



HIGHGATE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Curriculum Policy

September 2024

Introduction

The school curriculum is all the planned activities and experiences that the school provides in order to promote children's education and personal development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the enrichment programmes, community events and extra-curricular activities the school organises in order for children to achieve well across the curriculum, develop character and be well prepared for the next stage in their education. The curriculum has been designed to engage children in their learning and remain committed to learning throughout their lives, grow to become positive, responsible citizens, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills.

School Vision

The school curriculum is underpinned by the school's values, which are set out in its vision statement:

- Love learning: we want everyone to enjoy learning and to achieve their best.
- Inclusive: we want everyone who uses our school to feel involved and included.
- Supportive: we want everyone involved with our school to feel supported.
- Green: we want our school to look and be a greener place.
- Healthy: we want our school to be a healthy place for our minds and bodies.

Ten Curriculum Strands

In addition to the school's values, the school curriculum builds on ten underlying principles:

1. Joyful, meaningful and purposeful learning

We encourage children to appreciate the enjoyment that can come from learning the key skills of reading, writing and maths. We ensure that the application of these skills comes through purposeful activities which are connected to the wider learning taking place both within the class topics and beyond.

2. Investigative and collaborative approaches to learning

We aim to provide children with opportunities to pursue an enquiry, including discussion around what is already known, formulating questions as to what they want to find, carrying out independent or group research and presenting their findings to a range of audiences using a variety of media. Great emphasis is put on providing opportunities for children to work collaboratively.

3. Learning takes place everywhere

We aim to provide opportunities for children to learn in a variety of settings, including the classroom, specialist areas, home and on trips and visits. Great emphasis is given to learning in an outdoor setting including opportunities for outward-bound activities and Forest Schools.

4. A chance to shine

We aim for children to have opportunities to develop their unique skills and talents, and provide opportunities for these to be shared with others.

5. Thinking skills

We aim to provide children with opportunities to develop their thinking skills, including problem solving, logic, critical thinking and philosophy. The curriculum is also designed to promote children's personal development including the key skills and qualities of adaptability, resilience, thoughtfulness, co-operation and respect.

6. Knowledge and Mastery

We recognise the importance of knowledge and understand how it can be motivating and liberating, supporting children to communicate, engage with the world around them and overcome fear. We understand that children need opportunities to embed learning, ensuring firm foundations are in place on which to build.

7. Local, global and green

We aim to provide children with opportunities to develop their understanding of their place within the world. This includes developing their understanding of their locality, and its relationship with contrasting localities both in the UK and internationally. We want children to develop a sense of their national identity at the same time as developing an understanding and interest in other parts of the world. Internationalism is embedded in the curriculum, helping children develop a coherent international perspective. We want to develop children's understanding of issues relating to sustainability and the impact of human action on others.

8. Child-initiated learning and play

We fully support the principle that learning through play is an essential part of a child's development. A play-based curriculum is provided in The Family Centre and Early Years Foundation Stage, which is extended into Year 1, however children in older year groups are also provided opportunities within the curriculum to play. The curriculum also provides opportunities for children to extend their learning through research and project study in the areas of learning beyond the published curriculum in areas where they have a particular interest.

9. An Inclusive Education

We understand the importance of supporting children to develop a pride and understanding of their individual identity including their gender, ethnicity, faith and cultural heritage. The curriculum is planned to ensure strong and positive representation of different groups, with a focus on those represented within our school community. The curriculum promotes respect and positive attitudes towards individuals identifying with all such groups (including the Deaf community and children with special educational needs and disabilities) and an understanding of difference as both natural and a source of enrichment.

10. Classrooms rich in talk

We recognise the importance of giving children opportunities to communicate effectively with one another, the adults with whom they work and a range of audiences, using different registers as appropriate to the context, including Standard English. Oracy is promoted in a range of ways including collaborative group work, drama, debating and performance. Children are taught to speak audibly, clearly, concisely and in complete sentences, as well as to listen actively to others, responding with sensitivity and respect.

The Highgate Primary Curriculum

The school views the curriculum in the widest sense and, to reflect this, has developed the following areas of learning:

A topic-based approach to learning

The Highgate Primary Curriculum provides a cross-curricular, thematic teaching structure designed to engage children of all abilities.

It comprises a range of units of work, each planned to last for half a term. These units of work, or topics, are designed to provide continuity and progression in children's learning and for children to learn the essential knowledge, skills and understanding of a broad range of curriculum subjects. The collection of topics that comprises the HPC is set out in the HPC Curriculum Overview (Appendix 1) and is designed to meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.

Each unit begins with an 'in-day' in which an activity is planned to introduce the children to the topic. These activities are designed to motivate and generate interest in the topic and allow children opportunities to think about the lines of enquiry they would like to pursue.

Learning within each topic is delivered through a range of linked activities, which are planned to deliver clearly defined learning objectives within the context of the topic. Great emphasis is given to creating real-life links through different activities including enrichment activities, trips, visits and invitations to visiting experts to come into school.

Wherever possible, all subjects with the exception of maths, are delivered through the topic. In literacy, the skills of reading and writing, including handwriting, punctuation and grammar, will be taught explicitly but the chosen texts and related writing genres are linked to the topic.

Each topic is concluded with an 'out-day' which is a rounding off of the topic, and includes a celebration, evaluation and opportunities to reflect on the learning which has taken place.

Forest Schools and Outward Bound Curriculum

The school believes that children benefit significantly from learning in an outdoor setting. The Forest Schools Curriculum is a skills-based curriculum with a commitment for children to work in a woodland setting for one session each fortnight. This curriculum is delivered in partnership with Highgate Woods to children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

In addition, the school curriculum incorporates residential trips. Children in Year 4 visit Tolmers Activity Centre for 3 days in the Summer Term and children in Year 6 visit Pendarren Outward Bound and Activity Centre for one week.

Community Curriculum

The school understands that important learning takes place outside of the topics, through planned events and activities. This range of learning opportunities, called the Highgate Community Curriculum, comprises the following:

Assemblies

A programme of high quality assemblies is planned to support curriculum aims. Each week this includes:

- a Headteacher's assembly which addresses relevant themes, celebrates outstanding achievement and promotes commendable attitudes
- a key-stage singing assembly
- a phase assembly, which addresses a range of issues in an age-appropriate way

Performances and Concerts

The school provides a full schedule of performances and concerts throughout the year including:

- Class assemblies: each class presents a topic-based assembly to parents and the children.
- Arts performance: each year group from Year 1 to Year 6 spends a week working with a music and performing arts specialist and at the end of the week performs an immersive piece to children and parents.
- A Nursery concert to parents.
- A reception Nativity to parents.
- A Christmas performance to parents.
- A Year 6 leavers' performance to family members.
- A children's music concert where children perform pieces on the instruments they are learning at school.
- An evening community music concert, where members of the wider school community are invited to perform.
- Termly music performances by classes involved in the whole-school music tuition scheme, performed to a whole school audience and parents

- Highgate's Got Talent: a child-initiated annual performance where one child in each class performs to a whole school audience
- Christmas Sing-along: communal festive concert

Celebrations, Festivals and Themed Days

The school acknowledges and celebrates a range of festivals each year through special assemblies including a Harvest celebration. In addition, the school participates in a variety of special days and events each year, which typically include World Book Day and World Maths Day. The school also participates in different national initiatives to promote inclusion and community cohesion for example Black History Month in October and Autism Awareness Week.

Visitors to the school

The school has a programme of inviting inspirational visitors to school to talk to a range of audiences about their areas of expertise, experience and achievements. This includes regular visits from authors, musicians and experts from a variety of other fields. The school recognises the power of positive role models from diverse backgrounds.

PSA

The Parents' School Association (PSA) organises a wide range of events each year from which the children benefit significantly. The programme includes:

- One world Evening: a multi-cultural celebration of food and the arts.
- Christmas Fair: a community festive celebration at which children are involved in organising and running stalls.
- Summer Fair: a community celebration.

Extra-curricular clubs

The school provides a very wide selection of lunchtime and after-school clubs in order to enrich children's learning. These include specialist clubs for arts, crafts, sports, languages and cookery. In addition, the school's Breakfast Club (Early Birds) and After-School Club (Night Owls) are designed to support children's personal development, wellbeing and learning.

Links to other policies

Please refer to:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Literacy Policy
- Maths Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Review

This policy is subject to review every four years, as part of the school self-evaluation process.

Staff Responsible for Implementation

William Dean Headteacher

Emma Judge Deputy Headteacher

Appendix I: Curriculum Overview

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
N	Ourselves and our School	Celebrations	Transport	Sea and Space	Traditional Tales	Teddy Bears' Picnic
R	Ourselves and our School	Into the Wood	Explorers and Adventurers	Amazing Animals	What a Performance	Growing Up
I	Science The World through our Senses <i>The five senses</i>	History/ Geography Celebrations <i>Traditional celebrations</i>	Geography Whatever the Weather <i>Climate</i>	History Toys <i>Changes within living memory</i>	Science/History Amazing Architects <i>Materials</i>	Science Flowers and Insects <i>Classification</i>
2	Science The Animal Kingdom <i>Living things and their habitats</i>	History Great Fire of London <i>A significant national event</i> <i>Materials</i>	Geography Making Things Move <i>Transport</i>	Arts/DT The Circus <i>Circus skills</i>	Science Growing up <i>Plants/human growth</i>	Geography Beside the Seaside <i>A contrasting locality</i>
3	History/Science From Palaeontology to Archaeology <i>Rocks/fossils/skeletons</i>	Geography Chocolate <i>South America/Rainforest</i> <i>/ State of matter</i>	History Treasures of Ancient Egypt <i>The earliest civilizations</i>	Geog/Science Race to the South Pole <i>Magnets/forces</i>	Geography From Source to Sea <i>Rivers/water cycle</i>	Science Meadowsong <i>Plants/nutrition/soil/food chains</i>
4	History Masks and Minotaurs <i>Ancient Greek Civilisation</i>	Science Sound and Vision <i>Light/sound /electricity</i>	History Londinium <i>The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain</i>	Science Flight <i>Birds/forces/classification/ predators and prey</i>	History Away from Home <i>Evacuation/ digestion/teeth</i>	Science/Geog Active Planet <i>Rocks/Changing States</i>
5	History A Victorian Education <i>Local history study/ human change/growth</i>	Science/Geog What Price Progress? <i>Environmental science/ materials</i>	Science Our Place in Space <i>Space/forces</i>	Geography Highgate N6 <i>Local area study/ living things/habitats</i>	History Benin - An African Kingdom <i>non-European society</i>	Geography A Village School <i>Contrasting UK locality/ living things/habitats</i>
6	Geography Pendarren <i>Rocks/mountains/ classification</i>	History Our Island History <i>Invaders/settlers/migration</i>	Science The Body in Question <i>Evolution and inheritance/ human anatomy</i>	Science The Swinging 60s <i>Electricity/light</i>	History The First Emperor of China <i>Ancient Chinese Civilisation</i>	Arts/DT What a Performance! <i>Theatre studies</i>