

Teaching and Learning

As a school we believe that at the heart of teaching and learning are the children. Our core purpose therefore is to ensure that all of our pupils attain the highest standards in all aspects of the curriculum and leave achieving their true potential with both high levels of attainment and good progress. High Craggs is a happy and healthy place to learn and we enrich their school experience and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges of adult life.

Our rationale:

'We must bear in mind that the ultimate end of education is, not perfection in the accomplishments of the school, but in the fitness for life; not the acquirements of habits of blind obedience and of prescribed diligence, but a preparation for independent action...'

Pestalozzi

We believe children learn best when:

They feel safe, secure and valued.

Their experiences are matched to their individual interests and needs.

They have high self-esteem and are happy.

The learning is real and relevant to themselves and the wider world.

They have ownership of their learning.

The learning has a purpose.

They develop trusting relationships, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity.

They are challenged and encouraged to take risks.

Their surroundings are lively, interesting and stimulating.

They have time to reflect on and talk about their learning.

They know what is expected of them.

They are aware of their achievements and their next steps, - they aim high and value excellence;

They see questions and mistakes as essentials for their learning - we encourage a 'growth mindset'.

Our core aims

High Craggs Academy provides:

A happy, stimulating, secure and safe environment where everyone matters and achieves.

Creative teaching and active learning in order that every child reaches their full potential.

A community school where pupils, parents and staff can work together effectively to enhance the education provided for our children.

High Craggs Academy develops:

The inspiration in all pupils for a love of learning and the desire to continue to learn.

Specific lifelong qualities: curiosity, self-reliance, self-respect, self-discipline, respect for all, and the ability to co-operate with others.

High Craggs will:

Equip all of our pupils to take their place in an ever changing society.

Equip all of our pupils with the tools and self-confidence necessary to constructively influence their own lives.

Ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to take an active part in the life and work of the school.

Teach children to appreciate the benefits of staying healthy and safe.

Teach children to learn from, and care for, our environment.

Ensure that it is a place every child remembers with affection

Themes

We are committed to a cross curricular creative approach through whole school themes. We do this because we have a real commitment to creativity, and aim to make each child's learning vivid, real, engaging and exciting and to provide challenges that encourage their development in all areas. The feedback from the children also tells us that this is how they love learning!

We also believe that it is important that all children improve their own knowledge and understanding and this information is cleverly woven into their themes by some very experienced staff who make links and ensure that all the children's questions are answered. To provide breadth, balance and coverage of the children's interests we have ensured that each of the themes has a leading subject area so one is more scientific, one is more historical and one is more geographical.

We really do believe that learning is an exciting adventure where the whole community can participate. Our learning environments reflect the current theme and immerse the children in it on a daily basis. During the course of each theme they will adapt and change so that they continually motivate and inspire the children and in order to take full advantage of the rich and diverse nature of our school's community we have ensured that each theme includes opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom.

Autumn		Spring		Summer
The world in motion (Science)	Celebrations	Time Travel (History)	Easter	Explorers (Geography)
Autumn		Spring		Summer
Our world, the blue planet (Geography)	Festivals	Long, long ago (History)	Easter	Life (Science)

Each term parents will be invited into school to share in their child's learning experiences. The format of these will differ according to the theme. We really hope that as many parents as possible are able to join with us to ensure that each learning opportunity is utilised to its maximum potential.

Please [click here](#) to download the Long Term Planning PDF.

Please [click here](#) to download the class information pack PDF.

Please [click here](#) to download the end of year expectations PDF for Reading, Writing and Maths.

Curriculum Areas

English

We believe that reading and writing are core skills central to each and every day.

Most of our written work is linked to the termly theme and all staff ensure that there are meaningful reasons and audiences for writing. When writing, every child is supported by clear success criteria and adults who model and scaffold the work. Any specific aspects of writing that do not naturally fit into the theme are taught discretely but in a creative manner. All of our children also learn the appropriate aspects of spelling, punctuation and grammar, taught through our creative approach.

As stated in the National Curriculum:

All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

National Curriculum 2014

All of our children read on a daily basis in class either as part of a guided reading session, during their phonic activities or when taking part in paired reading. At the end of the day each class will take time to enjoy a carefully chosen class story. These might be related to the termly theme and will be read aloud to the class by the teacher.



As a school we are part of the Power of Reading development project which engages teachers and children in the literacy curriculum by using high quality books and proven teaching approaches. The project offers multi-layered professional development drawing on the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education's (CLPE's) classroom-based research and experience. The project combines the use of outstanding books with an approach to teaching the English curriculum that is creative, engaging and develops a love of literacy.

Maths

Children at High Craggs love maths because we teach Mathematics on a daily basis and in a creative way. We aim to develop real mathematicians that can reason, solve problems, are fluent, demonstrate and use their ability to memorise number facts and are able to apply their knowledge and understanding.

Maths is a central core aspect of the curriculum. This policy describes our particular approach, for example, how we group children and how we mark work and our emphasis on reasoning, problem solving and developing fluency.

Science

Our entire Science curriculum is taught through the carefully planned themes. The children cover a range of early physics (forces and magnets) chemistry (reversible and irreversible change) and biology (growing plants and the human body) aspects through a wide variety of practical work, observations and problem solving learning opportunities. We focus heavily on developing their ability to pursue lines of scientific enquiry and encourage questioning, discussion and drawing informed conclusions and evaluations based on evidence.

Computing

All of our children are growing up in a world full of technology and we want them to develop appropriate skills that enable them to use this technology confidently and safely. We incorporate our ICT curriculum into the termly themes and believe that if we teach our children these skills through a range of relevant, topic based tasks they will become competent and discerning users.

There are many aspects to the ICT curriculum including coding (programming). All of our children even the very youngest enjoy problem solving and we use a wide variety of programmes such as Scratch, 2DIY and Flowol our children to enhance their learning and enable them to practice, make mistakes and develop their knowledge and understanding.

As a school we are extremely well resourced with IT equipment enabling us to ensure that it is not only taught in exciting and motivating ways but it is used enhance the teaching and learning of other curriculum areas. We also believe that the Internet is an amazing source of information which can positively impact on their learning however it must be used safely. To ensure that they remain 'e-safe' we teach all of the children what to do when online, some of the dangers that they might encounter, how to deal with them and we cover topics such as cyberbullying.

Humanities

Alongside Science, History and Geography skills, knowledge and understanding are central to our termly themes during which the children are immersed in each of these subjects because of the creative way they are taught. At High Crag we want our children to know about the history of this country, the wider world and how events influence the world we live in today. They will learn about continuity, change, cause and consequence in history and apply this learning by posing questions, debating, writing accurate accounts and narratives. We encourage the children to develop a critical mind so that they can contrast and compare different accounts and identify different interpretations of events.

When focusing on Geographical skills the children develop their awareness of where they live, how it is similar and different to the world beyond. They study a particular area in depth looking at its physical and human features, its culture, traditions and what it is like to live there. They will also develop particular geographical skills such as map work, looking at aerial photos and making comparative studies which they will then use on particular external visits. We also want them to learn key facts about this country and beyond such as the names of oceans, rivers and capital cities.

RE

As a school we have planned our whole school themes to enable us to teach all of our pupils about the beliefs and practices of all major world faiths (particularly those represented in our school) and compare them to Christianity. Each year the children study one world religion in depth as well as working on aspects of social and moral education and work around Rights and Responsibilities.

Each day we have an assembly either as a whole school or as a key stage. This is a chance to come together as a school community, to learn about different faiths and festivals, to reflect on important ideas or to celebrate achievements. As a school we endeavour to cover all major events in the Christian calendar as well as key celebrations for other faiths.

As a school we have decided upon specific values that we believe are fundamental to our overall ethos. They are embedded into every aspect of the school culture:

The love of learning

Challenge

Respect

Resilience

Equality

Music

The teaching of music is embedded into our termly themes. From an early age we teach the children to appreciate different musical genres, take an active role in singing and making music activities and develop their confidence so that they can be part of a group or choir without any preconceptions. Pupils also gain a secure grounding in specific musical techniques.

Citizenship and Personal, Social and Health Education

We feel that PSHE and Citizenship help to give our children the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. It covers physical health, emotional health and wellbeing, drug education (including alcohol and tobacco), sex and relationship education (SRE), citizenship, anti-bullying, safety and the environment.

By taking part in PSHE & Citizenship, our children will grow to become adults who make sensible choices when faced with issues that are part of growing up. This approach also gives our children an understanding of their rights and responsibilities and provides opportunities to develop life skills in a safe, nurturing environment.

Modern Foreign Languages

We are incredibly fortunate because we employ a specialist teacher to enable all of our Key stage 2 pupils to learn Spanish. From Year 3 upwards the children learn how say things including their name, colours, numbers, months of the Year and some basic sentences.

Physical Education

Like all primary schools we receive additional PE funding from the government to support the delivery and provision of PE and sport. We use this money to partially fund the work of our Sports Co-ordinator, who, as a result has become a full time member of our staff team. As well as ensuring at least two hours of active PE a week for every class, our Coach mentors specific children; does one to one work on fitness and co-ordination; and ensures we network and exploit opportunities beyond the school.

As a school we are truly focused on providing an inclusive PE curriculum, offering a wide (and changing) range of sports for the children to participate in, helping children to understand the

importance of an active lifestyle (and associated health benefits) and increasing overall participation in external events.

Through our developed structured programme the children learn a range of traditional team sports such as hockey and football, and we monitor and track their aerobic fitness levels through regular activities such as the Bleep Test (to assess multi-stage fitness). Almost all of our children walk to school each day and we are committed to walking as much as possible – where possible we walk to local events and we no longer use coaches to transport the children to and from swimming.

Competitive sport and extra-curricular sporting activities are a strength of the school and we regularly enter inter-school competitions in a wide range of sports. We hold an annual sports day which includes competitive races as well as other potted sports activities, and we take part in other local tournaments during which our children often shine.

Residentials

As a school we are committed to ensure that there are real learning experiences at the heart of our curriculum. This includes arranging residential visits for the children.

Year 4 take part in a local sleepover.

Year 5 take part in a three, two night visit.

Year 6 take part in a four day, three night visit.

Each of these visits is linked to theme being covered at the time as well as developing the children's confidence, independence, resilience and team building skills. They are all wonderful experiences cited by children as amongst their best memories of school life. Whilst parents are asked to make a contribution towards each educational visit the school makes a significant contribution as well representing the value that we place on them.

Special Events

Throughout the year we place a significant emphasis on ensuring that there are scheduled special events some of which could be described as school traditions. These events provide opportunities for performances, bring the school together as a community, raise money for charity and create a sense of belonging which is central to our school ethos. We have also found that the children take great pride in being part of them and that parental support for them is extremely high. Whilst some events are fixed each year the ones that are linked to the termly theme will be quite varied however every class will hold one each term.

The events include:

- Celebration assemblies- parents whose children are receiving a certificate are invited to attend.
- Class assemblies – each class will produce a class assembly during the year. Parents are invited to attend.
- Christmas performances – each key stage will produce a performance for the parents
- Christingle carol concert – parents are invited into school to make a Christingle and then take part in a short carol concert
- Termly parents' events linked to the class theme.
- Easter breakfast – parents are invited in to have breakfast with their children and take part in a variety of Easter activities
- End of year KS2 performance
- Foundation Stage stay and play
- Weekly book club – in KS1 and FS2 parents are invited in every week to read with groups of children
- Annual Sports day and family picnic
- Annual Christmas fair.

Assessing Progress

We use 2 forms of assessment – formal and informal to keep us informed about the next steps for each child. As teachers we are constantly assessing, by asking questions, through group work, and by providing verbal and written feedback on a daily basis.

We place a great emphasis on different forms of assessment:

- Questioning during lessons because it identifies misconceptions quickly and supports next steps in learning.
- Making mistakes because this is how you learn. We identify with the children 'good mistakes' in lessons encouraging a resilience and positive attitude to meeting challenges and learning from them.
- Verbal and written feedback that focuses on addressing misconceptions and identifying the 'next steps' for each child. Children are strongly encouraged to enter into a daily dialogue with their teacher about how they have found each day's task.
- Formative assessment (informal) as we teach specific skills and objectives we identify the children that are achieving at, above or below the expected standard for their age.
- Summative assessments (formal tests) because this allows us to compare our children's results to national standards. At the ages of 7 and 11 the children do Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) during the Summer Term of Year 2 and Year 6 and children in Year take a Phonic test.

At the end of each school year, teachers write a very full report on each child. Parents are invited to discuss this report with the teacher. However as a school we do not wait if we have concerns about a child's progress, we will always contact parents to share worries – or good news

Homework

We have a school policy of setting homework because we want to develop a positive attitude towards learning outside of school and help set good habits for their future life particularly in secondary school. The homework system has been developed to link to their work in class and include some activities that can be completed as a whole family, however because of the carefully developed flexible system parents and children have a degree of choice too.

Homework routines begin in Reception with the expectation that children will be sharing and reading at home. In Key stage 1 and 2 tasks will include Mathematics, English, and theme related activities and many will use web based resources thus integrating technology. Daily reading and times table practice are expected too! At the start of year class meetings, parents are told about the specific routines for the new class. Expectations build up until Year 6 where children are really expected to be managing tasks independently.

As a school we are realistic and understand that circumstances will arise when children are unable to do the set homework or it becomes a negative experience for all. At this point we would like to re-assure parents not to worry about this, as we do understand! However, we do ask that any problems relating to homework are discussed with the class teacher as soon as possible.

Organisation of Learning

We are a two form entry school. This means that we have two classes in each year group. Each class has a maximum of 30 pupils and there are 8 year groups altogether split into 3 main key stages:

Foundation Stage

- FS1 (Nursery) – the children in here are 3 -4 years old. We also have a separate class for 2 year olds.
- FS2 (Reception) – the children in here are 4 – 5 years old.

Key Stage 1

- Year 1 – the children in here are 5-6 years old
- Year 2 – the children in here are 6-7 years old

Key Stage 2

- Year 3 – the children in here are 7-8 years old
- Year 4 – the children in here are 8-9 years old
- Year 5 – the children in here are 9-10 years old
- Year 6 – the children in here are 10-11 years old

Each class has their own classroom and each class has its own class teacher. We have additional spaces and rooms that are used for group and individual teaching and specific activities such as music. All our teachers are fully qualified to work with primary aged children and together have a wide, rich range of experience, abilities and skills which they bring to the life and work of our school. All our class teachers are assisted by a great team of support staff, including brilliant office staff and a fantastic site manager. As a school we take great pride in our learning environments and ensure that they truly reflect the termly theme, immersing the children in their learning and making it real which is vital in creating the right atmosphere for learning.

Teachers at High Craggs use a wide range of teaching strategies to inspire and motivate your children and these are selected to have maximum effect on the learning. Each week there will be occasions when your child will work individually, as one of a pair, as part of a mixed ability group, an ability group and as a member of the whole class. Our groupings are flexible as they are defined by the outcome for each child on the previous days learning and we are constantly challenging our children to achieve.

We Promise...

As a school we believe that education should enable all children to achieve their full potential.

"Education must develop every child's potential, talents and abilities to the full."

Article 29 of the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)

We therefore promise that by the time any child leaves High Craggs they will have:

- Sung in a concert
- Learnt a new language
- Visited a Museum
- Slept at least one night away from school with their class
- Visited a farm
- Had a speaking part in a play
- Represented the school in a sporting event
- Held a position of responsibility within school
- Taken part in a celebration for another faith/culture from your own
- Grow – cook – and eaten a vegetable in school
- Joined a School Club
- Watched a theatre performance
- Entered a school-based competition
- Had a piece of your work displayed for everyone to admire
- Worked alongside an expert
- Spent an evening at school