Curriculum Policy
Debden C of E Primary Academy

Reviewed by: Matt Hawley	September	2020
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POLICY STATEMENT

At Debden Church of England Primary Academy, our school vision and values underpin all aspects of school life, including our approach to the curriculum. Our school vision is to enable our children to:

-Progress exceptionally well academically, across a broad and knowledge-rich curriculum;

-Develop into confident, compassionate, well-rounded individuals, in a safe, caring, Christian environment;

-Become equipped with the learning skills needed to deal with future challenges;

-Hold happy, positive memories of their childhood.

The continual development and enhancement of a rigorous, broad and balanced curriculum is essential towards achieving these stated aims. This policy provides a comprehensive outline of our curriculum offer.

CURRICULUM INTENTIONS

Our curriculum aims/intends to:

-Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that's coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment;

-Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations;

-Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;

-Promote a Christian ethos and Christian values;

-Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active;

-Promote a positive attitude towards learning;

-Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support;

-Have a high academic/vocational/technical ambition for all pupils;

-Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life;

-Promote the learning and development of all our children and ensure they are ready for the next stage in their education.

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010, and the National Curriculum programmes of study which we have chosen to follow.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

From 2020, we have also amended our PSHE curriculum in line with the Department for Education's final statutory guidance to accompany introduction of compulsory health education, relationships education and relationships and sex education (RSE) in 2020.

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.

As a Church of England school, our curriculum also adheres to The Church of England guidelines for religious education and collective worship.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Head of School to account for its implementation. The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets

- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, and science, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement;

- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN);

- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements

- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

The Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for overseeing the school curriculum, and ensuring that this policy is adhered to. They should ensure 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 will be met;

-The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board;

-They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate;

-The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements;

-The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum;

-The governing board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions;

-Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN.

Subject Leaders

The subject leader's predominant role is to ensure the highest standards in terms of children's progress, attainment and enjoyment of their particular subject area. They endeavour to achieve this through:

-Researching, analysing and building the school's provision in their subject area;

-Ensuring coverage, continuity and progression of the curriculum in each year group by developing and curriculum plans;

-Cultivating the staff's pedagogical content knowledge to maximise learning across the school;

-Monitoring and supporting teaching, learning, progress and outcomes in their curriculum area;

-Monitoring the ways that resources in their curriculum area are stored, utilised and managed;

-Developing and maintaining policies and practices which reflect the school's commitment to high achievement;

Teachers

Teachers are chiefly responsible for the delivery of the curriculum. They should ensure that:

-Lessons are highly purposeful, imaginative and stimulating, to enable children to actively engage with subject content and make enhanced progress;

-Maintain a strong subject knowledge across all of the curriculum areas that they teach, to aid instruction/explanation and to ensure that feedback is precise and logical;

-To take an active role in reviewing the curriculum, through frequent dialogue with the Head of School and subject leaders.

ORGANISATION AND PLANNING

The curriculum has been carefully designed and structured to ensure that learning is continuous, sequenced and coherent across all subjects. Wherever possible subject matter is linked to ensure that the knowledge and skills gained are used across the whole curriculum - not simply in isolation - and that meaningful links are made between subjects in our termly themes. This helps children to develop schemata to frame their understanding of concepts. Our curriculum overview helps to detail these links – it can be found on the 'Debden Curriculum' page of our website.

Our curriculum also recognises the intertwined and mutually beneficial nature of the development of knowledge and skills – both of which are vital to deep and sustained learning. We have rigorously mapped our curriculum to help children to acquire the knowledge and skills that they need. They are then given opportunities to practice and apply them over time, in order to master them.

We define knowledge as information, facts or understanding about subject matter. Children's projected development of knowledge in each subject area have been carefully sequenced on our knowledge organisers, which we have created for every single unit of learning in every subject area (although we utilise the 'White Rose Maths' and 'Charanga' knowledge organisers in maths and music respectively. Examples of these documents can be also be viewed on the curriculum pages of our school website.

We define skills as the ability to do something, which can be practiced and honed over time. Research indicates that children become more proficient learners when they develop metacognitive and cognitive strategies, such as being able to retrieve and connect their knowledge (Muijs, 2020; Brown, Roediger and McDaniel, 2014). Children's projected development of skills in each subject area have been carefully plotted on our skills maps (these can be also be viewed on the curriculum pages of our school website).

A wide body of research expresses the importance of developing children's vocabulary as a central component of curriculum development (Quigley, 2019, Greenshaw et al, 2019). An expansive vocabulary is essential for children to confidently grasp the more demanding elements of the National Curriculum. In our vocabulary-rich curriculum, the new words and phrases that children are exposed to have been mapped throughout their journey at Debden (see the 'Debden Curriculum' page on the website). The new vocabulary that children are expected to be able to read and use are listed at the bottom of our knowledge organisers.

Our curriculum has been tailored to meet the needs and interests of the children in our school's context. Examples include the increased study of military history in our history topics (to reflect the high percentage of children from army families on roll) or the in-depth units on different stages of Jesus' life in RE (in accordance with our C of E school status).

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is embedded throughout the curriculum, and is particularly prominent in RE, PSHE and Collective Worship sessions. More information is provided about this in the 'Personal Development' section below.

Our individual subject policies provide a more in-depth outline of the intent, implementation and impact of our provision within each curriculum area. See our EYFS policy for information on how our early years curriculum is delivered.

DELIVERY

The school week provides 25 hours of teaching time per week. Due to the high-importance of reading, writing and mathematics in underpinning development across the curriculum, more time is allocated to these subject areas. As distinct disciplines, they are taught predominantly taught in the morning, and also feature heavily in other subject across the curriculum (particularly reading).

We allow for some slight variation between key stages and at different times in the year, however to ensure adequate coverage of our curriculum, teachers endeavour to ensure that children receive at least the following tuition duration in each subject area per week:

-English – 7 hours

-Maths – 5 hours

-Science and PE – 2 hours each

-History, Geography, RE, Computing, PSHE

Music, DT, Art & Design, MfL (KS2 only) – 45 minutes each

Foundation subjects may be taught in 'blocks' to allow for more concentrated, in-depth learning (e.g. two hours of history in Autumn 1 and two hours of geography in Autumn 2).

We also strongly encourage cross-curricular learning opportunities to link and strengthen knowledge and skills across curriculum areas – examples may include STEM-based experiments, posing ethical and moral questions within reading, or completing extended writing activities across other subject areas.

Teachers are encouraged to use a wide arsenal of pedagogical strategies to enable children to learn, remember and recall curriculum information. Chief amongst these are the 'Principles of Effective Instruction' (Rosenshine, 2010) which include short reviews and recaps at the beginnings and ends of lessons, regular quizzes to aid retention of knowledge, teaching and modelling in short steps, and providing a significant amount of time for active and independent practice.

INCLUSION

At Debden C of E Primary Academy, we set high expectations for all pupils. Learning expectations should be ambitious in all lessons, in order to ensure that they challenge even the more able pupils in the class. Appropriate, frequent assessment and feedback, alongside supportive scaffolding and support mechanisms, are then used to ensure that all groups of children are given the tools that they need to make progress, including:

-More able pupils

-Pupils with low prior attainment

-Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds

-Pupils with SEN

-Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

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

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

Where assessment shows that children do not meet or are at risk of not meeting the expected curriculum standards - to the extent where it is likely to be difficult for them to catch-up through classroom strategies alone - they are entered into our systematic interventions programme. This includes groups that function to enable children to make progress in specific target areas, including:

-Speech and language;

-Phonics catch-up;

-Numeracy catch-up;

-SATs boosters;

-Learning mentoring.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

MONITORING

Please see our marking and feedback and assessment polices for further details of how teachers monitor children's acquisition of curriculum knowledge and skills.

Governors monitor whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes the required subjects, through regular school visits. Within these school visits, they meet with the Subject Leader to review curriculum intent, implementation and impact, through methods including:

-Reviewing curriculum plans, overviews and maps;

-Learning walks/ Visiting lessons;

-Interviewing groups of children;

-Book/folder monitoring;

-Analysis of internal/ standardised assessment data;

The Head of School and Subject Leaders also use the methods above to monitor the way that subjects are being taught throughout the school on a termly cycle.

Whenever a monitoring visit is completed by a Governor, the Head of School, or a Subject Leader, a monitoring report (including curriculum strengths and next steps) is formulated and disseminated amongst the teaching team. These reports inform amendments to the school's SDP and determine foci/ discussion points within the teacher meeting/ CPD schedule.

Parents are informed of children's progress and attainment within the curriculum through regular dialogue with teachers (as necessary) parent consultations (once each in the autumn and spring terms) and written reports (in the summer term).

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development becomes enhanced through meaningful experiences woven across the curriculum. Examples may be as varied as considering how Buddhists perceive different images of the Buddha in RE (KS1), analysing how society has changed for children between the Victorian era and the present day (lower KS2) or debating the moral implications of a soldier's actions in war (upper KS2).

Children also develop an understanding of the fundamental British Values. For example, compassion, tolerance and respect are amongst our core Christian Values, and children engage in democratic processes through electing the student council and sports leaders.

Across the curriculum, we actively encourage children to demonstrate positive learning skills and behaviours, for example resilience, resourcefulness, and reflectiveness, and advocate the development of 'Growth Mindset.' These values are supported within our behaviour policy, and enable children to become confident and successful learners. Furthermore, the tasks and activities through which children learn the curriculum are varied – they may learn through group discussions, independent learning, enquiry, problem-solving and innovation-based activities – and this enables them to develop critical learning skills for their ongoing development.

Pupils also develop an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships through appropriate relationships and sex education, as a part of our PSHE curriculum.

A wide range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities are offered to children at Debden C of E Primary Academy. All teaching staff lead at least one extra-curricular club over the course of the academic year for one term – in the past this has included activities such as photography, choir and archery. We also have many enrichment activities organised by external providers, for example before and after school sports clubs.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of School and subject leaders. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Subject policies
- EYFS policy
- Assessment policy
- Marking and Feedback policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Equality information and objectives