

Witherley C of E (VC) Primary School

Curriculum Intent and Rationale

Introduction

Witherley C of (VC) School is a small, rural primary school situated in the far-west of Leicestershire, on the Warwickshire-Leicestershire border, along the River Anker. The school is Voluntary Controlled by the Diocese of Leicester and maintains close links to the local church (St. Peter's) which is on the school's doorstep. There are currently 103 pupils on roll, split into four mixed-aged classes; R/1, 1/2, 3/4, 5/6. With a predominantly affluent, White British demographic, the school takes in pupils from local villages and surrounding market towns, including Atherstone. The school, sited across three separate buildings, benefits from additional indoor and outdoor teaching spaces such as a library, vegetable gardens and varied, extensive outdoor spaces.

Intent

The school is at the heart of the community, with strong links to the church and other local groups. The school is increasingly seeking opportunities to engage with the local community and surrounding businesses so the children can develop confident, healthy relationships with increased resilience and respect for others and the environment and a clear understanding of the diverse world in which they live.

We aim to provide a stable, caring, Christian environment where children are encouraged to develop their full potential in all aspects of the curriculum. We encourage the children to develop a caring attitude towards each other and to respect the opinions, attitudes and beliefs of others. Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian value through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

Pupil voice has demonstrated that whilst well-behaved, pupils aren't engaged by the school's current curriculum and therefore don't always achieve what they are capable of, leading to outcomes which can be lower than expected. Senior leaders feel they should be providing children with a curriculum that is highly relevant, engaging and challenging and will raise their aspiration and awareness of global issues; life outside Witherley. We aim to offer them a wide range of practical learning experiences, developing their cultural capital, as well as teaching them about human creativity and achievement. We want their learning to be both meaningful and purposeful, relevant to the world today, inspirational and fun.

To summarise, our curriculum aims to:

- Develop learners' confidence, resilience and independence
- Reflect the need for children to develop healthy minds and bodies
- Make use of our outstanding local environment
- Challenge, inspire, engage and excite
- Promote the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes
- Provide continuity and progression in learning

- Enable learners to develop and discover their own interests and talents
- Encourage academic, physical, social, emotional and spiritual development

Rationale for Implementation

We are committed to helping our pupils make links across themes and subject disciplines, by providing a cohesive learning journey from their starting points. We believe the curriculum should be connected in a meaningful way, evidencing clear progression and should demonstrate a consistent approach throughout school.

We use Dimensions 'Learning Means the World' Curriculum as the vehicle for this. It is underpinned by four highly relevant world issues, known as the four Cs:-

Conflict

Culture

Communication

Conservation

Conflict

We believe that life skills should be taught throughout the curriculum and an understanding of responsible, respectful behaviour is an important aspect of learning and pupils are able to view this in the light of the conflict-focused themes.

Having a developed understanding of sources of conflict and its consequences, we believe, is an important aspect of learning. Living and learning together in a small, close-knit community, we need our pupils to have a real awareness of how their behaviour affects others and how important positive relationships are throughout life. We also want them to be able to put into action conflict resolution and modify their own behaviour to help them disagree in a constructive manner. We want our children to possess the tools required to resolve conflict at all levels; through sharing, peaceful collaboration, compromise and to understand the impact sustained conflict can have.

Culture

As a school that predominantly represents a white British demographic, we want our pupils to fully appreciate and embrace worldwide cultural diversity, learning about and experiencing a range of different cultural and faith heritages. We want our pupils to value diversity, to understand the roots and importance of cultural heritage and to behave in a respectful and tolerant way towards others, regardless of faith, ethnicity or background.

We actively and explicitly promote cross-cultural friendship, respect, tolerance and understanding through 'Learning Means the World'. We want our pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of different cultures that can be found in the UK and around the world. We aim for our children to celebrate diversity and to know that discrimination is wrong. We want to promote inclusivity of all, through the actively valuing individuality.

Communication

We believe that communication is key to accessing learning and securing pupils' future success. We are committed to nurturing high aspirations. Our curriculum provides lots of opportunities for pupils to develop their language and vocabulary, thus enabling them to articulate their learning, express themselves in discussion, debate and presentation, as well as enabling collaboration and exchange of ideas. We want our pupils to be thoughtful communicators, learning to take account of context, including audience and setting. We want them to show empathy, an ability to listen well and to respond sensitively to others, offering support in, not only words, but also actions. We want to promote how to communicate

effectively. To develop the confidence to communicate and not always rely on an adult to intervene. We hope all children will learn to recognise the importance of communication in all areas of life and relationships.

Conservation

We feel our pupils need a more structured approach to developing greater awareness and appreciation of local, national and global conservation issues and initiatives, learning how they have an important role to play in sustainability. We want our pupils to be more informed about sustainability issues, to care passionately about our world and to engage actively in conservation issues as good stewards now and in the future, enabling them to become positive and active ambassadors for change. We want our children to have a good understanding of the impact humans have on the world and what they can do as individuals to make a difference and to recognise the importance of the world around us, whilst developing respect for it.

