

# The Highfield Curriculum Overview: How We Unlock Potential



Year 4 trip to Murton Park

'EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE  
WORLD.'

Nelson Mandela

## Language Reference

The **curriculum** is the learning experience of Highfield pupils. It encompasses aims, content, pedagogy and assessment.

The **intent** outlines what society – the immediate Highfield community and wider global community - deems important for our children to learn.

The **implemented** curriculum is that which is delivered in the classroom. It is how we teach the Highfield Curriculum.

The **impact** is what our children have learned from the Highfield Curriculum.



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*'If young people are to navigate the promise and challenges of the twenty-first century they will be crossing multiple social and cultural boundaries and this requires the benefits of self-awareness and self-regulation with an empathy towards others as well as profound subject knowledge.'*

(Leat, 2023)

**Highfield Curriculum Aim:** To prepare children for the opportunities and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by providing opportunities for our children to develop socially, morally, spiritually, and culturally, alongside maximising academic achievement to unlock every child's potential. At the core of our curriculum are our school values: Ready, Respectful and Safe. We fulfil our aims by nurturing:

- A love of learning and appreciation of education, which creates successful learners who progress and achieve well
- Responsible, confident young people who make a positive contribution to society through strong interpersonal skills, tolerance, respect, and healthy choices, including online and offline safety.

## Highfield Curriculum Design – The Intent

The demands of our community and of global citizenship drives our curriculum, our planning, our decision making. Our community is ambitious, aspirational, culturally diverse and evolving demographically. Our curriculum is designed to meet the demands of a rapidly changing global society and employment market. It is designed also to deal with the impact of covid, differing online competencies, neurodiversity and diverse mental health issues. It is robust and dynamic.

How? The Highfield Curriculum sequencing at a whole school level ensures that all subjects, from Reception to the end of Key Stage 2, are broad, rich and extend beyond the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum is just the starting point, our programmes of study extend beyond this and are guided by our key drivers of Safeguarding, Reading, RED (respect, equality, diversity) and The Wider Curriculum (enrichment) which are woven through the Highfield Curriculum. Furthermore, we build meaningful links across subjects to improve the quality of the offer. We also recognise the importance of relating the curriculum to the local and global context. In doing so we meet the needs of the individual, as well as the wider community.

The 'broader' offer, does not just extend to individual National Curriculum subjects and the enrichment activities which support the learning. Our offer is fully inclusive. The personal development of children is enhanced not just through our extensive PSHE curriculum, but also widened by our behaviour and PSED curricula, and commitment to language acquisition. In addition, our dedication to the good mental health and wellbeing of children is underlined by our screening and provision.



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## Highfield Curriculum – The Implementation

We know our pupils and are responsive to their needs as learners. The planning of learning opportunities is meticulously sequenced to provide learning that is appropriately spaced. Revisiting previous learning, through retrieval practice, ensures 'sticky learning' takes place.

All subject curricula are ambitious and demanding, requiring children to know more. The breadth and depth of coverage challenges and supports the acquisition of powerful knowledge. This promotes greater exposure to 'the best that has been thought and said' (Arnold, 1869) and constitutes significant cultural capital. Our subject leaders have mapped out the key skills and knowledge within their subject discipline to facilitate progression across medium and long-term plans. These strategic subject and knowledge maps work in tandem with our core subject vocabulary booklets breaking down the key terms to be learned and providing the starting point for subsequent years to build upon and embed further.

Enrichment activities are also structured and delivered across the school to ensure children have powerful opportunities to learn through experience thereby supporting theoretical learning in the classroom. The enrichment activities improve their understanding of our culture which may be deficient due to social disadvantage or indeed the impact of Covid restrictions. Subject curricula construction includes criteria in the Key Stage 3 programmes of study to facilitate the transition process to secondary school and provide children of Highfield the best possible start for the next step in their education.

'Teachers require both content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge for effective teaching.'

(Coe et al., 2014)

To access and embed the content knowledge within the Highfield Curriculum, more than a single pedagogical approach is required. In addition to learning through experience and enrichment opportunities, we focus on enabling the acquisition of knowledge to be as simple and effective as possible through refining our understanding of how children learn which significantly impacts subsequent teaching practice. Staff knowledge of cognitive architecture, which includes a thorough understanding of the underlying mechanisms of cognition, memory, and learning, informs our planning and our teaching.

To ensure learning takes place our lessons are specifically devised with our learner's cognitive architecture at its core, as well as a clear understanding of how we fully utilise working memory, so our pupils are engaged and motivated to learn. The latest pedagogical research informs our lesson instruction, the resources we create and the feedback we provide to our pupils. Embedded formative assessments act as a bridge between our teaching and our pupils' learning. We continuously instil in our pupils a view of what learning is and how learning occurs. This results in Highfield children receiving and experiencing an exemplary education tailored for the 21st century and their place in it.



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## Highfield Curriculum - The Impact

Alignment of standards, curriculum, and assessment are the key to supporting the implementation of the Highfield Curriculum. Alignment clarifies what is intended for pupils to learn and their actual experience. Our assessment measures are designed to judge the accuracy of alignment of the intent and implementation and evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum, teaching and learning. Termly audits and work scrutinies are conducted by subject leaders which, most importantly, embrace pupil voice at the centre. Protected time is given to this process to ensure the depth of scrutiny is sufficient to inform subject leaders and class teachers accurately. From this action plans are devised to continually improve the cycle of teaching and learning.

Such rigorous scrutiny assures the curriculum is delivered consistently and robustly. This aids teachers' understanding of what Highfield children know and can do. We focus on strong curriculum alignment because it creates the right conditions for Highfield children to acquire new knowledge and skills, connect units of learning and learning between year groups and deepen understanding of new content.

*'Curriculum is not static but is constantly evolving.'*

(Watermeyer, 2011)

The local context is constantly changing. Global society is constantly changing. Therefore our curriculum does not stand still, it is constantly evolving to meet those changing demands. Our medium-term plans are 'live' – continually being reviewed and refined. Rigorous assessment of our practice and community informs the shape and scope of our curriculum design. But our values and aims remain: to unlock every child's potential ready to *navigate the promise and challenges of the twenty-first century*.



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## References

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