



## **Thornford CE Primary School Curriculum Policy**

November 2025

***“Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself.” Luke 6:31***

### **Our Curriculum aims to:**

- Excite and engage pupils with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote learning and so improve their life chances.
- Prioritise Phonics and Reading as the key to a child’s learning.
- Develop oracy, reading, writing and numeracy skills so that pupils can communicate fluently
- Develop life skills: growth mindset, resilience, adaptability, independence, creativity and a thirst for knowledge
- Cultivate aspiration and ambition, through self-motivation, self-confidence and self-belief.
- Rapidly address gaps in learning through effective assessment
- Teach pupils strategies to support their own mental health, physical health and well-being
- Be rigorous and broad, where there are high expectations for all pupils (including SEND, Disadvantaged and Able)
- Be well planned and properly sequenced so that end points are clear and pupils develop their knowledge and skills, building on what has been taught before
- Be adaptable so as to be meaningful and relevant to all Thornford pupils to ensure that they are well-prepared for the next stage of their education.

Due to two year groups within one class, like many small schools, we adapt our exciting curriculum accordingly.

### **Our Curriculum**

The curriculum is the total range of all the work that children learn and experience at school. Thornford Church School currently operates a broad and balanced curriculum, which encompasses the content, skills, knowledge & understanding from the current National Curriculum. The basis for our learning experiences is that **LEARNING SHOULD BE FUN!** If you enjoy doing something, you will do it better! We teach from the National Curriculum 2014.

Teachers may use schemes of work as a starting point for some subjects but are expected to consider their current cohorts & class and be creative when adapting schemes to challenge and inspire children. Where appropriate and relevant, teachers make links between subjects, so children can explore themes in depth in a more holistic way.

Teachers' personal enthusiasm and passions are positively encouraged, and cross phase teaching is utilised to enhance learning where appropriate. The curriculum is provided through subject lessons, cross curricular activities, interests outside the classroom, and the values promoted by the school.

The curriculum taught with EYFS & early Key Stage 1 emphasises the importance of play and focus is also placed upon personal, social and health education through our SCARF activities and whole school assemblies and our nurture programmes.

### **Long Term planning**

Teachers adapt the National Curriculum programme of study in order to create a broad and balanced curriculum providing the children with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to develop into well-rounded, informed individuals. Cornerstones Curriculum Maestro is used for our Foundation Subject Planning: History, Geography, Art and Design, Design Technology, as well as some Core subject (English, Maths and Science) links which can be taught throughout the topics. The teachers choose the topics for their year groups and there is a two-year rolling programme as we have mixed age classes.

### **Medium Term planning**

The teachers then adapt the Cornerstones Curriculum Maestro for their classes in a creative and meaningful way, making links across subjects. Maths is taught separately using White Rose Maths throughout the school. Teachers look for opportunities to use and apply both subject knowledge and skills in foundation subjects, for example, calculating pulse rates in PE or retelling a myth or legend using narrative techniques in history. Specialist Days and Weeks can boost coverage, if necessary. Cornerstones has a clear progression of learning through sequenced lessons. It also checks and tracks Curriculum and there is also a gap analysis tool for use if necessary at the end of a topic. Assessments can be made using Cornerstones, except for English, Maths, Science and RE which are recorded on our INSIGHT Assessment Tracking.

### **Short Term Planning**

The Teachers use their Medium Term planned sequences of lessons and turn them into detailed weekly plans for each year group, including scaffolding for SEN, Disadvantaged and Able pupils; Use of Teaching assistants for focused teaching etc. A topic sequence will often start with a significant event such as a school trip to Stonehenge.

### **EYFS Curriculum**

We use the Cornerstones: Curriculum 22 Reception projects, which stay true to early years pedagogy. There is a balance between directed and play-based activities which are aligned to the new early years framework. There is a high focus on language and communication throughout these projects. Children are introduced to a rich vocabulary through key texts and linked activities. The curriculum has the flexibility to incorporate our own ideas and follow any lines of inquiry that have come from the children. See our EYFS policy for information on how our Early Years Curriculum is delivered.

The long-term curriculum map is supported by more detailed half-termly plans which contain specific areas of focus followed by weekly plans. In all this, great care is taken to ensure that there is a balance across and between subject areas. We use a mixture of teaching styles including:

- whole class teaching
- mixed ability group work
- ability grouped work – both within the class and across the whole age range
- individual teaching & appropriate intervention groups to both support and stretch our pupils

## **Subjects**

Children are taught the core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science and Religious Education and the foundation subjects of History, Geography, Art, Music, P.E, MFL (Modern Foreign Languages), PSHE, Design and Technology, as well as Computing .

Sometimes subjects are taught in specific subject blocks, but mainly learning is organised in a cross-curricular way based on a variety of topics using Cornerstones Curriculum Maestro.

Through firsthand experience and through the skill of investigation, we aim to encourage self-motivation and enthusiasm for learning.

## **Curriculum Aims for each Subject Area:**

### **ENGLISH**

To be able to use language as a powerful means of communicating thoughts, plans and decisions, and to become an enthusiastic and fluent reader. Reading is taught through a fun, educational and systematic synthetic phonics approach (including other strategies). Within English, we teach comprehensive elements of reading, writing, the spoken word & language. Through story mapping, drama and role play, children learn and use new vocabulary in both speech and writing. Year 2 children develop their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills, with support from Essential Letters and Sounds, with a broadening range of genres that link writing to our cross curricular topics. This comprehensive approach is continued in KS2. A life-long love of Reading is developed through the

provision of regular opportunities, such as visiting authors. Writing and Oracy are emphasised as vital tools for communication in everyday life. Rigby Stars Spelling Scheme is followed through from Year 2 to Year 6 to ensure consistency and continuity throughout a pupil's school journey.

### **Phonics**

When they start at Thornford, early reading and writing skills are developed through daily phonics sessions in Reception and Key Stage 1, using the DfE validated systematic synthetic phonics scheme 'Essential Letters and Sounds'. This is supported by the use of decodable reading books, for Reception and Year 1, to allow children develop their love of reading and comprehension in books where they can read or 'decode' all the words themselves. Alongside reading, oracy is a large part of English lessons in Reception and Key Stage 1. We use Essential Letters and Sounds as our Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme (SSP). This is designed to teach children how to read through the act of decoding and blending. The SSP teaches children the link between the sounds (phonemes) of our language. Essential Letters and Sounds has a consistent lesson structure, resources and language.

### **Reading**

Becoming a fluent, skilled and attentive reader starts at the earliest stages, with the development of vocabulary through talk at nursery settings and in the home, before children even encounter a book for the first time. Reading is prioritised as a core skill. Becoming a fluent, skilled and attentive reader starts at the earliest stages, before children encounter a book for the first time. A focus is on expanding their vocabulary, which is partly driven by the quality of their parents' talk with their child. Reading is fundamental to education. Proficiency in reading, writing and spoken language is vital for success and to help with this we use accelerated reader and guided reading sessions to teach reading skills discreetly.

### **Writing**

We aim to give our children a writing curriculum which enables them to become confident, creative independent writers who can articulate their own ideas. We support them to develop transferable skills which they can use across the wider curriculum and throughout their lives. We use educational visits, high quality literature, film and music as stimuli for writing which links learning to real life experience and provides a contextualised meaningful curriculum. We want our pupils to leave with a strong independent writer's voice and the technical skills necessary to communicate clearly in a modern world. Using 'The Literacy Shed' as our base curriculum, lessons are structured, with a clear progression of skills.

### **Maths**

Mathematics is a creative and highly interconnected discipline that has been developed over centuries, providing the solution to some of history's most intriguing problems. It is essential to everyday life, critical to science, technology and engineering, and necessary

for financial literacy and most forms of employment. A high-quality mathematics education provides a foundation for understanding the world, the ability to reason mathematically, an appreciation of the beauty and power of mathematics, and a sense of enjoyment and curiosity about the subject. We use the Maths Mastery approach to develop a deep, long-term and adaptable understanding of Mathematics. This method is an inclusive approach where all children can achieve. It differentiates through depth rather than acceleration. Paired work enables children to regularly explain and articulate their learning. We use the White Rose resources from Reception through to Year 6.

### **Science**

A high-quality science education provides the foundations for understanding the world through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics. Science has changed our lives and is vital to the world's future prosperity, and all pupils should be taught essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science. Through building up a body of key foundational knowledge and concepts, pupils should be encouraged to recognise the power of rational explanation and develop a sense of excitement and curiosity about natural phenomena. They should be encouraged to understand how science can be used to explain what is occurring, predict how things will behave, and analyse causes.

### **Computing**

A high-quality computing education equips pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computing has deep links with mathematics, science, and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work, and how to put this knowledge to use through programming. Building on this knowledge and understanding, pupils are equipped to use information technology to create programmes, systems and a range of content. Computing also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

### **Religious Education**

We aim to encourage children to be reflective, sensitive, and thoughtful, to consider the beliefs of the Christian faith and other world faiths, to be considerate of the beliefs of others and to develop their spiritual and ethical awareness. We develop a knowledge and understanding of religion to explore fundamental questions arising out of our shared human experience of life. As a Church of England School, RE is vital to our whole school mission. (See SIAMS Inspection). The Emmanuel Project planning is followed to deliver RE across the school. Religions covered include: Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Humanist perspectives are also included.

## **Art**

Art and design embodies some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality art and design education should engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As pupils progress, they should be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design. They should also know how art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.

### **Aims of Art and Design:**

- Produce creative work
- Explore their own ideas
- Record their experiences
- Become proficient at drawing, painting, sculpting
- Become proficient at general art and design techniques
- Evaluate and analyse creative works using artistic language
- Know about great artists, craft makers and designers
- Understand historical and cultural developments of art forms

## **Design and Technology**

Design and technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. Using creativity and imagination, pupils design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. They acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art. Pupils learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens. Through the evaluation of past and present design and technology, they develop a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world. High-quality design and technology education makes an essential contribution to the creativity, culture, wealth and well-being of the nation.

## **Geography**

To inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

## **History**

To develop a sense of the past, sequencing of events, changes and their causes and to be able to find information through stories, artefacts, places of interest and other historical sources. To develop a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. To inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. To equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

For our pupils to:

1. Know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
2. Know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind
3. Maintain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'
4. Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses
5. Learn about methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed
6. To gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales.

## **Music**

Music is all around us. It is the soundtrack to our lives. Music connects us through people and places in our ever-changing world. It is creative, collaborative, celebratory and challenging. In our schools, music can bring communities together through the shared endeavour of whole-school singing, ensemble playing, experimenting with the creative process and, through the love of listening to friends and fellow pupils, performing. The sheer joy of music making can feed the soul of a school community, enriching each student while strengthening the shared bonds of support and trust which make a great school. In Years 3 and 4, pupils participate in a whole-class instrumental programme lasting a minimum of one term. Years 5 and 6 will also participate in a whole-class instrumental programme. This is supported by teachers from Dorset Music Education

Hub. Opportunities for development will continue beyond this mandatory term. There is access to both rhythmic and melodic instruments in Key Stages 1 and 2.

### **MFL (Modern Foreign Languages)**

To begin to experience and learn languages from other cultures (this is taught in Key Stage 2). This is French and delivered with a cross-curricular focus by a specialist MFL teacher. Thornford School is twinned with a school in the village of Hudesmesnil, Normandy, France and there is an active exchange programme.

We aim to give pupils:

- the opportunity to understand and respond to spoken and written language from a variety of authentic sources
- speak with increasing confidence, fluency and spontaneity, finding ways of communicating what they want to say, including through discussion and asking questions, and continually improving the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation
- write at varying length, for different purposes and audiences, using the variety of grammatical structures that they have learnt
- discover and develop an appreciation of a range of writing in French

### **PE (Physical Education)**

A high-quality Physical Education (PE) curriculum is delivered which supports all pupils' physical health and emotional well-being using the PE scheme, 'Complete PE'. Pupils learn a breadth of skills through invasion games, dance, outdoor activities, swimming and gymnastics. The underpinning values of these inclusive learning opportunities significantly support an individual's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in line with the whole-school approach to a pupil's long-term success. We teach more than skills as we recognise that this opens opportunities for all pupils through PE to develop and apply resilience, leadership and communication in a range of situations which will set them up for life.

### **PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education) and RHE (relationships and Health Education)**

We intend to provide a whole school PSHE curriculum that builds foundations of health and wellbeing, providing crucial skills and positive attitudes to enable children to achieve

their best potential, academically and socially. We want our children to develop and deepen their personal, social, emotional development in ways that are tailored to their age group, whilst also expanding on their previous knowledge as they progress through the school. Our intention is for our children to learn about themselves as developing individuals and as members of their communities, building on their own experiences and experiences of others. We want to provide a safe space for the children to learn PSHE, providing them with the ability to make safe and informed choices, taking responsibility for their actions, respecting and valuing difference and being the best that they can be. Children will learn to show tolerance of others regardless of their background, religion, race, gender or sexuality, and develop their understanding of others as we are 'All God's Children'. As they progress further up the school into upper KS2 we want to provide effective relationship and health education, to enable the children to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives, to help and support them through their physical, emotional and moral development. It is our aim to help our pupils to learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

### **Relationships and health education**

The overall aim of RHE is to foster a positive notion of lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development, including how to look after physical and mental health. It aims to support the development of self-respect and empathy for others and promotes the development of skills and understanding necessary to manage conflict peaceably and learn how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse. The SCARF scheme and resources are used for teaching this subject. See Relationships and Health Education Policy. Please note that YR follow the National EYFS Curriculum.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Our pupils encounter SMSC and British values in every aspect of school life; through their lessons, through assemblies, whole school charity days, visitor, trips and extra-curricular activities. See SMSC Vision on website.

### **British Values**

We use opportunities such as school council (and general/local elections) to understand Democracy. Debating skills are taught to provide pupils with the opportunity to learn how to argue and defend points of views. The rule of Law is related to the need for school rules in order to keep everyone safe. A wide variety of sources are used in Collective worship and RE to help pupils learn about and understand a range of faiths (Mutual respect & tolerance of different faiths and beliefs). Individual liberty is taught through our work on The Rights Respecting School award. Our PSHCE curriculum has a strong emphasis on

emotional literacy, building resilience and nurturing mental and physical health. With an ever-changing society, we are able to provide our children with a strong understanding of the diverse world around them and support them in playing a positive role in contributing to the school and the wider community.

### **Resources to support curriculum delivery**

- Essential letters and Sounds: Systematic synthetic Phonics programme
- White Rose Maths
- Rigby Stars Spellin Y2-6
- Complete PE
- YR-6 Cornerstones : History, Geography, Science, Art and DT, EYFS
- Y1-6 Charanga Music YR-6
- Emmanuel Project
- SCARF: PSHCE and SMSC Page

### **Inclusion**

Teachers set high expectations for ALL pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects. Further information can be found in our statement of equality of information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

Academy Committee Reps monitor whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a “broad and balanced curriculum” which includes the required subjects, through:

- school visits: meetings/liaison with Subject Leaders; meetings with the school council, etc.
- Subject leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- Subject Progress meetings planning scrutinies, learning walks, book scrutinies, pupil interviews.

Subject leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Head of School. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

Links with other policies This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- EYFS policy.
- Assessment policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Equality information and objective

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