



A Guide to Learning at Little Harrowden Primary School

“Learning for Life in a Caring Environment”

The Curriculum

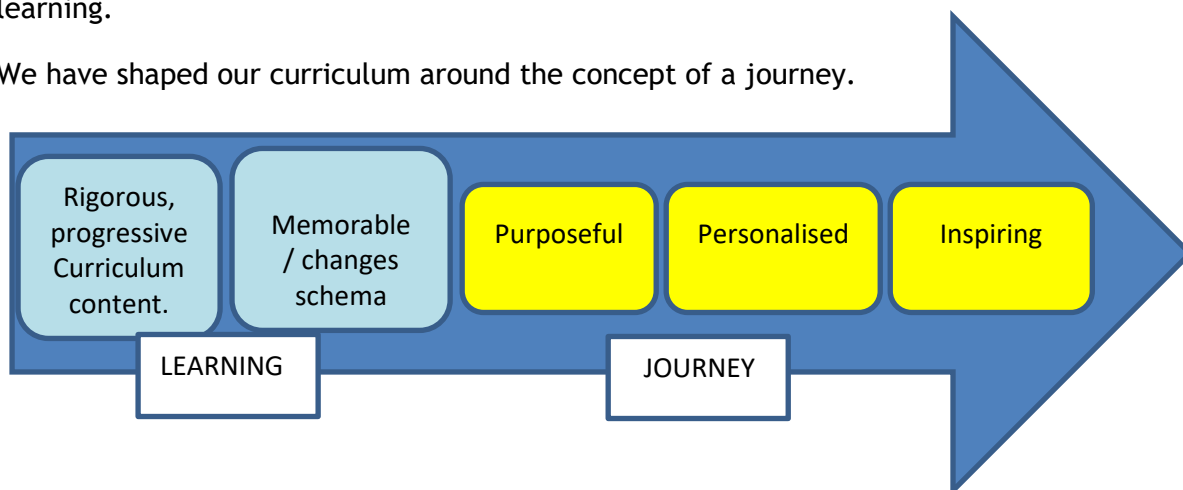
Children learn best when they are interested and enthused by what they are learning. At Little Harrowden we are passionate about engaging children in a rich and relevant curriculum that focuses on developing key subject and disciplinary knowledge across a broad and balanced curriculum whilst fostering the essential learning attitudes that will inspire a lifetime’s love of learning.

Our Reception class follows the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. They learn in a thematic way through play-based independent tasks and structured, adult-led activities. The learning environment in EYFS has fluid access to an outdoor classroom and also role play areas. Older children in school often act as learning role models, reading with the younger children and facilitating their induction to school life. Our Reception class often links with other classes to explore themes and they are included in whole school themes.

In Year 1 to Year 6, children’s learning is organised into themes that connect different strands of the national curriculum. All themes are underpinned by a book, poem or text that the children study. We want themes to excite children’s imaginations and stretch their thinking, giving them different opportunities and experiences.

We are passionate about learning outside the classroom and try to ensure that children have a varied number of trips during the year. We also invite experts into school to support learning.

We have shaped our curriculum around the concept of a journey.



Rigorous Assessment

Teaching is underpinned by a curriculum progression document based on the requirements of the national curriculum. Teachers plan themes in order to teach knowledge and skills in a systematic way and they assess based on age expectations as laid out in the National Curriculum. A child might be performing below, at or above age expectation. Our assessment systems are supported by PiXL. This helps us to identify gaps in knowledge and offers interventions to fill those gaps.

EYFS: When children enter school, we carry out a baseline assessment to identify strengths and areas for development. We use the NFER baseline assessment. This information is used to inform planning for learning. Teachers carry out continuous observation and assessment and report this to the DFE at the end of Reception.

Year 1: On-going observational assessment is underpinned by two low stakes assessment periods in the spring and summer term. Children in Year 1 are required to undertake a phonics assessment, the results of which are reported to parents and form part of the national data for the school.

Year 2: On-going assessment is underpinned by three low stakes assessment periods in the Autumn, Spring and Summer term (KS1 SATS). Teacher assessments in reading, writing, maths and science are reported at the end of KS1 and these form part of the national data for the school. Children who did not meet the expected standard in phonics are required to take the phonics assessment.

Year 3- 5: Reading, writing and EGPS are assessed formally each term in October, March and June using PiXL assessment tools. These assessments produce question level analysis which can then guide teachers towards strengths and areas for development for each child. Interventions, lesson planning and differentiation within class can then be used to address weaker areas of learning. Writing is teacher assessed as part of ongoing assessment for learning.

Year 4: Year 4 are required to undertake a multiplication check in June and these results are reported to parents and form part of the national data for school.

Year 6: In preparation for Secondary School, children are required to take the KS2 SAT tests which ascertain whether they have met or exceeded the national expectation in reading, maths and EGPS. Writing and science is teacher assessed. The children will be supported to ensure they are ready for the rigor of these more formal assessments.

*Children who are working significantly below the expected standard will be supported through on-going assessments and will not be required to sit national tests.

Learning Power

Children learn, practice and develop skills and attitudes to prepare them for their learning journey. Some of these skills are subject specific, others are universal skills and attitudes that support and deepen learning. These key skills underpin all learning across the curriculum and we aim to equip children with these fundamental learning skills so that they reach their full potential in the future. We see the journey as the most important part of the learning process not just the end product.

Cleverness is related to effort rather than attainment

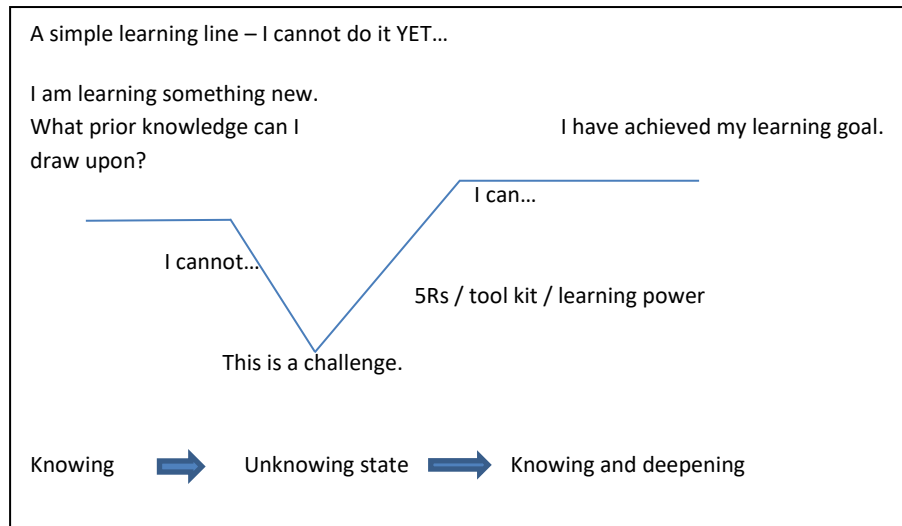
We use the word 'clever' to relate to learning behaviours and effort rather than attainment. For example: a child who is academically capable in maths may give very little effort to their work and make very limited progress whereas a child who finds maths difficult but never gives up can make outstanding progress from their individual starting point. At Little Harrowden, cleverness relates to the effort and learning behaviours shown, not attainment. It also means that every child in the class can be clever.

Below you will find more information about the power to learn.

Learning

‘What you learn depends on what you already know. The quality of what you already know can help or hinder your ability to learn new information.’

The learning line is a simple visual representation of the process of learning. It shows that when anyone learns something new, they go on a journey which often has bumps in it; we call this bump cognitive conflict.



I cannot



I can

Our curriculum is carefully designed from EYFS to KS2 to build on children’s prior learning. This means that we ensure that we build the component knowledge required to achieve the composite outcome. For example, in order to use water colours to paint a portrait (The composite outcome), children will have needed to have acquired knowledge throughout their school career, including knowledge of colour, sketch work skills and knowledge of proportion to name just a few components.

Memory and Learning

We can define learning as the ‘the retention and transfer of knowledge and skills’. Learning should change what we do, support our understanding and help us to make connections between different concepts. Staff use their understanding of short-term memory models and threshold concepts to ensure information and skills are passed into the long-term memory store. They used **spaced-learning strategies** to ensure that each memory has storage and retrieval strength. We aim for learning to be:

Integrative: Once learned, they connect different concepts together. Times tables might be an example here.

Transformative: Once understood, it changes the way you see a subject. For example, learning to read opens up a world of possibility and knowledge.

Irreversible: Once learned it is hard to unlearn. For example, riding a bike or spelling your name.

Reconstitutive: Over time, they change your sense of self. An example here might be how learning a sport might make you more active.

Troublesome: These are concepts that seem counter-intuitive and require conscious thought to overcome. Re-wiring a plug for those who don't do it often might feel like this. You may need to think aloud to overcome the challenge.

Discursive: The ability to use subject-specific language fluently and without conscious effort. For example, when discussing a text, a child used technical vocabulary without prompt.

(David Didau et al, 2016)

Spaced Learning Approaches

One technique we use is building incidental learning into the day. For example we might get children to tell the time or estimate weights, lengths or measures. An example of this is the minute game. We 'drip' learning into the fabric of the day.

Going Deeper tasks and Next Steps tasks

When teachers mark a child's learning they will identify common misconceptions or mistakes. These errors will be corrected promptly through the use of a deepening task. Tasks that deepen learning also provide feedback to the child and act as a prompt to review their work. We use the term next steps to talk about new learning in a subject.

Differentiation

Every child is at a different stage on the learning journey. Differentiation within the classroom supports each child in making progress regardless of their stage. We do not sit children by ability and we encourage children to select their own level of challenge to 'deepen learning', we call these challenges,

Challenge - Super Challenge - Ocean Deep

We expect every child to achieve the outcomes. However we plan different routes to the same outcome. For example a child might need further adult support, different equipment, access to learning tool kits, reminders or tasks broken down into smaller steps. Some children will be working significantly below or above the age expectation for their year group. These children will have specific plans to help them overcome barriers and may have interventions both inside and outside the classroom. The key to differentiation is that it is inclusive, ensuring that there is suitable challenge and support regardless of ability.

Purposeful –Personalised – Inspiring

Built on top of the foundations of rigor and memory, is the curriculum learning journey or theme. Teachers plan whole school themes, phase themes and individual class-based themes. We ensure that themes have a purpose. Children need to know why they are learning what they are learning. We personalise learning by making themes relevant to children and their interests. Finally, we make learning memorable, creating links between subjects and real life. Every theme is supported by a high quality book as story is very important to memory and learning. Teachers use stories to hook children in and incite curiosity.

The Learning Environment

Research tells us that fancy displays that have taken hours to create contribute very little towards children's progress in school. That said, this does not mean that we should abandon displays altogether. The learning environment is essential to a child's feeling of safety and, if a child feels safe, then they are more likely to take risks in learning.

1: **Classrooms and learning spaces should be purposeful, clutter free and resources should be organised, available and easy to access.** This promotes resourcefulness as children can self-select from a range of tool kits to support independent learning.

2: Displays fall into 3 categories:

- **Celebration Displays:** These showcase children's work or celebrate achievements. They track progress towards a goal or reward achievement.
- **Supportive Displays:** These displays support learning or show the learning journey.
- **Organisational Displays:** These displays offer reminders or support class organisation eg...a jobs rota.

At Little Harrowden, our teachers have the freedom to customise the classroom to support their class' needs. However all classrooms will have the following displays:

- Working walls in English and maths
- A vocabulary display
- A learning journey wall
- A display celebrating and promoting children's reading.
- An organisational display with information about the school rules, jobs rotas, marking policy, timetable, E-Safety rules, house points chart etc...
- A display that promotes positive health and emotional well-being.

3: A Reading Area

All classrooms will have a book shelf and easy access to books.

4: In order to promote well-being some classrooms will have a designated 'safe space'. This is a place that children can go to reflect, relax and self-regulate. We also recognise that children may have a preferred way of learning. Some children may prefer to work alone at a work space, whilst another may prefer a collaborative approach. The design of the classroom reflects the needs of the class.

5: Classrooms are places of work and endeavour. However that does not mean that they are not exciting and fun places to be. The curriculum, behaviour expectations and the relationships between members of the class supports the positive learning environment. We want our classrooms to be filled with curious discussion, creativity, story-telling, laughter and music.

6: Whilst the classroom is an important learning space, we actively encourage children to learn outside the classroom. We want to promote the belief that learning can happen anywhere and at any time. We will seek opportunities in the curriculum to use the whole of the school site and beyond for learning.

Collaboration

Speaking and listening are learned behaviours. These behaviours are essential when working with others in a team. We want all children to feel confident to contribute effectively during discussions and team work activities. We also want children to listen carefully and actively.

In order to promote speaking:

- We encourage children to answer questions using full sentences.
- We ask open questions to promote reasoning.
- We promote discussions in the classroom.
- We promote story-telling and poetry recital in English to broaden children's vocabulary.

In order to promote listening:

- We read stories to children.
- We ask children to summarise what they have heard.
- We have regular circle time discussions.
- We promote active listening skills - eye contact, body language etc...
- We teach music and a MFL in KS2

We also teach children collaboration skills so that they can enter into discussions, share ideas and work towards a collective goal. Children learn as much from one another as they do from adults in the classroom.

The Teacher's Role

Teachers fulfil a number of roles within school. They are in loco parentis (in place of the parent) whilst a child is at school. Therefore they ensure children are safe and their basic needs are being met. The development of social and emotional aspects of learning and British Values are promoted. Teachers are also responsible for children's learning development. They do this through a cycle called 'Assessment for Learning' (AfL) within the framework of the National Curriculum. Teachers continuously assess children's learning and adapt their approach to ensure that the pitch is challenging but accessible. In basic terms, a teacher find out what a child does not know yet and teaches it to them.

Teaching children requires imagination, creativity and a 'child's eye view' of the world. Children learn best through clear and direct instruction followed by practical experiences and through making connections to everyday life. They do not learn well through lecture. Children need to practice basic skills (develop fluency) before moving on to deepening

activities that embed those skills. For example, children have to learn to construct sentences before being able to write a story. In maths, times tables knowledge is a fluency required to support reasoning and problem solving (deeper learning). A teacher facilitates these experiences to ensure that skills and knowledge are learned, remembered and applied widely.

The Support Staff Role

Support Staff or Teaching Assistants work under the teacher's instruction. The jobs they do are varied but their core purpose is to ensure that all children have equal access to education and learning. They also provide emotional and well-being support to children outside the classroom. Some of our support staff have specific areas of expertise in speech and language, mental health and well-being. At Little Harrowden, we recognise the complexity of teaching and learning and this is why we are committed to ensuring staffing numbers support the many needs of our learners.

Home and School Partnership

We see the home and school partnership as vital to a child's success in school. We encourage parents to promote learning at home in a number of ways. In Reception, parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey and we send home resources to support learning prior to transition from nursery to support school readiness. We encourage parents to give their children a wide range of experiences in order to broaden their horizons and encourage curiosity. Children in KS1 and KS2 are encouraged to do homework activities weekly. We also expect every child to read for at least 10 minutes daily. Other ways that parents and carers can help is by ensuring that their child gets at least 9 hours sleep a night and eats a hearty breakfast. Children who have underperformed usually tell us it is because they are tired or hungry.

Local Academy Board

The board of governors for the school ensure that the school is meeting the needs of the children through engaging in the monitoring and evaluation process. They act as a 'critical friend' to the leadership of the school.

InMAT Multi-Academy Trust

The trust is there to support and challenge our school. It creates a partnership between schools and quality continues professional development (CPD) to its members through Inspire Teaching School. This network provides a sounding board for creativity in education as well as a basis for research and development.

The Key Attitudes to Learning

There are five key 'attitudes to learning' or learning behaviours called the 5Rs. These learning behaviours are an essential attributes in all learners in our school. They are:

- Resilient
- Resourceful
- Respectful
- Reflective
- Responsible

Learners with these attitudes will be successful life-long learners.

We ensure that our curriculum reinforces these 5Rs and we explicitly promote them through our curriculum design. There are many other learning attitudes that we encourage in children.

Risk-taking, perseverance, communication, cooperation, motivation, initiative, open-mindedness, patience, tolerance, independence, curiosity, empathy, courage, organisation, flexibility, imaginative, encouraging, focus, questioning, determination, ambition.

Our curriculum aims to deepen children's knowledge and understanding of the subjects being taught. In a mastery curriculum, children learn skills in order to reason, problem-solve, make connections and hypothesise.

These mastery skills include the ability to:

Analyse, describe, hypothesise and sequence.
Anticipate, determine, identify, simplify,
Apply, discuss, infer, solve
Make causal links, elaborate, interpret, sort
Choose, estimate, organise. Summarise
Classify, evaluate, para-phrase, support
Compare, explore, predict, test
Connect, generalise, question, verify
Contrast, exemplify, rank/order, visualise
Decide, give reasons, represent,
Define, group, respond.

The 5Rs in more detail

What does **resilient** look like?

I persevere, even when I'm not sure. I am not afraid to make mistakes as I know that this is essential to good learning. I practise and rehearse. I challenge myself to deepen learning by choosing activities that take me out of my comfort zone. I am brave.

What does **resourceful** look like?

I make sure that I use the tool kits around me to travel along the learning line. If I am stuck on something, I think about what might help me to make a breakthrough. I use my support networks. I listen to advice. I am a problem solver.

What does **respectful** look like?

I listen to others' view points and know that it is okay to respectfully disagree. I allow others to learn well and I allow the teacher to teach. I make sure I take care of my equipment and the equipment of others. When I speak to others, I do so in a way that accepts individual difference and diversity and promotes equality. I am respectful and tolerant.

What does **reflective** look like?

I listen and act on feedback. I think about how I could improve. I know and can list my strengths. I know what I need to work on. I know how I feel and I can self-regulate. I can self-assess and peer assess. I am honest.

What does **responsible** look like?

I am always ready to learn. I take my job as a learner seriously and make sure that I get plenty of sleep and eat a balanced diet. I ensure that I have the correct resources for the job. I look for learning opportunities at home and at school. I meet deadlines. I know that my success is down to the effort I put in. I am the learner.

I am brave, I am a problem solver, I am respectful and tolerant, I am honest,

I am the learner.