



Thomas Hickman School

Curriculum Policy

Intent – Implementation - Impact

Adopted by Thomas Hickman School

Adopted by Governors Full GB:

Date of review:

July 2024

Date of next review:

July 2025

Signed:

Date:

Alan Sherwell - Chair of Governors



Where
CURIOSITY
HATCHES,
creativity
takes
Flight
and
learning
SOARS
TO A SKY OF
opportunity.

BIRDS Philosophy

At Thomas Hickman we are expected to behave and learn in a way in keeping with our whole school philosophy. We are all **BIRDS**, staff, community and children alike.

We will be **BRAVE** in life and learning and stand up for what is right, even when no-one is looking. Everyone has the right to learn, be safe and respected at THS. Our courage to do the right thing will **INSPIRE** others around us to follow; we will be strong and lead the way.

We will be **RESPECTFUL** to our THS school family. We will demonstrate this in class, at playtime and around the school. Our kind hands, kind words and kind heart will show people we all belong together and no BIRD flies alone: there are No Outsiders at THS.

Even when times are really hard, we will stay **DETERMINED** to follow our school expectations. We 'grow our brain' every minute, of every day: we are **SCHOLARS** and understand that sometimes we need to learn how to behave well too.

Intent: Our Flying Start Curriculum

At Thomas Hickman School we aim to work in partnership with all members of the school and wider community. We understand and respect our school's context and in response to its challenge and complexities have developed a curriculum which provides rich, relevant and exciting learning opportunities for our children which addresses social disadvantage. The intent of our curriculum is to give our BIRDS a flying start to learning - to understand, in these foundation years, that learning is the key to opportunity and choice.

Our curriculum is fully inclusive and designed to reach every child: it supports and challenges them to achieve their full potential and to soar to success. It is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.

We have invested in the environment in which our curriculum takes place, and as a result the school is treasured, well-ordered, safe and secure. Our children are happy, valued and well prepared to make a positive contribution to our rapidly changing society – through our flying start curriculum our aim is to release *good* BIRDS into secondary school who become *good* citizens of the future.

We believe that the national curriculum is just **one** element in the education of every child.

Whilst at THS we follow the requirements of the National Curriculum, we are confident that there is time and space in the school day, each week, term and year to **range beyond** its specifications. It is during these opportunities that we make our **Flying Start** curriculum, bespoke to our school, for our **specific learners**.

To explain further, the National Curriculum provides only an outline of core knowledge, around which skilled leaders and teachers develop exciting, stimulating, sequenced and coherently planned lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum. Therefore, pupils at Thomas Hickman School are exposed to our **Contagious** and **Courageous Flying Start** Curriculum, which is creative, rich and deep, but most importantly **distinctive**; designed to meet individual needs.

It is **'contagious'** because we want all children to 'catch' learning – there is nowhere to hide from it, every minute of every day is a learning opportunity.

It is **'courageous'** because we won't narrow the curriculum to isolate 'Maths and English' lessons, and we won't teach to tests. We will not stop the curriculum in the Spring term to 'cram' for SATs. We will be brave and deliver PE or wider curriculum lessons first thing in the morning if we choose and consider how English and Maths can be incorporated into these.

Our curriculum has been mapped to ensure that there is both **substantive and disciplinary** content in each subject. Substantive knowledge are the facts that the children learn, while disciplinary knowledge is how the children use those facts. For example, in Geography, children to develop their 'thinking like a geographer'. So that they ask questions, gather and evaluate information and draw conclusions. This is part of a broader set of life skills that help them to be active citizens of the world we live in, as well as preparing children for the next stage of their education. For each Wider Curriculum area, a substantive and disciplinary document has been created to show the learning that will take place in each year group.

"The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically." (DfE 2013.) At Thomas Hickman School we value the importance of **oracy** throughout our curriculum. Staff at Thomas Hickman value oracy and know that oracy is *"not a subject but a condition of learning in all subjects; not merely a skill but the essential instrument in the humanising of the species"* (Wilkinson, 1970). Oracy is the ability to articulate ideas, develop understanding and engage with others through spoken language and listening. Oracy skills set children up for success in school and life. Our classroom culture value the talk process and children are actively encouraged to orally rehearse what they would like to say and write. Oracy skills are developed through strategies, such as, 'Talk to your partner,' 'My Turn, Your Turn,' 'Hold a sentence,' and through debates.

Children also have the opportunity to perform throughout their journey at THS. This is through a variety of planned assemblies, often linked to their Field of Study i.e. A Stone Age Harvest or through productions hosted at different points within the school year.

What's bespoke to our curriculum?

Some examples include;

- **Field of Study:** Fields of Study are coherently planned, sequenced and developed to teach the children the knowledge and discrete skills they need to succeed. The Fields of Study are designed to submerge the children in learning and allow for them to make links across the curriculum, taking the learning beyond the individual subject. Through our Field of Study approach, children are able to develop an understanding of chronology by linking prior learning, ensuring that they 'know more and remember more.'
- **Termly Trip/Visits/Visitors:** Thomas Hickman School understands the importance of Cultural Capital for our BIRDS. Our leaders ensure that the curriculum we have created widens/enhances the experiences and opportunities available to our children. We deliver on this pledge by planning and committing to a trip/visit and experience, each term– a visit will give the children access to 'experts' who bring in specialised skills in order to inspire. The planned trips support the children to make

further links to what is being taught inside the classroom. First-hand, learning experiences and engagement through motivating events effect a change in the long-term memory, enabling children to retain knowledge and skills.

In order to ease the financial strain on our disadvantaged families, we have committed to paying the cost of all transport on all trips. We use our Pupil Premium funding to enable our most vulnerable children to participate all trips. We also support parents in applying for grants from the 'William Harding Charity' if they feel they are unable to contribute to a trip / visit.

- **Specialist Teachers/Practitioners:** We have invested in subject specialist Teachers/Practitioners and our intent is to offer specialised teaching in: Sport and MFL – we want the quality of the delivery to be unsurpassed to inspire and nurture talent.
- **Clubs:** Clubs are very much part of our Flying Start curriculum as we encourage all children to take part in a club every week. These take place before, during lunchtime and after school. All of our clubs are FREE and the majority are staffed by teachers and teaching assistants within school who are committed to building new skills in our children and develop children's self-confidence. The clubs on offer change termly and deliver both commonplace activities such as Art Club and Homework Club and more unfamiliar themes such as archery or Fashion Frenzy. Our clubs also expand into the wider community, such as our gardening club entering the 'Aylesbury in Bloom' competition.
- **The Swoop (our playground):** In addition to clubs, we consider 'playtime' to be part of our curriculum and created **The Swoop** – a place where children can learn to share, take-turns and concede in life. Again, the activities on offer in **The Swoop** change termly, but activities such as Crazy Golf, Swing Ball, Wild Wheels, Dance, Basketball, Football, Loose Parts Lab and Kite Flying have all been known to take place here.
- **The Acorn Centre (Family Wellbeing and Mental First Aid Centre):** We offer therapy to support children's social, emotional and general wellbeing through Talking Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Creative and Play Therapy.
- **No Outsiders here:** We celebrate our rich diversity at THS and reflect this in our curriculum to give our children a sense of belonging: our Flying Start curriculum ensures that there are No Outsiders – our curriculum is for all our children whoever, whatever they are. Our Field of Study resources reflect our children's culture, heritage, abilities/disabilities, gender and family units - for example within the books and visual resources we use to deliver learning.

We also use our curriculum to tackle all kinds of bullying by representing and celebrating 'difference' in our planning regardless of **race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age or gender**. In doing so, we believe that children will attain more at school and our community will be happier and more successful.

Throughout the year, we ensure that all celebrations are celebrated and valued. Every child, every family is represented and treasured at Thomas Hickman School, for example:

Dine in for Diwali



Hot Cross Bun Cafe



Holi:



Eid picnic:



How do we enrich our curriculum?

Field of Study Linked Texts: To enrich our Field of Study lessons we display a range of linked reads for the children to explore. These are taught during Reading lessons as snippets of text or as a whole read. The children are encouraged to read these books further as home reads.



Author engagement: As a school we value the importance of meeting 'real life authors' who share their writing experience with the children. This supports the children with their understanding of 'Sky of Opportunity' and encourages them to explore potential jobs for the future. Thomas Hickman proudly has links with a local bookstore, who support our school with contacting local authors.



Parent pit-Stops: THS fully welcomes parents, carers and others within our local community to take part in our children's learning experiences, they are invited to two parental pit-stops per term. This includes offering opportunities for children to learn outdoors and within the local community. Plus, parents are invited to take part in the child's phonics and reading lessons through 'a Fortnight of phonics.'

Soft Start: There is a 'Soft Start' to our day, which supports our most vulnerable children. Our gates open at 8.30am and children are welcomed at every gate by members of staff with a warm smile and a cheery hello. Class teachers then welcome children into class and early morning work is provided to get the children ready for the day ahead.

Assembly Themes: Our assembly themes cover up to date social relevance's, which ensure our children are prepared to be cultured, educated and active citizens in the future. In addition to this, we provide opportunities for our children to test possible, future vocations, for example taking part in local

community projects such as the redesign of our local church so that it becomes an integral part of our local community.

Staff encourage children to reflect on the purpose and value of their learning, reflecting on its relevance to their past, present and future.

Implementation


When planning a Field of Study, staff complete a ‘*Curriculum Converter*’ to ensure that learning is bespoke to the children in their class. Staff ask themselves three important questions: Why this? Why now? Why this way? It also ensures that community links are made, so the community is always integral to any new learning opportunities.

Staff also identify and carefully plan where the parental pit-stops will take place over the term.

Field of Study Overview Autumn 1 2022

Field of Study: Stand up: Stand out!



Curriculum Converter: 			
Overview: This FoS teaches children about the history of the dispersion or spread of any group of people from their original homeland to the UK : It explores the UK part in this diaspora, past and present. It looks at key figures within different minority groups who 'stood up' for the rights and beliefs of their people. It ends in a celebration of difference, using our No Outsiders Here principle.			
Pitstop:	Why this?	Why now?	
Key Texts: Freedom by Catherine Johnson Boy at the Back of the class Onjari Q Rauf,	Linked texts: (these need to be displayed with your FOS) Pig Heart Boy Windrush Child Stand up -Stand Out	Class Context:	
Trips Houses of Parliament Local Historical study (Aylesbury) significance of statues	Visitors Invite a speaker who has experienced displacement first-hand to visit/zoom for language practice NaTakallam's School Sessions virtually connect students with a displaced person from the Middle East, Latin America, or Africa for an interactive conversation offering personal insight into global issues.	Primary/Secondary sources of evidence: Artefact Loan Art Loan	
Notable dates: Black History Month - October Harvest Festival - TBC National Poetry Day – Thursday 6 th October Guy Fawkes Day -5 th November (see trips above) Remembrance - Commonwealth War Graves Commission finally recognises its failure to treat Black African and other ethnic minority soldiers who served for Britain in the First World War with the dignity afforded to everyone else.	Bespoke experiences: Heart dissection First Aid Training	Parental Pit-stop?	Local Community link See trips See visitors
		Finale?	

Our ‘Flying Start’ curriculum ensures that each Field of Study begins with a ‘*Lock, Link and Load*’ document as a way of building upon, identifying and *linking* children’s prior knowledge.

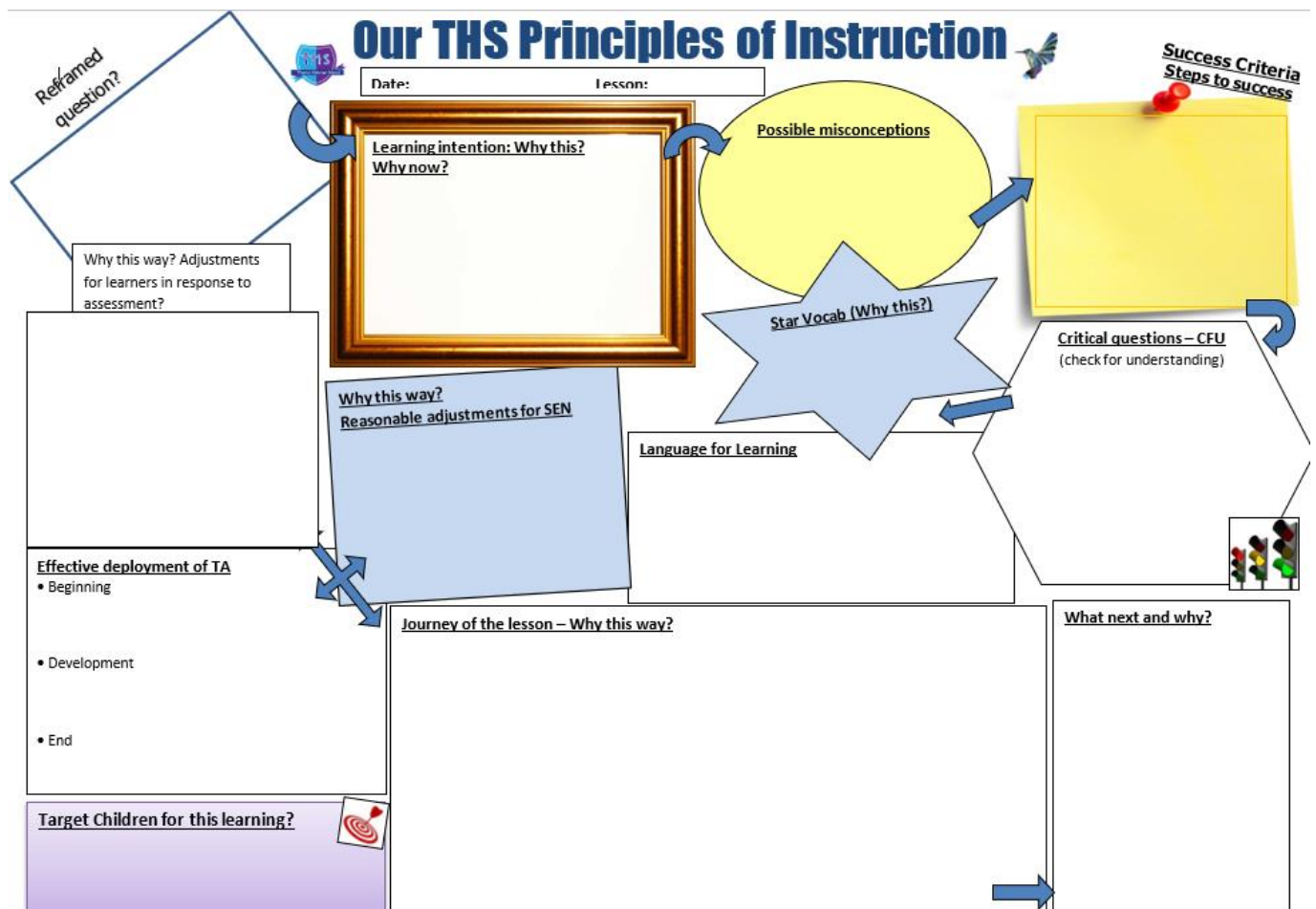
This document is used as a bespoke knowledge organiser, which guides the children in understanding the key learning that will take place and supports them to *lock* in prior and new knowledge. The children *link* what they have been previously taught, throughout the school. Children generate questions to answer throughout their Field of Study, ensuring that they are *loading* new information into their long-term memory.

As the Field of Study progresses, staff use the ‘Lock, Link and Load’ as an assessment tool to check that new knowledge has been secured.

Pedagogy: The delivery and diet of day-to-day learning

Our THS 'Principles of Instruction' are influenced by evidence-based research such as Dweck's Growth Mindset philosophy and Rosenshine's Principles in Action research. We have devised a Five Minute Planning sheet which distils our Principles of Instruction – these principles are not optional: they need to be habitual for our teachers to meet the requirements of our curriculum to ensure effective teaching and learning.

We ensure that reasonable adjustments are made so all children can fully participate in the education provided by the school, and that they can enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services that the school provides. This may include the way in which we modify the content, presentation, environment or expectations of Teaching and Learning.



Additionally, we adhere to these 17 Principles of Effective Instruction;

1. Begin a lesson with a short review of previous learning (Retrieval)
2. Present new material in small step pupil practice opportunities after each step
3. Limit the amount of material the children receive at one time (cognitive load theory)
4. Give clear and detailed instructions and explanations
5. Ask a large number of questions and check for understanding
6. Provide a high level of active practice for all children
7. Guide children as they begin practice.
8. Think aloud and model steps.
9. Provide many models of worked-out problems.

10. Ask children to explain what they have learned frequently (Tacit knowledge ‘how’ not ‘what’)
11. Check the response by children frequently.
12. Provide systematic feedback and corrections (See Effective Assessment and Feedback Policy)
13. Use more time to provide explanations
14. Provide many examples
15. Research material when necessary
16. Prepare children for independent practice
17. Monitor children when they begin independent practice

Impact:

We intend our well-constructed, well-taught curriculum will lead to good results over time.

Our ambition is for all our children to read at an age appropriate level to prepare them to access the curriculum throughout their school career.

Our ambition is for our children to achieve *at least* in-line with expected national assessments in each Key stage and make good progress from their relative starting points. Furthermore, we are committed to our children achieving *at least* in line with national assessments in combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.

All our children, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, acquire the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed and soar in life.

We have devised a formative assessment tool to support staff in tracking / identifying any gaps that may occur. The criteria link directly to the Field of Study being taught, e.g. History objectives that are taught in Year 2, Autumn Term:

Unlimited			
<input type="checkbox"/> Can use a historical model (Dawson) to make a judgement about significance	≡	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Describe, in simple terms, the importance of a local person (Ludwig Guttman)	≡	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Describe, in simple terms, the importance of a local place (National Paralympic Heritage Museum)	≡	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sequence significant information in chronological order	≡	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use historical models to make judgements about significance and describe the impact of a significant historical individual (Columbus & Armstrong)	≡	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Understand term activist and their impact	≡	<input type="text"/>	