

Ashbourne Primary School Golden Threads

At Ashbourne Primary, we believe education should shape both what children learn and who they become. We know that strong outcomes come from more than subject content alone; pupils need the language and literacy to access learning, the resilience and regulation to engage with challenge, and the confidence that comes from feeling they belong. These priorities reflect our understanding of our pupils, our community and the barriers some children face when starting school or moving through it. Our curriculum is therefore deliberately designed to build strong, secure knowledge while also developing confident and aspirational pupils who are well prepared for the next stage of education and for life beyond school.

To address this, we have identified **Three Golden Threads** that run through our entire curriculum:

- **Language and Literacy**
- **Resilience and Regulation**
- **Belonging and Becoming**

These threads reflect what our pupils need most to succeed.

Language and literacy are prioritised because they unlock learning across all subjects and help close gaps.

Resilience and regulation are essential so pupils can manage emotions, focus, persevere and learn effectively.

Belonging and becoming matter because children are more likely to develop confidence, aspiration and positive attitudes to learning when they feel safe, included and valued.

The golden threads guide curriculum design, teaching approaches and wider opportunities from Nursery to Year 6. They ensure strong foundations, reduce barriers to learning and prepare our pupils for the next stage of education and life beyond school.



Understanding the Barriers to Learning at Ashbourne Primary

We have identified a number of key barriers that can limit pupils' ability to engage fully with learning if they are not deliberately addressed through curriculum design and school culture. Identifying our children's barriers, helps us to understand what our pupils need in order to thrive, and they directly inform the Golden Threads that underpin our curriculum.

The barriers identified for our pupils include:

- Anxiety and low confidence
- Difficulties with self-regulation and emotional control
- Reduced resilience and perseverance
- Variability in school readiness and early foundations

- Low motivation and attitudes to learning
- Limited opportunities for imagination and expressive language
- Challenges linked to online safety and age-appropriate media use
- The impact of devices on pupil's attention, language and social skills
- Understanding and respecting diversity, including wider groups beyond pupils' immediate experience
- Low aspirations and limited exposure to wider opportunities

Recognising these barriers has been essential in shaping a curriculum that does more than deliver subject content. Our Golden Threads ensure that language development, emotional regulation and a strong sense of belonging are explicitly taught, revisited and strengthened over time, enabling all pupils to access learning, engage positively and develop confidence in who they are and who they can become.

Language and Literacy

Resilience and Regulation

Belonging and Becoming

Intent

At Ashbourne Primary, we place language and literacy at the heart of learning. We want all pupils, regardless of starting point, to develop the language, reading and literacy skills needed to access the curriculum, make sense of new knowledge and communicate their thinking clearly and confidently. We believe strong language underpins achievement, independence and equity across all subjects.

Intent

We want all pupils at Ashbourne Primary to develop the emotional, physical and cognitive regulation needed to engage positively with learning and with others. We aim to build resilient learners who can manage their feelings, persevere through challenge and approach learning with confidence and self-belief.

Intent

At Ashbourne Primary, we want every child to feel that they belong and are valued. We aim to help pupils develop a strong sense of identity, respect for others and an understanding of the diverse world around them. Through this, pupils are encouraged to imagine future possibilities, develop aspirations and believe in what they can become.

Implementation

Language and literacy are deliberately embedded across the curriculum rather than confined to English lessons.

This includes:

- A text-rich curriculum across subjects to build vocabulary, background knowledge and understanding
- High-quality reading and phonics and early to secure fluency and confidence
- Explicit teaching of oracy, including structured talk, sentence stems, partner talk, T4W and opportunities to explain thinking

Implementation

Resilience and regulation are treated as core curriculum conditions, not add-ons. This is achieved through:

- Explicit teaching of emotional regulation and self-management strategies through Zones of Regulation
- A trauma-informed approach and strong safeguarding culture
- Consistent routines and expectations that support focus, attention and independence
- Curriculum design that values effort and progress
- OPAL play to support wellbeing, resilience and engagement

Implementation

Belonging and becoming are woven through curriculum content, school culture and wider opportunities. This includes:

- A curriculum that reflects diversity, representation and different lived experiences
- Teaching respect, kindness and shared values through daily practice and assemblies
- Inclusive adaptations and support so all pupils can access learning
- Wider experiences, visits and visitors that broaden horizons and raise aspirations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive, tiered vocabulary taught and revisited across all foundation subjects • Consistent expectations for speaking, listening, reading and writing in every subject • Teaching pupils how to communicate effectively and critically in a digital world • Teachers explicitly plan for language and literacy development alongside subject content, ensuring pupils are supported to articulate, retain and apply what they learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive teaching and inclusive practices that remove barriers for SEND and disadvantaged pupils • Wellbeing is built into daily practice, ensuring pupils are ready to learn and supported to succeed. • Prioritising our pastoral offer and employing full time child and family wellbeing leader and part time Inclusion Mentor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for pupils to talk about who they are, what they value and what they hope for <p>Children are supported to feel safe and valued first, so they are then able to develop confidence, ambition and high aspirations.</p>
<p>Impact Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can access learning more independently across all subjects • Use ambitious vocabulary appropriately and confidently • Explain their thinking clearly, both orally and in writing • Read fluently and with understanding, using reading to learn • Retain knowledge over time and make meaningful links between subjects <p>As a result, gaps narrow, confidence grows and learning becomes more secure and transferable.</p>	<p>Impact Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show improved focus, attention and learning stamina • Manage emotions and transitions more successfully • Demonstrate perseverance and resilience when faced with challenge • Engage positively in learning and play • Feel safe, supported and ready to learn <p>This creates calm, purposeful classrooms and supports sustained academic and personal growth.</p>	<p>Impact Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel safe, included and valued within the school community • Show respect and kindness towards others • Develop confidence in who they are and pride in their identity • Understand the world beyond their immediate experience • Begin to form aspirations and positive attitudes towards their future <p>This supports both personal development and long-term engagement with learning.</p>
<p>Curriculum Review Alignment (Generation Alpha) In response to the 2025 curriculum review and the needs of Generation Alpha, this thread reflects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A stronger emphasis on oracy, applied grammar and language in use • Reading and vocabulary as gateways to all subjects 	<p>Curriculum Review Alignment (Generation Alpha) This thread responds directly to the review’s emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong early foundations in EYFS and KS1 • Removing barriers to progress for SEND and disadvantaged pupils • Engagement, confidence and wellbeing alongside attainment 	<p>Curriculum Review Alignment (Generation Alpha) This thread aligns strongly with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increased focus on diversity and representation • Statutory Citizenship, including rights, democracy, media literacy and climate education • Preparing pupils for life in a diverse, digital and global society

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved digital and media literacy, including evaluating information and AI-generated content• Clearer progression in literacy skills from EYFS to KS2 <p>This ensures pupils are prepared to communicate, think critically and navigate a rapidly changing information landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High expectations combined with adaptive teaching <p>For Generation Alpha, this ensures pupils are equipped to manage learning, relationships and wellbeing in an increasingly complex and fast-paced world.</p>	<p>For Generation Alpha, this ensures pupils grow up with a strong sense of belonging, ethical awareness and optimism about their future.</p>
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