

Curriculum Policy

This policy should be reviewed annually and as required by legislation.		
Action	Reviewer	Date
Review	EG	Jan 2024
Approved by Chair of COM	DD	Jan 2024
Date for next internal review		Jan 2025

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CURRICULUM POLICY

Introduction

This policy is a statement of the aims and principles which underpin our curriculum.

The Children's House School is committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum which is accessible to all and enables and inspires every pupil to reach their highest potential in academic, sporting, cultural, spiritual and personal development.

We place a strong emphasis on the development of core literacy and numeracy skills alongside essential key skills that include resilience, curiosity, calm, kindness, tolerance, responsibility, independence and a growth mindset. We recognise that a strong foundation in both the academics and these skills is essential for success at primary school and for all aspects of life beyond The Children's House.

Our thematic curriculum fully meets, and at times exceeds the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework and the National Curriculum for Key Stages One and Two and prepares children for the demands of secondary school entrance examinations at 11+. The thematic design provides children with deeper and more contextual learning, as subjects are often integrated within the umbrella theme rather than being taught as discrete units.

Aims

We aim to provide a broad, coherent, balanced and ambitious curriculum that focuses on developing the whole child and achieves the following aims:

To:

- Inspire children to become lifelong learners with a positive and confident attitude to learning.

- Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.
- Motivate each child to achieve the highest possible standards, academically, socially and morally.
- Inspire children to be curious about the world and to ask good questions.
- Cultivate a growth mindset that supports taking risks and making mistakes.
- Encourage every pupil to develop a good work ethic, and the ability to work both collaboratively and independently, taking a positive interest in their own work and that of others.
- Encourage children to respect one another's opinions and beliefs, property and the environment.
- Nurture creative, independent thinkers who value imagination and innovation.
- Develop good communication and listening skills.
- Develop children's capacity for building respectful and valued relationships, appreciating those needs, wishes, gifts and qualities within themselves and in others.
- Encourage children to care for the world around them and become responsible citizens.
- Support children's physical development, enabling them to be active and to take responsibility for their own good health.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Council of Management

The Council of Management (CoM) monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The CoM also ensure that:

- a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- the school is complying with its aims in teaching a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes the core subjects English, maths and science;
- enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the learning;
- proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN).

Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils are met.
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Council of Management (CoM).

Other staff

Heads of Subject and Members of the Senior Leadership Team ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

Organisation and Planning

The Children's House Curriculum is well structured and carefully planned to meet the needs of all pupils.

There are written whole-school policies for all subjects taught and to ensure that content for each subject is appropriate for the ages, interests and abilities of pupils. Schemes of work are in place to provide continuity and progression in children's learning and to guide teachers in their daily planning.

Class Teachers and Subject Specialists are responsible for short and medium term planning, with subjects from SLT and where in place, Heads of Subject.

Termly curriculum maps outline the term's theme for every year group, with the objectives for every curriculum area. These are available on the School website and on the Staff SharePoint.

Subject Curriculum Maps, available on Staff SharePoint enable an 'at a glance' overview of progression in a particular subject and these are available on the Staff SharePoint.

Subjects are linked through overarching themes wherever possible, so that children can make cross-curricular links and deepen their learning. Children's SMSC (social, moral, spiritual and cultural) education is prioritised across the curriculum as well as being addressed specifically through PSHE sessions, and skills in speaking and listening, literacy, numeracy and IT, are acquired both through timetabled lessons and cross curricularly. Lessons are planned to ensure there is enough time and flexibility to explore and deepen key learning.

Learning is made engaging and memorable through a wide variety of first-hand experiences, practical learning and the use of the outdoors. Outings are regular and visitors to the school are welcomed into the classroom to enrich children's learning.

Teachers use the school's schemes of work to deliver the curriculum, creating medium and short-term planning that is informed by teachers' observations of pupils.

Playtimes for pupils are planned and resourced with activities that link to termly themes, so that children can extend their learning through deep, independent play.

Teaching & Learning

Teachers are encouraged to employ a wide variety of approaches and teaching strategies in the classroom, with a focus on incorporating practical and creative activities wherever possible. This is encouraged by:

- regular sharing of good practice in staff meetings,
- an open-door policy to observe other teachers
- scheduled peer observations through the year,
- Termly observations by SLT with follow up coaching and target setting
- Regular INSET training, delivered by external visitors as well as members of staff.

The school is a member of NACE (National Association of Challenge in Education) and staff have benefitted from training in employing varied strategies to challenge every learner.

Teachers are expected to ensure that their lessons:

- are well planned and differentiated according to the needs of the pupils in the class;
- make best use of support staff;
- have clear Learning Objectives which are shared with the children
- extend on previous learning;

- incorporate regular feedback to pupils through thoughtful marking and discussion (verbal feedback) (see marking policy);
- use a variety of teaching styles;
- make observations to determine the next steps and inform future plans;
- create and sustain pupils' interest and motivation;
- ensure the full participation of all pupils.

Lessons should involve teaching strategies which:

- suit the subject matter as well as the pupils;
- ensure pupils apply themselves with purpose and self-confidence;
- use materials and resources including IT effectively to support learning;
- encourage pupils to display and develop good behaviours for learning such as: active listening, observation and information seeking; thoughtful questioning; communicating information and ideas in multiple ways; problem solving; application of knowledge to new contexts
- encourage and empower pupils to demonstrate independence and autonomy

Allocation of lessons per week

Our curriculum is carefully timetabled to provide a balanced and broad education.

The following table shows the average lessons per week allocated to each subject in each year group. Lessons length will vary according to subject and age.

In Reception, the seven areas of learning are interlinked, but timetabled sessions are allocated to some subjects, as indicated below.

Humanities refers to History, Geography and RE

PSHE & RSE objectives are covered both in dedicated lessons, but also cross curricularly and through school values.

Area of Learning	Reception	Subject	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Maths	5	Maths	5	5	5	5	5
Literacy	5	English	5	5	5	5	5
Understanding the World	4	Science	1	1	1	1	1
		Humanities	3	3	3	3	3
		PSHE & RSE	1	1	1	1	1
Personal, Social, Emotional Development	4	P4C & Current Events	1	1	1 fortnightly	1 fortnightly	1 fortnightly
		Reasoning	1 fortnightly from Spr 2	1 fortnightly progressing to weekly	1	1	1

IT	1	IT	1	1	1	1	1
Music	1	Music	1	1	1	1	1
Spanish	1	Spanish	1	1	1	1	1
Art	Integrated throughout curriculum	Art	1	1	1	1	1
PE & Games	3	PE & Games, including dance	2	2	2	2	2
Drama	1	Drama	1	1	1	1	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception is planned in accordance with the framework 'The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework January 2024'. Under the guiding theme of Learning and Development there are three prime and four specific interconnected areas of learning:

Prime:

- Personal, Social & Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication & Language

Specific:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts & Design

All areas of learning are of equal importance and depend on each other to provide a rounded approach to child development. The prime areas are particularly crucial for helping children to thrive and develop good relationships with others, for building their aptitude and ability for learning and for igniting their curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. The specific areas of learning provide opportunities for children to develop knowledge, skills and understanding through a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities and experiences. The school refers to the non-statutory document Development Matters which lists the incremental steps children need to attain as they learn and develop in each of the prime and specific areas of learning.

Children's learning and development is recorded through formative and summative assessment. Observations are made of each child in a variety of environments and learning situations, providing an accurate, detailed insight and record of their progress. Each child's attainment is assessed at the start and end of the year using a baseline assessment and assessed against the Early Learning Goals in the final term of Reception, with findings recorded on the EYFS profile.

The support children receive as they learn is personalised to meet their individual needs and to nurture, develop and stretch their talents and interests. Based on children's interests and needs, staff plan a wide range of related activities and experiences across the curriculum. Subject specialist

teachers in Spanish, IT, Dance, Music and Physical Education work closely with class teachers to further enrich the curriculum for each child and to add to teacher assessment of children's attainment in the prime and specific areas of the EYFS.

Please see our Early Years Policy for further information.

Key Stages 1 and 2

The curriculum in Key Stages One and Two follows and builds on the National Curriculum.

The syllabus for each academic subject is planned in accordance with the statutory requirements and guidance in the National Curriculum, as well as the requirements for the 11 + entrance examinations.

Inclusion

Our curriculum is inclusive. Pupils are taught in mixed ability classes, but adaptive teaching means that teachers respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils.

This includes:

- Pupils with SEND
- EAL Pupils
- More Able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can access every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English (EAL). Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information may be found in our SEND and Equality policies and Accessibility & Disability Plan.

Differentiation

In some lessons, pupils work in attainment groups, on work tailored to their level, and in others scaffolding and support will be provided to individuals. Teaching assistants, full time in the Reception & Key Stage One, and assigned for specific lessons, -predominantly core subjects, in Key Stage Two, provide invaluable support to ensure that all children have the opportunity to make progress and are sufficiently challenged.

Formative assessment on ITrack, together with termly assessments that are discussed in pupil progress meetings, ensure that relevant teaching staff are aware of pupils' targets and their areas of strength and weakness.

The Children's House is one form entry and children spend the bulk of their time with their class teacher. The class teacher is responsible for teaching the core subjects – English, Maths and Science, as well as Humanities - History, Geography and RE in addition to P4C, PSHE and Relationships Education, Current Affairs and Reasoning.

The following subjects are delivered by Subject Specialists:

Subject Specialist Teaching	Nursery & Pre-Reception	Reception	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
PE & Games, including Dance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spanish	✓	✓	✓	✓
Music	✓	✓	✓	✓
IT		✓	✓	✓
Drama		✓	✓	✓
Art & DT			✓	✓

PE & Games is taught by our part time Head of Games alongside specialist instructors for swimming and dance. As part of EYFS curriculum, these specialist lessons begin weekly at the nursery for Pre-Reception and those under 3 years of age, if deemed ready, can participate from the Spring Term. Children engage in running, jumping, throwing and balancing to develop their gross motor skills and coordination. They also play games involving balls to enhance hand-eye coordination and spatial awareness, promoting both health and social interaction. Children at the Nursery also have a weekly Dance session, encouraging expression, creativity and coordination through dance steps, gesture and imaginative play. By integrating curriculum themes the children's learning experience is enhanced through meaningful connections.

At the Upper School, Reception, who follow the EYFS framework, have three PE and Games sessions per week, and the other classes have two sessions. This includes swimming and dance. We use offsite venues which include The Red Pitch just up the road from the School and the Britannia Leisure Centre.

Art & DT is delivered by the part time Head of Art. Projects develop pupils' artistic skills in a range of media, with cross curricular links to the class' termly theme.

Music is taught by our part time Head of Music, who also runs a morning choir club for those children who wish to take part. Music lessons consist of listening, singing, composing and performing. Pupils in Year 2 learn to play glockenspiel, and Year 3 & 4 pupils learn the ukulele. Children have the added option to sign up for individual peripatetic music lessons in piano and guitar.

At the Nursery our music specialist offers children a rich array of musical experiences to explore sound, rhythm and instruments which enrich sensory development and coordination. Cultural awareness and exposure to diverse musical styles are encouraged through singing and creative expression.

Spanish is taught by our part time Head of Spanish, and children learn speaking and listening, reading and writing in weekly sessions that start in Pre-Reception. The children in Pre-Reception are taught by using songs, games and creative activities. Children engage with interactive resources such as flashcards and storybooks to reinforce new vocabulary, while roleplaying and storytelling capture their imagination and support comprehension. At the Upper School, we focus on ensuring a strong understanding of Spanish, both in listening and in speaking, reading, and writing. Writing begins gradually in Year One, building up as the children progress. Through constant practice, we aim for children to feel confident using basic phrases, thereby building a solid foundation for their continuous learning. Within the classroom, we conduct various activities that help children listen and repeat previously learned words, supporting retention and the committing to memory of vocabulary.

Weekly, we review the material before introducing new words. Additionally, we explore Spanish through songs, providing children with a creative and engaging experience to become familiar with the sounds and patterns of the language. Starting from Year 1 onwards, we assign Spanish homework each week. These tasks are designed to reinforce what is learned in class and provide children with practice at home.

Drama is taught by a drama specialist, who is also our SENCo, More Able and Wellbeing lead.

Our IT programme, led by our part-time Head of IT and Online Safety and Technical Lead, goes beyond simply using technology - it empowers students to understand and shape the digital world. We use the comprehensive Purple Mash Computing Scheme of Work, exceeding national standards and constantly evolving to reflect the latest advancements. From physical computing and industry-standard software to AI exploration, our students are prepared for the ever-changing digital landscape. Our curriculum is designed to enable children, through a structured, progressive approach, to use computational thinking and creativity to understand the world and to provide them with the skills necessary to become digitally literate and participate fully and safely in the modern world.

There are three central aspects of the computing curriculum:

Computer Science: Developing logical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a deep understanding of how technology works.

Information Technology: Learning to effectively and efficiently utilize technology for various purposes.

Digital Literacy: Cultivating critical thinking skills to navigate the online world responsibly and safely.

More Able

More able children may be gifted, high attaining pupils across the curriculum or be talented in a specific area or areas. We aim to provide a range of challenging learning opportunities that will enable each individual, including those with exceptional abilities, to realise their potential. The school's More Able Pupil policy outlines this in further detail.

PSHE & RSE

At The Children's House we use Jigsaw, the mindful approach to PSHE, which brings together Personal, Social, Health Education, emotional literacy, social skills and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning.

The Jigsaw scheme of work covers all of the Statutory requirements for Relationships and Health Education, along with some age-appropriate aspects of the Sex Education curriculum, alongside Science.

Please see our PSHE & RSE policy for further information.

SMSC (Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education) & British Values

Our SMSC provision meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards. In line with The Children's House ethos, opportunities to promote self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence', SMSC development and British values are infused within day-to-day School life, and prioritised both within the planned curriculum and through extracurricular events and activities.

Our approach to SMSC ensures that the following principles are actively promoted:

- Enabling pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- Encouraging pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
- Enabling pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- Furthering tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- Encouraging respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and
- Encouraging respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.
- Cultivating an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;

Discriminatory or extremist opinions or behaviours are challenged as a matter of routine.

Our teaching of RE covers World Religions, cultivating acceptance, tolerance and respect of a variety of faiths and/or views and makes connections with pupils' personal beliefs and practices.

For further information, please see our Religious Education Policy.

Philosophy for Children

Philosophy for Children (P4C) is taught across the school, from Pre-Reception upwards and influences all of teaching and learning. P4C, is an approach to teaching and learning in which children take part in philosophical enquiry. It enhances thinking and communication skills, boosts confidence and self-esteem, and improves behaviour and well-being.



The Children's House

Enrichment

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is further promoted through assemblies, circle times and a programme of enrichment which enhances their understanding and appreciation of the world around them and of themselves and their place within it.

There are themed days and weeks at least once a term focusing on families' cultural and geographical backgrounds, recycling, healthy living, food.

All children participate in regular fund-raising events each term including the mini farmers market, Wheelies (sponsored cycling and picnic), Children in Need and Anti Bullying Week. A proportion of the fundraising at our Winter and Summer Fairs is always donated to a charity.

All children are involved in music, drama, dance and poetry during the school year. Parents will be invited to an end of term performance and informal concerts and open classrooms during the term.

The school maintains a plot at a local community garden and children visit regularly for nature study and gardening.

All classes at the Upper School go on at least two major outings per term to complement an area of the curriculum. Full use is made of local facilities including museums, theatres and galleries. The curriculum is also enhanced by visits from theatre groups, science workshops, puppeteers, storytellers, musicians, parents and guest speakers from the wider community.

After-school clubs take place Monday to Friday. Activities are varied to introduce children to different experiences and skills and include cooking, LAMDA, sewing, fencing, capoeira, art and design, construction, pottery, chess, ball-skills, Djembe drumming, puppetry, drama.

Online Safety

Whilst pupils are explicitly taught how to stay safe online during weekly IT lessons, this critical life skill is embedded through the whole curriculum and pupils are regularly reminded of the following, at an age appropriate level:

- To evaluate carefully what they see online
- How to recognise techniques for persuasion
- How to behave safely online
- Where to seek support
- How to identify risk including fake websites, scam emails and phishing.

Monitoring Arrangements

The CoM monitor whether the school is complying with its aim to *teach a broad and balanced curriculum* which includes the required subjects, through:

- School visits
- Regular phone calls with the Headteacher
- Termly Head's reports to CoM
- Meetings with the school council



The Children's House

The SLT alongside Subject Leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school through:

- planning scrutinies
- learning walks
- book scrutinies
- peer observations

Subject Leads also have responsibility for monitoring use, storage and updating of resources/

This policy is reviewed every year by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Council of Management and approved by Dawn Brindle (Chair of the CoM).

Links with other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with policies including:

- All Subject Policies and schemes of work
- EYFS
- Assessment, Recording & Reporting
- SEND
- More Able
- Equalities
- Homework

This Policy was reviewed, amended and agreed by the Council of Management in January 2024. It will be reviewed again in one year's time.

Agreed by Adam Zivanic of the Council of Management