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Aims

We believe that the lower school years are amongst the most important in a child's life. Children are naturally interested in the world around them and are eager to make some sense of it, having acquired various degrees of learning through the home and the community.

The curriculum in the school is planned to promote the continued development of each individual pupil by providing a variety of experiences (intellectually, socially, physically, emotionally, aesthetically and spiritually) suited to the age and developmental needs of the child.

Our curriculum is therefore designed to be broad, balanced, relevant to the pupils' own experience and matched to their abilities and aptitudes, thus ensuring each child achieves the best outcomes possible.

The school also recognises that success relies on good teamwork between home and school, and we aim to build sound relationships and partnerships where school, parents / carers and the child all have an important role to play in the learning journey.

Our Vision and Values

We want the whole school environment to be stimulating, welcoming, happy and secure and one in which children develop self discipline and show care and respect for others.

The Curriculum springs from the values we believe in and the vision for the school our community shares. The children are encouraged to take pride in all that they do, trying their best and working well with others, as part of developing a 'Growth Mindset' (see Teaching and Learning and Behaviour Policies).

In promoting a positive image of themselves and a sensitivity to others, positive



attitudes of courtesy, respect and care are developed as part of the core values of the school.

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Our [22 core values](#) are developed in turn, each month over a two year cycle, which serves to enrich the curriculum offered to children at The Firs. The school is part of a wider community and is committed to developing pupils' awareness of their own and other's needs.

Curriculum structure

The curriculum for all pupils begins with the Foundation Stage for children in the early years. From Year 1 onwards children follow the [National Curriculum](#), which consists of the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science and the foundation subjects of Computing, History, Geography, Design Technology, Art, Music, Physical Education, PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) and French at KS2. Religious Education is organised according to the Bedfordshire Agreed Syllabus.

The work is planned to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which also fulfils the requirements of the National curriculum. A high priority is given to English and Maths. All subjects are taught as distinct areas of learning, with the key concepts, knowledge and skills of each particular subject area being developed through termly or half termly blocks of study. (Where appropriate, links are drawn between different subject areas.)

Intent

In deciding on the **intent** behind the design of our curriculum it is our vision and values that are the starting point.

The key drivers behind the makeup of our curriculum are:




- What we wanted to develop in a 'Firs' Mindset' (which we defined as the values and approaches to life we wanted our children to live by and hold to).
- The knowledge and skills we wished to develop in addition to those set out in the National Curriculum.
- Any gaps in children's knowledge, skills or awareness that we perceived, associated with the context of our local environment, location or general pupil characteristics.
- Our understanding of what 'Cultural Capital' meant to us at The Firs and in each year group, how we could give children the chance to experience it.


All of the thinking behind these key drivers are set out in [The Firs Scheme of Work](#).

We decided on an additional programme of learning, organised into a number of strands, that would complement the content from the National Curriculum. We have called these additional strands 'The Firs' Themes'.

The Firs' Themes

The 4 Firs' Themes, in addition to the National Curriculum, to be interwoven through the tapestry of our curriculum:

Firs' Theme	Aims
<p>1. Healthy Bodies and Minds (HBM)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To ensure that children know about keeping hydrated and the key aspects in ensuring they eat a balanced diet. b) To provide opportunities to get enough exercise in school and to learn about the need to keep fit and healthy. c) To support children in recognising their own emotions and the feelings of others and to begin to understand how our emotions influence what we do. d) To help children to know about mental health, what it means, ways to look after their own and how to seek help. e) To make sure children know the dangers they may meet online or when messaging, ways to keep themselves safe and how to get help.
<p>2. Developing Me! (DM!)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To provide opportunities to explore moral issues and personal qualities, so that children develop an understanding and appreciation of The Firs' Values. b) To explore our 22 values in more depth, looking at how they shape the community we live in. c) To help children to understand and embrace the aspects of a Growth Mindset. d) To support the acquisition of good teamwork skills and an ability to work successfully with others. e) To teach the personal skills that will develop children's independence and self confidence. f) To enrich children's learning by giving opportunities to experience traditional games, nursery rhymes, songs, fairy tales and texts from the canon of great children's literature. g) To teach children about some of the great artists, musicians and scientists of the past and to feature their work and thinking in the art, music and science curriculum. h) To develop children's appreciation of and provide opportunities to experience, a range of traditional sports, whilst developing associated skills. i) To begin to learn about and discuss gender and race equality issues in Y4 and begin to learn some of the history behind the moves for emancipation in the 19th and 20th Centuries. j) To be given opportunities in Y4, to discuss and learn about age appropriate current affairs.
<p>3. Forest Schools and the Environment (FSE)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To learn about the natural world around them, including local trees, wildlife and the seasons. b) To understand the problems facing the environment (including global warming, pollution, waste management and impact on the natural world) and ways we can take action to tackle issues. c) To be aware, at an age appropriate level, of current affairs relating to environmental issues. d) To benefit from forest school's work that develops practical skills, teaches about the natural world and gives opportunities to support outdoor learning in other curriculum areas. e) To develop social skills, independence and to foster self belief and confidence in Forest School sessions.

<p>4. Our Community (OC)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To develop an appreciation of the values and rules needed to support a successful and happy community. b) To learn at an age appropriate level, about the different roles and functions offered by members of the community (both male and female) beginning to awaken ideas about future interests / careers e.g. police, doctors, nurses, vets, firefighters, scientists, engineers, retail etc. c) To learn about Democracy in Year 4 and ensure children begin to understand how our democracy works. d) To learn about Ampthill and the area they come from (in its historical and cultural contexts). e) To learn about and develop an appreciation of different cultures, including those in nearby towns and globally. f) To learn about and respect the religious beliefs of others. g) To develop a basic understanding of French culture and life, to compliment MFL French work and to capitalise on Ampthill's relationship with its twinned town Nissan-lez-Enserune. h) To have opportunities to meet, talk to and value the contribution and experience of older members of our community.

Implementing our curriculum

We have created Knowledge and Skills maps for the Firs' Key Themes, to indicate what we want children to know and be able to do in relation to the Themes. They build from and support knowledge and skills in the National Curriculum and make sure that the curriculum is broad, with many different opportunities and is rooted in the knowledge, skills and local context that pupils need.

We have also created Knowledge and Skills maps for science and each foundation subject, to indicate what we want children to know and be able to do within the coverage of the National Curriculum.

This is to ensure that the curriculum is planned and sequenced well, with staff being able to see where the current lesson is rooted in the sequence of learning from the previous year, later in the current year or into the next year.

Teachers carefully plan to include, challenge and engage all pupils. This ensures a good pace of learning.

Learning objectives and success criteria, are used to communicate to children the key facts and skills involved in an aspect of learning and how to achieve well.

Children work in groups and with 'learning partners', (See '[Teaching and Learning](#)' policy) to ensure appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. By talking about their learning and explaining their thinking to others, children are given the opportunity to really cement their understanding of what they are learning.

Teachers give feedback to children either verbally in the lesson, as written comments when work is marked or by making notes about misconceptions, areas for development or next steps and devoting some time, at the beginning of the next lesson, to deliver these vital points to the children.

Termly 'What Are We Learning Sheets' for parents/ carers, as well as full access to the [Scheme of Work](#) on our website, ensure they have details about the work in each area being covered that term, with suggestions for how learning can be supported at home.

EYFS

The EYFS Framework is used as a basis for our own curriculum in The Saplings and Pine along with the [Development Matters](#) non statutory guidance. The curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning:

- Communication and Language Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Mathematical Development
- Literacy
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

At the Firs Lower School we recognise that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all the areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected and therefore depend upon each other to support a rounded approach to the development of the child.

As such we aim to deliver opportunities that develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning, through purposeful play, with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities within a curriculum which is firmly based on the children's interests and development needs. (See the 'Early Years Policy'. In addition, see the '[Teaching and Learning](#)' policy which highlights the features of effective teaching and learning at The Firs.

National Curriculum Subjects

English

The development of English is fundamental in all areas of the curriculum and therefore is given high priority in this school. All language modes: speaking and listening, reading, writing, including spelling and handwriting are interdependent and of great importance, although the school is unashamedly passionate about the use of the Read Write Inc. scheme, to develop children's reading.

Speaking and listening

Speaking and listening skills are taught specifically in English sessions and given prominence and time in all other lessons through for example, the use of Learning Partners. (See-'[Teaching and Learning](#)' policy.) It is valued and taught as the foundation skill for communication and for literacy.

Reading

We aim to teach children to become fluent independent readers and to develop a love of literature and books.

The school is a Read Write Inc. school and as such, we have made a commitment to aim for excellence in our pursuit of the vision that all our children should be fluent readers, who can use their skills to develop their learning in all areas of the

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curriculum and who can experience the joy and enrichment that reading brings to our lives.

[The Read Write Inc.](#) scheme is used to teach phonics, early reading skills and writing skills, with the aim being that the majority of pupils complete the programme early in Y2.

At the core of the programme is the lively and vigorous teaching of synthetic phonics. Children learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and how to sound-blend words for reading (decoding) at the same time as developing writing skills and spelling (encoding).

As their confidence in decoding develops they are taught to comprehend and compose ideas for their own writing. The children have the pleasure of reading exciting story books perfectly matched to their level – so that they have early success in reading.

A senior leader in the school will always be appointed as RWI Leader, to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the delivery of the programme.

RWI. has 5 underlying principles – the five Ps:

1. **PACE** – no time is wasted during teaching sessions! Children are active and involved in a fun and creative way. Children are reminded to give their teacher their ‘magnet eyes’ and ‘listening ears’.
2. **PRAISE** – teachers praise the children constantly throughout the teaching sessions. Children learn more quickly when they are praised for what they do well, rather than negative interaction about mistakes or behaviour corrections. The children are encouraged to praise each other and as a school we have developed several ‘Praise Phrases’ and ‘Praise actions’.
3. **PURPOSE** – each activity has a very clear purpose. The teacher will set this purpose at the beginning of the lesson, so that the children know exactly what they will be learning.
4. **PARTICIPATION** – all children take part in *all* parts of the lesson. Full participation is gained through partner work and choral response.
5. **PASSION** – as a staff we are passionate about our teaching and the benefits of the Read, Write Inc. programme. The RWI leader will meet / communicate with our RWI consultant at least termly to review the progress of groups and individuals, to agree additional support and strategies to make progress more rapid.

Through a system of regular individual assessments (every 6-8 weeks), children are allocated to a group which focuses accurately on their learning needs. The pace at which sessions are delivered, coupled with the fact that any child not making the necessary progress is given 1 to 1 support, ensures that children make rapid progress.

The RWI Leader will conduct regular weekly training sessions with staff and will have time each week to support and monitor RWI implementation during RWI lessons. In addition, the school will conduct termly RWI Development Days, to monitor pupil progress and the quality of provision and to provide hands on training and support for ‘RWI teachers’.

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Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the process of reading with their children and books are regularly taken home to be enjoyed together as well as the access to ebooks children can be given on the Oxford Owl / RWI portal.

After leaving the RWI programme, teachers will concentrate on further developing children's fluency and reading stamina. Children will be assisted to enhance their comprehension skills, learning for example, to 'read between the lines' and answer

inferential questions, comparing the work of different authors etc. Above all, we will support and encourage children in learning to appreciate the love of reading.

The initial sections of the reading scheme are organised using the RWI colour bands, so that the books children take home reflect the sounds they are already familiar with. (See [RWI Reading Scheme Levels](#).)

The reading scheme past the Grey level is reflective of the Accelerated Reader (AR) programme and is organised using AR Book Levels into colour bands. See [AR Reading Scheme Colours](#).

AR is a computer program used in KS2, that helps teachers manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. Pupils take regular 'Star Tests' that provide a wealth of information about their reading (including Reading Age and a Standardised Score). The tests also determine a child's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD is the range of book levels that are appropriate for the reading stage the child has reached. Children then pick a book at their own ZPD level and read it at his/her own pace. When finished, they take a short quiz on the computer - passing the quiz is an indication that they have understood what has been read. AR gives both children and teachers feedback based on the quiz results, which teachers then use to set targets and ongoing reading practice. See [AR Parent Guide](#) for more details.

Reading Practice:

-In YR and KS1, children take part in reading daily, as part of the RWI session, with opportunities to learn sounds, practise key words they can 'Fred talk' (sound) and 'red words' (words they need to recognise visually). They experience reading a text three times over three days, before taking the book home (along with an accompanying Book Bag Book and NonFiction Book past yellow level). This ensures that children are reading material that corresponds accurately to the sounds they have learned.

-Beyond this, staff in each year group will hear children read *at least* once a half term.

-As part of the RWI progress tracking process, children who are the furthest behind the RWI expectation for their age are placed into the 'Urgent Intervention Group' and are provided with 10 minutes a day 4 times a week.

-The remaining pupils, for whom there are some progress concerns (up to approximately 20%) are identified as being in the 'Intervention Group'. These children will be supported by staff in each year group and will be heard read at least once a fortnight.

-Educational research indicates that children make better progress in reading if they read daily for 30 minutes or more. In school we provide 15 minutes reading time and ask parents to encourage their child to read daily for 15 minutes.

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-AR Star Tests identify children who are in need of 'Urgent Intervention' and 'Intervention' in the same way as set out above.

-Children in the 'Urgent Intervention' and 'Intervention' Groups will either still be on RWI to support their needs and provide focussed daily reading or be supported by the KS2 Reading Leader / staff in their year group, who will hear them read *at least* once a fortnight (giving highest priority to children in the 'UI' Group.)

Writing

We aim to make children competent, confident writers to enable them to use the written word fluently and flexibly.

Early writing skills

Planned opportunities to develop skills in writing, pre-writing opportunities and making writing part of play from the earliest stages will be a fundamental part of the curriculum in Saplings and Pine.

A range of activities to develop fine motor skills are in place- drawing, painting, cutting, making and modelling as well manipulating a variety of textures, materials and toys.

High standards

Children's progress will be tracked carefully to ensure that they are progressing well and that high standards are being maintained. Teachers will ensure that children are well aware of how to be successful in lessons and how to assess their work and the work of their peers against the success criteria.

The approach to teaching writing

The Curriculum will be designed to provide children with an appropriate range of opportunities to write meaningfully in a range of genres. A great emphasis will be placed on using preparatory exercises to generate vocabulary, develop ideas, explore themes (using images, art activities, sound effects, drama and dramatic techniques) etc. in order to ensure that children are inspired and ready to write.

As children progress they will be expected to create a wide range of increasingly complex texts in a variety of formats, taking account of purpose and audience. They will be expected to become more adept at organising and structuring ideas, employing a range of language for effect and writing with technical accuracy.

Developing writing skills

Younger children will be encouraged to think about and say the sentence they are about to write, rehearsing it alone or with their 'learning partner'.

Correct formation of letters are taught and then encouraged in all writing. Regular focused handwriting lessons support correct formation and neat linked script for all children in line with the school [Handwriting Protocols](#) -(Appendix D)

Cross-curricular opportunities to develop and apply writing skills will be planned for. Core writing lessons will develop writing skills, focusing for example on settings for stories, developing characters, good openings or use of adjectives, adverbs and powerful verbs.

Skills to support extended writing will be taught- note taking, planning, setting out of reports etc.

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Supports such as word books, dictionaries, word lists and pyramids will be made available to pupils as appropriate.

All writing activities will have clear learning intentions and success criteria, which are agreed and shared with pupils (Opportunities to focus on success criteria and evaluate progress are used throughout lessons with the use of technology to focus on work to 'show what excellence looks like').

The use of 'learning partners' and reference to the success criteria will be used to encourage peer review and the improvement of children's writing. (See '[Teaching and Learning](#)' policy).

Feedback will be used to guide children in how to develop their writing, creating opportunities for pupils to develop their learning in response.

Range of writing

Children will be given opportunities to write in a wide variety of genres for various audiences and with a clear purpose. For example:

- Imaginative adventures, tales and story writing
- Writing in a style of ancient myths
- Poetry and plays
- Recounts of trips and activities
- Reports –newspaper, scientific explanations etc.
- Recipes
- Posters to advertise or persuade
- Letters e.g. to invite or protest
- Articles for a newspaper or a website
- Script writing
- Producing videos and/or radio recordings
- Games design -electronic and/or paper based.

Some of these writing activities will be in the context of another curricular area and some will be developing skills as a discrete aspect of literacy development

Spelling

The teaching of spelling is an integrated part of the RWI scheme for children on the programme in KS1. To support their learning, children will take home sounds sheets reflecting the sound or sounds they have learned and lists of words for RWI books they are reading.

The separate Firs spelling programme for children in Y1,-Y4, will cover all aspects of the National Curriculum and will be designed to ensure that spelling work is useful in improving the children's spelling in their day to day writing work. See '[Spelling Protocols](#)' Appendix C).

Children will be supported to learn to spell the [National Curriculum Common Exception Words](#) and their progress will be assessed regularly and tracked across the school.

Handwriting

Initial letter formation teaching occurs in YR in line with the RWI scheme. Handwriting work in Y1 continues to support this. Formal handwriting lessons are given to pupils as they leave the programme in Y2 and on into KS2. The children are taught a cursive style to ensure all children are joining and to improve presentation. (See [Handwriting Protocols](#) Appendix D)

Maths

We aim to provide opportunities for all children to experience and acquire the key mathematical concepts, skills and language, in a stimulating, challenging and supportive atmosphere. The introduction of mathematics in the early years is initially developed through practical activity, stories, songs, games and imaginative play.

Throughout the school children are encouraged to use visual images and practical apparatus, to support their working and to help to cement key concepts in their mind.

As they progress through the school, children follow a structured programme designed to increase children's understanding of the number system and their confidence when performing mental and written calculations.

A variety of teaching strategies and approaches are employed, including the traditional teaching of tables and the setting of homework.

In mathematics lessons, children learn how to conjecture, making logical deductions from what they know that they can then go on to test. They solve problems and undertake investigations, with a particular emphasis on children deciding for themselves how to organise their working and how to record their responses.

A great emphasis is also placed on encouraging children to discuss their work, draw conclusions and explain their methods of working, both to their 'Learning partner' and sometimes to the class as a whole.

At the beginning of maths lessons, the teacher will start with a short (10 minutes approximately) oral/mental starter. This session will be used to practise key processes and revise key concepts, so that children get regular reminders of blocks of work they have done previously.

Each class is equipped with a maths trolley, well supplied with a range of practical resources. This ensures that children can be given ready and regular access to equipment e.g. counters, diennes, cubes, plastic coins etc. to successfully support the acquisition / cementing of early number concepts.

In teaching calculation strategies, teachers will follow the agreed FARM calculation policy. See ['Calculation Policy'](#) - Appendix F

Science

Intent

The 2014 national curriculum for science aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics
- develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them
- are equipped with the scientific skills required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future.

We want lessons to have a 'hands on', skills-based focus, with the knowledge and skills being taught, linked to real life situations and applications, making references to the work of scientists and scientific discoveries.

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At The Firs, we encourage children to be inquisitive throughout their time at the school and beyond. The Science curriculum fosters a healthy curiosity in children about our universe and promotes respect for the world around them.

We believe science encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, concepts, skills and positive attitudes. Throughout the programmes of study, the children will acquire and develop the key knowledge that has been identified within each unit and across each year group, as well as the application of scientific skills.

We ensure that the Working Scientifically skills are built-on and developed throughout children's time at the school, so that they can apply their knowledge of science when using equipment, conducting experiments, building arguments and explaining concepts confidently and continue to ask questions and be curious about their surroundings.

In designing our curriculum we follow our Science Principles:



1. The Children have opportunities for exploration through well-equipped and prepared lessons.
2. All children are engaged and having fun learning.
3. Children show individual, continuous progress in science.
4. Children use scientific enquiry to ask and answer their own questions.
5. Children work collaboratively, having good conversations about what they are learning.

Implementation

Teachers create a positive attitude to science learning within their classrooms and reinforce an expectation that all pupils are capable of achieving high standards in science.

Our whole school approach to the teaching and learning of science involves the following;

- Science will be taught in planned and arranged topic blocks by the class teacher, to have a project-based approach. This is a strategy to enable the achievement of a greater depth of knowledge.
- Through our planning, we will involve problem solving opportunities that allow children to apply their knowledge, and find out answers for themselves. Children will be encouraged to ask their own questions and be given opportunities to use their scientific skills and research to discover the answers. This curiosity will be celebrated within the classroom. Planning will involve teachers creating engaging lessons, often involving high-quality

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resources to aid understanding of conceptual knowledge. Teachers will use targeted questioning to gauge conceptual knowledge and skills, and assess pupils to identify those children with gaps in learning, so that all pupils make progress.

- We will build upon the knowledge and skill development of the previous years. As the children's knowledge and understanding increases, and they become more proficient in selecting, using scientific equipment, collating and interpreting results, they will be helped to become increasingly confident in their growing ability to come to conclusions based on real evidence.
- Working Scientifically skills will be embedded into lessons to ensure these skills are being developed throughout the children's school career and new vocabulary and challenging concepts are introduced through direct teaching. This is developed through the years, in-keeping with the topics.
- Teachers will demonstrate how to use scientific equipment, and the various Working Scientifically skills, in order to embed scientific understanding. Teachers find opportunities to develop children's understanding of their surroundings by accessing outdoor learning and workshops with experts.
- Children will be offered a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits, trips and visitors to complement and broaden the curriculum. These will be purposeful and link with the knowledge being taught in class.
- Regular events, such as Science Week or project days, such as Nature Day, allow all pupils to come off-timetable, to provide broader provision and the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills. These events often involve families and the wider community.

The science curriculum follows the skills and knowledge objectives set out in The Firs' [Scheme of Work](#)

Challenge and differentiation.

Very often, issues with literacy skills can impede a child's ability to meet or demonstrate they have met scientific lesson objectives. We see the role of differentiation being to try to overcome these barriers to scientific achievement.

Teachers will plan learning activities with the intention of providing appropriate challenge for all children. The challenge element of lessons will seek to extend or deepen the children's understanding and/or ability to apply that knowledge to past or current examples. The list of examples below is representative but not exhaustive:

- Explaining the work in the classroom in relation to the work of a scientist in the past.
- Relating conclusions arrived at to real life situations and applications of the same scientific principles.
- Linking the work in the current lesson to previous work.
- Solving a problem using the application of the scientific methods or knowledge featured in the lesson / current topic.

In order to ensure consistency and appropriate progression, the [Science Vocabulary Progression - Appendix G](#) sets out the vocabulary that children are taught and / or revise in each year group.

Assessment

Children's progress is continually monitored and is used to inform future teaching and learning. By the end of each year, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study as set out in the Scheme of Work (see above).

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Children receive effective feedback through teacher assessment, both orally and through written feedback in line with the success criteria. Children are guided towards achievement of the main objective through the use of 'success criteria', provided by and explained by the teacher. Children will have these to refer to in the lesson, where they will be evident in their books and used to identify areas of difficulty by children and teachers when reviewing and assessing work.

Assessment for learning is continuous throughout the planning, teaching and learning cycle and occurs in the following ways:

- Observing children at work, individually, in pairs, in a group, and in classes.
- Questioning, talking and listening to children
- Considering work/materials / investigations produced by children together with discussion about this with them.
- Evidence from informal quizzes and summative tests

Children will be asked to identify what they know already about each topic, as well as what they would like to know. The work undertaken will be responsive to the children's starting points, as well as their specific interests. It also ensures a focus on the key identified knowledge of each topic, which is mapped within and across year groups to ensure progression.

Children's attainment will be recorded on the '[Science Assessment Tracker](#)' and this assessment will be concluded at the end of each year. Assessment judgements will be made in reference to the '[Science Assessment Guidance](#)' document and will draw on examples from the '[Firs' Standards Files](#)'.

In the EYFS, we assess the children's Understanding of the World according to the Development Matters statements.

Impact

The successful approach at The Firs will enable a fun, engaging, high-quality science education, that provides children with the foundations and knowledge for understanding the world.

Our engagement with the local environment ensures that children learn through varied and first hand experiences of the world around them.

Through ensuring a focus on linking topics under study with 'science capital' from the past and current scientific applications in the world, children have the understanding that science has changed our lives and that it is vital to the world's future prosperity.

Children will learn the possibilities for careers in science and feel they are scientists and capable of achieving. Children at The Firs will overwhelmingly enjoy science and this will result in motivated learners with sound scientific understanding.

Computing

Intent

'A high-quality computing education equips pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world.'

Computing programme of Study, DfE, 2013

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Computing has deep links with mathematics, science, and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. Computing also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

At The Firs, we believe that Computing is an integral part of preparing children to live in a world where technology is continuously and rapidly evolving, so much so that children are being prepared to work with some technology that doesn't even exist yet. For this reason, we feel that it is important that children are able to participate in the creation of these new tools, to fully grasp the relevance of and possibilities flowing from emerging technologies, thus preparing them for the world of work.

The Computing in the National Curriculum expectations split the teaching and learning of Computing into three strands (Computer Science, Digital Literacy and Information Technology). Teaching of Computing, from Reception through to Year 4, utilises a combination of practical lessons and theory lessons, designed to promote discussion and nurture understanding, which are also relevant to other areas of the curriculum, such as PSHE. In devising the learning programme in computing we have the following aims:

Computer Science

- To enable children to become confident coders on a range of devices.
- To create opportunities for collaborative and independent learning.
- To develop children's understanding of technology and how it is constantly evolving.

Digital Literacy

- To enable a safe computing environment through appropriate computing behaviours.
- To allow children to explore a range of digital devices safely.
- To promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information Technology

- To develop children's confidence to use ICT as a cross-curricular tool for learning.
- To promote learning through the development of thinking skills.
- To enable children to understand and appreciate their place in the modern world.

Implementation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on Computing, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught.

In order to develop the Computing and ICT capability and understanding of each child we will provide through our planning:

- A Computing lesson each week.
- Computing through all three strands taught within the classroom.
- Continuity throughout the school to ensure that experience and skills are developed in a cohesive and consistent way.
- Access to PCs, chromebooks and other devices within class or in the ICT suite.
- Experience of a variety of well-planned, structured and progressive activities.

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- Experience of cross-curricular links to widen children's knowledge of the capability of computing including safe use of the Internet and other digital equipment.
- Opportunities for children to recognise the value of computing and ICT in their everyday lives and their future working life as active participants in a digital world.
- A range of equipment such as Interactive whiteboards and 'Clever Touch' devices will also be used in the classrooms to enrich the learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- Children will be introduced to computers and a range of digital devices in Saplings and reception to develop their confidence and familiarity with ICT tools.
- Children will be given the experience of using the internet, email and other multimedia sources, with a strong emphasis on E safety.

Internet Safety:

Internet access is planned to enrich and extend learning activities across the curriculum. However, we have acknowledged the need to ensure that all pupils are responsible and safe users of the Internet and other communication technologies both in school and outside. The [Acceptable Use and E Safety Policy](#) sets out the approach and responsibilities for ensuring safe Internet use.

A [page](#) on the school website homepage gives parents more information on e-Safety.

Impact

Children will be assessed regarding their attainment and progress in understanding and applying computing skills. Teacher assessments of computing capability will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [Computing Assessment](#) sheet.

Formative assessment occurs on a lesson-by-lesson basis determined by the aims.

For more information, see the [Computing Subject Statement](#).

History

Intent

We believe History should be concerned with stimulating the children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. We aim for children to develop a sense of identity and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage.

We teach children to understand how events in the past have influenced our lives today; we also teach the children to investigate these past events and, by doing so, develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem solving. As children progress through the school, we provide them with a chronological understanding of the past.

Aims:

We aim to provide quality teaching and learning of history to promote:

- An understanding of life in the present by exploring the past.

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- A curiosity and inquisitiveness about life in the past.
- A knowledge of significant events in British history and an appreciation of how societies and people have changed over time.
- A sense of chronology.
- An enjoyment and appreciation of the richness of the past.
- An understanding of society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage.
- An understanding of historical concepts such as cause/consequence, continuity and change etc.
- An understanding of how evidence is used to arrive at views about the past.
- Perspectives between local and international history, encompassing all areas of history such as political and religious.

Implementation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on History, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught and the expectations at the end of each year.

Our school curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage. It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards each year and what children need to know and be able to do.

Teaching will equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, build a chronological framework, make comparisons across time periods, understand the cause of significant events and understand their consequences as well as scrutinising the validity of evidence and relating history to their own lives. The history curriculum will help pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships

At the beginning of all units, children will look back at time periods studied previously. This encourages them to build on their chronological framework and see every unit in the wider context of time.

In history, children will be taught key historical skills in progressively sophisticated ways and applied to a variety of different time periods. In terms of evidence, the same types of questions will be applied to different sources such as artefacts, pictures/paintings, written accounts e.g. 'what does this evidence tell me?' and 'how reliable is this source?.'

Children are encouraged to ask a variety of questions on one particular subject whether that be a piece of evidence, an event or the time period in general.

History units are addressed in relation to the development of key knowledge and skills:

- Learning some key aspects and/or events connected with the period under study.
- Developing a chronological understanding putting the time period in context with those previously studied.
- Comparing and making connections between time periods previously studied or to the present day.
- Understanding the cause or consequence of significant historical events.
- Understanding what has changed and stayed the same.
- Understanding the impact of a time period on our lives today.

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- The opportunity to ask historically valid and deep questions.
- Analysing evidence and questioning its validity.

In history children study people, events and developments in the past and the ways in which these have helped shape the present. Interest in and curiosity about the past is taught through story-telling, drama, themed days, 'living history' demonstrations by visitors to the school, individual research and the examination of a range of historical sources including pictures, written and oral evidence, buildings and artefacts.

Visits to museums or other places of historical interest are made where appropriate.

Key Stage 1 history teaching centres on the lives of people in the past, including their homes, toys and holidays and by learning about some key historical figures in the past.

Key Stage 2 follow topics on local history (World War II), Ancient Egyptians and Anglo Saxons in Y3 and Early settlement of Britain (focusing on the Celts) and The Roman occupation of Britain.

Impact

Teacher assessments for history will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [History Assessment](#) sheet.

Formative assessment occurs on a lesson-by-lesson basis determined by the aims.

For further information see [History Subject Statement](#).

Geography

Intent

Geography provokes and answers questions about the natural and human worlds using different scales of inquiry to view them from different perspectives. It develops knowledge of different places and environments throughout the world, an understanding of maps and a range of investigative and problem solving skills both inside and outside the classroom.

Geography is a focus for understanding and resolving issues about the environment and sustainable development. It can inspire them to think about their place in the world, their values and their rights and responsibilities to other people and the environment.

Aims:

- To stimulate and develop geographical knowledge and understanding and show clear progression throughout the school.
- To develop inquiring minds and an ability to observe, question, discuss and record findings using geographical terms.
- To develop an interest in and awareness of the world and its people.
- To understand the interdependence of people, animals and plants.
- To know about measures being taken to protect the environment both locally and globally.

Implementation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on Geography, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught and the expectations at the end of each year.

Our school curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage. It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards each year and what children need to know and be able to do.

The children are given opportunities to visit and reflect on the locality of Ampthill, including the school grounds, Station Road, Ampthill town centre and Coopers Hill.

The pupils will contrast these experiences with different places they study in the wider world in Y2, 'France' In Year 3 and 'Brazil' in Year 4.

During their course of study, children have the opportunity to support their learning through using a variety of geographical evidence e.g., photographs, maps, pictures, videos and ICT resources.

Impact

Teacher assessments for history will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [Geography Assessment](#) sheet.

Formative assessment occurs on a lesson-by-lesson basis determined by the aims.

For further information see [Geography Subject Statement](#).

Design Technology

Intent

"Design and technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. Using creativity and imagination, pupils design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. They acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art. Pupils learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens. Through the evaluation of past and present design and technology, they develop a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world. High-quality design and technology education makes an essential contribution to the creativity, culture, wealth and well-being of the nation." (National Curriculum 2014)

Design and Technology involves the application of knowledge and skills when designing and making products and helps to prepare children for the developing world.

The activities undertaken will enable our children to consider the needs of individuals and of society. The subject encourages children to use a range of materials and processes and to become creative problem-solvers, both as individuals and as part of a team.

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We aim to ensure that the activities undertaken will impact on the children's local environment and support them in the wider world to become discriminating and informed consumers and potential innovators. It should assist children in developing a greater awareness and understanding of how everyday products are designed and made.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the effective delivery of the National Curriculum for Design and Technology and to promote the delivery of the subject within cross-curricular activities.

In the Early Years, pupils will experiment to create different textures and to manipulate materials to achieve a planned effect. They will construct with a purpose in mind, using a variety of resources and simple tools and techniques competently and appropriately.

During Key Stage 1, pupils will learn how to think imaginatively and talk about what they like and dislike when designing and making. They will build on their early childhood experiences of investigating objects around them. They will explore how familiar things work and talk about, draw and model their ideas. They will learn how to design and construct objects safely.

During Key Stage 2, pupils work on their own and as part of a team at a range of designing and making activities. They think about what products are used for and the needs of the people who use them. They plan what has to be done and identify what works well and what could be improved in their own and other people's designs.

Teaching will ensure that the specific expectations of 'knowledge and understanding' are applied when 'developing ideas', 'planning', 'making products' and 'evaluating' them.

Aims:

- To develop imaginative thinking in children and to enable them to talk about what they like and dislike when designing and making.
- To foster enjoyment, satisfaction and purpose in designing and making.
- To provide structured and appropriately-differentiated activities, which develop a breadth of experience and progression in skills. (Where possible, these will relate to the interests and everyday experiences of our pupils.)
- To develop knowledge and to teach skills in order to assist in the design and making of products successfully.
- To develop the children's knowledge of tools and to encourage children to select appropriate tools and techniques for making a product, whilst following safe procedures.
- To help children become aware of and to investigate simple products through disassembly and evaluation.
- To provide adequate time frames, access to information, skills and resources, in order to develop an effective, useful and appropriate end-product.
- To enable children to talk about how things work, and to draw and model their ideas.
- To develop children's abilities to evaluate their designs and products and suggest improvements.
- To provide equal opportunities for access to tools and skills and to develop the qualities, aptitudes and skills of children.

Implementation

The Firs Lower School Curriculum Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on Design Technology, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught and the expectations at the end of each year.

Our school curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage. It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards each year and what children need to know and be able to do.

Children will be given opportunities to construct using a range of skills and a variety of materials. The range of skills includes modelling, fastening materials together using a variety of mechanisms, food technology, assembling and disassembling models and exploring simple mechanisms such as joints, levers and gears, the varieties of materials include clay, textiles, foodstuffs, sheet materials, wood and the use of constructions kits.

The children will always be encouraged to create designs and plan their work and to evaluate and modify it as they progress, identifying strengths and weaknesses and then adjusting their work accordingly.

Impact

Teacher assessments for history will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [DT Assessment](#) sheet.

Formative assessment occurs on a lesson-by-lesson basis determined by the aims.

For further information see [DT Subject Statement](#).

Music

Intent

Music is important because it can provide fulfilment throughout life. It is a powerful, unique form of communication that can change the way pupils feel, think and act. It transcends different cultures, abilities and generations.

Listening to and making music fulfils an instinctive human need for self-expression and creativity. It stimulates responses on both emotional and intellectual levels.

Besides being a creative and enjoyable activity, music can also be a highly academic and demanding subject.

Musical activities include performing vocally or with instruments, exploring sounds and composing as well as listening and responding to music of different styles and cultures. All These Activities Involve the musical elements of pitch, duration (rhythm), dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and structure.

Aims:

- To give every child the opportunity to experience enjoyment through a variety of musical activities and to respond emotionally.

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- To help children of all abilities develop positive attitudes and to experience success and satisfaction in music.
- To develop social skills through cooperation with others in the shared experience of music making.
- To develop an understanding of musical traditions and enhance performance skills by learning and performing music from a variety of cultures.
- To give children the opportunity to perform music both vocally and with instruments.
- To encourage the children to explore a wide range of sounds.
- To give them the opportunity to compose music and express their ideas and feelings through music.
- To experience listening to music from a variety of styles and cultures.
- To develop an appreciation of the richness of our musical heritage.
- To provide an array of performance opportunities, so children can feel part of a community.
- To encourage high standards in performance.
- To encourage children to express ideas and opinions about music they have heard or created.
- To give each child the opportunity to develop their musical talents
- To develop an appropriate vocabulary to help children understand and discuss their own work and that of others.

Implementation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on music, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught and the expectations at the end of each year.

Our school curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage. It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards each year and what children need to know and be able to do.

Musical appreciation is extended by the children being taught about rhythm, pitch and the basic understanding of musical notation. Children are taught to listen and appraise the works of others, to sing, to play simple percussion instruments and to compose music themselves.

The 'Charanga' scheme is used as the main source of the music curriculum. The school has a variety of instruments from various cultures, CDs, music from the internet and live professional performances, which are used to deliver the planned music curriculum.

Extra-curricular opportunities are also an important part of the provision for music made by the school. Children in Year 2, 3 and 4 are given the opportunity to participate in the school choir. Some children receive individual tuition in the violin, cello, piano, flute, guitar and some brass instruments from the Country peripatetic staff.

Children are encouraged to play their instruments in assembly and to enhance the end of term class productions. Children also perform within the local community and a Musical Concert evening is held in school annually to provide the opportunity for children to experience performing to a large audience.

Impact

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Teacher assessments for music will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [music Assessment](#) sheet.

Formative assessment occurs on a lesson-by-lesson basis determined by the aims.

Physical Education

Intent

We aim to promote and develop a greater understanding of the benefits of healthy living, including healthy exercise. Children need to practise skills on a daily basis to show commitment to keeping their bodies healthy. This will promote long term healthy, active lifestyle choices.

We will provide, *‘opportunities for children to compete in a wide range of sports and other activities in order to build character and help to embed values such as fairness and respect.’*

We will ensure that; *‘pupils develop fundamental movement skills, become increasingly competent and confident and access a broad range of opportunities to extend their agility, balance and coordination, individually and with others.’* As pupils move into KS2 they will *‘continue to apply and develop a broader range of skills, learning how to use them in different ways and to link them to actions and sequences of movement’*

We will support the children in, *‘developing an understanding of how to improve physical activities and sports and learn how to evaluate and recognise their own success.’*

We also aim to nurture confident, resilient children who strive to achieve their potential through a wealth of competitive experiences. We will encourage a positive attitude towards winning and an accepting approach towards losing within a wide range of sports. This way everyone can celebrate varying sports, skills and success in themselves and others in school.

National Curriculum 2014

At The Firs, we believe that physical education, experienced in a safe and supportive environment, is vital and unique in its contribution to a child’s physical and emotional development and health.

The physical education curriculum aims to provide for pupils’ increasing self-confidence through an ability to manage themselves successfully in a variety of situations. A balance of individual, team, co-operative and competitive activities aims to cater for individual pupil’s needs and abilities. The scheme of work is based on progressive learning objectives which, combined with varied and flexible teaching styles, endeavour to provide appropriate, stimulating, challenging and enjoyable learning situations for all pupils.

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The scheme aims to promote an understanding of the many benefits of exercise, through a balanced range of relevant activities.

Aims of PE:

- Provide learning situations in which all pupils will be able to develop their physical ability to the full
- Acquire and develop skills, performing with increasing physical competence and confidence in a range of physical activities and contexts
- Provide stimulating and challenging opportunities that help to promote physical development such as cardio-vascular health, flexibility, muscular strength and endurance
- Enable pupils to understand the importance of Physical Education in respect of a healthy lifestyle. (Knowledge and understanding of fitness and health).
- Develop positive attitudes towards participation in physical activity
- Provide a safe learning environment for physical activity and an understanding of the need for safety
- Provide pupils with opportunities to become aware and conform to the principles of fair play, demonstrating a good sporting behaviour.
- Enable pupils to actively participate in a wide range of activities with confidence, developing self-esteem through achievement
- Promote equal opportunities for all and value the contribution of others irrespective of gender, ability, social/cultural background
- Solve problems and find alternative solutions to physical challenges on their own and with others
- Learn how to select and apply skills, tactics and compositional ideas to suit activities that need different approaches and ways of thinking
- Develop their ideas in a creative way
- Set targets for themselves and compete against others, individually and as members of a team
- Understand how (and be able) to persevere, succeed and acknowledge others' success
- Take initiative, lead activities and focus on improving aspects of their own performance
- Discover their own aptitudes and preferences for different activities
- Make informed decisions about the importance (and value) of exercise in their lives
- Be given a firm foundation for life-long participation in sporting activity

Implementation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on PE, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught and the expectations at the end of each year.

Our school curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage. It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards each year and what children need to know and be able to do.

All children have an opportunity for PE twice each week through gymnastics, games, athletics or dance/movement lessons. In dance the children have the opportunity to experience imaginative dance and dance from different ages and cultures.

Children participate in a variety of individual and group based activities and also in competitive games. By providing activities to develop control, coordination and mobility, we aim to assist the children to develop an understanding, and awareness of their own capabilities and mastery of their body movements.

Health and fitness are promoted by activities that extend the children physically and we hope to lay the foundations for the enjoyment of a variety of sporting activities throughout life.

Impact

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Teacher assessments for history will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [PE Assessment](#) sheet for each year.

Formative assessment occurs on a lesson-by-lesson basis determined by the aims.

Art and design

Intent

We believe that Art and Design:

- Stimulates creativity and imagination
- Provides visual, tactile and sensory experiences and a unique way of understanding and responding to the world
- Provides opportunities to learn and make informed value judgements and aesthetic and practical decisions
- Allows children to explore ideas and meanings in the work of artists, craftspeople and designers and to learn about the diverse functions of art and design in contemporary life and in different times and cultures
- Has the power to enrich our personal and public lives
- Is incorporated into all areas of the curriculum

General Aims:

In our teaching of Art and Design we aim to give pupils the opportunity to:

- Develop their use of memory, imagination and observation
- Enjoy the visual and tactile qualities of their environment
- Develop the ability to evaluate and modify their own work and evaluate the work of others
- Develop a specialist vocabulary so that they can discuss their own and other's work
- Understand how methods and approaches used by other artists can be used to present their own ideas and feelings
- Appreciate the distinctive characteristics of Art and Design from a variety of periods and cultures, in a variety of styles and genres
- Develop confidence and a sense of achievement through the acquisition of new skills and techniques

We also aim to:

- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum in accordance with the National Curriculum
- Provide equal opportunities for all pupils regardless of race, religion or gender
- Provide experience which ensure the inclusion of every child
- Encourage and promote safe practice

NC Art requirements:

Purpose of study

- Engage, inspire and challenge pupils.
- Equip them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design.
- Enable them to understand, progress and think critically.

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- Teach them how art and design reflects and shapes our history and contributes to our culture.

Aims

- Produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences.
- Become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques.
- Evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design.
- Know about great artists, craft makers and designers and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.

Implementation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on art and design, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught and the expectations at the end of each year.

Our school curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage. It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards each year and what children need to know and be able to do.

Subject content:

KS1 pupils should be taught:

- To use a range of materials creatively to design and make products.
- To use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination.
- To develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space.
- About the work of a range of artists, craft makers and designers, describing the differences and similarities between different practices and disciplines and making links to their own work.

KS2 pupils should be taught:

- To develop their techniques, including their control and their use of materials, with creativity, experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design.
- To create sketchbooks to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas.
- To improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials eg. pencil, charcoal, paint, clay.
- About great artists, architects and designers in history.

Coverage:

Year R

Autumn Term – Experimenting and investigating

Spring Term – Developing skills

Summer Term – Refining skills

KEY STAGE 1

Year 1

Autumn Term - Pattern
Spring Term - The Natural World
Summer Term - People and their Lives

Year 2

Autumn Term - Prints
Spring Term - Fish
Summer Term - Flowers

KEY STAGE 2

Year 3

Autumn Term – Art from Other Cultures
Spring Term - Sculpture
Summer Term - Landscapes

Year 4

Autumn Term – Still Life and Drawing
Spring Term - Portraits
Summer Term - South America/The Rainforest

Schemes of Work - Key Stage 1 and 2

Both Key Stages follow The Firs Progression of Skills. This satisfies all National Curriculum programmes of study and ensures that children develop their art skills year on year, building on previously learned skills, engaged in a variety of tasks and having experience of using different media.

The progression of skills and outlines for each lesson in the medium term plans are stored on the Google Drive and are set out in the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) .

ICT:

- The school digital camera can be used to record examples of children's work, as part of an Art and Design topic/project or to collect examples of work to be modelled by the class.
- The Internet is a very useful source of information about particular artists, inspiring work and videos which show particular techniques to be mastered.
- There are Art programs such as Dazzle to be accessed on our network and within the 2Simple software on Purple Mash.
- Each year group has an ICT requirement for the children to fulfil relating to their art work which may be research based or experimenting with digital art tools.

Equipment and Resources

- Each classroom has a supply of basic Art and Design equipment including; paints, palettes, brushes, water pots, glue and scissors.

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- Cartridge paper should be used for drawing and painting and sugar paper for experimental work.
- All other Art and Design resources eg. class sets of watercolours, oil pastels are stored in the trays and boxes in the Resources Room adjoining Year 2. (Please put them back neatly)
- Please look for resources ahead of your lessons and check with the Art Coordinator before placing any orders other than for basic equipment to be stored in your room.
- Useful websites for videos, examples of prints, powerpoints about artists etc are stored in year group resources folders of the Drive and should be added too as appropriate.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment in Art and Design is a continuous process, forming an important part of the normal teaching programme. Through observation, the teacher should assess the pupil's achievements in planning and designing, making and evaluating. Through discussion the children's understanding of the concepts and methods used will be assessed. The effectiveness of the teaching and learning strategies used will also be assessed by the teacher and this information will influence future planning.

Teacher assessments for history will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [Art Assessment](#) sheet for each year.

Recording

At the end of each term the teacher will assess the pupils' work against the skills/objectives covered to ascertain whether they have reached the 'expected standard' having mastered these skills. Any children who have not been able to achieve these skills and have needed much support will be said to be 'working towards' that standard. Children who have exceeded expectations, produced impressive work, used initiative and worked independently, experimenting further will be said to be 'working at greater depth'. An overall grade will be attributed to children at the end of the year.

Art displays and selected completed pieces of work (chosen by the class teacher) will be recorded using the school's digital camera. Teachers will then upload these as examples on the Google Drive in a year group folder marked as 'Art Evidence'.

For further information see [Art & Design Subject Statement](#).

Modern Foreign language - French

Intent

Languages education should foster children's curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world.

At The Firs we are committed to ensuring that beginning to learn another language enables children to interpret, create and exchange meaning within and across

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cultures. It also helps children develop skills that will open further opportunities later in life.

Our main objectives in the teaching of a modern foreign language at a lower school is to promote the early development of linguistic competence and an understanding of other cultures. We believe that to accomplish this, we should help the children to do all of the following:

- Foster an interest in learning another language;
- Become aware that language has a structure, and that this structure differs from one language to another;
- Begin to learn basic vocabulary
- Begin to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Gain enjoyment, pride and a sense of achievement;
- Explore and apply strategies to improve language learning;
- Explore the culture of the native speakers of the language.

As Ampthill is twinned with a French town (Nissan-lez-Enserune), French is the MFL we focus on at The Firs like the other schools in our area.

Implementation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on French, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught and the expectations at the end of each year.

Our school curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage. It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards each year and what children need to know and be able to do.

At The Firs, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our French lessons.

Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding through an introduction to basic spoken French.

Children will have the opportunity to support their work with a variety of resources. We aim for a balance 'whole class' class, group and independent learning.

During KS1 there may be an informal introduction to foreign languages through answering the register in different languages and through songs and games etc.

KS2 children are entitled to 1 hour of MFL teaching a week although this time is sometimes divided into smaller, more frequent slots. French is taught in KS2 through actions, songs, activities and role-play, where many of the following topics are covered: Introductions (hello), numbers, family, pets, parts of the body, animals, months of the year, clothing and hobbies etc.

Impact

Teacher assessments for history will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [French Assessment](#) sheet for each year.

Formative assessment occurs on a lesson-by-lesson basis determined by the aims.

Religious Education

Intent

Religious Education is a compulsory subject which every pupil should have access to. It can provide the foundation for many people's lives and promote acceptance and understanding of other beliefs.

Through the teaching of RE we aim to promote the spiritual, moral and cultural development of all pupils.

The RE syllabus that we follow is the 'Bedfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education'. At The Firs, we enable children to develop a sound knowledge of many key aspects of the following major religions; Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism. Both religious and non-religious world views are covered. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help children learn from religions as well as about religions.

In a town where children do not always experience multiple faiths, we see RE at The Firs as a very important vehicle, to help children learn about some of the fundamental aspects of other cultures, as well as promoting the values of tolerance and respect that are so important to our school ethos.

Aims:

1. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews.
2. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews.
3. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.

The overall aims should enable pupils to:

- *Develop conceptual understanding of religion, religious beliefs and practices* – in order that they can begin to engage in informed reflection and discussion about religions and religion.
- *Develop an informed appreciation of religions* – in order that they can explore religions with openness, interest and enjoyment.
- *Value religious and cultural diversity* – in order to enhance their social and cultural development and to contribute to a more just and civil society.
- *Create meaning from their knowledge and understanding of religions*– in order to enhance their spiritual and moral development.
- *Develop an awareness of the richness of religions and their contributions to society and culture*– in order that they can make increasingly mature judgements about the world in which they live.
- *Recognise commonality and difference within and between religions* – in order to develop respect, openness and curiosity.
- *Develop a sensitive understanding of the significance of religious commitment and practice in the lives of individuals* – in order that they might develop respect and tolerance for individuals and their right to hold beliefs that are different from their own.

Implementation

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on RE, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught and the expectations at the end of each year.

Our school curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage. It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards each year and what children need to know and be able to do.

The teaching of RE is based on the County's recommended study units:

Year 1	Diwali, Hanukkah and Christmas Birth & Marriage Stories / Special People in Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism
Year 2	Families and communities/Feelings and Relationships/Christmas Story Special Books/Key Stories in the Bible/Torah/Qur'an New Life/Baptism and Creation Stories from around the world.
Year 3	How should we live and who can inspire us? How and why does a Christian follow Jesus? What does it mean to be a Jew?
Year 4	Islam Christianity Hinduism

EYFS:

It is important in the foundation stage to give children a broad, play based experience of RE in a range of contexts, including outdoor play. Our early years learning environments will feature RE scenarios based on experience in the real world, such as in role play. We will teach RE to all children in the school, including those in the early years.

As part of the Foundation Stage Curriculum, we relate the RE aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum experiences for children up to the age of five.

Withdrawal from RE Learning:

Parents may request that their child is withdrawn from R.E. Where parents are wishing to exercise this right, the Governing Body would first suggest that the parents first meet with the Headteacher to discuss their concerns. If the matter cannot be resolved, parents need to apply to the Headteacher in writing to withdraw their child from RE lessons.

The school will make arrangements for the child(ren) to be supervised or engaged in another activity during this time. We are mindful that everyone holds different beliefs and this is taken into consideration in RE lessons.

Impact

Teacher assessments for history will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [RE Assessment](#) sheet for each year.

Formative assessment occurs on a lesson-by-lesson basis determined by the aims.

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Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) - including Relationships Education

Intent

At The Firs, PSHE is a planned programme of learning where the children acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to keep themselves healthy and safe. PSHE provides the children with the building blocks in order for them to develop healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This sits alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy.

As part of our whole school approach, PSHE develops the qualities and attributes that children need to manage opportunities, challenges and responsibilities as they grow up, enabling them to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society.

By teaching pupils to stay safe and healthy, and by building self-esteem, resilience and empathy, our effective PSHE programme enables staff to tackle barriers to learning and raise aspirations for our children.

At The Firs, it is our intent to provide all children with a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to assist children and young people to prepare for adult life by supporting them through their physical, emotional and moral development, and them to understand themselves, respect others and form and sustain healthy relationships.

Implementation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Firs' [Scheme of Work](#) section on PSHE, that sets out in detail what children in different year groups will be taught and the expectations at the end of each year.

Our school curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage. It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards each year and what children need to know and be able to do.

In the Early Years, PSED (Personal, Social and Emotional Development) is a prime area of learning therefore an integral aspect of daily planning, teaching and learning:

- Making relationships
- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour

Planning is child led to reflect the interests of the children and the needs of the school. Children take part in circle time and discuss topics and themes that are at their level. Teachers look at the three core themes and take aspects of these to inform their planning. PSED is a fundamental building block in a child's development and underpins the whole curriculum.

We also believe that children's every day experiences at school greatly contribute to their personal, social and emotional development. Children are encouraged from an early age to be responsible for themselves and to see the need for truthfulness, politeness and considerations for others.

Our 22 [values](#), taught in a 2 year programme, are central to our school ethos and children learn about the value the school is focusing on each month in PSHE, to support work in assembly on developing the theme. Approaches to behaviour management in the school are based on thinking of others and their needs, (Ready

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Respect Safe). (See [Behaviour Policy](#)) All these elements are important in shaping children's development in a positive way and in so doing, help to create a friendly and happy environment where children can enjoy learning.

Relationships Education

The PSHE curriculum [covers significant amounts of the programme set out by the Government](#) for coverage by the end of KS2. The remaining elements are covered at Middle school.

Impact

Teacher assessments for history will be recorded throughout the year and a final assessment produced at the end of each academic year and recorded on the [PSHE Assessment](#) sheet for each year.

Formative assessment occurs on a lesson-by-lesson basis determined by the aims.

Collective Worship

The daily act of worship provides an opportunity for children to develop spiritual awareness and understanding whilst at the same time providing children with a time for reflection. The act of collective worship is 'mainly of a broadly Christian character', but where respect and tolerance of the beliefs of others are shown. It also creates a sense of school identity and belonging through the sharing of our 22 [values](#) and the celebration of achievement.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship by putting their request in writing to the Head teacher.

Community Links

The school maintains close links with the local play groups, the local (FARM) schools, Russell Lower and Maulden Lower and also Alameda Middle school (with whom we share the school site). The head teachers meet regularly, as do the curriculum leaders. We have regular visits from local church leaders, who join us for assemblies.

The school supports the local Day Centre for the elderly, the Leonard Cheshire home for the disabled with Harvest Festival produce. We have also recently developed ties with a local care home for the elderly with a programme of visits of our Y4 children very much enriching their learning. experience.

The school also joins in various local events such as visits by our Choir, The Ampthill Christmas Tree Festival, The annual Ampthill Remembrance event and the Ampthill carnival. We see the school as a very important part of Ampthill town life and encourage the children to appreciate this and contribute as fully as possible to their community.

Assessment to measure Impact

We believe that assessment and monitoring is essential to the promotion of effective teaching and learning and should take place on a continuous basis. It should be a fair and open process, which involves, informs, supports and motivates pupils. We assess our children's progress by continuous observation, assessing children's work on a regular basis and by testing at various stages as the children progress through the school.

Our approach to assessing children's achievement is set out in the [Teaching and Learning Policy](#).

Curriculum leadership

The school identifies leaders for each curriculum area and this is set out in the 'CLG Groups and Staff Responsibilities' document each year. Curriculum leaders also work collaboratively in one of the two Curriculum Leadership Groups (CLGs).

Individual subject leaders create a [Subject Monitoring Plan](#) (SMP) each year, to set out how they will approach monitoring standards in the provision made for their subject.

The CLGs are responsible for creating a Curriculum Development Plan (CDP) as part of the School Development Plan each year.

They will work as a group to ascertain priorities for development across their curriculum range, based on monitoring data (from the completed SMPs) and **capacity**, bearing in mind the need to safeguard teacher's work life balance. These decisions will lead to the formation of a CDP.

The collaborative approach within each CLG (set out in the [CLG Terms of Reference](#) - Appendix B) allows for the sharing of good practice in approaches to monitoring standards and for prioritising development actions effectively, when time and resources are always limited.

Homework

Learning at home is an essential part of good education. Regular homework is important, since it gives pupils the opportunity to further practise with the concepts and processes learned in class at home, and helps them work towards improving important skills.

It also encourages children to become confident and independent in their learning, which will help throughout their time at school and, later, in adult life. Homework activities are an important part of the home/school partnership and help to inform parents / carers about the curriculum being followed in school. Details concerning our provision for homework are set out in the [Homework Protocols](#) - Appendix A.

If more formal approaches to learning at home are required e.g. during a partial or full closure of the school for a significant period, the [Remote Learning Protocols](#) will be followed. (Appendix E)

British Values within the curriculum

Children at The Firs Lower School demonstrate the following values whilst learning:

Democracy:

- Listening to everyone's ideas in order to form a majority.
- Working as part of a team and collaborating effectively with their learning partner, in groups and with the class as a whole.

Rule of Law:

- Developing knowledge of lawful behaviours.
- Understanding the difference between right and wrong and demonstrating respect for the law.

Individual Liberty:

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- Taking responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Challenging stereotypes and bias.
- Exercising rights and personal freedoms safely (including E-safety) showing respect and tolerance for others.
- Showing respect for and interest in other cultures.
- Demonstrating support for our Equality Policy by working together successfully so everyone can do their best.

Equal Opportunities

The school promotes equal access for all pupils to all aspects of the curriculum and the extra curricular areas and will not discriminate on the basis of gender, disability, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins. See [Equality Scheme](#) and [Equality Policy](#).

It is our aim to ensure that all children, regardless of race, class or gender, should have the opportunity to develop their learning and work with others well to achieve their best. We aim to respond to children's needs and overcome potential barriers for individuals and groups of children by:

- Ensuring that all children follow the Firs' Scheme of Work
- Providing curriculum materials and programmes, which are in no way class, gender or racially prejudiced or biased.
- Providing opportunities for our children who do not have access at home to use the school computers/Internet to develop independent learning.
- Providing suitable challenges for all children, including supporting those who have additional needs.
- Responding to the diversity of children's social and cultural backgrounds.
- Overcoming barriers to learning through the use of assessment and additional support