

Our Curriculum

We are proud of the curriculum that we offer at Owlsmoor. Our curriculum comprises all the learning and other experiences that we plan to meet the needs and interests of our pupils. It constantly evolves in order to ensure that we are developing the skills needed for our children to become successful citizens of modern Britain and empower them to achieve success in the future. Our curriculum intentions are:

- To deliver an ambitious and knowledge-rich curriculum that is broad and balanced
- To ensure pupils develop the behaviours, attitudes and habits to become effective learners
- To develop pupils' character and cultural capital
- To develop pupils' understanding of how to keep physically and mentally healthy, and how to keep themselves safe
- To provide for pupils' broader development and equip them for future success

Our curriculum is planned thematically - topics are chosen to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are taught in as an effective, exciting and relevant way as possible. Themes have included 'Fire and Light', 'Extreme Earth' and 'The Rainforest'. Although using a topic approach, we ensure that each subject discipline is taught effectively.

Staff Training and Development

Staff at our school take on responsibility for an area of the curriculum and these posts are reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure continuing professional development for all staff. Each subject leader gets the opportunity to access training from Bracknell Forest, and our local cluster of schools so that they can keep up to date with any changes to their subject. Subject leaders monitor planning and assessment in their subject and regularly lead staff meetings or training on INSET days. They have created a 'vision statement' for their subject and a detailed progression map. Each subject leader also produces an action plan which is shared with the Governors. Governors also monitor alongside subject leaders.

Owlsmoor Primary School



Curriculum 'In a Nutshell'

Our school aims to develop a life-long love of learning where the children become resilient learners, develop their independence and have the confidence and self-esteem to persevere in all they do.

Our school offers the children a broad and balanced curriculum that is tailor made to suit the needs of the children in each year group. Teachers plan using the National Curriculum requirements and end of year expectations. Long term plans are created for the whole term with more detailed medium term plans showing how the areas of the curriculum are linked and covered through each academic year.

Children are given opportunities to experience whole school themed days or weeks such as maths week, book week, science week, arts fortnight, healthy mind week, geography day and poetry day. These allow the children to be immersed into that aspect of the curriculum, see the links between subjects and delve deeper into that subject. Weeks such as 'Careers Week' and 'My Money Week' help to prepare children for their future. Where possible these days/weeks are often cross-phase. Parents are frequently invited to share in these events to celebrate the children's achievements.

Whole school events such as Harvest and Christmas feature across the year. Every class undertakes an assembly, and a whole year group production which normally involves both individual and group singing, narration and dance. We think this emphasis on The Arts helps develop skills in those children who are perhaps not as academic as their peers and we wish to value all our children's talents and interests.

We also have a strong sporting history and participate in the local authority's inter-school competition. We recently won the netball league decisively, with no other team managing to win any games against us. We promote physical activity throughout the school day, with children completing the Daily Mile and making use of our outdoor gym.

We offer a variety of extra-curriculum clubs both for Key Stage 1 and 2 including gardening, construction, film and salsa dance clubs.

Children are given opportunities to undertake various roles in the school, including School Council, Green Team, Rights Respecting Champions, House Point Champions, Librarians. These help children to experience having a responsibility and develop their personal skills.

Social, Moral, Spiritual, Cultural (SMSC) and British Values

We are a Rights Respecting School (Silver level achieved) and we incorporate SMSC throughout our curriculum.

Assemblies are carefully planned to enable staff to share the British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect. Each year we use the local council ballot boxes and polling booths to replicate a General Election when we elect our school council. Children write speeches, make posters and canvas support. Children have a secret ballot and vote in their own time either at playtime or lunchtime.

Within assemblies we also cover themes that are important to our school such as children being active learners, embracing change and challenge and making mistakes. Developing independence and resilience are key threads throughout our curriculum as we believe these traits are integral to becoming successful citizens in a modern 21st century Britain. Religious festivals and days are celebrated in assembly to show the children how we are linked to the wider world and to make links with the multi-cultural make up of our school.

We encourage visitors to come in to school to share their experiences or talents with the children both in lessons and during assembly time.

Curriculum Promises To supplement the taught curriculum, each year group has a set of 'curriculum promises' which incorporate additional experiences we feel are of value to children's development.

These include: life skills such as cooking, gardening and sewing; social skills such as learning playground games; cultural experiences such as visiting a theatre or a gallery; outdoor activities such as den building and orienteering; wellbeing activities such as yoga and mindfulness; and learning new skills such as swimming and learning a musical instrument. These experiences enrich our curriculum further and help our children to become well-rounded individuals.

Links to the wider community

As a school we are proud of our community and are continuously looking at ways in which we can develop links further afield.

As part of developing links with the wider community and to help children develop tolerance towards other faiths, all children have the opportunity to visit St George's Church (local to the school), Woking Mosque, a synagogue and a Hindu temple.

We also welcome visitors into the school as part of specific topics such as vets, artists and scientists.

Every year children participate in an offsite visit, linked to the curriculum, and when they reach year 6 they are given the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to Hayling Island. This is always very popular and helps to further develop teamwork, co-operation and interpersonal skills.

Reading

Reading is central to our curriculum, and supporting our pupils to become fluent and accomplished readers with a love and passion for reading is one of our key aims. Reading is promoted and celebrated through events such as 'Book Week', 'World Poetry Day', 'Roald Dahl Day', 'The Summer Reading Challenge' and 'The Extreme Reading Challenge'. We hold an annual 'Book Fair', where children can purchase books, and we invite our local librarians in to encourage the children to use their local library. We have also arranged occasional visits from published authors, who talk to the children about how they write their books – leaving them feeling very inspired to read more, and often to write more too! We read aloud to the children regularly, with the class novel often being the most eagerly anticipated part of the school day - even at the top end of the school. We have a well-stocked school library with a wide variety of texts; the library is also open during lunchtimes for those bookworms who are happiest with their head buried in a book – here the children can spend time reading independently for their own enjoyment, or listening to stories being read aloud by an adult. The children are guided to read high-quality texts – engaging with fiction and non-fiction books as well as poetry, pictures and film – and they are encouraged to share their recommendations with peers. Pupils are taught to read and interpret texts on a one to one basis, in focused Guided Reading lessons and as part of their English units of work. Children are taught a range of decoding strategies, with a strong emphasis on phonics in Early Years and KS1, and a focus on developing increasingly sophisticated comprehension skills as they progress through the school. They are given frequent opportunities to read across other areas of the curriculum – such as examining historical sources, or conducting research on a topic. We recognise that regular reading at home is essential in supporting pupils to become proficient readers, and children are rewarded with additional playtime for reading four or more times at home per week – we also run parent workshops on supporting children with reading, and we have recommended lists of high quality texts for each year group published on our website.

Key Strengths

- Strong attainment and progress in the core subjects, demonstrated by our consistently good results.
- The development of Growth Mindset pedagogy and introducing 'Habits of Mind' has enabled our pupils to become more effective learners, building resilience and developing greater independence.
- We recently reviewed and adapted our curriculum, with the following aims: ensuring all requirements of the NC are being fully met; ensuring the school's curriculum intentions are being translated effectively into practice; ensuring MTPs reflect best practice in each subject discipline, including appropriate pedagogy; ensuring there is coherent progression in each subject across the school.
- The curriculum is enhanced in a number of ways including: successful themed days & weeks; workshops, visitors & school trips; curriculum promises; many opportunities to perform in assemblies and productions; a good range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer.
- Links with the wider community, including the choir performing at the local church fete and Sandhurst Community Centre.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of global citizenship through learning about environmental issues and supporting charities.
- Development of pupils' cultural capital, e.g. through teaching children about significant artists and composers, opportunities to visit places of worship etc

Key Priorities

- To ensure that the improvements introduced last year, detailed in the 'curriculum development' document are implemented and embedded.
- To implement the RSHE curriculum.
- To ensure that teachers are adapting the curriculum in response to AFL information and pupils' needs following school closures.
- Continue to develop opportunities for reading across the curriculum and promote reading for pleasure.