



Curriculum Overview

Championing Excellence, Nurturing Aspirations

Community, Curiosity, Care, Courage

Our curriculum ensure learning is effective, exciting and, above all else, relevant to the needs of our children.

All pupils will secure firm foundations in English and Mathematics which underpins the growing excellence in other subjects. Our knowledge and skills based curriculum offers a broad range of subjects throughout Key Stage 2 (KS2). We believe in bringing learning to life, both indoors and outdoors, with an emphasis on engaging and purposeful learning.

Howden Junior School aims to provide a curriculum that is engaging, balanced and relevant. While emphasis is placed on children learning core skills of English and Maths, we place great value on developing the 'whole child' and provide an engaging programme of study in all curriculum areas.

Our high expectations of children begin in Year 3 building on the skills and knowledge developed at the infant school. Children begin Howden Junior School in Year 3 and are baseline assessed in all core subjects including phonics checks. These assessments are used to identify key subject areas that need revisiting through informed planning, as well as identifying children who need to be targeted for specific intervention/support. Pupils continue daily phonics lessons in Year 3 with children who need to revisit specific phases targeted through additional daily teaching through Read Write Inc.

In Years 3 and 4, children continue their learning journey, taking part in daily maths, reading and writing lessons each morning. In Year 3 and 4 children access daily Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) lessons, which are linked to their learning in writing, to allow them to apply

and deepen their basic skills. In the afternoon, children access the wider curriculum through carefully planned and sequenced topics, with additional subjects delivered as timetabled discrete lessons: Science, Religious Education (RE), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), French (MFL) and Music.

Speaking and Listening skills are also enhanced through the 'Now Press Play' immersive experiences – linked and planned into to the current topic being taught.

In Upper Key Stage 2 (UKS2), children again continue their daily diet of rigorous teaching, taking part in maths, reading and writing lessons each morning. In Year 5 and 6, focus gradually shifts to the of Key Stage assessments, as children are prepared for these tests and their transition into Year 7. However, this is not done at the expense of an engaging curriculum offer. In the afternoons, children access the wider curriculum through carefully planned and sequenced topics with additional subjects delivered as timetabled discrete lessons: Science, Religious Education (RE), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), French (MFL) and Music.

Reading

For pupils to succeed in education and beyond, reading needs to be the highest priority and as such is at the heart of our school's curriculum. We aim for all our pupils – regardless of their needs, abilities or background – to learn to read fluently and with understanding. Once children can decode text effectively, we aim to build word recognition and develop comprehension skills in order to produce secure, confident, independent readers who enjoy and understand the benefits of reading.

As such, when leaving HJS, we aim for children to:

- To be excited and motivated to read for pleasure.
- To demonstrate enthusiasm and confidence when discussing the wide range of authors, illustrators and text types.
- To be curious to explore new texts and question what they have read.
- To value the use of text as a tool for a gaining deeper understanding of areas of interest or for investigation including knowledge about themselves and the world in which they live.

Therefore, we use a range of strategies, in addition to phonics, such as a variety of decoding methods, teaching high frequency words through sight recognition, discussions through picture books and Toe by Toe interventions.

Our school recognises the importance of enriching the curriculum through welcoming inspirational professionals who help raise the aspirations of our children. With this in mind, we regularly invite writers and authors (Tom Palmer, Vashti Hardy, Jennifer Killick, Neal Zetter) into school (both physically and virtually) allowing us to improve and enhance our resources. The

school has a Patron of Reading, children's author James Nicol, who helps promote a love of reading through half-termly visits, videos, workshops and challenges. In March 2020, Howden Junior School was awarded the Reading for Pleasure Award by the Society of Authors, in recognition of our inspiring effort in promoting a love of reading in our pupils.

Volunteers enhance our reading provision each week through hearing our lowest 20% and most vulnerable readers.

At Howden Junior School, reading comprehension is largely taught through whole class reading lessons. The focus of our reading teaching is vocabulary development, the development of explicit reading skills and immersion in a wide range of high-quality, age appropriate and diverse texts through discrete teaching of the different reading domains. Whole class reading sessions incorporate class novels as a stimulus for deeper thinking, as well as a range of fiction and nonfiction texts which develop contextual knowledge and understanding whilst also providing opportunities for learning in other areas of the curriculum. These texts are carefully chosen to ensure that there is progression and challenge across the school. We aim to develop a love of reading; children are encouraged to read for pleasure at home and school. Teachers read a variety of high-quality texts to children on a daily basis.

In 2020, the school raised over £5,000 to build a new exciting and engaging school library – James Nicol Library (named after our Patron of Reading and local children's author). Through twice annually book donations from parents – books chosen from our 'Book Wish List', carefully chosen to help engage our pupils, we frequently replenish and revitalise our library. The library itself is welcoming and inviting, with the walls covered in hundreds of letters and postcards from authors/illustrators from across the world, all aimed at helping us inspire a love of reading. Each class has a timetabled Library Visit, allowing the children to browse at their leisure a wonderful range of novels, non-fiction texts, graphic novels and picture books. The school raised a further £3000 in donations providing 20 tablets within the library, allowing children access to AR quizzes and our virtual MyOn library.

As part of our drive that children will read at home, the school also has a virtual library – MyOn. Through this, children can access over 6,500 books virtually. All the books are linked to their reading age, via regular teacher assessment, online Accelerated Reading quizzes, STAR Reading Assessments and ZPD scoring.

Phonics

Our expectation is that all pupils should be ready for daily whole-class reading sessions on entry. However, those children whose decoding skills are not yet secure, access daily Read Write Inc sessions. Children in Years 3 and 4 work within the Read Write Inc: Phonics scheme, moving onto Read Write Inc: Fresh Start in Years 5 and 6, if necessary. Throughout the programme, the children rapidly learn sounds and letters/groups of letters in 'Speed Sound' lessons. This knowledge is taught and consolidated every day. High frequency words, that are not phonetically regular, are taught as 'tricky' words and practiced frequently.

Sessions are lively, fast-paced and fun. In a session, children are taught either phonemes/graphemes/digraphs/trigraphs, high frequency and/or tricky words – all consolidated through reading and writing. There are lots of opportunities to speak and listen, as well as read and write the sounds.

Children read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and ‘tricky’ words so that they experience plenty of success. Repeated readings of these texts support their increasingly fluent decoding. During sessions, teachers read aloud and discuss books with similar themes so children build up background knowledge ready for the next text. Children are assessed and regrouped every six weeks according to their phonic knowledge. Ongoing assessment means that groups are constantly adjusted to ensure the best progress for each child.

Writing

At Howden Junior School, we incorporate Talk for Writing and other models into the teaching of writing. In KS2, children are taught writing skills through studying a range of both fiction and non-fiction texts including teacher produced models. In the first term of Year 3, children are encouraged and supported to learn texts by heart, before trying to innovate them and gradually apply more independent changes to the model until they can write freely with confidence. In KS2, picture books and topic work are used as a stimulus for writing. Throughout KS2, children are taught to write through novel study. All of their writing is inspired by novels and they study several key texts – outline in our Key Text Progression Document – per academic year. Challenging texts are chosen to ensure that children have an excellent model for their own writing.

During their time at Howden Junior School, children are exposed to a range of classic and contemporary poetry. They have the opportunity to use these poems as a model for their own writing.

Children’s writing is further enhanced by using resources from The Literacy Shed + and The Spelling Shed.

Mathematics

At Howden Junior School we believe that mathematics should be fun and rewarding for all children. As such, we endeavor to make our work in mathematics engaging for all learners.

Our mastery approach to teaching is by no means achieved solely with a textbook. Rigour and skill characterise our teaching and the White Rose approach is at the heart of this. The textbooks are skilfully designed by expert authors. They contain carefully varied questions and

examples which are easy for pupils to enter while still containing challenging components; encourage pupils to think about maths; and deepen pupils' understanding and reveal misconceptions.

Throughout Year 3 to 6, Lessons are structured in the following manner:

- **Exploration** – instead of 'Let me teach you...' as a starting point, children are encouraged to explore a problem themselves to see what they already know. At the beginning of each lesson in our school this exploration is referred to as the '**anchor task**'.
- **Structured discussion** – the teacher will lead a discussion with the children in order to organise the findings of the exploration, compare/contrast strategies and guide toward the most efficient strategy (or the one being learnt that day).
- **Questions** to challenge thinking – teachers use questioning throughout every lesson to check understanding. Children are also encouraged to question each other frequently throughout the lesson; this aids the development of independent learners and deepens their understanding. A variety of questions are used, such as: How do you know? Can you prove it? Are you sure? Is that right? What's the same/different about? Can you explain that? What does your partner think? Can you imagine? Questions are also used to challenge children who have grasped the concept. Children are expected to listen to each other's responses and may be asked to explain someone else's ideas in their own words, or if they agree/disagree etc.
- **Discussion and feedback** – pupils have opportunities to talk to their partners and explain/clarify their thinking throughout the lesson but are expected to complete written work independently (unless working in a guided group with the teacher).

TT Rockstars is used from Year 3 to Year 6 with children taking part and competing in National Times Table Wrangle competitions.

Science

We follow the National Curriculum for science ensuring all pupils develop their scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics. Science is hands on where possible; pupils are given the opportunities to experience science in the real world. Having a pond, orchard and woodland area on site is an invaluable resource available to all year groups, ensuring they have a real world setting in which to base their investigations.

Computing

Our Computing curriculum comprises a number of different strands: digital literacy, coding, data handling and using technology in the wider world. Each year group builds on the skills taught during the previous year, to ensure that by Year 6 students are confident using technology, including a range of different programs, apps and websites.

Apps on the iPads are utilised to teach skills such as animations, music creation and e-books. Purple Mash and Office software are embedded in the curriculum.

Through fundraising, the school now has enough devices for 1 per child across the entire school – including additional iPads, tablets and desktop computers.

Personal, Social Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) and Sex and Relationship Education (SRE)

Here at Howden Junior School, we use the Jigsaw' scheme throughout the school. This is divided into the following topics:

We also cover safeguarding themes through the following:

- Anti-bullying week in the Autumn Term
- SRE is included in the scheme that we follow for Year 5 and 6
- E Safety Week and a constant reminder, through weekly assemblies, the importance of staying safe online.
- Assemblies are delivered 4 times per week, covering elements of current topics in the news or celebrations. In addition, the teaching of core British Values, 3 School Rights and outline how these are exemplified in our school values.
- Big Talk visit the school to deliver aspects of SRE to all pupils.

Religious Education

Here at Howden Junior School, we follow the East Riding of Yorkshire agreed syllabus scheme throughout the school. This provides a broad and balanced programme of RE which reflect these key areas of reflection, discussion and comparison of:

- beliefs and practices
- identity and values
- meaning and purpose

History and Geography

History and Geography form an important part of our curriculum. We follow the National Curriculum and embrace a broad-spectrum of stimulating topics. As a school we aim to wholly

develop each child's geographical and historical skills, understanding and knowledge. Consequently, our lessons are well planned, highly engaging and challenge all abilities. Other curriculum areas are incorporated into learning to ensure high levels of motivation and interest from the children.

We teach a knowledge rich curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all learners the skills needed to succeed in life. We teach through Topics (through literacy where links can be made) as opposed to themes. If a subject does not link, it is taught as a standalone.

We have standalone Geography (Wonderous World) and History (Music Through The Ages) focused weeks that, where possible, incorporate other subjects.

Subject Specialisms

The following taught discretely through weekly timetable lessons that follow superficially chosen schemes of work:

PE – taught weekly by class teachers in addition to each child receiving a 10 week block of lessons based around building key character traits by trained coaches from Club Doncaster Foundation.

MFL – Languages are taught through weekly PPA sessions and via class teachers, and are further enhanced using iLanguages. A weekly Spanish club, delivered by a Spanish teacher from Superlingo is very popular.

Art and DT – As well as being taught through topics, are also celebrated through specific ART/DT days.

Music – Pupils develop their rhythm and vocal control across the phases using Charanga Music School. We have a weekly choir which is well attended. The children from the choir represent the school at Young Voices each academic year. A range of peripatetic musicians attend the school to continue lessons for children who have expressed a keen interest in specific instruments such as classical guitar and violin.

Wider Experiences

Residential and Visits

Children in UKS2 are able to attend a residential in Year 5 (High Adventure) and Year 6 (Whitby). These compliment the termly experiences that all children experience at Howden Junior School.

Hands on learning and experiences are key to children being able to write with meaning and add context to their topics.

Every child experiences a place of worship visit to study a new faith practically.

Forest School

In 2019, we opened a dedicated Forest School in our extensive outdoor grounds. Led by a level 3 trained Forest School Leader, we ensure that well-being is the foundation of our Forest School practice and through recognising the social, emotional and physical needs of participants we provide the guidance and facilitation for our time in nature. Through creating learner inspired experiences based on exploration and discovery, we recognise opportunities to mentor holistic growth over the course of long-term programmes.

In developing the community, we nurture a culture based on collaboration and of embracing challenge so that we can allow, over time, for the blossoming of character, resilience and empathy, and for a greater sense of connection, with nature and for our shared future. Our Forest School aims is to develop in children the skills they need to be effective learners and nurtures a love of nature and the outdoors, encouraging our children to:

- develop personal and social skills
- work through practical problems and challenges
- use tools to create, build or manage
- discover how they learn best
- pursue knowledge that interests them
- learn how to manage failures
- build confidence in decision making and evaluating risk
- develop practical skills
- explore connections between humans, wildlife and the earth
- regularly experience achievement and success
- reflect on learning and experiences
- develop their language and communication skills
- improve physical motor skills
- become more motivated
- improve their concentration skills