



December 2017

Curriculum Policy Statement

Summary

The Curriculum is the total of all learning experiences that West Thurrock Academy provides for the children in its care. We aim to provide a broad, balanced curriculum for all pupils which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school, and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Through the curriculum we aim to enable children to reach their full potential and develop their talents, experiences, interests and skills. We do this by teaching the full range of subject areas within the National Curriculum and choose the appropriate teaching methods to take account of the wide variety of learning styles of children. We seek to provide opportunities for development, not only through academic subjects, but through all aspects of the school day, including break and lunch times, assemblies and extra-curricular activities that provide children with the essential knowledge they need.

At West Thurrock Academy we believe our children have the right to an excellent education of quality where teaching is of the highest quality and learning reaches the highest standards.

- ❖ We promote the value of learning and develop enthusiasms for personal development;
- ❖ We sustain and enhance the quality and accessibility of learning opportunities for all;
- ❖ We secure commitment to achievement through involvement and consultation with outside agencies;
- ❖ We monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in raising pupil achievement.

Aims of the Curriculum

The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives. All children are entitled to a curriculum that provides opportunities for

them to learn and achieve. We aim to provide a curriculum that gives opportunities for them to build upon strengths, interests and experiences and develop their confidence in their ability to learn independently and work collaboratively. We aim to create children who see the value of continuing education, develop a love for learning and a commitment to a lifetime of learning.

Our curriculum seeks to equip the children with essential skills of English, mathematics and computing, to promote an enquiring mind and rational thought, and to be broad and balanced in order to give them the opportunity to be creative, innovative and enterprising. We aim to promote pupil's self-esteem and emotional well-being to help them to form worthwhile relationships and to develop the capacity for leadership and teamwork.

The Whole Curriculum

The curriculum comprises all planned activities within school and extended through homework. At West Thurrock Academy we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the National Curriculum programmes of study through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. We also offer a wide variety of extracurricular activities to further develop children's interests, skills and experiences.

The Foundation Stage

The curriculum for children in our reception classes is based on the following areas of learning:

The prime areas of learning:

- ❖ communication and language
- ❖ physical development
- ❖ personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas of learning:

- ❖ literacy
- ❖ mathematics
- ❖ understanding the world
- ❖ expressive arts and design

Key Stage 1 and 2

Our curriculum is organised on the basis of the following areas of study:

- ❖ English
- ❖ Mathematics
- ❖ Science
- ❖ Art and Design
- ❖ Computing
- ❖ Design Technology
- ❖ History
- ❖ Geography
- ❖ Spanish
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Physical Education
- ❖ Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
- ❖ Religious Education

As well as the core and foundation subjects listed above, we also aim to equip children with a good understanding of the outside world and the ability to make informed and sensible choices. To support this we teach Sex and Relationships Education and Drugs Education.

Key Skills

At West Thurrock Academy we know that key skills are those that help learners to improve their learning and performance in education, work and life. We aim:

- ❖ to enable all children to learn and develop all their skills, including communication, to the best of their ability;
- ❖ to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- ❖ to acquire progressively the basic skills and knowledge they will need in adult and working life, especially English, mathematics and computing;
- ❖ to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking;
- ❖ to enable children to know how to improve their own learning and performance by assessing, recording and reflecting upon their own achievements;
- ❖ work independently and with others;
- ❖ to enable children to be positive citizens in society;
- ❖ to teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to understand right from wrong;
- ❖ to enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others;

- ❖ to identify their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs through the content of the curriculum.

Organisation and planning

We plan our curriculum in three phases. We agree a long-term plan for each key stage. This indicates which topics are to be covered in each term, and to which groups of children. We review our long-term plan on an annual basis.

Medium-term plans have clear guidance on the skills that should be covered when teaching each topic. We follow the National Curriculum for our school, and we take our medium-term planning directly from the guidance documents.

Short-term plans are written on a weekly or daily basis. The children decide the specific areas they are interested in and wish to study from the topic provided on the long term plans. Teachers use the children's interests and questions to create short-term plans which set out the learning objectives for each session, skills to be taught, differentiated group work, and to identify what resources and activities which will be the focus in the lesson.

The Early Years Foundation Stage follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and use this to plan daily activities which are matched to the children's needs and driven by the children's interests. Activities are carefully planned to ensure that there is coherence and full coverage of all aspects of the Early Learning Goals, and there is planned progression in all prime and specific areas.

Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play, and by engaging in 'in the moment' activities based on their interests. Planning and teaching in the reception class builds on the interests and experiences of the children in their pre-school learning and baseline assessments, which are made by the teacher during the child's first term in Reception.

At Key Stage 1 and 2 the curriculum at our school places a great emphasis on the core and foundation subjects, and we teach these subjects separately. For example, a child may concentrate in one half-term on a history topic, then on geography in the next half-term. However, teachers take every opportunity to link curriculum areas where this is considered appropriate. For example, much of the material used within the study of non-fiction reading and writing in Literacy will be drawn from other curriculum areas. Over the course of the academic year, each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects.

Learning Styles

In planning our curriculum, teachers at West Thurrock Academy understand that children learn in a variety of ways. In recognising this they aim to plan lessons to facilitate learning for all children. Teachers choose the most appropriate method of teaching for each lesson, taking into account the following learning styles:

Visual - Visual learners benefit from visually presented information such as graphs, charts, posters, concept mapping etc.

Auditory - Auditory learners benefit from discussion activities, lecture-style lessons, interviewing, reading, hearing stories, language games etc.

Kinaesthetic - Kinaesthetic learners benefit from physical activity, modelling, field trips, visits, learning by 'doing'.

Inclusion

At West Thurrock Academy we recognise that we have children from hugely diverse backgrounds and we aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success. We aim to set high expectations and provide opportunities for all children to achieve. We understand that children bring to school different experiences, interests and strengths and that these influence the way that they learn. We seek to plan our lessons in such a way that enables all pupils to take part in lessons fully and effectively. We do this by:

- ❖ Creating effective learning environments
- ❖ Securing children's motivation and concentration
- ❖ Providing equality of opportunity through a variety of teaching approaches
- ❖ Using appropriate assessment approaches
- ❖ Ensuring that children understand the objectives of lessons
- ❖ Setting targets for learning

Special Educational Needs

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so only after the parents of the child have been consulted.

Some children have particular learning and assessment requirements, either through having Special Educational Needs, Disabilities, or English as an Additional Language. At West Thurrock Academy we take account of these requirements and make provision, as

far as is possible, to support individuals or groups of pupils to participate in curriculum and assessment activities. We recognise the importance of accounting for the diverse backgrounds of our children and value the partnership we have with parents.

If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEND Code of Practice in providing for children with special needs. In most instances the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe, we consider the child for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, and we involve the appropriate external agencies when making this assessment. We always provide additional resources and support for children with special needs.

The school provides a Provision Map for each of the children who are identified as needing extra support. This sets out the nature of the need, and outlines how the schools will aim to address this. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals.

In aiming to give every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning, we also aim to recognise particular needs of gifted and talented children. We believe that the best provision for gifted and talented children is not 'more of the same but harder' but strategies which challenge them by extending their thinking, understanding, knowledge and skills.

Assessment, Reporting and Recording

At West Thurrock Academy we understand that assessment is at the heart of the teaching and learning process. Assessment enables us to identify children's strengths and weaknesses in order that future learning needs can be carefully identified. We aim to make the assessment procedure a positive one for children, which celebrates their current achievements. The sharing of assessment information develops the partnership between pupils, teachers and parents, with reports and meetings providing the opportunity to review a child's progress to date, discuss strengths and weaknesses and to set targets for the future.

We understand that formative assessment (assessment for learning) is a major factor in raising children's standards of achievement. We aim to make it an embedded part of the learning process, to share learning goals with children, to help children know and recognise the standards to aim for, to provide feedback to help children to improve, to involve not only the teacher, but the pupil as well in self-assessment.

We also recognise the usefulness of summative assessment and carry out end of year summative tests in all year groups except in Reception. In Year 2 and Year 6 these take the form of Statutory Tests. We carry out an initial Baseline Assessment of children starting in Reception. Teachers keep their own records of assessments of children and each year update children's records, including information on achievements across the curriculum. Results of Assessments are updated termly on Target Tracker. We also provide one written record to parents each year.

Monitoring and review

Our governing body is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented. This committee reviews each subject area in its cycle of review and development.

We have named governors for reading, writing, grammar, mathematics, science and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The governors liaise with the subject leaders of these areas, and monitor closely the way the school teaches these subjects.

The headteacher is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. The headteacher monitors the weekly lesson plans for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the National Curriculum, and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives.

Subject leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school. They examine long-term, medium-term and short-term planning, and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Subject leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.