

Curriculum Policy

1. Introduction

At the Marchant-Holliday School (MHS) we aim to provide a curriculum that is appropriate for the needs of our children. The children at the school have a wide range of academic, social, emotional and behavioural needs. The curriculum aims to support pupils to be successful and develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes that they will need in their future education and beyond.

1.1

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning, personal development and well-being. The curriculum is a 24 hour curriculum that covers the more formal activities of classroom learning and the wide range of activities that we organise to enrich the experience of the children. We endeavour to make the 'hidden curriculum' more explicit by modelling and supporting good social skills and behaviour. We aim to support children to develop into positive, responsible people, who have the confidence and self-worth to work and co-operate with others and achieve their full potential.

1.2

The curriculum is a skills based, competency curriculum that recognises the need for children to develop the skills and attributes needed to access learning and be successful learners. Some of our children go on to mainstream schools, others go on to other specialist provision. The increasingly complex nature of the children referred to MHS has necessitated a curriculum that is more flexible and adaptable to individual needs. The curriculum incorporates aspects of the National Curriculum, includes SEAL and takes account of the Code of Practice for SEN and of Every Child Matters. The curriculum has its own core, foundation and enrichment areas.

1.3

Given the changing nature of the children referred to MHS the curriculum is fluid and subject to regular review. This is so that we can realistically address the increasingly complex needs of children experiencing social, emotional and behavioural problems who often have additional needs in areas such as ASD, ADHD, ODD, Spld (including Dyslexia, Dyscalculia), Dyspraxia and Attachment Disorder.

1.4

All of our children have failed in mainstream education, with their anxieties and problems being expressed by un-acceptable behaviours. They have low self-esteem and self-worth. We feel that it is important that our curriculum reflects the need to spend time on developing social skills, emotional literacy and modifying behaviour so that children are better able to manage situations they find difficult.

Our work on behaviour modification takes place through the behaviour systems we have in place (See Behaviour Policy) and are underpinned by the values and the ethos of the school. Adverse individual or group behaviour can happen at any time.

When they arise they need to be dealt with immediately in order that do not escalate or disrupt the learning of the individual(s) concerned or others. At these times the curriculum for an individual or a group may be suspended so that the issue can be resolved.

1.5 Values

The curriculum at MHS is underpinned by the following values:

- We value the way in which all children are unique and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of the individual as well as people from all cultures and backgrounds. We value the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development as well as the spiritual and moral development of people.
- We value the importance of each person and their role in our community.
- We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community.
- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our community and encourage individual and collective responsibility.
- We respect each child in our school for who they are and treat them with respect, fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all children in our school.
- 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.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

2.1

At MHS we support our children to over-come their social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. In addition we support them with any specific learning difficulties. The aims of our school curriculum are:

- to enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability
- to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school and acquire a solid base for lifelong learning
- to teach children the core skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology which underpin many aspects of learning
- to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking

- to teach children about their developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time
- to help children understand Britain's cultural heritage
- 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 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.

3.0 Curriculum Organisation

The MHS curriculum is needs led and skills based. As such it has a much larger Core Curriculum than the National Curriculum. The MHS Core Curriculum consists of:

English (Literacy)
 Mathematics (Numeracy)
 Science
 ICT
 PE
 RE
 PSHE/Citizenship
 Social Skills
 Learning Support (1:1 support for Spld etc)
 Behaviour Support (1:1 support for behavioural issues)
 Care Curriculum
 Therapy/Counselling

The MHS Foundation Curriculum consists of:

History
 Geography
 Art
 Design Technology
 Music
 MFL

These subjects are taught thematically in termly topics over a two year cycle. Where appropriate, links are made to Core Curriculum areas. ICT, PE and Music are taught by specialist teachers. All other subjects are taught by the class teacher.

The curriculum is enriched by

- Assemblies
- Special Days (Friendship Day, Multicultural Day, Sports Day, Fruity Friday)
- Events (Christingle Service, Pantomime, Christmas performance)
- Themed weeks (Anti-bullying week)
- Educational visits
- Social visits
- Visitors

4.0 Curriculum Planning

Many of our children have an academic attainment that is below their chronological age due to a disrupted education and/or additional specific learning needs. Planning is pitched at levels appropriate for the individual child.

4.1 Long-term Planning

The curriculum is planned in three phases. We agree a long-term plan for each class group. This indicates what topics/areas are to be taught in each term. Long-term plans are reviewed annually.

The review of the long-term planning allows for the development of a curriculum that is best suited to individual class-groups which may contain pupils of different ages, abilities and additional needs. Any changes to long-term plans are considered and agreed between the Deputy Head Teacher and the class teacher. Any changes are reported to the governors through a Curriculum update document.

Included in the long-term planning for the year are special days such as Friendship day and Multicultural Day. These allow for suspension of the usual timetable to allow children to work in mixed age groups and explore wider educational themes as well as develop social skills. Flexibility exists within the curriculum to introduce additional whole or part days for all or some pupils to be involved in activities such as sex and relationship afternoons for older boys.

4.2 Medium Term Planning

Medium term-planning covers half-termly plans for Core Subjects and termly plans for Foundation subjects. Medium term plans show the learning objectives, SEAL objectives and the learning activities that will take place to meet these objectives.

A simple classification of activities into visual, auditory and kinaesthetic allows for diversity of activity in terms of learning styles.

Medium term-planning is submitted for monitoring at the start of each-half-term. It is recognised that there may be a need to adjust planning because in the professional judgement of the teachers more time is needed to consolidate learning or an area has been covered more quickly than anticipated. Such modifications are highlighted on planning sheets.

4.3 Short Term Planning

Short-term plans are written on a weekly or daily basis. These set out the learning activities for that day. These are completed at least one day ahead and used by cover teachers to allow for some continuity of learning should the usual class teacher be absent.

It is at the classroom level of planning that there is the greatest need for flexibility. Due to the complex nature of the behaviour of our children it will sometimes be pertinent to suspend the lesson content to deal with the behavioural issue. It may be necessary to suspend the lesson content to cover some special event.

It is also recognised that children may need to attend 1:1 sessions for speech & language, learning support, behaviour support, reading, exercises and counselling and that this requires a flexible approach to class-room activities.

5.0 Key Skills and Thinking Skills

Children learn, practice, develop and refine a range of skills during their school career. Some of these skills are specific to certain subjects; others are universal and support learning in all subjects. These skills underpin learning throughout the school. We aim to equip children with these skills so that they can be successful now and in the future.

5.1

We consider the need to embed key skills into our curriculum. These are:

- **Communication** - including listening, speaking, reading & writing
- **Application of number** - including mental calculation skills and learning how to apply these skills to solving number problems
- **Information technology** - including using technology to find, analyze, interpret and present information.
- **Working with others** - including the ability to work well with others as a team member or team leader and considering the views of others
- **Improving own learning and performance** - including evaluating performance and understanding what is needed to improve
- **Problem solving** - including how to apply common techniques to solve problems in a variety of contexts and situations in any aspect of life.

We consider the need to embed thinking skills into our curriculum. These are:

- **Information-processing skills** - These enable pupils to locate and collect relevant information, to sort, classify, sequence, compare and contrast, and to analyse part/whole relationships.

- **Reasoning skills** - These enable pupils to give reasons for opinions and actions, to draw inferences and make deductions, to use precise language to explain what they think, and to make judgments and decisions informed by reasons or evidence.
- **Enquiry skills**- These enable pupils to ask relevant questions, to pose and define problems, to plan what to do and how to research, to predict outcomes and anticipate consequences, and to test conclusions and improve ideas.
- **Creative thinking skills** - These enable pupils to generate and extend ideas, to suggest hypotheses, to apply imagination, and to look for alternative innovative outcomes.
- **Evaluation skills**- These enable pupils to evaluate information, to judge the value of what they read, hear and do, to develop criteria for judging the value of their own and others' work or ideas, and to have confidence in their judgments

5.2

Key skills & Thinking Skills form a cornerstone of curriculum planning throughout the school. These skills are taught through all curriculum subjects and are developed them within the pastoral curriculum. Teachers highlight opportunities to develop these skills on their medium term planning.

We give children plenty of opportunity to work as part of a group and take responsibility for their role in group work. As with other skills, we actively teach children how they can contribute to the work of a group and what being a successful member of a team involves. Teachers assess these skills as part of the established assessment processes in school. The class teacher comments on each child's progress in annual reports to parents.

6.0 Children with additional needs

The curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children that attend the school. It is sometimes necessary to adapt the curriculum in order to provide a more specialist provision that will meet the needs of individual children and for them to make progress towards the objectives specified in their Statement of Special Educational Needs.

6.1

We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice. Before a child enters the school and during the first few weeks following admission, an assessment is made of the child's needs. This includes an academic Base Line Assessment and an assessment of social, emotional and behavioural needs. In most instances the class teacher and/or the Learning Support Unit are able to provide resources and educational opportunities that meet the

child's needs within the normal class organisation. If the child's needs are more complex we involve the appropriate external agencies such as Speech & Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Educational Psychology, when making assessments or providing additional resources and support.

6.2

The school provides an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for all our children. This sets out the targets for improvement and the strategies used to support this improvement. These targets are monitored and reviewed regularly. IEP's are set and reviewed at the end of each term. Where appropriate children are encouraged to contribute to the target setting and review process. The targets are linked to statement objectives and baseline assessment results. Every child has their academic targets displayed in their classroom and on pack work folders. The school also provides an Individual Care Plan which focuses on social and life skill targets. As with IEP targets they are clearly displayed and regularly monitored and reviewed. (See Special Needs Policy)

7.0 Homework

One of the aims of our school is for children to develop as independent learners. We believe that homework is an important way in which children can acquire some of the skills of independent learning. However, we also acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development.

7.1 The aims of homework

The aims of homework are:

- to help children develop the skills of an independent learner
- to consolidate and reinforce learning done in class
- to allow children to practice skills taught in class
- to help children develop good work habits for the future

7.2 Organisation

Homework is given to children in years 6 & 7. This is a minimum of 1 hour a week. The school can use one of two models for homework. In the first model homework is split into two 30 minute sessions twice a week at 6.p.m. These sessions are supervised by the evening supervisor and additional staff if required. In the second model homework is set on a Monday for children to complete during the week and to be handed to the class teacher on Friday. Children do their homework in their rooms in the evening. Day pupils take their work home. The homework which is set is at a level that the individual child can manage with minimal intervention from an adult. Homework is usually literacy or numeracy based. The children may sometimes be given homework to complete during the school holidays.

7.3 The role of parent/carers of Day Pupils

We ask parents/carers to encourage their child to complete homework tasks that are set. We invite them to help their children as they feel necessary and provide them with the sort of environment that allows children to do their best.

If a parent/carer has any problems or questions about homework, they should, in the first instance, contact the child's class teacher. Questions of a more general nature should be directed to the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher. Finally, if they wish to make a complaint about homework policy or the way it is presented, parents should contact the governing body.

8.0 The role of the Subject Leader

The primary role of the subject leader is to:

- provide a strategic role 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

8.1

The school gives subject leaders Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time each week so they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role. It is the role of each subject leader to keep up to date with developments in their subject at both national and local level. They review the way the subject is taught in the school and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole school objectives and is, whenever relevant, included in the School Improvement Plan. Each subject leader reviews the curriculum plans for their subject, ensuring that there is appropriate coverage and progression planned.

9.0 Curriculum Budgets

Each curriculum area has its own budget, which is set at the beginning of every financial year. Subject leaders are responsible for managing the budget for their subject area. In addition class teachers are allocated a budget for the topics that they teach. All requests for additional curriculum money should be addressed in the first instance to the Deputy Headteacher.

10.0 Reporting pupil progress

We are aware that all children need the support of parents/carers and teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents and carers of each child by keeping them informed about the way in which their child is being taught and how well the child is progressing. We inform parents/carers about what and how their children are learning by:

- sending information at the start of each year in which we outline the topics the children will be studying during the school year;
- Sending weekly reports which explain how the child has done that week and what improvements they could make the following week. The pupils also have an opportunity to express their views on their progress for the week.

- Sending reports home every December and July. Parents have an opportunity to meet with the class teacher at these report times;
- producing a detailed annual review report for discussion with parents/carers at the Annual Review
- Inviting parents/carers to School Performances, Sports Days and other special events.

Pupils are assessed regularly both summatively and formatively. We promote assessment for learning and encourage pupils to do self-assessment, peer assessment etc. (See Assessment & Target Setting Policy)

11.0 Monitoring and Review

The governing body's Curriculum & Personnel Committee, together with the Head Teacher and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for monitoring and implementing the curriculum policy.

We have named governors for all curriculum subjects. The governors are encouraged to liaise with subject leaders of these areas and monitor the way the school delivers these subjects.

11.1

The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. The Deputy Headteacher monitors the annual and medium term planning for all teachers, ensuring that all classes get breadth and balance in their curriculum, and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives. Subject-leaders monitor their subject areas as outlined above.

12.0 Curriculum Development

Due to the changing nature of the pupils that are referred to and attend the Marchant Holliday School we recognise the need to adapt, modify and develop our curriculum to meet the needs of the children.

12.1

There is an annual review of the curriculum to consider the positive aspects of the curriculum and to consider those aspects that need development. In addition there is, at a Senior Management level, annual consideration given to the need to make more fundamental changes to the curriculum. Where such changes are deemed necessary, a consultation document is produced. This includes the rationale for change, the implications for change, together with any costings and timescales. Following feedback from staff, this is then taken to the Curriculum Committee for consideration and then to a meeting of the full Governing body for ratification.