



Whiston Junior and Infant School

Part of White Woods Primary Academy Trust



Engaging Minds Developing Lives

EPIC Curriculum Policy

Reviewed by SLT: February 2016

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School Aims

The school aims to provide quality education for children between four and eleven years of age. Our aim is to provide high standards of teaching and learning through:

- A rich, broad, balanced and creative curriculum which sustains the engagement of all learners.
- Operating an environment which is safe, healthy, caring and supportive for everyone.
- Encouraging self-reliance and pride in all achievements.
- Developing learning skills and a love of learning, including the ability to question, enquire and be independent in their approach to learning.
- Promoting the development of tolerance and respect for others, regardless of race, creed or gender and ensure that all learners have equality of opportunity.

Our Overall Philosophy-Mission Statement

Our vision for Whiston J & I School is one of high standards achieved through the creative nature of the curriculum offered. We have a learning culture of high and realistic expectations of everyone, children and adults alike.

We believe that active participation in learning is crucial, engaging children as active participants in their learning, not simply recipients of knowledge. Children are not seen as vessels to be filled. We provide opportunities for problem solving, creativity and independence in order to promote confidence and maturity. There are many aspects of the educational process that we judge to be non-negotiable, views that we hold with a passion about children's education.

These include:

- High expectations for every child to achieve their full potential, whatever their circumstances, by providing them with the foundations for future learning and for success in life;
- An ethos that nurtures, cares and provides a safe and secure learning environment for all children;
- School visits, as they play a vital role in providing children with first hand experiences of the topics being studied;
- The richness and diversity of experiences both within and outside the curriculum offer opportunities for success, independence and well developed self-esteem and confidence for all children;
- A high quality learning environment where the display and celebration of children's learning is paramount. This develops an ethos of high expectation and helps promote a sense of pride and achievement;
- A school that builds partnerships with families and the wider community;

The 'EPIC' approach to inspire and equip learners for the 21st Century

The development of the curriculum is paramount at Whiston Junior and Infant School. Each year children will be immersed in at least six learning projects; FS2 plan for a range of mini learning projects which are a balance between specific topics and children's interests. Each learning project is split into sections, which starts by a planned **enquiring question** and sees children progress through four stages of learning.

The **four stages** of learning are Engagement, Progression, Innovation and Communication (EPIC):

1. **Engagement:** During this opening phase the children are **immersed** in an experience connected to the new theme; an opportunity to develop an '**awe and wonder**' moment. We hope to '**hook**' and **engage** them to build excitement around their learning. This phase would also incorporate the development of and **modelling of questioning**: to find out what they know already, what they want to find out and how they are going to do that. Leading then to develop a set of their own **enquiry questions**.
2. **Progression:** If the children are going to learn about something new they may need **new skills**, or might have to practise some old ones. This is where the teacher plans and **models** new learning across the curriculum subjects identified for the project and helps the children **progress** through the skills at an appropriate **pace**, incorporating **discovery** and **curiosity, differentiation, questioning** and **challenge**. There are planned opportunities for children to develop an understanding of the **social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects** within the project and to be given opportunities to develop an understanding of the importance of **British Values**.
3. **Innovation:** In this stage the children are encouraged to develop their **divergent thinking skills** in order for them to be **innovative, independent and resilient to use** and **apply** their new skills, knowledge and understanding through **challenging** learning activities. They may be given a problem to solve, an experiment to test or a task to investigate. They will be **challenged** to work and learn on their own, in pairs or together in small groups to **discover, find solutions, identify patterns, and investigate a theory** by putting all their learning into practice.
4. **Communication:** The final stage is an opportunity to **link** their learning from their starting point and **assess their progression** through the development of skills and their understanding of the topic. This will lead to them planning opportunities to **share and apply their skills and knowledge** in order to **celebrate** their learning in different ways. The children, with support from their adults, will **make decisions** of what and how they want to **celebrate** their learning. For example, they may produce an e-book, make works of art, perform a play/dance or write a diary/newspaper report in role and then share their outcomes and invite **an audience** to a presentation/assembly or **exhibition** etc - maybe other classes, parents/governors or a 'Public' audience. Finally, they will **critique** their learning and outcomes and **set themselves challenging targets**.

The Aims of the EPIC Curriculum

Our EPIC curriculum aims to develop caring and responsible citizens who:

- are secure in their values and beliefs
- respect others
- recognise responsibilities as a global community and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs
- have a sense of worth, purpose and personal identity
- make informed choices
- can handle conflict
- have enquiring minds
- can communicate well
- are able to learn independently and with others
- have essential learning skills in literacy, numeracy, science and computing
- are creative and resourceful
- work co-operatively through an understanding of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty
- develop problem solving skills
- use, apply and transfer skills to differing situations
- are confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- can relate to others and form good relationships
- know how to sustain and improve the environment and take into account the needs of present and future generations when making choices.

The Curriculum

The EPIC Creative Curriculum has been organised through a 'topic based' approach which incorporates key skills as set out above. The use of computing, digital thinking and visual and digital literacy are encouraged in all topic areas. Computing skills are also taught with planned opportunities to develop and apply their skills within independent learning activities. Each class teacher is responsible for the delivery of the EPIC Creative Curriculum.

Although links can and should be made with all subjects, the following subjects are also taught as dedicated, discrete sessions:

- **Mathematics**
- **Aspects of Literacy** (although the creative curriculum will be used as a vehicle for writing)
- **RE**
- **PE** including **Swimming** in Year 4 and **Cycling** in Y5
- **MFL** (French in KS2)
- **Science**
- **Music**

Planning and progression of skills:

The new National Curriculum 2014 and EYFS objectives and key skills are incorporated into our planning.

Long term planning:

Gives a broad outline of the skills taught in each year group and shows progression and continuity between skills taught in a cross curricular way across school.

Medium Term Planning:

Uses a question approach to hook children's learning and demonstrates progression through specific objectives to be taught within each area of the curriculum and the links between them.

Weekly Planning:

Breaks down the objectives into weekly achievable targets and activities for mathematics and literacy (speaking, reading, writing, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and phonics). All teaching staff are responsible for the planning and delivery of the curriculum on a day-to-day basis and for making cross-curricular links where appropriate. Staff make amendments to planning in order to optimise learning opportunities when they arise.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Head Teacher and SLT have overall responsibility for the Creative Curriculum, supported by the Curriculum Leaders. The Curriculum Leaders are responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Creative Curriculum through:

- Regular formal and informal discussions with staff.
- Monitoring planning to ensure curriculum coverage.
- Carrying out book/topic scrutinies alongside planning to ensure cross-curricular links are optimised.
- Observing learning and teaching to ensure progress is being made within the topics.
- Regular reviews of the curriculum through staff and pupil questionnaires and open dialogue.
- Making changes where necessary.
- Formulating an action plan to move the school forward.
- Speaking with the children about their learning.

Assessment:

See Assessment Policy

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Individual subject leaders monitor the effectiveness of their curriculum area. The SLT monitors the progression, continuity and effectiveness of the creative curriculum together with other members of staff through the Triangulation Timetable and reports the findings within the termly Triangulation Report.

Inclusion:

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children have equal access to the curriculum and are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities.