



Birkwood Primary School – Curriculum Rationale 2017

Birkwood Primary School, Cudworth, is an above average sized primary school situated in the ex-mining area of Barnsley, South Yorkshire. There are currently 282 full-time pupils.

Compared to all primary schools, the school Birkwood Primary School has a very high % of pupils who have been FSM eligible in the past 6 years at 49%, compared to the national figure of 26%. (FFT Aspire 2016)

Children attending Birkwood are from less affluent social backgrounds than both Barnsley and England.

We believe that our children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum which is inspiring, engaging and which provides a range of learning opportunities that help to develop children's life- long love of learning as well as developing their life skills.

The creative curriculum we provide gives children a sense of purpose and develops an understanding of the world around them. By combining engaging, practical and personalised topics into the learning environment, children have access to contexts, which enable independent learning and promote the development of life skills and knowledge.

Our approach enables teachers to plan learning experiences around topics which raise attainment in literacy, numeracy, science and technology. It allows all learners to engage and contribute positively to the classroom, the school and the community.

At Birkwood Primary School, we plan aspirational trips that give our children memorable experiences they might not otherwise get the opportunity to have. All our trips are heavily subsidised and encourage our children to be inspired to be the best they can be. We aim to raise aspirations through showing children the opportunities beyond their local community. In the past, we have taken classes on trips to The Houses of Parliament, Harry Potter World, Kingswood residential in North Wales and many more.

Through the Open Futures Curriculum, we aim to better equip our children to ask questions, discuss options and make decisions. We believe that children need a context in which to see the value of skills and to practise and develop them.

Open Futures makes sense of skills by providing a context and a framework. All children at Birkwood Primary School have the opportunity to grow, cook and make films. These opportunities not only raise standards but also give our children life skills they can use throughout their education and in later life.

As an 'Arts Mark Gold' School, we believe it is important for our children to express themselves creatively. We use art, dance, drama and music to inspire children to reach for the stars. We also provide opportunities for children to discover hidden talents, particularly through music and sport. Our School has a unique link with Grimethorpe Colliery Band who act as role models and inspire our children to learn instruments.

We are very proud of the opportunities that we provide our children and their families so that they can all be 'the best that they can be.'