

Curriculum Drivers

At Western, we have designed a fluid and evolving curriculum which can respond to change, whether this is in terms of the children's interests, global or local developments or technological innovation. However, the key principles (or drivers) of our curriculum remain consistent and are briefly outlined below.

Excitement and engagement.

We are committed to providing learning which is rooted in real experiences which will enthuse, motivate and inspire our pupils. These may take the form of educational visits, experts being invited into school and the use of artefacts and environments to promote excitement and engagement in learning.

Effective Learners Forever (ELF)

Ensuring that children acquire and develop key learning skills is central to our aims. We enable children to become aware of the importance of learning these skills, to know their own strengths and weaknesses and to have opportunities to develop and improve their use of a range of such skills, including: problem solving, communication, evaluation, thinking, questioning and creativity. One of the products of the successful development of these skills is increased confidence. In a competitive world, it is increasingly important for children and adults to have the confidence to express themselves clearly, to stand up for what they believe in, to 'sell' themselves and to be able to make sensible and informed decisions. We provide a range of opportunities, across the school, for children to develop this confidence and high self-esteem. This can be through presenting to their class, performing on stage, talking to stakeholders, showing visitors around school, sharing their learning with parents or taking part in sporting and academic competitions.

Community

It is important for our children to have a sense of community and the vital role they play within it. At a local level, this involves the children sharing their learning with parents, friends and community groups; engaging with local businesses, social care providers and church groups and taking part in local events such as Remembrance Day, Countryside Day, competitive sport and musical events at the Harrogate International Centre and other venues. Pupils are taught to consider and reflect upon their responsibilities as global citizens through involvement in charities such as Water Aid and Dr Barnardos; by investigating the natural world, sustainability and endangered species and by becoming involved in environmental issues such as plastic pollution. All our children are taught British values and how they are pivotal to healthy communities.

Health and Wellbeing

In an increasingly digital world with its associated problems of poor physical and mental health, we are determined to make our children aware of these issues and to provide them with the skills, experiences, understanding and strength of character which will enable them to make sensible choices, leading to healthy and fulfilling lives. This is achieved in several ways. Through assembly themes, PSHE and science, children become aware of issues such as exercise, diet and drugs and how they affect people's lives. We have a strong sporting tradition at Western which encourages all children to develop the habit of regular physical exercise which they will hopefully carry with them into adulthood. From Nursery to Year 6, our children are immersed in the natural world, encouraged to take measured risks, develop confidence and try new and adventurous activities such as rock-climbing and canoeing. Through the work of the highly qualified team in the Junction and the mental health training received by the teaching staff, the school is well equipped to manage pupils' mental health issues.

Technology

In an increasingly digital world, it is vital that pupils are able to equip themselves with the knowledge, skills and confidence associated with the effective use of modern technology. At Western this is achieved through our computing curriculum and through the use of one to one iPads in the classrooms. Pupils are taught how to use iPads, computers and other technology efficiently and safely, to enhance and tailor their learning experiences. The use of iPads as the main teaching medium has the associated benefits of reducing teacher workload, particularly in the sphere of marking, and reducing a school's carbon footprint as much less paper is consumed.