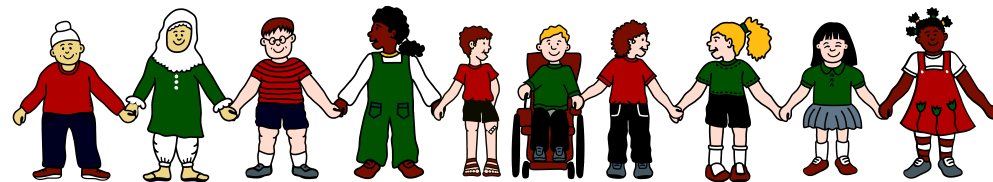


# ***The Giles Nursery and Infants' School***

## ***School Improvement Plan – end of year review 2024 / 2025***

*Developed by staff and governors after consultation with a wide range of stakeholders*



## **Our school is a place where we aim to develop:**

- ▶ Positive attitudes to learning.
- ▶ Creativity and a sense of self-confidence and self-esteem.
- ▶ Equality of opportunity, independence, individuality, tolerance, sensitivity and cooperation.
- ▶ Good relations, respect for others and the environment.
- ▶ A broad and balanced creative curriculum.
- ▶ Pupil achievement by providing quality experiences.

**Priority 1:** Continue to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and the lowest 20%, achieve as highly as possible across all areas of the curriculum, with particular focus on science and on streamlining our curricula intent and implementation to embed lifelong learning skills while ensuring that children have increased opportunities to learn practically and through play.

**Priority 2:** Continue to ensure that the well-being needs of our children are met to the highest degree by further enhancing the strong provision for our pupils with SEND and advancing and prioritising well-being throughout the school community.

**Priority 3:** To further secure outstanding leadership and management through supporting those responsible for governance to securely and consistently understand their role and carry it out effectively.

# Priority 1

**Continue to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and the lowest 20%, achieve as highly as possible across all areas of the curriculum, with particular focus on science and on streamlining our curricula intent and implementation to embed lifelong learning skills while ensuring that children have increased opportunities to learn practically and through play.**

**Context:**

The quality of education provided at our school is exceptional and senior leaders ensure that the school’s curriculum intent is embedded securely and consistently throughout the school. Our broad and balanced curriculum allows pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and builds their cultural capital to prepare them for their next steps in life. It is both vibrant and cross-curricular, enabling pupils to develop and apply skills learnt independently and to enjoy opportunities to be creative, to demonstrate curiosity, to problem-solve and to explore. The curriculum is planned within the context of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and the national curriculum and has been carefully planned and sequenced, allowing coherent progression towards defined end points and equipping pupils well for their next stages in education.

Outcomes at the end of 2023-24 showed that the percentage of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the EYFS continues to increase each year, with the majority of pupils achieving a GLD. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) achieving a GLD continues to increase and be above the national average.

The large majority of Year 1 pupils reached the threshold mark in the phonics screening check. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND reaching the threshold mark in the phonics screening is maintained above national average, with most pupils achieving the expected standard. Year 1 pupils made excellent progress in phonics when compared with their end of EYFS attainment – 75.6% reached the threshold mark in the phonics screening check, compared with 55.2% achieving GLD at the end of the EYFS.

Attainment at the end of key stage one (KS1) continues to increase each year, with the majority of pupils achieving expected or above in reading, writing and mathematics. Additionally, the percentage of pupils achieving expected or above is above national average in all three subjects. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are in line with the national average. Outcomes for pupils with SEND are significantly above the national average. Year 2 pupils made excellent progress from their end of EYFS attainment.

**Development:**

To ensure that:

- The new science curriculum leaders are secure in their new roles and the science curriculum is robust across the school.
- The curriculum provides plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn practically and through play, including Forest School.
- The standard of teaching and learning across the school continues to be at least good, with much that is outstanding, to continue to raise outcomes at GLD in EYFS, and in phonics, reading, writing and mathematics in KS1.
- Assessment of foundation subjects using progression maps is embedded in all year groups.

Target	Input, activities and tasks	Timescale	Cost / resources	Monitoring	Success Criteria
<b>Science</b>					

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<b>Develop the knowledge and skills of the new science curriculum leaders.</b>	<p>New science curriculum leaders to have a comprehensive handover with the outgoing leader.</p> <p>New science curriculum leaders to receive bespoke support from the Science Curriculum Advisor from Herts for Learning (HfL), to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of curriculum mapping</li> <li>• Review of pupil books in KS1</li> <li>• Progression in working scientifically skills</li> <li>• Progression in learning and assessment</li> <li>• Development of two progression maps – scientific knowledge and working scientifically</li> <li>• Staff meeting focusing on development of working scientifically skills</li> </ul>	Autumn 2	<p>Supply teacher cost</p> <p>Staff meeting time</p>	<p>Science curriculum leaders</p> <p>Headteacher</p>	<p>Maxine Humphrey and Jade O’Regan, the new science curriculum leaders, are secure in their new roles and are equipped to carry them out effectively. They can offer leadership, expertise and enthusiasm for their subject and are knowledgeable on current pedagogy and approaches.</p> <p>The science curriculum is robust, key vocabulary is up to date and progression maps are clear.</p> <p>The profile of working scientifically is raised across the school.</p>
	<p>New science curriculum leaders to attend the Science Conference.</p>	Summer term? To be confirmed by HFL.	<p>Conference fee</p> <p>Supply cover cost</p>	<p>Science curriculum leaders</p> <p>Headteacher</p>	<p>All staff receive up to date science CPD.</p>
<b>Secure the Platinum Award from the Woodland Trust for environmental education and outdoor learning.</b>	Submit portfolio of evidence of projects completed last year to the Woodland Trust.	Autumn 1	Staff time to compile portfolio	Science curriculum leaders	Our school receives the highest accolade for environmental and outdoor education. Our pupils demonstrate a sound awareness of the natural world in our school grounds.
<b>Forest School</b>					
<b>Ensure outdoor learning is well led with accredited Forest</b>	New Forest School leader to be appointed and participate in Forest School leader training through the Forest School Association.	Ongoing through the year	<p>Course fee</p> <p>Supply cover</p>	Forest School leader	Cat Brown is validated as a Forest School Leader by the Forest School Association. She

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<b>School leadership and all staff involved in Forest School are highly trained.</b>	New Forest School leader to lead training for staff, to ensure they know the ethos of Forest School and are confident to lead sessions safely and effectively, where appropriate.	Completion in summer 2	Staff meeting time	Headteacher	can share the ethos of Forest School with all members of staff – to promote self-esteem, creativity, confidence and independence. Mrs Brown will produce a Forest School Handbook including risk assessments.
<b>Through Forest School activities, ensure our pupils continue to enjoy rich outdoor play-based and practical learning experiences, deepening their curiosity and strengthening their characteristics of learning.</b>	Outdoor learning to continue for Year 1 and to be rolled out to Year 2.	Autumn 2 ongoing through the year	Resources to be purchased as needed	Forest School leader KS1 teachers	Our school continues to provide a rich outdoor learning experience for our pupils which support risk-taking, pupil-centred learning, exploration and play.  KS1 timetables include one dedicated outdoor learning session per week per class.  Pupil voice expresses pupil engagement.
<b>Ensure resources for outdoor learning are well maintained.</b>	New Forest School leader to audit outdoor learning resources and identify any gaps.	Autumn 2 / ongoing	Equipment costs	Forest School leader	Pupils are able to fully participate in activities.  Resources are safe to use and well maintained.
<b>Mathematics</b>					
<b>Maintain the high standard of mathematics teaching and targeted support for disadvantaged</b>	Curriculum leaders monitor closely the second year of implementation of White Rose Maths across Reception and Key Stage 1 and of daily maths fluency from Nursery to Year 2.	Termly review of assessment data	Purchase of White Rose Maths subscription, workbooks	Mathematics curriculum leaders	Pupils make good progress, with all pupils' needs met (higher challenge as well as securing basic skills)

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<p><b>pupils, pupils with SEND and the lowest 20% and ensure the school’s mathematics curriculum continues to have a positive impact on pupil outcomes in mathematics.</b></p>		<p>Spring term – book look in staff meeting</p> <p>Summer term – pupil voice</p>	<p>and assessments</p> <p>Purchase of Fluency Bee subscription</p> <p>Purchase of Numbots subscription</p>	<p>Year group leaders</p> <p>Class teachers</p>	<p>Data shows progression</p> <p>Books show high-quality feedback, intervention, and hands-on learning</p> <p>Pupil voice reflects enjoyment of and confidence in mathematical learning</p>
	<p>Class teachers put in place small intervention groups to support the lowest attaining 20% of pupils. Curriculum leaders track progress of PPG, SEN, EAL and pupils predicted end of Year 2 levels that are below EXS.</p>	<p>Autumn – DANS intervention training for new staff</p> <p>Spring – review data / book look</p> <p>Summer – review data / collect pupil voice</p>	<p>Time for curriculum leader and intervention staff</p>	<p>Class teachers</p> <p>Assessment leader</p> <p>Curriculum leaders</p>	<p>Interventions and 1:1 support in place for those pupils who need it.</p> <p>Assessment data shows that pupils taking part in interventions are making progress.</p> <p>Pupil voice demonstrates growing sense of mathematical confidence and enjoyment</p>
	<p>Monitor bespoke provision provided for SEND pupils in Orca class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Orca class leader to review annual planning for mathematics.</li> <li>• Work with Orca class leader to ensure adequate resourcing is available to support mathematical learning.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing – curriculum leaders to spend quality time in Orca class</p>	<p>Curriculum leaders and Orca class leader time</p> <p>CPD opportunities</p>	<p>Mathematics curriculum leaders</p> <p>Orca class teachers</p>	<p>Pupils with SEND in the specialist provision class have learning targets that are achievable, personalised and secure progression.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at assessment data for Orca pupils with the Orca lead teacher.</li> <li>• Mathematics leads to spend time in Orca class to teach or support teaching.</li> <li>• Mathematics leads to check CPD needs with Orca team and source appropriate CPD as necessary.</li> <li>• Pupil voice to be collected from pupils in Orca class about their mathematical learning.</li> </ul>	<p>Spring and summer – planning, attainment and resourcing review</p> <p>Ongoing – CPD as identified</p> <p>Summer – pupil voice collected</p>	<p>as identified for Orca staff</p>	<p>Teaching and learning support assistants</p> <p>SENCO team</p>	<p>Pupils with SEND in the specialist provision can demonstrate their mathematical learning and understanding.</p> <p>Staff in Orca class feel supported to implement a rich and high-quality mathematics learning environment.</p> <p>Staff in Orca class feel supported to help pupils achieve their individual learning targets.</p>
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**English**

<p><b>Maintain the high standard of phonics, reading and writing teaching and targeted support for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and the lowest 20% to ensure pupil outcomes continue to improve across the school.</b></p>	<p>English curriculum leader to coordinate refresher training on the school’s bespoke SSP for all teachers and support staff.</p>	<p>Autumn 1</p>	<p>INSET time</p>	<p>English curriculum leader</p>	<p>All pupils are taught phonics using a consistent approach, supporting a reduction in cognitive overload for the lowest 20% of pupils. Pupils develop their phonic skills and knowledge rapidly and can apply these to decode text and spell.</p> <p>Pupils identified as beginning to fall behind are supported through targeted intervention to ‘keep up’.</p>
	<p>Teachers to timetable regular ‘keep up’ sessions in class, to enable pupil identified as beginning to fall behind are supported through targeted intervention.</p>	<p>Autumn 1</p>	<p>Teaching time</p>	<p>Teachers</p>	
	<p>Undertake phonological awareness testing and accelerated progress interventions with those pupils in Year 1 that did not achieve a GLD at the end of EYFS, and those in Year 2 that did not reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check, with especial focus on the lowest 20%.</p>	<p>Autumn 1</p>	<p>TA time / PP grant</p>	<p>KS1 teachers</p> <p>Disadvantaged leader</p> <p>Class TAs</p>	

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					The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in the national Y1 phonics screening check is at least in line with or better than the national average.
	English curriculum leader to coordinate refresher training on the school's approach to teaching reading for all teachers and support staff. Revisit: reading with individual pupils, guided reading, reading spine and reading for fluency (text / poem of the week).	Autumn 1	INSET time	English curriculum leader	All staff are confident to teach / support the teaching of reading. Pupils will develop their pace and prosody. This will enable them to access longer texts and support them to read with greater fluency, understanding and stamina. Pupils will develop their engagement with reading, comprehension skills, understanding and use of vocabulary. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading at the end of EYFS and KS1 will be at least in line with the national average.
	Undertake reading interventions with those pupils in Year 1 that did not achieve a GLD at the end of EYFS, and those in Year 2 that did not reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check, with especial focus on the lowest 20%.	Autumn 2	PP grant	KS1 teachers  Disadvantaged leader	
	Headteacher and assistant headteacher / English curriculum leader allocate time to work in classes across the school to monitor pupils' independent reading, using the individual reading check proforma.	Spring 1	Time	Headteacher  Assistant headteacher / English curriculum leader	Independent reading is monitored effectively across the school. Pupils are reading independently at the correct level. Pupil voice is collected, including about reading at home and being read to at school.

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	<p>English curriculum leader and SENCo to monitor bespoke provision provided for SEND pupils in Orca class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review annual planning for English.</li> <li>• Ensure adequate resourcing is available to support English learning.</li> <li>• Monitor assessment data for Orca pupils.</li> <li>• Spend time in Orca class to teach / support teaching.</li> <li>• Check CPD needs with Orca team and source appropriate CPD as necessary.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>English curriculum leader time</p> <p>SENCo time</p> <p>Orca class teacher time</p> <p>CPD as required</p>	<p>English curriculum leader</p> <p>SENCo</p> <p>Orca class teacher</p> <p>Pupil progress meetings</p>	<p>Pupils in the specialist provision class have learning targets that are achievable, personalised and secure progression. They received English teaching and learning adapted to individual needs and next steps.</p> <p>Staff in Orca class feel supported to implement a rich and high-quality English learning environment.</p>
	<p>Writing curriculum to be reviewed in each year group to ensure it supports all pupils, including challenge for high prior attaining pupils. Focus on the inclusion of play and practical learning to engage all pupils.</p> <p>Year groups to look at the HfL writing planning to see if any units of work can be incorporated into our curriculum.</p> <p>Reception to look at coverage in the new HFL writing planning for early years and compare with our own curriculum.</p>	Autumn 1	Staff meeting time	English curriculum leader	<p>All staff are confident to teach / support the teaching of writing. Staff receive current, focused CPD about the teaching and learning of writing, which they can use to further develop their pedagogy.</p> <p>Pupils are motivated and engaged with writing. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing at the end of EYFS and KS1 will be at least in line with the national average.</p>
	<p>English curriculum leader to attend the 2025 National Primary English Conference: Powerful Pedagogy: Say it, read it, write it.</p> <p>Key learning points to be shared with teaching staff.</p>	Spring 1	Staff meeting time	English curriculum leader	

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<p><b>Parents / carers are well-supported to help their child develop their English knowledge and skills knowledge and use an approach which is consistent with the school's.</b></p>	<p>Review and collate English support materials on the school's website, to include:</p> <p><b>Phonics:</b> pronunciation videos, parent talks and an overview of the phonics planning.</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> story videos, links to online stories and reading tools, parent talk videos and information about upcoming / past reading events; for example, Stay and Read.</p> <p><b>Writing:</b> links to online stories and writing tools, parent talk videos and information about upcoming / past events.</p>	<p>Spring 1 onwards</p>	<p>Assistant headteacher time</p>	<p>English curriculum leader</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>Office staff</p>	<p>Parents / carers can access a range of high-quality support materials and resources to support their child's development in English. They know how phonics, reading and writing are taught in school and how they can support this at home.</p>
<p><b>Planning for progression across the school curriculum</b></p>					
<p><b>Enrich the broader curriculum and strengthen leadership in foundation subjects.</b></p>	<p>Headteacher to conduct a review of curriculum leadership across the school, following the appointment of new staff.</p> <p>New curriculum leaders to receive thorough handovers and training from previous curriculum leaders.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>Training costs</p>	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>Curriculum leaders</p>	<p>Curriculum leaders have an excellent knowledge of how to lead their subject effectively.</p> <p>Staff feel secure and happy in their roles within the school. They are upskilled and trained</p>

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	<p>Progression maps to be completed for remaining foundation subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art and design</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• PE</li> <li>• RE</li> </ul> <p>Progression maps to include key learning in all years groups and key assessment points.</p>	Ongoing	Staff meeting time	Curriculum leaders Teachers	<p>to carry out their duties effectively. The school benefits from experienced curriculum leaders who know their subject and can lead confidently.</p> <p>Teaching of foundation subjects is outstanding and pupils make excellent progress.</p> <p>Assessment within and of foundation subjects is outstanding.</p>
<b>Pupils are enabled to secure precise curriculum language setting firm foundations for lifelong learning.</b>	Revisit all key vocabulary to ensure it matches the key learning as identified in the progression maps developed last year.	Spring 1	Staff meeting time	Curriculum leaders	Pupils use and understand subject-specific terminology, building on their knowledge as they progress through the school.
<b>Pupils learn through direct teaching, with plenty of opportunity to apply their learning through child-led time and small group practical exploration of the learning objective.</b>	<p>Review planning in line with the progression maps developed last year, to ensure that key learning is streamlined and direct teaching is focused, specific and time-measured. Direct teaching on the carpet to be reduced to the minimum requirement (twice the pupil's age as a guideline).</p> <p>For example; in art and design, focus on one artist each half term, with vocabulary and objectives linked, artist appraised using key vocabulary, learning to include key vocabulary and time for pupils to appraise their own work using the same vocabulary.</p>	Spring 1	Staff meeting time	Curriculum leaders Teachers	<p>Planning allows for a good balance of teaching time, practical exploration and child-led learning time.</p> <p>Teaching units are carefully planned to ensure key vocabulary is embedded in all lessons and pupils are given opportunities to use the vocabulary and share their learning.</p>

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<p><b>Learning environments to be rich in high-quality, open-ended continuous provision for creative-thinking and learning through play from EYFS to the end of Year 2.</b></p>	<p>All year groups create role play areas accessible to all their pupils. The role play areas are changed regularly in line with topics. Pupils have agency in the creation of the role play areas, for example voting on a limited choice of options. Teachers model the use of the role play area to ensure pupils know how to maximise the opportunity to embed their key learning. Opportunities for reading, writing and mathematics should be integrated to the role play.</p>	Ongoing	Planning and resourcing time	Class teachers Support staff	<p>Pupils demonstrate creative-thinking in their play.</p> <p>Pupils demonstrate high levels of engagement in teacher-led sessions and in child-led sessions.</p> <p>Pupils are happy, relaxed, challenged and fulfilled in school.</p>
	<p>Year groups review their continuous provision to ensure the resources are in good condition, open-ended in their use and a canvas for imaginative play. New resources to be purchased as needed to meet these objectives, whilst balancing this with a 'less is more' approach to resourcing rich play environments.</p>	Ongoing	Time Budget for new resources	Class teachers Support staff	<p>Pupils are self-motivated learners, applying and extending their knowledge and supporting each other to learn.</p>
	<p>Teachers ensure their learning environments are well organised with resources relevant, accessible and easy for pupils to tidy away, without being overwhelming.</p>	Ongoing	Time Budget for accessible storage	Class teachers Support staff	<p>Data demonstrates pupils continue to make excellent progress.</p>
	<p>Classroom adults model good use and care of the resources and engage in high quality conversation with the pupils to seize a learning opportunity as it presents itself.</p>	Ongoing		Class teachers Support staff	
<p><b>Pupils develop their awareness of their local area.</b></p>	<p>All year groups have at least one local walk in the area of the school per year. Teachers clearly identify the learning objectives that are met by the walk and relate to curriculum areas.</p>	Ongoing	Planning time	Teachers Year group leaders	<p>Pupils demonstrate pride in their local area. Pupils link their learning in school to the wider world.</p>

**Inclusivity and SEND, including narrowing the progress and attainment gap between differing socio-economic groups – Please read in conjunction with the School's Pupil Premium Strategy.**

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<b>Further develop provision and the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND.</b>	Continue to improve the provision offered in class for pupils with SEND. Ensure teachers and support staff are trained in Therapeutic Thinking approaches. Provide opportunities for teachers to share examples of effective adapted learning in all areas of the curriculum.	Ongoing	Training  Staff meeting time	Headteacher  SENCo  Teachers	All staff are fully trained in the Therapeutic Thinking approach.  The needs of the most vulnerable pupils across the school are met and they can access their learning appropriately.
	Provide training to ensure support staff can lead effective intervention sessions to pupils working below the expected standard, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project X Code (Year 2 reading intervention)</li> <li>• DANS (mathematics intervention)</li> <li>• White Rose TA materials (pre teaching)</li> <li>• Phonological awareness / Phase 1 phonics</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Training  Staff time	SENCo  English curriculum leader  Mathematics curriculum leader	Classes are supported with skilled and knowledgeable staff, promoting staff wellbeing and reducing stress.  Incidents of pupils being suspended decreases.
	Ensure staff are knowledgeable on how to make reasonable adjustments to support the range of needs of pupils in their class, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Products to support the different needs of pupils with SEND</li> <li>• Managing individual timetables</li> <li>• Implementing therapeutic plans (risk reduction) and individual risk assessments</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Resource costs  Staff time	SENCo  Teachers	
	Provide additional staff in class to support pupils who have significant needs but do not have EHC plans or additional funding.	Autumn 1 ongoing	Staff cost	Headteacher  SENCo	
<b>Narrow gaps for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.</b>	Use PP grant funding to provide bespoke provision and intervention to disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.	Autumn 1 ongoing	PP grant	Assistant headteacher  Teachers	Disadvantaged pupils' needs are swiftly and accurately identified. They make accelerated progress

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	<p>Teachers to work closely with the assistant headteacher to identify need for targeted interventions. Training and timetables to be arranged as required.</p> <p>Provide training for staff to effectively support disadvantaged pupils within the classroom to ensure they make accelerated progress.</p> <p><i>Please read the Pupil Premium Strategy for further information regarding the implementation of support for disadvantaged pupils.</i></p>		<p>Pupil progress meetings</p>	<p>through bespoke provision and intervention.</p> <p>Gaps narrow and close over time so that disadvantaged pupils' attainment is in line with non-disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.</p>
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**End of year review:**

**Science**

The new science curriculum leaders received a comprehensive handover from the outgoing leader. Over the course of two days, the new leaders reviewed the science curriculum and key vocabulary with the support of the outgoing leader. The new science curriculum leaders received bespoke support from the Science Advisor from HFL, focused on developing progression maps for scientific knowledge and working scientifically. Staff meeting time was given for all staff to develop the progression maps. The staff meeting also focused on the development of working scientifically skills. Teachers looked at the areas of scientific enquiry – researching, comparative testing, observing over time, pattern seeking, identifying, classifying and grouping – to ensure all the areas are covered in our science curriculum. The science curriculum leaders planned an exciting Science Week, which took place in March. This year, it focused on the theme of ‘change and adapt’. Pupils had the opportunity to investigate how animals adapt to suit their habitat, how humans change as they grow and how our school has changed over time.

In the autumn term, our school achieved the Platinum Award from the Woodland Trust. To achieve the award, pupils took part in fun, practical projects while helping the environment and developing the school grounds. Projects included promoting recycling in school, going for a walk in the woods, exploring the seasons, making a piece of natural art, and having a lesson in the fresh air. This is the highest award available and validates the strength of our provision and the impact upon our pupils.

**Forest School**

## School Improvement Plan: 2024 / 2025

Although our Forest School leader left our school at the end of the summer term 2024, we have continued to run effective Forest School sessions in Year 1. A Year 1 teacher successfully completed the Forest School Leader training and received her certification in the spring term. She produced a comprehensive handbook, including risk assessments, and cascaded it to staff teaching Forest School sessions and provided the weekly planning. This year, we introduced teaching tools skills in Forest School. In the autumn term, the children learnt to whittle in an age-appropriate way, using a vegetable peeler and practicing the skill by 'whittling' a carrot. In the spring term, the children started to learn how to cut a piece of wood using a saw. The tools skill sessions are taught by the class teacher on a one-to-one basis with the children in a safe area away from the rest of the Forest School group. The class teachers received training from the Forest School leader in advance of teaching the skill. The tools are new, so they are in excellent condition, protective clothing is available in the form of gloves, a proper sawhorse has been purchased, and the teachers have been trained how to use it. Tools are safely stored and maintained when not in use. The Year 1 leader is currently attending Early Years training and cascading to Year 1 colleagues, including the Forest School leader, some of the recommendations for ensuring pupil wellbeing and identifying gross and fine-motor skill gaps. Following this, the Forest School leader purchased some new equipment for the school's woodland, including a hammock and a rope ladder.

Pupil voice demonstrates that the children thoroughly enjoy their weekly session and photographs on our website are testament to the joy they experience and their immersion into nature, applying problem-solving skills, team-working, and creativity. We feel that the benefits of Forest School are so wonderful for our children that Forest School sessions were set up for Year 2 in the final part of the summer term.

### **Mathematics**

In the academic year 2023-2024, we adopted a new scheme of learning for mathematics across the school from Reception to Year 2. White Rose Mathematics is a well-established and comprehensive scheme, developed by teachers and closely aligned with the National Curriculum expectations. It has also been developed to ensure children can think flexibly in their problem-solving, preparing them for assessment style questions. It breaks down the teaching of the core concepts into small steps to prevent the creation of knowledge gaps. It is a tightly developed sequence, with a spiral progression as the child journeys through the mathematical curriculum from Early Years to the end of Key Stage One. All teaching staff attended a training session in the autumn term of 2023 on how to use the scheme most effectively, including how to adapt it to the needs of the pupils. Our curriculum journey is developed with all teaching staff contributing and details how skills progress over the period that pupils attend The Giles Nursery and Infants' School. These link to the National Curriculum objectives and clearly detail how all pupils progress through the curriculum to the defined end point.

We are now into our second year using the scheme. Mathematics in Nursery has been developed to give all pupils strong foundations for the start of their White Rose Mathematics learning in Reception. In Reception, this was the first full year of teaching White Rose Mathematics, as last year the scheme writers had not released autumn term materials in time for us.

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In October 2024, a staff meeting was allocated to gain feedback from Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 teachers on how the curriculum is supporting progression. Reception shared an update on how the curriculum is being embedded and gave positive mention to the quality of hands-on experiences using White Rose Mathematics.

The focus on fluency practice introduced last year has continued this year. Mathematics fluency has been implemented across the school and pupils rehearse key skills in all year groups. Reception classes have embedded mathematics fluency into their daily routines and pupils start each morning with fluency activities. Year 1 and 2 carefully track areas for development and fluency work is planned to secure understanding in these areas. The Fluency Bee programme is used in Year 1, whilst in Year 2 there is a big drive to encourage pupils to use Numbots. Pupils are enthused by weekly certificates recognising their progress and the attraction of moving through the levels.

In spring 2025, teachers from Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 attended a staff meeting to share White Rose Mathematics pre-teaching resources. The teachers discussed adaptations and possible implementation strategies to support the lowest 20% of children.

To help the lowest achieving 20%, we introduced the intervention package Diagnostic Assessment of Numeracy Skills (DANS) last academic year. This is a specific intervention scheme to target gaps in number and counting knowledge. Training was provided to teaching assistants to implement DANS. Further training was delivered in the spring term to up-skill more members of staff. Teachers identified pupils who may need DANS through the autumn assessments. Those pupils are then assessed again to pinpoint the specific learning gap before the DANS intervention begins. It is very practical as an intervention, so pupils feel engaged and can see how they are using mathematical skills.

One of our mathematics curriculum leaders led a training session to support teaching assistants with interventions. The meeting covered identifying children that need support in mathematics and the use of concrete, pictorial and abstract (CPA) methods. Time was given to explore resources that can be used to support teaching in class and small groups.

A standard number formation pattern is now in place across the school, from Nursery through to the end of Year 2, to ensure that all children can record their calculations and mathematical workings with the correct representation of numerals.

The Orca lead reviewed and adapted the mathematics curriculum according to individual pupil's needs. A hands-on, practical approach with lots of over learning was planned for children working at EYFS level. A mathematics area was set up for children to access during child-initiated learning; this included a shop role play area with a till and money and a physical shape display. Children accessing key stage one learning were regularly assessed on units of work before moving on, to ensure no gaps in their learning. Mathematics resources in Orca class were audited and additional resources provided to ensure staff have access to the concrete manipulatives they need to support children's learning. Orca class participated in Money Week, exploring coins and their values. CPD was provided to

staff as the need arose. For instance, the Assistant Headteacher supported the new Orca class teacher to adapt the foundation stage White Rose planning and provided guidance to support staff to explain and teach different strategies and concepts.

In spring 2025, the curriculum leader attended a cluster meeting with mathematics leaders from several other local schools to share good practice and develop understanding of leading the subject.

The curriculum leaders continue to audit resources to ensure the highest quality provision in all classes. In autumn and spring 2025, Year 1 purchased a full class set of foam ten frame boards, a class set of bead strings, large scale magnetic base ten to be used as a teaching resource, and new large teaching rekenreks. Year 1 have also developed a continuous provision outdoor area with mathematics resources including a large-scale bead string, 100 square, clock templates and other resources to practise and explore measure. This outdoor area is in daily use.

Mathematics Week took place in the first week of the summer term, to celebrate mathematics in the school and engage and enthuse all our pupils. The theme was 'marvellous mistakes and resilience'. A soft toy version of the White Rose Mathematics mascot, Tiny, was purchased for every classroom. The children engage with Tiny when he appears on the screen because they must help him to understand his marvellous mistake. A shape workshop was booked over two days, with a parent session after school. The lead governor for mathematics was invited to see the week in action.

End of year EYFSP results:

- Pupils achieving GLD – 60% (national average 68%)
- Disadvantaged pupils achieving GLD – 44% (national average 52%)
- Pupils with SEND achieving GLD – 21% (national average 20%)

End of year KS1 mathematics results:

- Pupils achieving the expected level and above – 75% (national average 70%)
- Disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected level and above – 70% (national average 56%)
- Pupils with SEND achieving the expected level and above – 50% (national average 32%)

## English

This is the third year that the school has followed its own bespoke systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programme. The SSP programme was sequenced and planned by the English curriculum leader. It begins with phase 1 in Nursery and continues until pupils begin to learn grammar and spelling rules in Year 2. The programme provides an overview of the knowledge and skills to be taught in each phase. This includes the essential skills of listening and phonological awareness that need to be embedded in phase 1. As the programme progresses, it details the letters and sounds to be taught within each phase, along with the high frequency and common exception words that pupils should be able to read and spell, based on the knowledge they have already secured. The programme

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provides daily lesson plans for each phase, following the best practice model – revisit and review, teach, practise, apply and assess. It provides pupils with regular opportunities to revisit previous learning, including the essential phonological awareness skills taught at phase 1. Whilst the programme is structured so that each phase is given a specific timeframe to be taught, there is flexibility for phases or parts of phases to be repeated in response to teacher assessment of pupils' progress. Daily plans and smartboard files are complete for each phase of learning, to ensure phonics lessons are presented consistently across the school. Activities and worksheets to support each lesson have been organised, to build a large bank of fully prepared lessons that can be used repeatedly. All year groups have access to displays, mnemonic cards, games and word cards for each phase, which all have the same appearance, including font and pictures prompts. Intervention leaders have their own set of resources, to ensure consistency when pupils attend interventions or keep up sessions. A key aim of our SSP programme is to reduce cognitive overload for pupils, to enable them to learn key phonic skills. Securing consistency in planning, presentation of lessons, displays, resources, activities and worksheets enables pupils to focus on the phonics first and foremost.

The school has employed several new members of staff this year. New members of staff are encouraged to read the phonics policy, which explains the rationale behind our phonics programme, gives an overview of teaching and learning within the phases and provides guidance to teachers and support staff on the delivery of phonics sessions, whether whole class or with small groups of pupils. New staff have lots of opportunities to observe outstanding phonics teaching across the year groups they provide support to. The English curriculum leader delivered training to support staff focused on pronunciations, terminology and phonics planning in the spring term.

At the beginning of the academic year, teachers in key stage one identified pupils at risk of falling behind in phonics. This included pupils in Year 1 that did not achieve at good level of development (GLD) at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and pupils in Year 2 that did not reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Phonological awareness assessments were completed with these pupils so teachers could identify gaps and incorporate targeted activities into their whole class phonics lessons. These pupils attended targeted intervention sessions led by highly skilled teaching assistants. Within each class, teachers used their daily formative assessments to identify pupils who needed additional practise to secure new learning. Pupils were provided with short, over-learning opportunities whenever possible.

End of year results for Year 1 in the phonics screening check:

- All pupils achieving threshold mark – 82% (national average 80%)
- Disadvantaged pupils achieving threshold mark – 69% (national average 68%)
- Pupils with SEND achieving the threshold mark – 74% (national average 44%)

End of year results for Year 2 in the phonics screening check:

- All pupils achieving threshold mark – 90% (national average 89%)
- Disadvantaged pupils achieving threshold mark – 92% (91% last year)
- Pupils with SEND achieving the threshold mark – 79% (85% last year)

At the start of the spring term, the English curriculum leader ran a training session for support staff on the importance of reading fluency. The session revised how to support pupils to become fluent readers when working with individual children, and how to develop reading fluency with a whole class across the curriculum. The training was also shared with teachers.

At the beginning of the academic year, teachers in key stage one identified pupils at risk of falling behind in reading. This included pupils in Year 1 that did not achieve at good level of development (GLD) at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and pupils in Year 2 that did not reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Targeted intervention sessions led by highly skilled teaching assistants supported these pupils to develop their decoding and comprehension skills, as well as reading fluency. Pupils at risk of falling behind, and those who do not read regularly at home, were identified for additional one to one reading each week, supported by the many volunteers that come into school. In the autumn term, the English curriculum leader trained the Year 2 teaching assistants to run the Project X Code reading intervention, which has been very successful in improving pupil's reading in previous years. Project X Code is linked closely to pupil's phonic knowledge, so supports phonics learning while encouraging reading comprehension. Sessions were timetabled and groups chosen following discussions in pupil progress meetings.

Staff meeting time was allocated for year group staff to review their current reading spine to ensure pupils are exposed to a wide range of high-quality literature during their time at our school. Staff decided on new texts to add to the spine, and removed others to ensure the spine is concise and enough time is dedicated to each text to enable pupils to become familiar with a range of genres and styles of writing. New texts were purchased, including a selection of traditional tales for each class and a range of ethnically diverse / LGBTQIA+ books, to ensure all our pupils and their families are represented in the spine. Spine books are read aloud in class a minimum of three times a week.

In the spring term, the English curriculum leader conducted pupil voice sessions with pupils in KS1. Feedback from pupils was very positive, with the majority of pupils sharing their enjoyment of reading. Comments included:

‘Reading keeps me calm. I pronounce words wrong but then I have another go. I like learning new words.’

‘I like having stories read to me. I use my phonics to help me sound-out words when I read, and I feel good when I get it right.’

‘There are so many books in school. Story books and fact books! My teacher reads to me a lot.’

Inspiring pupils to have a lifelong love of literature remains a priority for our school. Reading events are held frequently, including regular ‘stay and read’ sessions, when parents and carers are invited to come into their child's class and share a book. As part of our ‘advent reading tree’, 15 children received a book to take home as a prize. In November, a representative from Stevenage Library gave an assembly to KS1 pupils to promote the Winter Reading Challenge. Pupils

who took part were encouraged to bring their certificate into school to share with their class. World Book Day was celebrated in March, with pupils and staff encouraged to dress up as their favourite book character. Pupils took part in book themed activities, including a special Forest School session with a book theme. World Book Day tokens were given out early this year, to ensure the £1 books would still be available for our pupils to choose from. The English curriculum leader was very pleased to bump into a child from her class spending his token at a local bookshop during the February half term.

The spring term visit from the School Effectiveness Advisor (SEA) focused on reading. The day was a huge success, with every observation judged to be outstanding. The SEA's comments included:

'Everything is just so perfect! What the children get at this school is honestly just amazing.'

'You know we mentioned that Golden Thread? I can see it everywhere. The high expectations are so clear. Both examples of guided reading and of hearing readers I think were superb.'

'With all staff I've observed, the understanding of the children is so intuitive – the adults are so experienced with such high levels of skill. Strong relationships underpin everything throughout the school – children are so confident to speak; they're brimming with enthusiasm – they are such happy learners.'

'When you walk around the school, it's clear that everyone seizes every opportunity to enrich the learning, to engage in extended conversation, to have books accessible to the children that are relevant and engaging, to deepen learning. It's superb.'

She judged that the school was rated dark green (the highest level, equivalent to outstanding) throughout.

End of year EYFSP results:

- Pupils achieving GLD – 60% (national average 68%)
- Disadvantaged pupils achieving GLD – 44% (national average 52%)
- Pupils with SEND achieving GLD – 21% (national average 20%)

End of year KS1 reading results:

- Pupils achieving the expected level and above – 73% (national average 68%)
- Disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected level and above – 62% (national average 54%)
- Pupils with SEND achieving the expected level and above – 53% (national average 28%)

The Orca lead reviewed and adapted the English curriculum according to individual pupil's needs. A hands-on, practical approach with lots of over learning was planned for children working at EYFS level. Role play and story areas were set up to enable children to extend their literacy skills in child-initiated play. Orca class pupils participated in the termly Big Writes. CPD was provided to staff as the need arose. For instance, the Assistant Headteacher modelled and supported phonics teaching and interventions.

A review of the writing curriculum journey was conducted in the autumn term. Teachers worked together to update their year group journey to reflect the changes that have been made since it was last revised in 2021/22. The English curriculum leader signposted the Reception teachers to the new HfL writing planning for early years, so they could compare with their own curriculum. Teachers in KS1 looked at the HfL exemplar planning and considered incorporating into our curriculum.

The English curriculum leader explored new, exciting Big Write themes for this year to appeal to pupils and captivate their attention. In the autumn term, pupils were amazed to discover that a giant beanstalk had erupted in the playground. In Year 1, pupils wrote a caption while in Year 2, they wrote a set of instructions explaining how to steal from the giant at the top of the beanstalk. Teachers took the opportunity to plan some cross-curricular learning activities, including making beanstalks in design and technology and exploring the lifecycle of a bean plant in science. In the spring term, pupils took part in a 'potty potions' workshop delivered by Fab Science. Pupils were thrilled to see colour-changing potions, cloud potions and exploding potions. Following the workshop, pupils in Year 1 wrote a sentence to describe a magic hat, while pupils in Year 2 wrote magical themed stories. Cross-curricular learning activities included potion making and creating a potion recipe. In the summer term, the Big Write theme was 'the secret doors'. Small fairy doors were placed around the Year 1 and 2 playgrounds and classrooms, which the children loved searching for. They imagined what was behind the doors and wrote stories about the adventures that might take place behind them.

An English book look took place at the start of the spring term, during staff meeting time. The English curriculum leader produced a new book look pro forma based on a 'tick list' approach. The pro forma is broken down into four key areas – attainment, pitch and personalisation, marking and feedback and learner attitudes. The new pro forma enabled teachers to spend much of their time focused on looking at a range of pupil's work, rather than recording their findings. Teachers were paired across year groups, which gave them an opportunity to see the work of pupils they had taught previously. Strengths identified during the book look included evidence of adapted learning, clear progression, evidence of verbal feedback and pupils responding to feedback, a wide range of tasks, clear targets and evidence of time being given for pupils to address their next steps. Areas for development focused on consistent use of marking codes across the school and making sure teachers are using verbal feedback frequently, to reduce written feedback and the impact on staff workload.

End of year EYFSP results:

- Pupils achieving GLD – 60% (national average 68%)
- Disadvantaged pupils achieving GLD – 44% (national average 52%)

- Pupils with SEND achieving GLD – 21% (national average 20%)

End of year KS1 writing results:

- Pupils achieving the expected level and above – 65% (national average 60%)
- Disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected level and above – 54% (national average 44%)
- Pupils with SEND achieving the expected level and above – 44% (national average 19%)

The English curriculum leader and SENCo have worked closely to review the bespoke curriculum provided to the pupils in our specialist SEND provision, Orca class. Please read the review of Priority 2 for further information.

Towards the end of last academic year, the English curriculum leader reviewed the sections on the school website that were put together to help parents support their children with learning at home, and remote learning during the covid-19 pandemic. She met with year group leaders to discuss what could be removed from the website and how pages could be adapted to make them easier for parents to find the information they need. A plan was put together, but potential changes were delayed as the school launched a new website towards the end of the last academic year. In the autumn term, the English and mathematics curriculum leads worked together to navigate the new website and provided training to staff on how to make changes, upload documents and photographs. Redesigning the parent pages on the website will take place next academic year. In the meantime, parents have been invited to attend phonics workshops in Reception and Year 1. 'Stay and read' sessions continue to be well attended across all year groups.

### **Progression across the school curriculum**

Following the appointment of new members of teaching staff at the start of the academic year, the headteacher conducted a review of curriculum leadership across the school. Where curriculum leadership was transferred, new leaders were given dedicated time out of class to receive a comprehensive handover and training from the previous leader. Leadership changes occurred in music, science, computing, and art and design.

The art and design progression map was developed in the autumn term, prior to the SEA visit. Teachers reviewed the curriculum journey in all year groups and worked together to identify key learning objectives and progression from Nursery to the end of Year 2. In her report, the SEA commented:

'Today's visit evidenced the carefully planned art curriculum is implemented as leaders intended. Skilful teaching meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, and pupils apply their skills with increasing fluency and independence. This aligns with previous visits focussed on foundation subjects which explored the quality of education in physical education and music. Leaders state on the school's website, 'Enjoyment of the curriculum promotes achievement, confidence and strong behaviour for learning' and this was palpable across the school.'

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The completed progression maps are being used as an effective way of recording whole class assessment in foundation subjects. Teachers 'RAG' rate learning objectives as they are taught, collating an overview of pupils' learning across the year. The highlighted progression maps are then shared with the next teacher, so they can plan review and revisit sessions as required. In the spring and summer terms, progression maps were completed for PE and RE. Music will be a focus in the next academic year.

In the creation of the progression maps, teachers have separated learning into two categories – substantive (topic specific) and disciplinary (skill specific). Next steps will involve reviewing the key vocabulary for each subject to ensure prioritisation of skill specific vocabulary. The Voice 21 oracy project will be a valuable tool to help shape this work going forward.

Mrs Dalton and Mrs Clark have attended the EYFS Annual Programme sessions, led by Herts for Learning. The sessions have shared thinking and best practice in the EYFS, which Mrs Dalton is planning to disseminate in Year 1. Mrs Dalton has used the training to improve her ability to identify gaps in children's learning as they move into Year 1 and the power of play-based learning. Alongside this, Mrs Dalton is completing the NPQSEN over 18 months. A key message of the training is 'best practice for SEN is best practice for everyone', particularly as SEN provision is moving much more into mainstream. Year 1 timetabling for the next academic year will be continually reviewed and adapted, starting with very short inputs in English and mathematics in the first few weeks, with most learning consolidated and secured through play and small group work. Mrs Dalton is researching continuous provision and how this model can be implemented effectively.

Roleplay areas have always been consistently in use in EYFS. In Year 1, this year role play areas were constantly present and changed in line with topics. Some examples were cafes and home corners, vets and hospitals. Reading, writing and mathematics opportunities were present; for example, reading a menu, writing down food orders and paying for a meal in a café, or exploring appointments and time for visiting the vets. The roleplay areas have been very popular with the children, who have used them well to apply their learning in real life contexts. In Year 2, interactive displays of small world representations of Antarctica invited imaginative revisiting of geography and history learning. The children also thoroughly enjoyed playing knights and castles through small world resources and building their own castles in the playground, consolidating their learning from the trip to Mountfitchet Castle.

Staff regularly checked the condition of the resources in continuous provision. Some new resources were purchased to encourage imaginative play, including a castle construction kit for the Year 2 playground. The Year 2 playground was also enhanced with play panels and a socialising area. The Year 1 outdoor classroom area has been significantly developed with sand and water trays, a science investigation zone, mathematical resources including a large bead string, 100 square, measuring bones and counting ladybirds, and paints, chalks, pens and pencils for drawing, writing and mark-making. On the Forest School fencing beautiful nature spotting charts were installed to encourage wildlife identification. In EYFS, the outdoor areas were renovated, including the installation of a climbing wall outside Nursery and another for Reception, and resurfacing of the soft floor under the Nursery climbing frame. New line markings were also installed on the playgrounds. Storage for resources was constantly reviewed too, and children taught to tidy away toys as they finish with them.

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To help develop pupils' awareness of their local area, Year 1 walked to Sishes Wood and All Saints Church. Year 2 walked to St Nicholas Church. The visit to Sishes Wood helps pupils to achieve science and geography learning objectives. The church visits support pupils' learning in RE. Additionally, Year 2 learn about maps and use Google Earth and aerial pictures to observe the local area. Nursery and Reception children walked around the school, to develop their experience of the school grounds and the area around them. Pupils in key stage one were able to observe the local area and beyond when they travelled on coaches to Shepreth Wildlife Park, Mountfitchet Castle and Woburn Safari Park.

### **Further develop provision and the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND**

Therapeutic Thinking refresher training took place at the start of September for all staff who had previously been trained. Full training was provided for new members of staff in September 2024 and February 2025.

In the autumn term, the English curriculum leader trained the Year 2 teaching assistants to run the Project X Code reading intervention, which has been very successful in improving pupil's reading in previous years. Project X Code is linked closely to pupil's phonic knowledge, so supports phonics learning while encouraging reading comprehension. Sessions were timetabled and groups chosen following discussions in pupil progress meetings.

Teaching assistants received training on the DANS mathematics intervention. They were trained to spot gaps in children's learning more easily within class and are now equipped to deliver an intervention if necessary.

White Rose TA materials were shared with teachers in a staff meeting. It was agreed that these are potentially useful for pre-teaching, and primarily for identifying the key vocabulary needed for each step of learning. Teachers felt it was a resource that it is good to be aware of and dip into as needed.

Support staff in key stage one received training in the autumn term on phonological awareness to deliver interventions.

Teachers have been implementing the assess, plan, do, review (APDR) cycle with children who require adaptations to support their learning or personal and social wellbeing. This has involved working with parents to agree targets and discuss ways in which the child will be supported. Targets are carefully shaped to be realistic and achievable based on a solid understanding of the pupil. The APDR targets are shared with support staff in class so that they can also implement the agreed strategies effectively. These strategies may include adapted work, bespoke timetabling, personalised learning areas, regular brain-breaks, additional snacks, and visual aids to support behaviour management, self-regulation and celebration.

This year, all classes across the school have three members of staff. Some have an additional member of staff if one-to-one support for an individual pupil has been agreed. The additional staff member is invaluable in supporting all children to receive a high-quality education in a well-managed and inclusive environment.

Year 1 has been enhanced with the development of an outdoor continuous provision area, equipped with sand and water trays, mathematical, science, art and PSHE resources. The area is in daily use by children with SEND, supervised by an adult.

The Early Years Special Advisory Service have delivered two lots of training to staff members across Early Years to deliver the Attention Bucket intervention. This aims to develop children's attention span and their ability to engage with adult-led tasks. A Reception class teacher and a Year 1 teacher are attending the 2024-25 Annual Programme for Early Years Foundation Stage leaders and staff, delivered by Herts for Learning. Topics covered have included physical development, PSED in the early years, diverse pathways of development in early childhood, and the needs of EAL children in early years.

**Narrow gaps for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils**

Following pupil progress meetings in the autumn term, the disadvantaged leader supported teachers to identify pupils who would benefit from adapted provision and / or targeted interventions. These focused in the first instance on phonics and reading, in line with our intent for every pupil to leave our school as a confident reader. Training needs were identified for new support staff. The English curriculum leader delivered reading intervention training to Year 2 teaching assistants, so they could implement interventions with the pupils in their class who were identified for support. The English curriculum leader also delivered phonics training to support staff in the spring term. Carefully planned distribution of staff has enabled a member of support staff to provide interventions to disadvantaged pupils full time in Year 1. In Year 2, a member of support staff provides phonics intervention to pupils from all Year 2 classes three afternoons a week. Further information relating to the provision and interventions in place for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils can be found in the school's Pupil Premium Strategy 2024-2025.

## Priority 2

**Continue to ensure that the well-being needs of our children are met to the highest degree by further enhancing the strong provision for our pupils with SEND and advancing and prioritising well-being throughout the school community.**

**Context:**

As an infants' school and early years setting, we have a responsibility to ensure that well-being is a key focus for our pupils, so they start their educational careers with a secure understanding of the terminology associated with well-being, as well as an ability to identify the physiological and emotional impact of well-being and the responsibility of ourselves and those around us to safeguard our well-being. We recognise the significance of this in light of data published by the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England (shared by Therapeutic Thinking), that indicates a significant rise in children and young people's mental health difficulties as they progress through school. The data suggests the needs of children who internalise their feelings and struggles at a young age are often unrecognised, meaning needs are unmet and remain relevant at transition into adult life.

We plan an annual Well-Being Week for pupils, during which we plan a range of activities designed to teach pupils about fundamental aspects of well-being, as well as opportunities for them to recognise and address their own well-being needs using therapeutically healthy approaches, such as mindfulness. In addition to this, all classes are equipped with quiet rooms and/or safe spaces that pupils can utilise if they need some time away from the main classroom. Therapeutic Thinking principles and approaches to behaviour and well-being management are embedded throughout the school, and all staff receive regular refresher training to ensure that they have a secure understanding of how to create a therapeutically healthy learning environment.

We are aware that having learning disabilities and/or neurodiversity are considered risk factors for poor mental health and well-being. Our school has a well-established Speech and Language Base, as well as a specialist provision classroom, Orca Class, both of which meet the needs of our pupils with complex speech, language and communication difficulties, who account for 83.9% of our overall SEND population. Our Speech and Language Base is equipped for ten pupils, but only one of these spaces is currently filled.

Orca Class is utilised as a specialist provision for pupils who are unable to access the mainstream classroom environment. In previous years, these pupils' needs were often characterised by dangerous and dysregulated behaviours. This focus is shifting. As a direct result of the lack of places available in special schools across Hertfordshire, we are seeing that pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties, including toileting issues and non-verbal communication, are now being placed in our school. The extremely complex needs of these pupils will be met in Orca Class, meaning that this provision must evolve to meet the changing need of its cohort.

**Development:**

- The well-being of our most vulnerable pupils will be supported and safeguarded through quality first teaching and specialist provision (where appropriate).
- Specialist provision arrangements within school will be adapted to meet the changing needs of our pupils with the most complex SEND.
- Staff will be supported to adapt their teaching practices to meet the changing needs of the SEND cohort.
- Families will be supported to access a wide range of external well-being and SEND support as part of the local offer.

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High quality specialist provision					
Target	Input, activities and tasks	Timescale	Cost / resources	Monitoring	Success Criteria
New Speech and Language Base provision is set up to meet pupil needs.	Work with therapists to provide an attractive therapeutic environment that serves speech and language needs in North Hertfordshire to increase numbers.  Invite therapists from across the county to see our provision.	Autumn 2	Time  Resources	Headteacher  SENCo	The profile of the Speech and Language Base is raised and a greater range of therapists are aware of the benefits of the provision.  New families are incentivised to apply for places for their pupils who meet criteria.
	School to fund speech and language assessments of intake pupils to ensure needs are identified. Strategies to meet these needs are planned for and implemented effectively in a timely manner.	Autumn 2	Assessment costs	Headteacher  SENCo	Pupils with severe speech and language needs are identified at the earliest possible stage, with a view to securing places for them in our Speech and Language Base.
	New speech and language intervention in Reception – Targeted Language Groups.	Autumn 2 – ongoing	Time	SENCo  Reception leader	By trialling this pilot intervention overseen and supported by the SALT service, school staff will regularly meet with the SALT service, who may be able to support the early identification of needs that could be met through the Speech and Language Base.

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<p>Provision in Orca class to be reviewed so as to ensure best practice.</p>	<p>Assistant headteacher to work closely with SENCo to lead Orca class. Regular staff meetings to be planned with the Orca class team.</p> <p>Member of staff from Nursery to come up with the new Orca pupils, to aid smooth transition.</p> <p>Orca class environment to be remodelled to create a continuous provision with defined practical learning and play areas. Annual planning rewritten following a topic framework for all Orca pupils. Timetable to be reviewed to incorporate curriculum and EHCP interventions.</p> <p>Curriculum leaders to be released to do some teaching of their subject area in Orca class, providing an opportunity to reflect on barriers to learning and effective support for pupils with SEND in their subject.</p> <p>Daily sensory circuits introduced for all Orca pupils.</p> <p>Further training on specific interventions to be provided to Orca class staff, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCERTS</li> <li>• Autism attention bucket</li> <li>• Intensive interaction</li> <li>• Social stories</li> <li>• Blanks questioning</li> <li>• Phonological awareness</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Time Resources</p>	<p>Orca class teacher SENCo Orca class staff Headteacher T Pullin</p>	<p>Both national curriculum lessons and specialist interventions will be planned, resourced and adapted for pupils in Orca class by highly skilled staff members.</p> <p>Orca class staff will receive additional support through increased presence of senior staff members and will have the opportunity to improve their own practice, supported by new plans and resources.</p> <p>Orca class pupils will make greater progress by accessing a range of play and learning experiences that are specifically designed to meet their needs.</p> <p>Orca class pupils will become more engaged in their learning and play experiences as a result of having their sensory needs met.</p> <p>Behaviour in Orca class will improve as a result of pupils' increased engagement in learning.</p>
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Positive mental health and well-being is promoted for staff and pupils.	Nature and Nurture Week for the pupils to include a yoga workshop, mindfulness activities and promotion of a good understanding of healthy choices.	Autumn 1	Time	Headteacher Teachers	<p>Pupils across the school will have the opportunity to learn about the importance of meeting their own well-being needs through therapeutic practices.</p> <p>Pupils will develop a secure understanding of their own well-being, leading to a decrease in mental health difficulties experienced by pupils across the school.</p>
	Mental Health lead training to be undertaken.	Spring 1	Time	SENCo	<p>The well-being of staff and pupils will be monitored by a named professional.</p>
	Staff well-being day.	Autumn 2	Time	Headteacher	<p>Staff and pupils will feel that their mental health needs are met by the school, thus increasing engagement with school activities as well as positive interactions with peers.</p> <p>Staff will feel supported to manage their mental health and well-being needs.</p>
<b>Behaviour management and Therapeutic Thinking approach</b>					
Pupils are supported to manage their emotions, develop their emotional	A new behaviour lead will be appointed and will work with the assistant head to develop a behaviour curriculum informed by Therapeutic Thinking.	Autumn 1	Time	Headteacher	The development of a Behaviour Curriculum is in line

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literacy, and adjust their behaviour to suit different contexts.					with the Therapeutic Thinking approach.  Staff, pupils and parents will benefit from a clearly defined Behaviour Curriculum alongside the Behaviour Policy.
	Two additional members of staff will undertake Therapeutic Thinking Train the Trainer training.	Autumn Term	Time Training	Headteacher	With more trainers distributed throughout the school, a greater range of staff will have access to the highest level of support and professional development through their colleagues.
	Regular twilight training on Dynamis and Therapeutic Thinking for all staff members working with pupils.	Ongoing	Time  Additional pay for support staff	Headteacher  SENCo	The Therapeutic Thinking approach will be strengthened and delivered more consistently throughout the school.  Regular refresher training will empower all staff to recognise that they have the skills and knowledge to embed the recommended approaches.
	School to investigate delivery of Therapeutic Thinking for Parents training.	Spring 1	Time	Headteacher  SENCo	Families will feel supported to therapeutically manage their child's behaviour, thus

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	Investigate sharing behaviour advice through our school website.	Spring 1	Time	SENCo	<p>fortifying their relationships with the school</p> <p>Pupils will benefit from a consistent approach between home and school, leading to an increase in valued behaviours.</p>
	Several members of staff will receive SCERTS (social communication, emotional regulation, transactional support) training.	Autumn 2	<p>Time</p> <p>Additional pay for support staff</p>	<p>Headteacher</p> <p>SENCo</p>	A range of staff will develop their skills to be able to meet the changing communication needs of pupils across the school.
	School website updated with a SEN information page.	Autumn 2	Time	SENCo	<p>Families will feel supported to reach out to external agencies for support, easing the pressure on school-based support and helping families to feel empowered.</p> <p>Pupils will be more likely to receive tailored support in the home environment as parents will have access to a greater range of resources.</p>
	Restorative Posters to be distributed throughout school to support the repairing of relationships between peers following anti-social incidents.	Autumn 1 – ongoing	None	<p>SENCo</p> <p>Teachers</p>	<p>Pupils’ understanding of the restorative process will improve.</p> <p>The well-being needs of all parties to anti-social incidents will be prioritised.</p>

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					Pupils will feel empowered to address their own well-being needs following anti-social incidents.
All staff working with pupils are involved in working collaboratively to identify and meet needs as they arise.	Time for teachers and TAs to work together to conduct therapeutic tree analyses, circles of inclusion, anxiety analyses, the early prognosis tool, therapeutic plans, risk calculators and conscious/subconscious behaviour assessments together.	Ongoing	Time	Headteacher  Assistant Headteachers	Detrimental behaviours will be identified and understood at the earliest possible opportunity, allowing for reasonable adjustments to be made to decrease the risk of behaviours deteriorating. This will have a positive impact on the well-being of all staff and pupils.
	Use of paired 1:1 support to be put in place for pupils with the highest levels of challenging behaviour.	Autumn 1 – ongoing	None	Headteacher	1:1 support staff will feel their well-being is safeguarded by being able to share a challenging role with colleagues, and have breaks from the intensity of this role.  Well-being of pupils will be enhanced through increased opportunities to interact with a range of staff members throughout the day.
	Once monthly twilight paid for all 1:1 support staff to meet for support, advice and an opportunity to discuss concerns with the SENCo and Headteacher.	Ongoing	Additional pay for support staff	Headteacher	All staff will have regular opportunities to share their concerns and to seek support and advice in their roles.

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	Significant CPD on autism, including attention autism bucket, comic strips and social stories training for all TAs working with pupils with special needs.	Ongoing	Time	Headteacher SENCo	All staff will have frequent opportunities to develop their practice in order to more effectively meet the needs of the pupils they support.
	SENCo to deliver training in school on the trauma and attachment aware toolkit.	Spring 1	Time	Headteacher SENCo	
New assistant head is equipped to have a strong understanding of SEN provision in our school.	Assistant head to undertake NPQ SEN training.	Ongoing	Release time for face-to-face events	T Dalton	SENCo will be supported in her role by being able to share key tasks with another senior member of staff.
	Assistant head to gain an overview of SEND across the school by working closely with SENCo to review the whole school context, create a provision map of SEND support and collaborate on the EHCP application process.	Ongoing	Time	SENCo T Dalton	The profile of SEND will be raised by a senior member of staff undertaking this additional qualification.

**End of year review:**

**High quality specialist provision**

Speech and Language Base provision

A new project to support pupils identified as having gaps in their receptive comprehension and expressive language has started, including pupils from Reception and Year 1. A member of Year 1 staff received the training to implement the interventions. The project is designed by the NHS Speech and Language Service. An NHS therapist provided the training so the intervention could be delivered successfully.

Speech and language therapists have visited pupils on their registers in school weekly.

School staff have met with families of children with speech difficulties to promote our speech and language base offer.

Orca class

At the start of the year, the Assistant Headteacher took over the role of Orca class teacher, working in collaboration with the SENCo to provide strong leadership. The learning environment was remodelled into a structured continuous provision, with revised annual planning and a more flexible timetable that supported both engagement and targeted intervention. Regular team meetings and transition support from Nursery staff promoted consistency and ensured a smoother start for new pupils. Sensory circuits were introduced to prepare pupils for their learning each day. Staff were given the opportunity to access

targeted CPD on a range of evidence-based strategies, including SCERTS, autism attention bucket, intensive interaction, social stories, blanks questioning and phonological awareness. In the spring term, a part-time teacher was transferred into Orca class to lead teaching and planning, with the Assistant Headteacher maintaining an overview. With her experience of the early years curriculum, the teacher was able to finetune the curriculum for the younger pupils and those with the most diverse needs, including non-verbal pupils. Throughout the year, the Orca pupils have accessed workshops, trips and visits with their year group peers, often with support from their parents. In the summer term, an Open Evening took place for the new Orca pupils and their parents. A Sports Afternoon was organised specifically for the Orca pupils and a Leavers' Celebration was arranged for the Year 2 Orca pupils. The Orca class teacher spent time at two specialist provision schools – Greenside and Woolgrove – to build her knowledge of supporting pupils with SEND. The Orca class teacher, Assistant Headteacher and SENCo met to discuss planning for the next academic year. Transition for new pupils and staffing for the next academic year were carefully considered, to continue to build on the successes seen this year.

### Mental health

Nature and Nurture Week took place in October, just before the half-term holiday. The week included yoga workshops for all year groups run by Happy Little Yogi, planting autumn flowers and spring bulbs all around the school and learning about ways to stay healthy. All children reflected on how they need to eat healthy foods, do lots of exercise, get plenty of sleep and keep clean. Nursery children learnt about healthy eating and fruits and vegetables and were delighted to play in a green-grocer role-play area. Reception children loved tasting fruits and vegetables and learning about how exercise affects their bodies. They loved playing with the dolls and preparing them for bed. They pretended to bath the dolls and clean their teeth, then wrapped them up in a blanket. The children either sang a lullaby to their doll or read them a bedtime story and finished off by giving their toy a goodnight kiss. In Year 1, the children enjoyed a full day of sports and mindfulness activities including making stress balls, doing mindful colouring, dancing, riding bikes and playing parachute games and were delighted to make fruit kebab snacks. They used an invisible UV lotion on their hands to see how dirt and germs can be transferred to things that you touch. They were amazed to see their fingerprints on the tables become visible under the UV light. In Year 2, the children discussed how the UV gel showed them areas they were missing when washing their hands and the importance of washing hands very carefully. The Year 2 children prepared healthy salads following kitchen safety and hygiene rules. They learnt about mindfulness techniques such as mindful breathing. In the spring term, children were able to appreciate the beauty of the flowering bulbs that they planted in Nature and Nurture Week.

The SENCo completed Mental Health lead training. This equipped her to recognise when staff might need support, provide support and signpost to other services. The Assistant Headteacher attended a session led by Mind in Mid Herts about setting up Peer Supporters for mental health. The Assistant Headteacher and Headteacher are in discussions as to the best way to implement this in school.

Staff expressed their appreciation of the occasional day in the autumn term as a well-being day. They valued the time for themselves at a particularly busy time of year, after ensuring their new classes had all transitioned well into their year groups. It was timed to provide staff and pupils with a long weekend. Pupils and staff returned refreshed, happy and ready for the excitement of the weeks leading up to Christmas. Staff meeting time is often allocated to update pupil records such as targets, APDRs and other tasks such as subject leadership responsibilities, to reduced teacher workload at busy times during the year.

### **Behaviour management and Therapeutic Thinking approach**

Regular twilight training on Dynamis and Therapeutic Thinking has taken place. One of the Assistant Headteachers completed the full safeguarding course run for Herts for Learning and is now a deputy safeguarding lead, taking the safeguarding team up to four members. Staff were trained to use CPOMS in March 2025. All staff now use CPOMS to record behaviour incidents, parent meetings, records of concern, safeguarding concerns and observations of mental health and wellbeing. The system has streamlined the recording of incidents and made it much easier for the safeguarding team and other relevant members of staff to take relevant action and stay up to date.

For pupils with the highest levels of challenging behaviour, paired 1:1 support is in place. This is helping to preserve the well-being of the pupils and the staff. Pupils have benefitted from the opportunity to interact with a range of adults, and the adults are able to share a challenging role with a colleague.

As mentioned above, staff meeting time is regularly allocated to allowing staff time to review APDRs or behaviour assessments. Additionally, support staff are invited to after school inset sessions each half term to receive relevant training and have time to meet with their team to plan for the class needs.

The SEND page on the school website is updated weekly to signpost parents to parenting courses and workshops.

SCERTS training was delivered for all staff working with children who have this provision identified as a need.

Restorative posters are in place throughout the school and are in regular use to support pupils to carry out a consequence for a behaviour choice.

The new assistant head is completing NPQ SEN training with Camden Learning and UCL. She is also working closely with the SENCo to gain an understanding of SEND across the school, to follow an EHCP application process, and to understand the creation of a provision map of SEND support in school. She has also started to attend the INCo coffee mornings, meeting with parents of pupils with SEND.

The Headteacher and Assistant Heads attended Positive Regard training in the summer term. The INCO team also attended training. This approach combines elements of the Therapeutic Thinking programme with practical strategies for day-to-day interactions with children and creating a whole school culture of inclusion and kindness. Positive Regard will be a major strand of the school improvement plan for 2025/26. This will include whole staff training, curriculum development and parental engagement. Training on trauma and attachment disorders will be delivered to underpin Positive Regard.

# Priority 3

**To further secure outstanding leadership and management through supporting those responsible for governance to securely and consistently understand their role and carry it out effectively.**

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**Context:** As a school we are very proud of the close, respectful and collaborative relationship we have with our governing body. We value greatly the strategic guidance, critical support and oversight they provide. Over the summer, the school governing body has experienced some changes in membership. The Chair of Governors stepped down in July 2024 after several years of dedicated service both in the role and, prior to that, as part of the school staff. The role is now held by two Co-Chairs, both of whom were already members of the governing body. The governing body and the staff are keen that the wealth of experience of the outgoing Chair should be passed on through effective handover. There is a new Vice Chair and four new governors, therefore it is necessary to run a comprehensive induction programme. The governing body has nine members. The governors share out areas of responsibility. Some of these are curriculum areas, but the lead governor for health and safety has also changed. Curriculum leaders are keen to meet with their link governors and inform them of developments in their subject areas and plans for this year. The outgoing health and safety lead governor will also support a high-quality handover of this key area of responsibility. Whilst these changes are to be embedded, we are keen to ensure that the normal business of school governance should also continue seamlessly.

- Development:**
- Full and effective handover of Chair to Co-Chairs ensures smooth leadership.
  - Comprehensive induction of new governors.
  - A strong, collaborative relationship between staff and governors is maintained ensuring that pupils at the school continue to receive an exceptional education.
  - Health and safety at the school continues to be managed with the utmost regard for the wellbeing of the whole community and compliance with regulations.

Target	Input, activities and tasks	Timescale	Cost / resources	Monitoring	Success Criteria
Ensure that changes in the governing body are well-managed and supported so that governors are highly skilled, able to lead the school and feel valued in their role.	Full handover for the two new Co-Chairs and the new Vice Chair.	Autumn 1 and 2	Meeting space	Headteacher	Seamless strong leadership of the governing body ensures accountability processes are followed.  Headteacher is well-supported in her role.
	Full induction for the four new governors, including a parent governor, two associate governors and a co-opted governor.	Autumn 1 and 2	Induction pack	Headteacher	New governors are equipped to contribute effectively to school development.

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			Access to Governor Hub		<p>New governors have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>School benefits from sound guidance.</p> <p>Headteacher is well-supported in her role.</p>
	Outgoing Health and Safety (H&S) lead to meet with the governor taking over this role and to come in to school to support during the first governor H&S audit.	Autumn 1 and 2	<p>Meeting space</p> <p>Office staff time</p>	Headteacher	<p>School premises are safe, secure, well maintained and compliant with regulations.</p> <p>Safety routines are well established and run smoothly (for example, fire drills – all staff and pupils know exactly what to do).</p> <p>School accountability for the health and safety of all members of its community is assured.</p>
	A comprehensive training programme will be put in place, including a three-hour twilight for governors as well as annual training sessions.	Ongoing through the year	<p>Use of school building</p> <p>Teaching staff present</p> <p>Hospitality</p>	Headteacher	<p>All governors are well-informed of latest developments in education and therefore equipped to carry out their role.</p> <p>School benefits from sound guidance.</p>

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	Autumn twilight meeting for governors with opportunities to meet leaders for mathematics, Forest School, safeguarding and SEND.	Autumn 2	Meeting space  Time of staff presenting  Hospitality	Headteacher	All governors are well-informed of developments within the school curriculum and educational offer. Governors offer insights. A spirit of co-stewardship is fostered.
	Governors taking on new areas of responsibility meet with curriculum or area leaders.  Curriculum and area leaders share annual reports with governors.	Spring	Staff and governor time  Meeting spaces in school	Headteacher	All governors are well-informed of developments within the school curriculum and educational offer. Governors offer insights. A spirit of co-stewardship is fostered.
	Governors meet with staff at the beginning and end of the school year to discuss school development, reflect on achievements and identify next steps.	Autumn 1  Summer 2	Hospitality  Additional time paid	Headteacher	A spirit of co-stewardship for the ongoing development of the school prevails, with staff and governors bringing their various viewpoints to the discussion, ensuring a full review of the year and consultation of all parties on areas for development.
	Governors are offered increased opportunities to visit the school, meet with link staff members and engage with pupils.	Ongoing through the year	Governor time	Headteacher	Governors see the daily life of the school and are able to interact with pupils.

**End of year review:**

In the autumn term, a full handover took place between the outgoing Chair of Governors and the two new Co-Chairs and the new Vice Chair. Four new governors received a full induction programme. The outgoing Health and Safety lead supported the new governor who took over the role and came into school to support during the first health and safety audit in the autumn term.

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Governors attended a three-hour twilight session in the spring term, focused on 'knowing your school and Ofsted'. Additionally, governors were encouraged to access training on TES Develop and Governor Hub, particularly in safeguarding, child protection and the Prevent Duty.

In the autumn term, curriculum leaders presented governors with updates in mathematics, Forest School, safeguarding and SEND.

In the spring term, curriculum leaders met with their link governor to share a report of updates and successes in their subject this year.

Regular termly meetings have taken place between link governors and leaders of key curriculum areas, including English, mathematics, disadvantaged pupils and SEND.

Governors attended the end of year review and forward planning meeting at the end of the summer term.