If a resolution has still not been arrived at, parents may write to the Curriculum Complaints Tribunal of the Education Authority.