



Alexandra School

Learning Together



Curriculum Policy

This policy outlines the aims of the curriculum for the children learning together, here at Alexandra School. It describes what we teach and the approaches we use.

Aims

In their time at Alexandra, we want our children to acquire knowledge, and use and apply that knowledge to both demonstrate and further their own understanding. In this way, we believe our children will not only value what they learn, but come to love the process of learning together.

To achieve this goal, our children need to:

- Enjoy learning
- View themselves as learners, and acquire the learning behaviour which makes this possible
- Explore all areas of the National Curriculum
- Use and Apply learnt skills in real life situations wherever possible
- Develop language and communication skills through all areas of the curriculum
- Develop physical and coordination skills
- Develop life-skills in order to optimise independence and the ability to make a positive contribution
- Develop the spiritual, moral and cultural values which will enable them to participate, contribute and benefit from their community and wider society

In pursuit of this goal, we will:

- Work with all children to ensure progress appropriate to their age, stage and phase of development, whether steps taken be big or small, and celebrate this progress with the children and their families when they do.
- Develop an active approach to learning, through problem solving and investigation
- Develop their social and emotional skills and abilities through nurturing, modelling and explicit teaching
- Deliver a challenging, accessible and stimulating curriculum, which takes account of the needs and abilities of the child

Content of the Curriculum

Curriculum planning at Alexandra relates to the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum for KS1 and 2 throughout the school. The school uses a range of published materials to assist teachers in differentiating and modifying the curriculum to suit the needs of the children they teach. Teachers are encouraged to write their own plans, making use of these support materials as necessary. Supporting documents include The Primary National Strategy, QCA and SEAL support teachers in their planning.

Often our children can find imaginative play and child directed activities difficult. Children on the autistic spectrum in particular can find a typical foundation stage classroom a confusing and overwhelming environment. Learning through play remains central to our EYFS curriculum. However a higher level of structure than might be found in a mainstream EYFS setting may be necessary in order for our children to access the full curriculum. The EYFS curriculum at Alexandra is designed to introduce the play skills that facilitate investigation, exploration and social communication and engagement through structured, adult-directed activities. Opportunities are then provided to use these skills within planned child directed activities.

Occasionally we have children in Year 1 who could and should continue to work within the Early Years Foundation stage.

Children in Key Stages 1 and 2 follow a subject based curriculum which includes:

- Literacy, Maths, Science, ICT
- DT, Art, Music and Drama
- PE (including swimming)
- History and Geography
- RE
- SMSCE (including PSHCE, RE and Life Skills)

Children learn French from their final term in Year 4, to the end of Year 6.

Language and Communication Skills

As a priority in this school, generous emphasis is given to the development of speaking and listening skills. This is apparent in planning and in the delivery of the curriculum as a whole.

Life-skills Curriculum

Life-skills are taught through all areas of the curriculum and on occasions as a discrete subject in the timetable. Life-skills objectives are stated on planning and are a vital part of our children's development and growing independence.

ICT (also see ICT policy)

ICT supports all areas of the curriculum and is also taught as a discrete subject. ICT objectives and activities are stated on planning and are embedded within the curriculum. The acquisition of ICT skills are essential if our children are to realise their potential, and to thrive in the society they will ultimately become a part of.

Organisation of the Curriculum

Planning the coverage for the Long term curriculum ensures that children have ample opportunity to cover the skills integral to each of these curriculum areas. It helps to ensure that the best possible use is made of the children's learning time, by covering a broad and balanced range of topics across disciplines, coverage within disciplines, and providing opportunities to develop the children's learning in areas of particular interest.

Medium term planning is closely monitored to ensure that all teachers are providing opportunities for developing key skills appropriate the age and stage of development of each child in their class. Medium term plans benefit from the skills and experience of our teachers who create inspirational programmes of study to meet the individual needs of the children.

The way in which the curriculum is organised by individual teachers is flexible. Teachers have the freedom to extend or enhance the curriculum and its delivery in any of the following ways in order to meet the needs of their class:

- Combining two or more curriculum areas together to create a more topic based approach, whilst still enabling children to learn the skills required for each curriculum area
- Educational visits to museums, places of interest, the theatre, to do fieldwork...any way in which the curriculum can be brought alive and applied in the real world
- Using a range of creative teaching methods
- Themed curriculum activities, both in and out of school
- Developing flexibility in the timetable to allow for sessions of an appropriate and accessible length

Recording and Assessment

Please read our Assessment Policy, which includes information on marking and annotations.

Reviewed by P Buchanan-Barrow and approved by governors November 2011

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