

CURRICULUM POLICY

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

Policy reviewed by: Morven MacDonald

Policy approved by: Robert Berry – Director of Operations

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Reviewer's Signature: 

Approver's Signature: 

Please note: 'School' refers to Chatsworth Schools; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers. This is a whole school policy, which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Introduction

The school aims to:

- ensure that pupils develop the essential literacy and numeracy skills;
- provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum;
- foster pupils' creativity
- provide pupils with the learning skills and attitudes to empower them in every area of life;
- inspire pupils to a commitment to learning which will last a lifetime;

The school's curriculum follows the National Curriculum but aims to extend beyond this through outstanding extra curriculum learning opportunities. The curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of our pupils to enable them to excel both within the school and within the wider society.

Values

At The Village Prep School, we believe that every child should experience an education that is individual to them. It is the responsibility of every member of staff to ensure that the learning is tailored to the needs of each child and that they are nurtured to achieve in every area of school life. We believe that that children will flourish when they enjoy learning and given the skills to take ownership over their learning. Teachers are committed to providing exceptional teaching and model high standards in every area of school life.

Objectives

The aim of our curriculum is to provide meaningful learning opportunities that excite children. We know that when children are challenged and enthused by their learning, they will thrive and this determines every decision regarding the curriculum. As a result of exceptional teaching and learning girls flourish and achieve fantastic results but this is simply a by-product. Our curriculum focuses on the process of learning rather than the outcome of the learning. As a result, we provide a curriculum which:

- Nurtures a love of learning
- Develops creative thinking skills
- Is broad and encourages academic, cultural, aesthetic and creative interests
- Responds in the moment to children's needs and interests/
- Uses technology to enhance learning
- Ensures that children are able to take ownership over their learning
- Provides opportunities for collaboration
- Ensures that pupils develop an understanding of Fundamental British Values
- Encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics stated in the 2010 Equality Act (i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

The curriculum plans provide for experiences which cover linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education in accordance

with section 8 of the Education Act 1996. In all year groups pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.

Linguistic: This area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. All pupils study English as a First or Second Language as appropriate to their situation. Pupils may have access to French and Latin, and some Spanish in their journey through the school. In addition, they may study their own mother tongue. Communication skills, both verbal and written, are an inherent competency developed in all courses.

Mathematical: This area helps pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space, and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics are being developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion in mathematics, science, the Humanities and through application of mathematical skills in other areas such as PE and the Arts.

Scientific: This area is concerned with increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings.

Technical: This area seeks to develop, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products; and evaluating processes and products. Many of these skills are essential competencies taught and experienced through Art.

Human and Social: This area is concerned with people and their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. These key skills and experiences are provided for in History, Geography, Religious Studies and various sections of the Science curriculum. PSHEE and assemblies add to the opportunities for pupils to experience this aspect of learning.

Physical: This area aims to develop the pupils' physical control and co-ordination, as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses, and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. Pupils should also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health. All pupils have time in the week for formal PE lessons. Aspects of health and fitness also form part of the science curriculum.

Aesthetic and Creative: This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. There are aesthetic and creative aspects in all subjects, but some make a particularly strong contribution, including Art, Computing, Music, Drama and the study of literature, because they call for personal, imaginative, and often practical, responses. Pupils have access to all these areas of endeavour both within the main curriculum and as extracurricular activities.

Through all these activities and experiences all pupils, irrespective of their SEND needs,

whether they have an EHC plan or are using English as an additional language, will acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills in all phases of their education at TVPS.

PSHEE and Careers guidance (i.e. seeking a suitable secondary school) are an integral part of the pupils' learning experiences. These are delivered both as named timetable subjects but also through form time, assemblies and visiting speakers. The PSHEE programme (see separate policy) reflects the school's aim and ethos, encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. Careers education is for pupils looking for secondary education, which is accurate, up-to-date and is presented in an impartial manner, and enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of school choices, and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.

At TVPS we incorporate the Fundamental British Values within our curriculum: they form part of our expectations of conduct and behaviour and the principles of democracy are exhibited in the election of the School Councillors, as well as the selection of the school's Head Girl. As a school, we also place these in the context of other democratic societies, whilst acknowledging the diversity of political, cultural and religious situations that make up our pupils' global experience. Indeed, the diversity of our pupils is seen as one of our greatest strengths.

To achieve this:

1. The curriculum is about the development of the whole person. Opportunities for learners to develop values and attitudes are as important as the development of skills and factual knowledge, so that learners can:
 - show and know success in a variety of ways;
 - develop and maintain positive self-esteem;
 - follow healthy and safe lifestyles;
 - show courtesy, consideration and good humour to others;
 - be constructive, critical members of a global society;
 - articulate their own opinions and needs.
2. All learners are given equality of opportunity in learning by providing a curriculum that meets the needs of every learner in a relevant, flexible and responsive way, so that learners can:
 - take an active part in their own learning in school and want to be lifelong learners;
 - be engaged in making decisions about their own learning;
 - be responsible, honest, caring and confident;
 - use technology effectively, efficiently and ethically as a tool for finding, thinking, making and doing.
3. The school curriculum builds on learners' strengths, interests and experiences both inside and outside school, including those developed by their first educators – their parents - and equips them with the skills to become confident, enthusiastic and effective learners, so that they can:
 - be engaged in making decisions about their own learning in school;
 - communicate effectively;

- take risks, responsibly and creatively;
- enjoy and achieve;
- be responsible, honest, caring and confident.

4. Skills and processes are embedded in a wide range of practical, theoretical and creative curriculum opportunities. This will engage learners in problem solving, enquiry and creative thinking, enabling them to become adaptable, responsive and innovative, so that they can:

- communicate effectively;
- work independently and collaboratively.

5. The curriculum presents learners with new challenges and opportunities. Through experiencing the curriculum in a range of contexts, learners learn to take risks and rise to challenges, so that they can:

- be flexible, resourceful and able to adapt to new situations in a rapidly changing world;
- show initiative, resilience and confidence;
- take risks, responsibly and creatively.

Key aspects of learning included in the curriculum incorporate – motivation, empathy, social skills, communication, enquiry, problem solving, creative thinking, information processing, reasoning, evaluation, self-awareness and managing feelings.

In any learning experience, learners draw on a range of skills, attitudes and knowledge to develop new understandings and build concepts. These cross-curricular learning skills focus on cognitive and affective aspects of learning and are integral to becoming a lifelong and effective learner.

6. The curriculum focuses on knowledge creation as well as knowledge acquisition. By making connections between different bodies of knowledge, learners create new learning for themselves, so that they can:

- be willing and able to learn new skills;
- think analytically and develop reasoning and enquiry skill
- understand at what stage they are at, and how they can progress from that point.

7. The curriculum reflects the learners' place in their local community. It gives them opportunities to learn about the place, people and values in which they are growing up. It enables them to develop their sense of belonging, appreciate the diversity of their community and feel empowered to make a difference for the better, so that they can:

- contribute to the local community both in school and outside;
- value themselves, their families and others around them;
- value the diversity in our society and others', and the environment in which we live;
- participate in decision making and contribute to the community;
- show courtesy, consideration and good humour to others.

8. The curriculum reflects the learners' place in the global community. It allows them to develop their sense of identity beyond their personal experience, to develop a sense

of belonging and empowerment to make a difference for the better in the wider world, so that they can:

- be flexible, resourceful and able to adapt to new situations in a rapidly changing world;
- enjoy and flourish when at key transition points in their lives;
- understand the connectedness of their community within the national and global communities;
- use global resources wisely and contribute to environmental sustainability;
- recognise their role and responsibilities as members of a global society by understanding their own values and attitudes;
- recognise the commonness of humanity, transcending national boundaries.

Our aim is that our learners will...

Values

- value and respect themselves, family and others around them and further afield;
- value diversity in our local and global societies;
- value the environment in which we live;
- show courtesy, consideration and good humour to others;
- recognise roles and responsibilities as members of a global society through understanding their own values and attitudes;
- be responsible, honest, and caring;
- develop and maintain high self-esteem.

Enjoyment

- enjoy and achieve;
- follow a healthy and safe lifestyle;
- be innovative and enterprising;
- cope effectively with change and adversity.

Thinking skills

- develop thinking, reasoning and enquiring skills;
- engage in sustained, shared thinking with other learners;
- develop analytical skills;
- think creatively, imaginatively and critically.

Decision making

- be confident to make decisions about their own learning;
- make choices in their day-to-day learning;
- make decisions which make a positive contribution to the school or local community;
- problem solve;
- be flexible, resourceful and adapt to new situations in a rapidly changing world.

Learning opportunities

- be willing to learn new skills;
- incorporate technology efficiently, for thinking, making and doing;
- be willing to take risks;
- work independently and as a team member;

- show initiative and resilience.

Curriculum Delivery

Learning and Teaching

- Individualised learning and teaching;
- Flexible and responsive teaching styles;
- Maintaining a stimulating learning environment;
- Promoting an independent, lifelong learning;
- Preparing pupils for their place in society while being aware of the demands made of them, through examinations;
- Assessment of pupil progress to inform teaching, set appropriate targets and track progress.

Planning

The learning and teaching of the curriculum is supported through planning.

Planning:

- provides continuity and progression for all;
- promotes an enjoyment of learning and commitment to learning and achieving;
- provides rich and varied learning experiences;
- encourages best possible progress and highest attainment for all pupils;
- enables pupils to make connections across different areas of learning;
- helps pupils to think creatively and solve problems;
- develops pupils' capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- enables pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities;
- enables pupils to acquire and develop a broad range of knowledge, skills and Understanding

Organisation

Pre-Prep: Nursery (2.5-4)

Preparatory (Reception)

Key Stage 1: Lower I (Year 1) and Upper I (Year 2)

Maths and English to include Reading, Spelling, Comprehension, Composition, Handwriting, Language and Poetry

Topic Work to include Science, History, Geography, PSHE, Computing, Spanish, Music, RS, Sport, Nature Study, Art, Craft, Drama, Singing and Dance.

Lower Key Stage 2:

Transition (Year 3)

Switch to specialist subject teaching – the number of weekly periods is in brackets.

- (7) English: Language, Comprehension, Creative Writing, Poetry, Class Book
- (5) Maths

- (1) Handwriting
- (2) Science
- (1) History
- (1) Computing
- (1) R.E.
- (1) PSHE.
- (1) Spanish

Afternoon activities counted in hours: Singing/Music (1 ½), Dance (¾), Art (1 ½), Sport (2 ¼), Nature Study (1 ½), Sewing (¾).

Lower II (Year 4)

- (7) English: Language, Comprehension, Creative Writing, Class Book
- (5) Maths
- (2) Science
- (1) Geography
- (1) History
- (1) Culture
- (1) R.S.
- (1) PSHE.
- (1) Computing
- (1) French

Afternoon activities counted in hours: Music/Singing, (1 ½), Dance (¾), Art (1 ½), Sport (3 ¾)

Upper Key Stage 2:

Upper II (Year 5) and **IIIrd Form** (Year 6)

- (7) English: Language, Comprehension, Creative Writing, Class Book
- (5) Maths
- (2) Science
- (1) Geography
- (1) History
- (1) Culture
- (1) R.S.
- (1) P.S.H.E.
- (1) Computing
- (1) French
- (1) Latin
- (1) History of Art

Afternoon activities counted in hours: Music/Singing, (¾), Dance (¾), Art (1 ½), Sport (4 ½),

IIIrd Form only: Residential Field Trips (2 nights) – Derbyshire and Dorset.

All years perform dramatic (usually musical) productions to their parents in the course of the academic year. In addition, Drama Club (Upper II & IIIrd Form) traditionally perform a Shakespeare play in the Spring term.

The Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage

Pre-Prep and Prep follow the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (2021) to through the teaching of seven areas of learning:

Prime Areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific Areas:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding of the World

Expressive Arts and Design

The areas overlap considerably, and topics are used to help the children to make sense of their learning and to allow them to create links between new ideas and what they already know. Each area of learning is implemented through planned, purposeful play and a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. We aim for all children to achieve or exceed the 'Early Learning Goals', which are set out below, by the end of the Preparatory Class.

Preparatory Class children enjoy lessons with subject specialists in P.E., Music, Dance and Spanish, giving each child a rich and stimulating curriculum.

The EYFS classrooms have a dedicated and secure outdoor space used daily for supervised activities. The children are regularly taken in supervised groups around the secure grounds to learn about their natural surroundings. The children are fortunate to have the beautiful area of Hampstead Heath on their doorstep.

Each child in the EYFS is assigned a key person. This is the child's class teacher. There is a high adult-to-child ratio (currently 1:5) with a teacher and teaching assistant in lessons with each class throughout the day. Throughout the day children must usually be within sight, and always within sight or hearing, of staff. A risk assessment is written for all external trips on which children go, and an appropriate adult-to-child ratio is agreed. However, for all off-site visits, our adult-to-child ratio is a minimum of 1:6. A member of staff who has a current paediatric first aid certificate will also accompany every EYFS outing.

Children who may need specialist help and assistance are supported by the Head of Early Years, who assists the EYFS staff with on-going assessments, and the Special Educational Needs coordinator. Our policy is to put in early intervention and to assess needs on an ongoing basis. From these discussions, strategies are put in place to support children, which are then reviewed on a regular basis to see if they are being effective. Key strategies are shared with parents who are always informed if any outside assessments or specialist input are required.

Children's progress is assessed using a range of strategies, including observation of their independent learning. Progress is reported to parents formally each term through meetings and/ or reports. However, we are always very happy to share a child's development records with their parents at any point in the year and indeed the children very much enjoy sharing their work with their parents. Meanwhile, if parents would like to see any of their child's work or records, they are welcome to ask their child's class teacher.

Each child has a 'Learning Journey' folder. This is a portfolio of photographs, observations, assessment checklists and samples of work, which provides a unique account of the child playing and exploring at home and in school. This learning record is used to inform assessments and support staff to plan the next steps in the child's learning and development.

The children's progress in each of the 7 areas of learning and development is tracked in this folder and is shared with them each half term. Early Years Education is concerned with the intellectual, social, emotional, aesthetic and physical development of the child.

Care and education are inseparable. The involvement of parents and the recognition of their key role in children's development are especially important in the education of very young children. The experience of school complements the experience of home.

The curriculum consists of all of those planned and spontaneous learning experiences, which children will have during their time at TVPS. We follow the guidance recommended by the Department for Education, statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (revised 2017), which helps us to plan activities designated to lay secure foundations for each child's future learning.

At TVPS we believe that the seven areas of learning and development depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Junior Curriculum (Years Transition to IIIrd Form, Key Stage 2)

In Transition to IIIrd Form, pupils study a broad, balanced and exciting curriculum, that draws on the best elements of the National Curriculum.

We aim to infuse an enthusiasm for knowledge, which will support and enhance the pupils' learning and curiosity as they progress through the school. Science lessons are taught in a well-equipped, designated learning space. Great emphasis is placed on practical learning and problem solving, encouraging children to be inquisitive and to think for themselves. We continue to create a culture of praise and encouragement, rewarding good behaviour, kindness and consideration for others.

The children learn about responsibility and can represent their class in a variety of ways, such as on The School Council. Assemblies are held to celebrate success. We aim to inspire an appetite for reading and continue to develop the skills needed to become confident, independent readers. All pupils are encouraged to make full use of the school's library and its extensive range of fiction, non-fiction and reference texts. There is the expectation that pupils read each night at home.

Assessment

Homework in Years Transition to IIIrd Form is given as part of the on-going educational development of each child. Homework is based on the principle that children should accumulate knowledge and skills through revision and practice 'little and often'. Homework is set weekly and completed at school during a timetabled independent study slot.

More formal assessments are introduced in Transition and continue in L II, U II & III. The progress of pupils is monitored and reported to parents through termly reports, as well as Parent/Teacher Evenings.

Co-curricular

Academic studies throughout the Junior Years continue to be complemented by an assorted programme of sporting and cultural activities which give a breadth of experience to pupils, offering them opportunities to develop new skills. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop self-confidence through a varied programme of Performing Arts, and they may join the Junior Choir. Individual tuition of a variety of musical instruments is offered. Our Art Room is a bright creative space in which the pupils are introduced to an array of media and techniques. The Art work produced by pupils in the Junior years is of a very high standard, with individuality and creativity being nurtured. Teamwork and individual excellence continue to be developed on the sports field. Hockey, cricket, tennis, netball, athletics and rounders are played. Pupils also develop their skills in dance. From Transition onwards, the girls have a comprehensive fixture list in all major team sports which, together with Inter-House matches each term, ensures that all pupils can play for a team. A Sports Day is held in the summer term, which gives every child an opportunity to compete for her own House.

In UII and IIrd Form, pupils attend residential trips. Through attendance on these trips, the children not only have a lot of fun but also develop qualities which cannot be defined by academic success.

After IIIrd Form, pupils will proceed to a senior school. By the end of their time at TVPS, we endeavour to ensure the children have acquired a real enthusiasm for learning, having also become confident, self-reliant young people possessing high personal self-esteem and strong ethical and community principles. The advantage of the close relationship between the staff and the pupils during their time at TVPS ensures pupils are offered a level of advice on progression and continuity that is second to none, backed with the necessary qualifications and examination results.

Special Educational Needs

Children with SEND are supported in a number of ways. Our Teaching Assistants are employed to either support a child or to small groups of children with special needs within a classroom (mainly at Pre-Prep level, but also occasionally at Prep level). Our classroom teachers differentiate their lessons to ensure that they are inclusive and accessible for every child in the class, regardless of their needs. Provision maps are reviewed on a termly basis.

The school's SENDCO also offers support to some children. Their progress is recorded. Any feedback recorded by the SENDCO is sent on to teachers, so that they are aware of the work being carried out, and areas of further weakness or achievements.

Where pupils have English as an Additional Language (EAL) every effort is made to encourage the development of learning (written and spoken English) within timetabled lessons or as an additional support lesson.

Gifted and Talented (or more able)

All children have personal qualities, special talents and capabilities, which parents and teachers seek to identify, nurture and develop. An individual's gift or talent may be displayed within the regular curriculum, in a particular area of study, or it may cover a broader aspect of ability, such as leadership or creativity. Every class teacher will have identified those pupils who are considered to be more able than their peers, using school assessments (especially from U II onwards, and end-of-year assessments) and classroom observations, background knowledge and any other relevant reports. Rather than using this information to label these pupils, we use it to ensure effective and suitable provision of work, to ensure appropriate pace, rigour and challenge. We consider it important that pupils are reassessed regularly so that individuals are not inappropriately pigeonholed into a single group for their entire school career.

We consider it important to differentiate the work that is provided for children, in order to meet the needs of, and to challenge pupils in lessons, whatever their level of ability. The organisation of lessons allows for class teaching that meets individual needs and provides for differentiated group and independent work. Within lessons, able pupils are given direct teaching and opportunities to work with their peers. Lessons involving particularly able pupils are based on the principle of inclusive whole class and group teaching.

The school aims to ensure that there are enrichment opportunities that can stretch the more able or the gifted in the school, but at the same time we consider that the provision of activities which are exclusive rather than inclusive to be contrary to the aims and ethos of the school. Thus, although we may direct or encourage certain individuals to engage in specific enrichment activities, we do not exclude others who, whatever their level of ability, express an interest in extending their skills, knowledge or talents in any field of endeavour.

Assessment and Recording

The effectiveness of the Policy is assessed overall by the Head and Deputy Head, and Head of EYFS/ KS1, but all staff have a duty to ensure the curriculum is taught and that the aims are achieved for each child in each class. The Head ensures that the progress of each pupil is tracked and that there is appropriate challenge, support and intervention.

Reporting

Parents are kept informed through Parents' Evenings, interim reports and a formal written report at least once a year. Communication with parents across the school is undertaken in a variety of ways, through phone, e-mail, letters, newsletters, website and discussion with parents at drop-off and pick-up.

Monitoring

The school's SLT has the responsibility for monitoring work across all year groups. The Head and the school's SLT have the responsibility for monitoring the whole curriculum and how it needs developing to cater for all needs. The Head has overall responsibility for monitoring the curriculum taught and its effectiveness.

Interpretation

In this policy, the term “senior manager” means a School Head or their designated deputies. This policy applies in the whole school and other work environments within the Chatsworth Schools group.

This policy applies within all companies, which are wholly owned subsidiaries of Chatsworth Schools Ltd, a company registered in England, registered number 10830542, and the term “Company” should be interpreted accordingly, dependent on the employing company. The registered office of all companies is Crimea House, Great Tew Estate, Great Tew, Oxfordshire, OX7 4AH. Any enquiries regarding the application of this policy should be addressed to the Group Director of Operations at this address.

Review date: October 2021 Next review: August 2022

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POLICY AMENDMENT PAGE

