

Our Curriculum

We believe our curriculum should inspire, excite, motivate and challenge our children to develop a love of learning, beyond that of the classroom.

We follow a comprehensive, thematic, creative curriculum, with a clear process of learning and specific learning goals for every subject. This develops international mindedness and encourages personal learning. We deliver a rigorous learning of knowledge and new skills whilst giving children the opportunity to build upon, develop and apply what they already know to a range of different contexts. We are passionate about ensuring our approach allows children to engage with their learning at a deep level. To help us further with our curriculum provision, we have invested in the International Primary Curriculum. We are developing a detailed map of our coverage of skills to ensure whichever class a child is in, the learning journey is fulfilling and age appropriate.

As a Federation of two schools, we welcome children from the age of two into our nursery at Marshchapel and see learning progress to the age of eleven at Grainthorpe. We follow the National Curriculum Programmes of Study (POS). Our curriculum is comprehensive, thematic and creative with a clear progression of learning and skills for every subject. During the course of the academic year, the children encounter a termly focus where they discover answers to 'Key Questions', explore 'Big Issues'. Through our projects, we help children to connect their learning to where they live as well as looking at learning viewpoints of other people around the world. We provide opportunities so that our curriculum is supported and enhanced by a range of experiences, visits and activities; all designed to heighten and enrich learning. Non-core subjects are blocked over the three terms in order to facilitate better quality learning, through providing a sustained and concentrated approach, leading to a deeper learning experience.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We follow the The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, which is the statutory framework for children's development from birth to the end of their first (Reception) year in school.

Our Early Years Curriculum is designed to support children's learning across all areas, through the provision of both planned and child-initiated purposeful activities and experiences within an environment of high quality resources and interactions. It recognises each child as an individual with their own interests, motivations and needs.

The curriculum is divided into PRIME and SPECIFIC areas of learning. The early learning goals in the prime areas of learning cover personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language. The early learning goals in the specific areas cover mathematics and literacy. Each of these areas are taught through cross-curricular indoor and outdoor, play-based learning experiences.

We use a range of observations and assessments to plan for children's next steps in learning and provide children with play-based, purposeful learning experiences. It is important for our Early Years team to gain knowledge of children's individual interests so that these can be incorporated in the planning of relevant learning experiences. An essential element of this process is the link between home and school; parents know their child better than anyone else and are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey.

All children in EYFS have their own individual online learning journal in which key aspects of their learning are recorded. All parents have access to their child's online journal and we actively encourage parents and carers to add observations and comments to their child's journal. We love to hear about learning and WOW moments from home.

English

We are passionate about ensuring every child will be able to speak confidently, read fluently with understanding and be able to express their ideas clearly in a variety of written forms. It is vital that children have good speaking skills, as oracy underpins all literacy/English skills. As such, we have a whole school focus on developing vocabulary and use numerous approaches to encourage high quality conversations.

Reading, Phonics into Spelling

We are committed to making 'Every Child a Reader' and developing a love of reading for all by exposing children to a range of reading approaches and text types. We firmly believe that reading does not only happen at school and actively encourage our children to share books with parents and carers at home; evidence shows that children who read regularly outside of school make more rapid progress.

Phonics

We teach reading through the Ruth Miskin synthetic phonics programme called Read, Write, Inc. This programme teaches children to say the sounds for individual letters and then blend them together to read words. By having daily dedicated lessons, we aim to have all children reading by the end of Reception and by the end of Year 1 to read fluently with a developing understanding of different texts. From Year 2, our children are then free to concentrate on improving their comprehension for a variety of purposes.

Spelling

Our Spelling starts in earnest, once children have completed the phonics programme-usually by the end of Year 1. From phonics, children move on to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Spelling Pathways which involve teaching spelling strategies taken from a combination of Support for Spelling and Spelling Bank. In addition to this, children are expected to learn individual spellings and spelling and grammar rules that have been identified by teachers during observations of children's work.

Handwriting

Handwriting is a key literacy component that needs to be taught actively and we believe legible and neat handwriting is essential. Our aim is for all children to develop a fluent, confident handwriting style. To achieve this, teachers model handwriting formation during discrete sessions, whole class shared writing opportunities, small guided groups and on a one-to-one basis.

Children's gross and fine motor skills develop at different rates and they will learn to form letters in a consistent way at their own speed. Once they have learned how to form the individual letters correctly and consistently, they then learn to join the letters and develop a cursive handwriting style. At all stages, children are expected to take pride in the presentation of their work.

Writing

We recognise that the effective teaching and development of oracy and phonics underpins the development of successful writers. From the first days in Reception, children are encouraged to mark-make daily in a variety of ways and as soon as they learn their sounds, practise writing their letters. By the end of the first year of school, we aim to have the children writing simple sentences to express their ideas. As they progress through the year groups, children are challenged to write more complex sentences in different genres, with a strong emphasis on correct grammar and spelling. Children are given a weekly opportunity to write independently at length and not just in their dedicated Literacy lessons but through topic sessions as well. There are many aspects to writing successfully and we aim to give equal measure to each constituent.

Mathematics

We want every child to develop a love of mathematics in order that they become competent mathematicians. To do this, we teach a comprehensive mathematics curriculum which embeds the three main principles of Fluency, Reasoning and Problem Solving.

Fluency / Conceptual understanding

In developing children's skills through enhancing their factual, conceptual and procedural knowledge, we allow the children to deepen their mathematical understanding and be able to apply what they know to help them to solve problems.

Mathematical reasoning

The progression and development of mental calculations and efficiency in strategies provides children with the skills which will allow them to communicate and present their findings effectively using appropriate mathematical language.

Problem solving

By providing opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in different contexts and across a range of subject areas, children will be able to work systematically to organise information, find patterns and ultimately solutions through independent and collaborative learning.

All children, from Early Years Foundation Stage, follow our curriculum through which we deliver an established framework of mental strategies and supported / independent practice. By combining mental strategies with the main principles of Fluency, Reasoning and Problem solving we are able to ensure learning has depth, is sustained and builds on previous knowledge.

Throughout the school, children use equipment, pictures and abstract representations to help them build a secure grasp of mathematical concepts. Opportunities are provided throughout the mathematics curriculum for children to re-visit areas previously covered. Concepts are broken down into manageable chunks before being put back together again and children are given the independence to self and peer assess their work as they progress through the school years. We prefer using these approaches because in line with current thinking on how we learn and how our memories work, they have been proven to provide the most impact and support learning and progress.