



Curriculum – Teaching & Learning Policy.

Related documents: Safeguarding policy, What we do & how we do it policy, RSE Policy,

Our vision is to provide pupils with the confidence, skills, and ambition to achieve a successful and productive life. We aim to ensure they leave us with the opportunities and can become positive members of their communities. To do this, we have 3 principles that underpin our policies, practices, and everything we do:

- Everyone can learn, achieve, and has the potential to be successful
- Positive relationships are key to success and are underpinned by mutual trust, respect and caring for one another
- We have high expectations in everything we do

Wonderful
Excellent
Lovely
Clever
Outstanding
Magnificent
Enthusiastic

(Acronym created by White Trees pupils)

INTRODUCTION

White Trees Independent School is an inclusive school which strives to provide a first-class education that encourages pupils to think independently and to develop their full intellectual, creative, and physical potential. Its success is the result of the recognition of the unique worth and importance of each child. The school makes provision for children and young people in Key Stage3 to Key Stage 5 inclusively. The school will provide an environment in which all its members feel safe, valued, and respected. Every pupil will be encouraged to acquire a sensitivity to the feelings and needs of others, accept personal responsibility for his or her actions, and treat all property with due care, irrespective of its ownership.

The school will celebrate achievement and promote pupils' achievement through praise whenever appropriate. Behaviour that undermines the happy environment that is such a hallmark of school life, such as bullying, insensitivity, discrimination, bad language or acts of intolerance, will not be accepted. By knowing every pupil socially, emotionally and academically, we can employ strategies and practices giving the opportunity for each pupil will flourish and acquire the confidence and self-belief to achieve a fulfilling and successful future and to become confident, accomplished and ambitious young adults. At our school we know and support each one of our pupils. No effort is spared to ensure that they acquire the confidence and self-belief required for success in the world beyond school. Our detailed knowledge of our pupils social, emotional and mental health wellbeing enables us to monitor their progress very attentively and help them cope successfully with the educational and personal challenges of schooling. Our school offers a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society and
- Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.

PUPIL PROFILE

Our school provides for those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (SEMH), as well as other needs or diagnoses, including, ADHD, ADD, ASD and other difficulties. Most of our pupils are referred to us and funded through the local authorities. Our age range may vary depending on specific cases; however, most of our pupils will range between 11 and 18 years of age. Most of our pupils will have an Education Health Care Plan. Others may be undergoing assessment. Emphasis in the school is thus on the development of community values, i.e. a caring and considerate attitude to others, good manners, self-discipline, service to the community and the pursuit of excellence. Many of the pupils who arrive at White Trees Independent school are disengaged and have significant gaps in their education due to prolonged periods of absence and multiple educational placement breakdowns. They present with several barriers to learning which are reflected in weak literacy and numeracy skills, poor organisation, low aspirations, inability to tackle things independently, low self-esteem and limited cultural and life experiences. All this has a direct bearing on our curriculum design.

To meet the needs of our pupils the curriculum at White Trees Independent School is delivered through a thematic approach which views learning and teaching in a holistic way, encompassing a wide range of different subjects. Providing a purpose and relevance to learning which in turn promotes positive attitudes in pupils, as they are more engaged, motivated, and successful. This approach is run through the use of focus themed weeks, such as Science week; its impact on the human anatomy and the ethical basis for development of medicine, and enables pupils to explore it from a variety of perspectives, drawing on skills, knowledge and understanding from a range of subjects. It often involves practical investigations and

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contributes to pupil's social as well as academic development. This is supported by some discreet subject teaching and successfully reinforces learning in core subjects such as Maths and English. This enables pupils to consolidate and apply the skills they have gained and to understand their wider relevance and usefulness.

In our school the most important role of teaching is to promote learning to raise pupils' achievement. For us, teaching includes lesson planning, the implementation of plans, as well as marking, assessment, and feedback. It also includes support and intervention strategies. In assessing the quality of the teaching in our school we take account of the evidence of pupils' learning, achievements, and progress over time – evidencing using learning journals and pupil Pathways. When evaluating the quality of teaching in our school, we consider how successful the teaching is in promoting the learning, progress, and personal development for every pupil by:

- extending the previous knowledge, skills and understanding of all pupils in a range of lessons and activities over time.
- enabling pupils to develop skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics.
- enthusing, engaging, and motivating pupils to learn.
- using assessment and feedback to support learning and to help pupils know how to improve their work
- differentiating teaching, by setting suitably challenging activities and providing support for pupils of different abilities, including the most able and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, so that they can all learn well and make progress
- enabling pupils to apply intellectual, physical, or creative efforts and develop the skills to learn for themselves and setting high expectations
- using well-judged and effective teaching methods, deploying appropriate resources, managing class time, and drawing on good subject knowledge and expertise to encourage pupils to make good progress
- managing instances of poor or disruptive behaviour.

White Trees Independent School is a school whose success is founded on the recognition of the unique worth and importance of each pupil. This ensures that no pupil is anonymous or unsupported. Individual attention along with small class sizes and 1:1 teaching where appropriate promotes confident learning and academic progress. It is integral to our purpose and incumbent on us to enable a nurturing approach to pupils which supports the personal, social, and academic development of each of them. The close relationship between teachers, pupils and parents/carers/guardians ensures that pupils' strengths are built upon and needs for their individual development addressed.

VALUES

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values of Excellence, Respect, Courage and Perseverance that we hold dear at White Trees School. The curriculum is how the school achieves its objective of educating Pupils in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to lead fulfilling lives, underpinned by these values. The curriculum seeks to promote the reputation of as a school that prepares pupils for further education and life-long involvement in learning, contributing confidently to an ethnically pluralistic society.

- We value the way in which all Pupils are unique, and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual Pupil, as well as for people of all cultures. We value the spiritual and moral development of each person as well as their intellectual and physical growth.
- We value the importance of each person in our community. We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community.

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- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each Pupil in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to be successful and we provide equal opportunities for all the Pupils at White Trees Independent School
- We value our environment and we aim, through our curriculum, to teach respect for our world and how we should care for it for future generations, as well as our own.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

White Trees Independent School is committed to providing a curriculum which ensures that all its pupils acquire and develop skills appropriate to their age and aptitude in the following areas:

ENGLISH

This area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are most overtly brought into focus in lessons in English, Participation and PHSE. The teaching of literacy and literary skills is not, however, confined to these subjects, and the policy of the school is that teachers of all subjects will encourage good linguistic and literary standards in all pupils' work. Communication skills are enhanced.

The Accelerated Reader Programme

The Accelerated Reader Programme is used to assess the reading levels of all pupils and to track their individual progress on a termly basis. All pupils complete a star reading test which generates their reading age, ZPD range and a scaled score to show progress each term. Pupils are given access to a choice of books within their ZPD range and we try to encourage them to choose books that are at the highest end of this range so that they are being challenged and learning new vocabulary each time they read. Pupils have daily reading time on their timetables and must complete a comprehension online quiz every time they complete a book. This gives us a result as a percentage and their progress is tracked through the Accelerated Reader reporting system.

Literacy Across the Curriculum

Literacy is the responsibility of all classroom teachers and tutors, therefore during teaching sessions in all subjects pupils are encouraged to check grammar and spellings. Reading is inclusive of all pupils and subjects with pupils being asked to read and comprehend a range of texts. Spelling tests are completed each week and key words from all subjects are included. Pupils are therefore learning specialist, subject specific vocabulary which will help them access work in their lessons each week. A generic mark scheme is given to all teachers who then assess work for SPAG and give pupils regular feedback on their work to improve their literacy levels.

MATHEMATICS

This area helps pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics should be developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration, and discussion.

SCIENCE

This area is concerned with increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials, and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting small experiments, and recording their findings.

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TECHNOLOGICAL (Including Art and Design, ICT and Food Technology)

These skills can include information and communication technology (ICT); developing, planning, and communicating ideas; working with equipment, materials, and components to produce good quality products; and evaluating processes and products.

HUMANITIES (Including Geography, History and Religious Studies)

This area is concerned with people and with their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. In most schools, the subjects of history and geography make a strong contribution to this area. In our school our topic based Personal, Social and Health and Economic (PSHE) education alongside our knowledge and understanding of the world makes a strong contribution to this area

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This area aims to develop the pupils' physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses, and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. Pupils should also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health. PE and games All Pupils are expected to take part in the school's Physical Education and Games programme.

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

The School provides Sex and Relationships education in the basic curriculum. Pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. The policy for the School's Sex and Relationships Education is available to parents/guardian/carers. It forms a key part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) course and has regard for the government's guidance in Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (0116/2000). In accordance with the law the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all pupils, but parents/guardian/carers may withdraw their pupils from any other part of the sex education provided without giving reasons.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (SMSC)

This policy statement and the declared values of the school are enhanced by the linked qualities of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development. White Trees Independent School is a non-denominational school where pupils of all faiths and belief systems are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and a spirit of open and shared enquiry, whilst developing their individual potential and qualities of character so they can make a positive contribution to the world. This SMSC policy links and strengthens other policies so that the ideals of the school's ethos and mission statement become a reality for its Pupils. Whilst SMSC is integral to all aspects of our curriculum, PSHE and Focus Weeks make a strong contribution. Pupils are led towards distinguishing right from wrong, to respect the law and towards acting consistently with their beliefs and with a view to the consequences of their own and others' actions. We actively promote fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Our School:

- Leads pupils towards becoming confident and positive contributors to their community and effective users of its services and facilities according to their maturity.

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- Enables pupils to gain insights into the origins and practices of their own cultures and into those of the wider community.
- Takes steps to ensure that the pupils appreciate racial and cultural diversity and avoid and resist racism, and
- Ensure that pupils can understand and respond to risk, for example risks associated with extremism, new technology, substance misuse, knives and gangs, personal relationships, and personal safety.
- Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence.
- Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life.
- Provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England.
- Assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions.
- Encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and
- Precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school

We also take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that political issues are brought to attention of pupils-

- While they attend the school.
- While they are taking part an activity which are provided or organized by or on behalf of the school; or
- In the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of activities taking place at the school or elsewhere.
- Being offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Therefore, the understanding and knowledge expected of the pupils in White Trees Independent School as an outcome of our positive approach to SMSC includes
- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process.
- An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety.
- An understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence;
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law.
- An acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (PSHCE)

White Trees Independent School is committed to providing a comprehensive programme of PSHE education for all pupils, which is appropriate to their age and needs. Responsibility for developing and implementing this programme rests with the Senior Leadership Team. Each pupil's PSHE education and Citizenship education informs all aspects of the school day. The form this takes ranges from the way we treat each other to planning food technology lessons based on individual's cultural heritage. We have a cross-curricular approach to PSHE education, and its associated objectives may be addressed in such areas as Science, Assemblies, or other curriculum areas. Some Physical Education lessons are specifically tailored to the needs of the group, from working with a pupil coping with individual sports to facilitating turn taking and initiation with their peers. We 'help pupils achieve more' by ensuring that all pupils are given the

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opportunity to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being.

We provide positive experiences through planned and coherent opportunities in the curriculum, residential experiences and through interactions with teachers and other adults for our pupils. Our range of artistic, sporting, and other cultural opportunities is available to pupils through the curricular programme, and their participation in these opportunities. We plan our, personal, social and health education and citizenship through assemblies and curricular areas to help our pupils acquire values and skills to enable them to develop independence and choose their path in life. White Trees Independent School seeks to:

- Develop an ethos and environment which encourages a healthy lifestyle for pupils.
- use the full capacity and flexibility of the curriculum to help pupils to achieve safe and healthy lifestyles.
- Provide high quality Physical Education, with specialised teachers, and sport to promote physical activity.
- Promote an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon a lifelong health and well-being.

We aim for our pupils to understand and appreciate the range of different cultures and faiths in modern democratic Britain. We use our schemes of work and other plans which enable pupils to develop an understanding of public services and institutions and to take their place in modern democratic British society. We provide a range of quality opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility in school and make a positive contribution to the school, local and wider communities.

TRANSITION SUPPORT

We carefully manage the transition of our pupils throughout the school and in preparing pupils for further education. Our staff also spend time towards the end of the current academic year working with their prospective pupils for the year ahead if there is to be a change. This allows pupils to familiarise themselves with their new teacher in readiness for the next year group. We are especially careful in ensuring that transitions for children with SEND are fully prepared at each stage both internally and externally.

PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE

White Trees Independent School provides an appropriate curriculum for preparing pupils for further higher education, career choices and adult life. We aim to provide pupils with insights into the world of work, the range of career opportunities available to them, entry routes and what further training and education they can and/or need to access. It arranges work experience and advice is given concerning further and higher education.

STANDARD OF ATTAINMENT

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We carry out data analysis each year and use the data provided to find out how well pupils in our school are achieving, compared with pupils in similar schools. We analyse the statistics to help answer the following questions:

- Do pupils perform better in some subjects than others?
- Are there significant differences between boys' and girls' performances?
- How well are the more able pupils doing, and do enough pupils achieve the higher levels?
- Can we identify any groups of pupils who may be underperforming?
- Can we identify any groups of pupils who are gifted and talented?
- Can we compare expectations and estimates with final results?

THE CURRICULUM, ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE & PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

Whilst accepting the need to prepare its pupils for public examinations and further and higher education, White Trees Independent School will strive to ensure that the pursuit of these goals is consistent with achieving the other goals set out in this policy.

ORGANISATION & PLANNING

We plan our curriculum in three layers. The first layer consists of agreeing termly schemes of work which provides an overview of the content of the curriculum for each pupil. From these plans, creating the second layer, the teachers create weekly plans for the pupils they teach. From those plans they then create a third layer, in completing daily planning, they are used to set out the learning objectives for each session and to identify the resources and activities required for the lesson. When teaching we focus on motivating the pupils and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. This whole process consists of long, medium- and short-term planning. (See an example of the planning templates in an Appendices). The regular maintenance of the 3 planning layers are completed by all staff, which is then overseen by Senior Leaders in charge of the staff teams. The planning system is reviewed on an annual basis. We use the pupils Pathways to plan and guide our teaching. This sets out the aims and objectives of the curriculum and school, with details of what is to be taught to our pupils. We base our teaching on our knowledge of the pupils' level of attainment. Teachers make on-going assessments of each pupil's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. We also use Foreskills assessments at the beginning of each academic year to assess levels in English, Maths and ICT – which also helps to identify key strands within the subjects where the pupils are falling short.

This process enables staff to consider the abilities of all our pupils, with the prime focus being to develop and further the knowledge and skills of our pupils. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each pupil's level of ability, modifying teaching and learning as appropriate for all pupils. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunity's legislation covering race, gender, and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all our pupils, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion and aims outlined in individual pupils EHCP's. We have high expectations of our pupils, and we believe that their work here at White Trees Independent School is of the highest possible standard they can achieve.

The curriculum underpins the fundamental aims of the School. The curriculum must be seen as the major component of a pupil's education which, together with the pastoral care and the residential activities offered, help pupils to develop a wide range of key and transferable skills so that they leave the school equipped to become a valuable member of society. Our planned curriculum activities are organised to promote learning and personal growth and development. We aim to provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum which encourages an enthusiasm for learning, intellectual curiosity, creativity, personal growth, and development. Fundamental to the ethos of White Trees Independent School our determination to

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provide an active learning environment for limitless minds. The school places great importance firstly on the individual development of each pupil, secondly, on the acquisition of the skills of research, evaluation and judgement required for independent study; thirdly, on the development of individual enthusiasms, both curricular and co-curricular; and fourthly on its pupils' development of qualities such as leadership, initiative and creativity. The teaching at White Trees School is committed to inspiring, motivating and enriching the learning opportunities of its Pupils in terms of both curricular and co-curricular delivery. Teaching styles are adapted to meet the varying needs of our Pupils. Our Schemes of work are designed to bring the curriculum to life and are interpreted creatively by teachers to inspire and challenge Pupils. To this end the aim of White Trees School is to provide a broadly based academic curriculum that will be delivered within the context of the school's aims and mission. The curriculum underpins the fundamental aims of White Trees School. The school encourages its pupils to develop intellectual independence and an enduring love of learning for its own sake, equipping them for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. The programmes of study at the School are inclusive of the National Curriculum. They include not only the full range of academic subjects but also a wide variety of physical and creative experiences. Pupils benefit from opportunities to exercise initiative, develop team-working skills, and participate in visits beyond the classroom. The curriculum not only supports pupils' academic progress but also fosters in them awareness and understanding of a range of spiritual, moral, cultural, and social issues. In this way, it promotes their development into compassionate, empathetic, and confident individuals.

EFFECTIVE ETHOS & CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

White Trees Independent School provides an academically challenging environment which is vibrant, happy, creative, and stimulating. Our teachers have high expectations but equally foster a nurturing environment to promote pupils' academic growth and to provide the support they need to make good progress in their studies. We believe that a purposeful and structured learning environment is essential in promoting high standards. A positive caring environment and culture will promote positive self-esteem and confidence. Organised resources, displays of children's work, stimulating materials and bright, colourful, language enriched displays all help to provide the Optimal Learning Environment. We try to ensure that all tasks and activities that the children perform are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we follow Department for Education (DfE) and Health and Safety (HSE) advice. We issue a 'one off' consent form for parents/guardian/carers to sign when a child enrolls at school and an additional consent form for residential and adventure activities. We provide details of proposed outings for parents/guardian/carers' information.

Our school is an attractive learning environment. We ensure that all Pupils can display their best work at some time during the year. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the Pupils. All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all pupils in the class. We treat the pupils with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy about discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with pupils the class code of conduct. We expect all pupils to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise pupils for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards the school and learning in general. We aim to provide a learning environment which is challenging and stimulating, peaceful and calm, happy and caring, organised and well resourced, makes learnings accessible, encouraging and appreciative, welcoming, enabling equal access and inclusion and providing a professional working atmosphere. The role of the Headteacher, Laura Bull is

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to provide strategic leadership and direction, support and offer advice to colleagues and monitor Pupil progress in specific subject areas or activities.

THE CURRICULUM AND MEMBERS OF TEACHING STAFF

Teachers ensure that an appropriate level and standard of homework is regularly set and marked so that learning outcomes may be consolidated, and the needs of individual Pupils identified and met. We appreciate that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows Pupils to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. 'Pupils learn and flourish when they are healthy, protected from harm and authentically engaged and stimulated.' Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable Pupils to become confident, resourceful, enquiring, and independent learners.
- foster Pupils' self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people.
- develop Pupils' self-respect and encourage Pupils to respect the ideas, attitudes, values, and feelings of others.
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people.
- cater for the needs of individual Pupils.
- personalise learning.
- enable Pupils to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community.
- help Pupils grow into reliable, independent, and positive citizens.
- Enable achievement and provide challenge appropriate to the ability, interests and needs of each Pupil.

AUDITING OUR CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING

We ask ourselves the following questions when auditing our current performance:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we compare with similar schools?
- What more should we aim to achieve?
- What must we do to make it happen?
- Self-evaluation and development are a critical part of the school's managerial role and teachers, care staff and managers will input into the development as well as pupils' own feedback. At White Trees School the most important role of teaching is to promote learning to raise pupils' achievement. For us, teaching includes lesson planning, the implementation of plans, as well as marking, assessment, and feedback. It also includes support and intervention strategies. In assessing the quality of the teaching in our school we take account of the evidence of pupils' learning, achievements, and progress over time. When evaluating the quality of teaching in our school, we consider how successful the teaching is in promoting the learning, progress, and personal development for every pupil by:
 - Extending the previous knowledge, skills and understanding of all pupils in a range of lessons and activities over time.
 - Enabling pupils to develop skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics.
 - Enthusing, engaging, and motivating pupils to learn.
 - using assessment and feedback to support learning and to help pupils know how to improve their work.
 - Differentiating teaching, by setting suitably challenging activities and providing support for pupils of different abilities, including the most able and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, so that they can all learn well and make progress.

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- Enabling pupils to apply intellectual, physical, or creative efforts and develop the skills to learn for themselves and setting high expectations.
- Setting appropriate homework.
- Using well-judged and effective teaching methods, deploying appropriate resources, managing class time and drawing on good subject knowledge and expertise to encourage pupils to make good progress.
- Managing instances of poor or disruptive behaviour.

Behaviour that undermines the happy environment that is such a hallmark of White Trees Independent School life, such as bullying, insensitivity, discrimination, bad language or acts of intolerance, will not be accepted. When evaluating the quality of the curriculum, we consider:

- The impact of the curriculum on pupils' academic and personal development and in preparing them for the future
- Opportunities, choices, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life.
- The contribution of the curriculum to the school's ethos and aims and the impact on pupils' academic and personal development and well-being.
- How well curriculum planning is supported by appropriate schemes of work, builds systematically upon pupils' prior experience, and plans for progression and
- The extent to which the curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular opportunities and through collaboration with other schools and organisations, including, for example, to provide appropriate careers guidance for our senior pupils and the views of our pupils, parents/guardian/carers and staff.

We design our curriculum to ensure that it is broad, well balanced and covers all the required areas of learning. We modify our curriculum and teaching to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils including our gifted and talented and disabled pupils or those with a special educational need. When evaluating the quality of the curriculum, we consider:

- The impact of the curriculum on pupils' academic and personal development and in preparing them for the opportunities, choices, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life.
- The contribution of the curriculum to the school's ethos and aims and the impact on pupils' academic and personal development and well-being.
- How well curriculum planning is supported by appropriate schemes of work, builds systematically upon pupils' prior experience, and plans for progression.
- The extent to which the curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular opportunities and through collaboration with other schools and organisations, including, for example, to provide appropriate careers guidance for our senior pupils and
- The views of our pupils, parents/guardian/carers, and staff.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING – EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF

Staff are expected to actively promote the curriculum aims by:

- Having a high expectation of pupils.
- Employing a variety of learning and teaching methods.
- Ensuring that pupils are enabled to access the curriculum and given opportunities to be successful.
- Delivering lessons which build upon previous experience, providing continuity and progression.
- Providing learning opportunities which offer depth and challenge and motivate and inspire children.
- Involving children in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular formative feedback through discussion, assessment and marking, negotiating targets, and encouraging children to evaluate their personal achievements.

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- Developing pupils' skills to become independent learners.
- Encouraging, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment.
- Working in partnership with children, staff, and parents/guardian/carers to achieve shared goals.
- Keeping parents/guardians/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their children through reports and parents coffee mornings.

SLT carries out learning journal scrutiny, whereby books are checked for consistency of marking and being up to date. Planning appraisals are carried out by the Headteacher who checks planning is up to date and evaluated. All teachers are observed working with classes once or twice a year, and Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) are observed each half term, with Sarah Rixson as their qualified NTQ mentor, supporting them through their induction year. The criteria that we use have been agreed by all teachers and are part of our teaching and learning policy. The teacher and the observer follow the observation with a discussion. The observer notes the strengths and areas for development and gives a copy of this information to the teacher. The Headteacher uses the information gained from this monitoring process to help identify common development points which can be addressed in the school's training programme for continuing professional development.

Direct observation must be supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable inspectors to evaluate the impact that teaching has had on pupils' learning. Such additional evidence should include:

- Observing some lessons jointly with senior staff before discussing them also with the teacher who has been observed.
- Discussing with pupils the work they have done and their experience of teaching and learning over longer periods.
- Discussing teaching and learning with staff.
- Taking account of the views of pupils, parents/guardian/carers and carer staff and placing authorities, where appropriate.
- Taking account of the school's own evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning and
- Scrutinising the standard of pupils' work, noting:
 - How well and frequently marking and assessment are used to help pupils to improve their learning
 - The level of challenge provided.

EFFECTIVE LEARNING

We acknowledge that people learn in many ways and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. Our Schemes of work are designed to bring the curriculum to life and are interpreted creatively by teachers to inspire and challenge pupils. We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which Pupils feel safe and feel they belong, in which they enjoy being challenged, but in which they enjoy learning, and know that they will succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level). We provide small class sizes, 1:1 teaching when and where necessary, which ensure that each pupil's individual strengths, talents and aptitudes are nurtured and developed. All teaching is structured to maximise learning opportunities and lessons are planned in accordance with the following principles:

- The teaching should build on previous learning.
- The teacher should explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important.
- It should allow pupils to see the links within learning.
- The lesson should be presented in a range of styles.

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- It should allow opportunities for the Pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities.
- It should allow opportunities for the Pupils to review what has been learnt.
- It should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the Pupils, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies.
- The teaching should indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

We encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Assessment and marking are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Informal formative assessment takes place continuously in the classroom and comprises of:

- Well understood learning objectives which are shared with the Pupils
- Sharing or creating learning outcomes with the Pupils to make them partners in their learning.
- Plenaries being used as assessment opportunities:
- Effective teacher questioning.
- Observations of learning.
- Analysing and interpreting evidence of learning to inform future planning.
- Sensitive and positive feedback to Pupils.
- Individual target setting: SMART (specific, measurable, assessable, realistic and given in time);
- Pupils understanding how well they are doing and how they can improve.

EFFECTIVE PLANNING

The curriculum must be seen as the major component of a pupil's education that, together with the pastoral care and the residential activities offered, helps pupils to develop a wide range of key and transferable skills so that they leave White Trees Independent School equipped to become valuable members of society. Our planned curriculum activities are organised to promote learning and personal growth and development. We aim to provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum which encourages an enthusiasm and love for learning, intellectual curiosity, creativity, personal growth, and development. When teaching we focus on motivating the Pupils and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the school curriculum pathway to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives of the school and details what is to be taught to each pupil. We base our teaching on our knowledge of the Pupils' level of attainment. Teachers make ongoing assessments of each Pupil's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to consider the abilities of all their Pupils. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the Pupils. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each Pupil's level of ability. When planning work for Pupils with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the Pupils' Personal Learning Programmes. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for Pupils with disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities' legislation covering race, gender and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all our Pupils, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion. We have high expectations of our Pupils, and we believe that their work here at White Trees Independent School is of the highest possible standard. We set academic targets for the Pupils in each academic year and we share these targets with Pupils and their parents/guardian/carers. We review the progress of each Pupil at the end of term. Our lessons have clear learning objectives. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way we assess the Pupils' work. We evaluate all lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

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Children with Additional and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND): The curriculum and the work of the Teaching and Learning personnel.

Our curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so only after parents/guardian/carers have been consulted. If a child has a special need, our school complies with all legislative and best practice requirements to meet these individual needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, the teacher liaises with the SENCO, providing details of this need and in most instances is able to provide resources and educational opportunities that meets the child's needs within the teaching group. If a pupils need is more severe, consideration is given to involving appropriate external agencies and special support teachers. Where a Pupil has an EHCP, the SENCO liaises with the child's teachers to ensure that the education he or she receives fulfils its requirements and participates fully in the annual review.

Pupils with an Educational Healthcare Plan (EHCP) - please also refer to our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy.

Should a Pupil be in receipt of an EHCP, we will provide an education that meets their needs as specified by their EHCP.

Learning outside the classroom – Educational visits/off-site activities

Integral to our curriculum is a wide range of educational experiences that extend beyond the classroom door. White Trees Independent School curriculum offers a series of educational journeys that deepen the Pupils' understanding of the world around them. Trips extend Pupils' knowledge of past and present. Our experience is that Pupils forge strong bonds of friendship during the trips, and their respect for one another grows because of sharing the experiences.

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

All pupils can develop existing interests and nurture new ones through a variety of clubs and enrichment activities. These reflect the talents and interests of the staff and pupils. We ensure that all tasks and activities that the Pupils perform are safe. When we plan to take Pupils out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. Parents/guardian/carers are informed, and their permission obtained before the visit takes place. Learning assistants are deployed as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual pupils and sometimes they work with small groups.

HOMEWORK

The school sets homework as appropriate. Often the most valuable homework a child can do are activities outside of the school curriculum. Examples may be, e.g. The Duke of Edinburgh Award,

CAREERS GUIDANCE

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Pupils at White Trees Independent School are supported in their preparation for formal examinations at various stages of their education. They receive specific support in Work Skills that includes guidance on revision technique, making notes, examination technique and management of stress. Pupils are encouraged to learn about their own academic strengths and weaknesses and the type of learning method that best suits them as an individual. Whilst we do not specifically instigate careers advice until Year 9, we provide opportunities for Pupils to understand the world of work and the promotion of their economic wellbeing. There are talks from professionals in various fields as well as visits to places of employment and manufacture. Through visiting speakers Pupils receive motivational and inspirational guidance that will help them in their current and future endeavours. Pupils receive interview training at the appropriate stage. These are a few of the ways in which Pupils are prepared for the future beyond White Trees Independent School.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/CARERS

We believe that parents/guardian/carers and guardians have a fundamental role to play in helping Pupils to learn. We do all we can to inform parents/guardian/carers and guardians about what and how their children are learning by:

- Holding meetings with parents/guardian/carers to explain our school strategies.
- Sending information to parents/guardian/carers at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the Pupils will be studying during that term at school.
- Sending regular reports to parents/guardian/carers in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further.
- Explaining to parents/guardian/carers how they can support their Pupils with homework. We suggest support for older Pupils with their projects and investigative work.
- Being available - we have an open-door policy.
- Strong lines of communication with parents/guardian/carers. We believe that parents/guardian/carers have the responsibility to support their Pupils and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents/guardian/carers to:
 - Ensure that their child has the best attendance and punctuality record possible.
 - Do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school.
 - Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school.
 - Promote a positive attitude towards school, staff and learning in general

SUBJECTS OFFERED AT WHITE TREES SCHOOL

UPPER KS2	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Pupil Pathways				BTEC's	
AQA's/Entry Level/Functional Skills			GCSE's (External Partner)		
Emotional Support & Development, PSHEE & Social Skills, Reading, Values, Learning Around Character & Attitudes, Work Experience, College Courses, Enriching Experiences, Trips, Celebrations, Visits, Independent Careers advice, Community Engagement and Wider Opportunities to Develop					

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PUPIL PATHWAYS

White Trees School has created a curriculum and education plan in the form of Pupil Pathways. The Pathway covers the full national curriculum and is designed as a 5-year curriculum in most subjects. Pathways lead directly into further qualifications and also account for pupils with below age-related levels, incorporating objectives from upper KS2. The Pathway also includes a deep and wide offer of learning and development beyond academic, vocational or technical through PSHCEE and Social Skills pathways. Pupils learn about careers, social skills, character, attitudes and other areas that will set them up to succeed in life after White Trees. Pupils, at the end of Year 9, are given the opportunity to choose their options/qualifications for KS4 – they can choose 4 subjects to study (column highlighted in yellow) on top of their compulsory subjects (please see the options table below). Other certificates/opportunities that are also on offer to achieve are listed in the 'other' column.

Compulsory	Options	Other	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Core</u></p> <p>Functional Skills English Functional Skills Maths Functional Skills ICT Applied Science BTEC Work Skills L1</p> <p>Duke of Edinburgh Award (Bronze)</p>	BTEC's	Circles farm	Circles Beauty
	Sport & Active Leisure L1	Music	Work Experience
	Cooking level L1 & 2	Forest Schools	Rally Sports
	ICT Users L1	GCSE English Language	
	Business Administration L1		
	Creative Media L1		
	Performing Arts L1		
	Planning & participating in work experience L1		
	Public Services L1	<u>Certificates to gain during outdoor education:</u> Paddle power star award canoeing Paddle power kayaking NICAS climbing level 1	
	Travel & Tourism L1		
	Creative Media L1		
	Art L1		
	Teamwork & personal skills in the community L1		
	Construction L1		
	Health & Social Care L1		
	<u>Asdan short courses</u>		
	Animal care		
	Life-skills challenge		
Personal finance			

All pupils are to study the compulsory subjects listed under the 'core' section; they then choose 3 subjects from the 'options' category to study on top. Other courses and experiences that are on offer are also listed in the far-right column which are available to the pupils.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

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