

Hemdean House School



Curriculum Policy

Updated : Autumn 2014 by Head and Senior Deputy Head

Review : Autumn 2017

Principles

Teaching and learning are the processes through which we offer a curriculum which is broad and balanced, adapted to be suitable for all our pupils and meets the requirements, either of the Education Reform Act relating to the National Curriculum and religious education and collective worship, or of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

All our pupils have the right to access the full curriculum and to be allowed to grow in intellectual, physical, creative, cultural, spiritual, emotional and moral awareness to enable them to face the challenges of the adult world with confidence, responsibility and a sense of purpose.

Aims

To encourage each pupil to achieve his or her potential in terms of academic achievement, physical attainment, aesthetic appreciation and spiritual awareness;

To foster an enjoyment of work through the main curriculum and extra-curriculum provision;

To enable pupils to develop a responsible and independent attitude towards work and towards his or her role in society;

To help pupils to be tolerant and have an understanding of the rights, views of other pupils and to respect their property.

Inclusion

In planning the curriculum the school must ensure that:

- All pupils, including those with a statement, are presented with learning opportunities relevant to their attainments and ability to enable them to make progress and to achieve positive outcomes;
- All pupils are enabled to achieve their goals, including boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, pupils of different ethnic groups, pupils from different linguistic, social, cultural and religious backgrounds and gifted and talented pupils;
- Provision is made to meet the individual requirements of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement, pupils with disabilities and pupils for whom English is an additional language, in order to overcome any potential barriers to learning and assessment.

Achieving our Aims

All members of the school community (teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, pupils and trustees) work towards the school's aims by:

- esteeming children as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs;
- fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community;
- providing a well ordered environment in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations;
- offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures;
- providing pupils with appropriate enrichment activities such as trips, clubs and visiting experts etc.
- encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviour and work;
- working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

Teachers work towards the school aims by:

- providing a challenging and stimulating programme of study designed to enable all children to reach the highest standards of personal achievement;
- recognising and being constantly aware of the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude;
- ensuring that learning is progressive and continuous;
- building on pupils' strengths, interests and experiences;
- being good role models - punctual, well prepared and organised;
- maintaining an up to date knowledge of the National Curriculum;

- having a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise;
- providing opportunities for senior pupils to work with and support younger pupils.
- establishing links with the local community for visits and information.

Pupils work towards the school aims by:

- attending school regularly and in good health maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep;
- being punctual for lessons and handing in homework on time;
- being organised by bringing the necessary kit, taking letters home promptly, returning reading books regularly;
- making the most of all the opportunities they are given;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected code of behaviour;
- taking growing responsibility for their own learning.

Parents work towards the school aims by:

- ensuring that children attend school in good health, regularly and punctually, abstaining from term time holidays;
- providing support for the discipline within the school;
- being realistic about their children's abilities and offering encouragement and praise;
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainments;
- ensuring early contact with the school to discuss matters which affect a child's happiness, progress and behaviour;
- giving due importance to homework;
- allowing their children to take increasing responsibility as they progress throughout the school.
- Encouraging their child to make the most of all opportunities appropriate and available to them

Strategies for Delivering the Curriculum

Foundation Stage

Nursery

Boys and girls from 3 to 4 years attend the nursery between 8.45am and 3.30pm daily; some children attend for two half-day sessions only, some attend full-time and others for something in between these extremes. Children take part in the different daily activities and, through careful planning, observation and record-keeping, access the whole curriculum.

Three full time members of staff lead the teaching and learning activities with small groups of children.

Children in the nursery follow the statutory requirements and guidance of DfE Early Years Foundation Stage. This covers the seven areas of learning.

- 1 Communication and Language
- 2 Physical development
- 3 Personal social and emotional development

The specific areas are:

- 4 Literacy
- 5 Mathematics
- 6 Understanding the World
- 7 Expressive arts and design

The nursery curriculum is delivered through indoor and outdoor activities in the nursery house and garden; occasional use is made of the school playground and field, the hall and the computer room. Nursery children attend whole school assemblies and services when it is felt appropriate.

Reception

Boys and girls from 4 to 5 years attend the reception class between 8.45am and 3.30pm; all children are full time from Monday to Friday in reception.

A teacher and a teaching assistant work full time with the reception children, following a structured timetable also covering the seven areas of learning (as above) All areas

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum continues in reception but is enhanced by specialist 40 minute lessons in music and I.C.T. once a week and in P.E. twice a week.

The reception teacher listens to each child read every day. Children always take their reading books or word cards home and parents are encouraged to hear their child reading every day.

Junior School

Our strategies for Planning, Teaching, Learning, Recording and Reporting in Key Stages 1 and 2 are detailed in the school's Policy for Teaching and Learning in the Junior School and in the Junior Curriculum booklet.

The National Curriculum is followed with the exceptions that little work is done with resistive materials in Design and Technology, much of the design requirements being met in the teaching of Art, Craft and Design, and the pupils are not taught to swim as part of their Physical Education.

The nature and quantity of homework required in the junior school is detailed for parents in their Welcome Booklet which they receive when their child starts at the school.

Years 1 and 2

At Key Stage 1 our curriculum is organised on a subject basis wherein language and literacy development and mathematical activities are a priority. Multiplication tables begin to be taught in Year 1.

The school day is from 8.45am until 3.30pm.

The form teacher has the support of a teaching assistant, full time in Year 1 and part time in Year 2, depending on numbers and specific needs.

Specialist teaching in 40 minute lessons of I.C.T., Music, French and Drama take place once a week and P.E. lessons occur twice a week in Year 1 and three times a week in Year 2.

Years 3 and 4

At Key Stage 2 our curriculum is subject based, with English and Maths still being our priorities.

The school day still finishes at 3.30pm for Year 3 boys and girls but continues until 3.45pm for Year 4 pupils.

The form teacher delivers the curriculum in English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, R.E., P.S.H.E. and Citizenship.

Specialist teaching in Art and Design now adds to the Drama, French, Music, I.C.T. and P.E. specialist lessons.

Years 5 and 6

The school day is from 8.45am until 3.45pm.

English and maths continue to be our priorities at the top of the junior school and preparation for the secondary stage of education becomes increasingly important.

Boys and girls in Years 5 and 6 benefit from additional specialist teaching in Science, resulting in nearly half their timetabled lessons being taught by teachers other than their form teachers and taking place in rooms other than their form rooms. We feel that this is an excellent preparation for the future, enhancing their academic, personal and organisational skills. Booster and enrichment lessons take place as appropriate.

Throughout the junior school there is a high level of teacher direction but with the pupils being encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

Displays of work and performance of Music or Drama give opportunities for all pupils to exhibit their talents and skills.

Sustained effort is encouraged to enhance standards of work and pupils understand that any exhibited work should represent their highest standards of personal achievement and that such performance or display is a celebration of their achievements.

Senior School

Our aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning at Key Stages 3 and 4 are detailed in the school's Policy for Teaching and Learning and Subject Management in the Senior School.

There are eight 40 minute lessons each day (8.45am to 3.45pm).

We follow the National Curriculum for Key Stages 3 and 4 and offer 6 core and 10 optional GCSE subjects for Year 10 pupils to select from; most pupils take 9.5 or 10 subjects. More details are available in the Senior Curriculum summary booklet.

All subjects are taught by graduate specialists in those subjects.

Most classes could have a maximum size of 12 pupils and are taught as mixed ability groups, with the exception of maths where, in Years 10 & 11, girls aiming for the higher tier may be taught as a separate group.

Homework is compulsory for all as an essential extension to a pupil's programme of study, while providing an important link between home and school. A structured homework timetable and a homework planner will be given to each girl at the beginning of the academic year. The amount of homework set will increase as the pupil progresses through the school and is detailed in the Parents' Welcome Booklet.

All senior pupils will receive careers education and guidance, and sex and relationship education and guidance as part of their P.S.H.C.C.E. programme.

Regular assessment information, monitoring of pupils' attainment, review of progress and setting of improvement targets are an important part of a successful curriculum and are carried out formally at least twice a year and on a continual basis as required by individuals.

Years 7 to 9

Pupils study English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, RE, French, PE, Art, Textiles, I.C.T., Home Economics (Food), P.S.H.C.C.E. and citizenship, Music and Drama.

In Years 8 and 9 pupils also study German.

In Year 9 pupils take Functional Skills in English

Years 10 and 11

All pupils take GCSEs in English, English Literature, Mathematics, Science and Additional Science, with, in addition, a short course or full course in GCSE or Functional Skills in ICT.

Pupils may choose four GCSEs from these optional subjects: French, German, History, Geography, RE, Art, Drama, HE. Food or Music. Extending science to three separate sciences is also available as an option.

A short course GCSE in P.E. (Games) may also be taken.

Not all pupils will start with 9.5 or 10 GCSEs, but this is expected as the norm. Some pupils have the opportunity to study up to 12 GCSE subjects by attending early or twilight sessions. Conversely, some pupils may require more study periods to concentrate on fewer subjects.

All Year 10 pupils undertake a week of work experience.

The curriculum is enhanced by participation in local competitions and lunchtime and after school activities. There are many trips, visiting speakers are brought in, and workshops provided to enrich the curriculum in the senior school.

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