



Discovery Schools
Academy Trust



Woolden Hill
Primary School
Achieving Success, Creating Futures Together

CURRICULUM POLICY

2016-2017

Introduction

Our schools within Discovery Schools Academy Trust (DSAT) believe that the curriculum is a powerful tool that should promote a love of learning, a willingness to explore and have a bespoke set of opportunities to meet the needs of the children within each school. The National Curriculum is used as a starting point for each school to construct topics of curricular subjects for the children to explore. We enrich it locally within each school by using the four cornerstones of learning: engage, develop, innovate and express your learning. We are committed to developing the whole child and ensure that the curriculum is appropriate for their stage of education regardless of their age. Our children will have the opportunity to be creative, to be physically active and to be academically challenged. We seek to find real life experiences and opportunities for children to work together within and between schools.

Through joint practice development all curriculum leaders within our schools continually review and improve the curriculum we offer to our children. Each school is expected to develop a curriculum that evolves according to the needs of its children and to the aspirations of the staff and community.

Values

We value the way in which all children are unique, and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual child, as well as for people of all cultures. We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.

We value the importance of each person in our community. Schools organise their curriculum so that they promote co-operation and understanding between all members of the Trust community. Each school uses their local community to enrich the curriculum.

We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each child in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all the children in our multi academy trust.

We value our environment and we aim, through our curriculum, to teach respect for our world, and how we should care for it for future generations, as well as our own.

We value parents and work in partnership with them to enrich the curriculum. Parents are informed about the curriculum through topic letters, homework and curriculum workshops, and are positively encouraged to become involved.

Our values strongly reflect those accepted as British Values.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of our school's curriculum are:

- To enable all children to understand how to be successful learners
- To ensure that all children, regardless of starting point and barriers, achieve their potential
- To enable children to understand the skills and attributes needed to be a successful learner

- To enable children to develop their own personal interests
- To promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning
- To teach children the basic skills of English, Mathematics and Information Technology (IT) / Computing
- To enable children to be creative through art, dance, music, drama and design technology
- To enable children to be healthy individuals who enjoy exercise and appreciate the importance of a healthy lifestyle
- To teach children about their developing world, including how their environment and society has changed over time
- To help children understand Britain's cultural heritage and traditional British values
- To enable children to be positive citizens in society and to feel that they can make a difference
- To enable children to understand and respect other cultures
- To fulfil all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed syllabus for Religious Education
- To teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to understand right from wrong
- To help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all
- 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 enable children to be active and take responsibility for their own health
- To give every child the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument
- To give every child opportunities to learn a foreign language and about other cultures
- To encourage children to be passionate about what they believe in and to develop their own thinking
- To enable children to ask questions and take risks
- To enable children to develop their intellect including their emotional development

Organisation and Planning

Each school within the Trust is autonomous in the creation and delivery of its own curriculum to meet the needs of its children. We expect each school to follow the trust aims and objectives but to deliver these in a way that is appropriate to their school.

Generally topics of work have no predefined length but are grouped across the year to suit the year group curriculum aims and necessary coverage of skills. The majority of the schools use Cornerstone's Curriculum framework to deliver the four cornerstone principles.

Where possible schools seek to share planning and topics to encourage joint practice development, and have a similar language between schools to exploit shared opportunities and peer review. The Trust has developed a core scheme of work for English and Mathematics which schools are encouraged to follow.

All teachers are expected to provide a medium-term plan, which gives clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that will be used when teaching each topic.

Our short-term plans are written on a weekly basis for English and Mathematics.

In the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2 we adopt an inter-disciplinary topic approach to curriculum planning. We plan the curriculum carefully so that there is coherence and full coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum and early learning goals, and there is planned progression in all curriculum areas.

Each topic may have specific subject focuses and not cover all subjects. Over the three terms of the academic year each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects.

Children with Special Needs

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

If a child has a special need, our schools do all they can to meet their individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice in providing for children with special needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, his/her teacher makes an assessment of this need. 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 referral to receive an individualized Education Health Care Plan, and we involve the appropriate external agencies when making this assessment. We provide additional resources and support for children with special needs.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The curriculum that we teach in the EYFS class meets the requirements set out in the revised National Curriculum at Foundation Stage. Our curriculum planning focuses on the six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication – language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

All our schools fully support the principle that young children learn through play, and by engaging in well-planned structured activities. Teaching in the Foundation class builds on the experiences of the children in their pre-school learning. We do all we can to build positive partnerships with the variety of nurseries and other pre-school providers in each area.

During the children's first term in school, their teacher begins to assess each child. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child. A Baseline assessment is completed. Our schools have chosen to use 'Speech Link' as their preferred provider for Baseline Assessment in 2015 – 2016.

We believe the support of parents and carers is essential if teachers are to make outstanding progress in our schools. Each school is expected to strive to build positive links with the parents and carers of each child

by having a carefully planned induction process including home visits. This relationship is nurtured throughout their time in Foundation Stage and onto KS1.

Key Skills

The following skills have been deemed 'key skills' in the revised National Curriculum:

- Communication
- Application of number
- Information technology
- Working with others
- Improving own learning and performance
- Problem-solving

Schools strive to develop these skills across the curriculum.

Extra-Curricular Activities

All schools are expected to provide extra-curricular activities to expand and meet the interest of its children. Opportunities for participation for all children should be explored and the Trust provides a range of sporting and Arts activities which are designed to increase the number of children who can participate in representing their school. Where possible, schools provide before and after school wrap around care with activities linked to the curriculum.

Pupil Voice

Each school has a school council and encourages children to elect representatives to provide opportunities for pupil voice within school. Each school council has a budget and uses it to promote learning and opportunities within their school. The council is used regularly to interview staff for positions and act as ambassadors for guests visiting the school.

The Trust organises and operates a children's parliament that is made up of representatives from each school. Children elect two Members of Discovery Parliament (MDPs) for each select committees within each school.

The four select committees are

- The Arts
- Well Being
- STEM
- Literature and Learning

Schools then identify from their MDPs two children who are Ministers for the Cabinet, and they select a Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Chancellor. The cabinet is provided with an annual budget to develop learning opportunities between schools and set priorities. The cabinet is expected to report to the Trust Directors three times a year.

Celebration of Excellence and Effort

Each school has its own rewards and house systems to celebrate children's successes. DSAT organises an annual awards event to celebrate children's and adult's contributions and efforts. All schools nominate children for each category and the Trust selects three candidates in each category to attend the prestigious awards ceremony.

Curriculum Leadership

Each school decides how to distribute the leadership of the curriculum and specific areas. The role of the each leader is to:

- Provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject
- Support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject
- Monitor pupil progress in that subject area
- Provide efficient resource management for the subject

It is the role of each leader to keep up to date with developments in their area, at both national and local level. They review the way their area is taught in the school and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each subject leader reviews the curriculum plans for their subject, ensures that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum and that progression is planned into schemes of work. They all attend trust network meetings to share and develop best practice.

Monitoring and Review

Our advisory board is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented locally. Members liaise with the leaders of these areas, and monitor the way the school teaches these subjects through governor visits to school.

The Headteacher is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. The Headteacher monitors the curriculum through planning, classroom observation, liaising with the Curriculum Co-ordinators and School Management Team.

Subject leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school. They examine long-term and medium-term planning, and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Subject leaders have responsibility for monitoring standards and ensuring that teachers have the skills and resources they need.

The Trust Board of Directors has a Risk management subcommittee that reviews Trust priorities and initiatives to develop teaching and learning which includes curriculum developments and partnerships. A Headteacher and a local governor can be elected to join this group.

REVIEW

The Board of Discovery Schools Academy Trust will review this policy statement annually and update, modify or amend it as it considers necessary to ensure the policy meets the needs of all the schools in the Trust.