



CREATIVE CURRICULUM POLICY

Approved on 30.11.2020 by the RA

Subject Leader: Helen Miller

1. Introduction

At Holmwood School, we believe that the curriculum is a powerful tool that promotes a love of learning and a willingness to explore and question.

The curriculum defines and describes the full range of experiences that Holmwood School plans and delivers for its pupils in preparing them for the opportunities and demands of adult life. Through our curriculum we are striving to enable learners to develop their knowledge, experience and imaginative understanding and their awareness of moral values. We hope that it will enable them to enter life after formal education as active participants in and contributors to society, capable of achieving as much independence as possible.

Holmwood School has chosen to use Focus Education's 'The Learning Challenge Curriculum'. This process puts high emphasis on learners being involved in their own learning. It also focuses on improving learners' and teachers' questioning and uses a key skills system to guarantee continuity and progression in learning across the whole school. It is the focus of the creative curriculum to combine subjects where possible and link to the term's topics. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

We are continually reviewing and improving our curriculum.

2. Curriculum Aims

We adhere to National Curriculum Aims (September 2014).

The aims of our school curriculum are:-

- Raise achievement
- To enable all children to understand that they are successful learners
- Provide a broad, balanced and enriching curriculum.
- To help pupils understand and appreciate Britain's cultural heritage and promote the values of a wider British Society.

- To help children understand what it means to be a member of European and Global Citizens and enable them to be positive citizens in society.
- Develop the use of computing across the curriculum.
- To fulfil all the requirements of the National Curriculum (September 2014) and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.
- To teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development and understand right from wrong.
- Build up children's confidence and motivation to learn through the use of a range of learning and teaching styles.
- Challenge thinking.
- To be healthy individuals.
- Promote curiosity i.e. for further study.
- Embed key skills in order to prepare children for real-life and everyday situations.
- To embed the principles of Focus Education's 'The Learning Challenge Curriculum'.
- Provide opportunities to apply knowledge and learning in practical ways.
- Provide a creative approach to planning and delivery that will incorporate and embed key aspects of the National Curriculum supported by The Learning Challenge Curriculum.
- Provide enrichment opportunities where learning and teaching can take place beyond the classroom.
- Develop Excellence and Enjoyment.
- Develop social skills and encourage children to become more active citizens within the school community and beyond.

The curriculum will:-

- Increase learners' motivation, enthusiasm and engagement in their learning, making learning more meaningful
- Raise standards in both teaching and learning
- Help learners become more independent and take greater ownership of their learning; developing children's confidence and motivation to learn through the use of a range of learning and teaching styles
- Give opportunity for true depth of study
- Establish cross-curricular links to foster a broader understanding
- Create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment, including whole school themed days.
- Provide opportunities to apply knowledge and learning in practical ways and to solve problems in a variety of situations
- Provide enrichment opportunities where learning and teaching can take place beyond the classroom.

3. The Organisation of the Curriculum

Each class teacher is responsible for the delivery of the curriculum through a Learning Challenge approach which incorporates key skills.

The role of the Curriculum Lead is to:-

- Provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject
- Support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject.
- Provide efficient resource management for the subject.

The Curriculum has been organised into Learning Challenges. Each Learning Challenge has been given a key focus within each year group and links have been made to curricular areas within the topic.

Opportunities for the Spoken Language are optimised and basic skills are delivered through this holistic approach to teaching.

The use of computing is encouraged in all topic areas as a subject in its own right and in both the teaching of the topic and in the opportunities for children's independent learning.

Although links can be made with all subjects, the following subjects are taught as dedicated, discrete sessions:-

- **Maths** – Maths skills are key to developing everyday skills
- **Aspects of English** – Phonics, reading spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting are taught as discrete subjects as they build up basic skills.
- **RE**
- **Aspects of Science**
- **Sex Education**
- **PE and Swimming**
- **FL** – *French*

Teaching staff are encouraged to enthuse the children and broaden their experiences through the 'WOW' factor e.g. off-site visits, visitors into school and shared experiences of the wider school community. This works really well at the beginning of a topic but can be used anywhere.

Childrens' achievements are celebrated regularly in the school through displays in classrooms and shared areas and in assemblies where children are encouraged to share their knowledge with the rest of the school.

Governors' Role

The Governing Body, when considering and reviewing the curriculum of Holmwood School, are asked to ensure that all pupils can experience, through the various elements of the curriculum, the full range of entitlement.

Inclusion

Cross curricular dimensions encompass equal opportunities, education for cultural diversity and special educational needs. In Holmwood we ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of gender or social, cultural and linguistic background.

As we seek to prepare our pupils for life in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society as well as a society that promotes British values. We also promote an awareness of racism and provide anti-racist education. The curriculum now reflects the cultural diversity of our country and promotes an understanding of the United Kingdom's place in a wider inter-dependent world. The curriculum promotes equal opportunities between the genders.

Enriching the Curriculum

Holmwood recognises activities that extend learning beyond the classroom and contribute to the whole curriculum, such as planned educational visits. We believe that these are essential to enable our pupils to have access to a greater understanding of the world. We are fortunate to have our own Minibus, and this is used regularly and effectively to support Teaching and Learning. All educational visits are supported by the Evolve programme.

OHSL

We have developed a culture of Out of Hours Learning which we believe makes a valuable contribution to the learning experience of pupils. These include additional lunchtime sessions, before school sessions and the occasional after school sessions

These activities support the aims and priorities of the school and extend the experience of many elements of the curriculum.

Curriculum Organisation

Being a small school with a shifting population and usually a higher percentage of pupils in Key Stage Two we need to be flexible to deliver the curriculum effectively.

The school roll is set by the Local Authority, but acts as a Service Provider to the LA.

The school is currently organised into 8 classes with approximately 10 pupils in each class.

We try to ensure that each class has a basic staffing of 1 teacher, 1 Senior Teaching Assistant (Level 3) and 1 Teaching Assistant (Level 2) in Key Stage Two. In Key Stage One, an extra Teaching Assistant is added. Special pupil situations may warrant additional staffing.

Classes are organised initially by age. As in any small school, we sometimes need to have more than one year group in a class. Where this happens we consider ability, and consider fast-tracking pupils and band more-able pupils. Account is taken of special need, but all classes are expected to deliver the curriculum to a mixed-ability class with a range of learning and behavioural needs.

Foundation Stage and KS1 pupils are taught in the Early Years department and support is given by the Leadership Team. They have their own toilet and changing facilities, dining and play areas. The Foundation Stage Curriculum and KS1 Curriculum is fully in place, and approaches from Foundation Stage are used as appropriate across the school. All staff in the Early Years department need to be fully aware of Foundation Stage and KS1 curriculum.

KS2 Curriculum is fully in place.

Teachers need to be able to teach across year groups, and support is given by the Leadership Team.

As a Primary School, teachers are expected to teach all subjects, but we offer specialism in Dance and some areas of Sport and PE.

Sex and Relationships Education

Holmwood School has developed a statement of policy on sex education. This is available to parents and governors. We also provide a purpose-designed Sex Education programme as part of our Healthy Schools initiative for the whole school.

Political Education

- Where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils they will be offered a balanced presentation of views.
- Other than from a topical initiative, political issues will not be part of the curriculum.

Religious Education

Religious education is provided for all pupils. The curriculum follows the guidance given in the locally agreed syllabus established by the Middlesbrough Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

All pupils in attendance take part in an act of collective worship on each school day.

Inclusion

Schools have a responsibility to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils. The National Curriculum provides the framework for planning a school curriculum which meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils (boys, girls, special educational needs, ethnic minority, asylum seekers and looked after pupils). This statutory inclusion statement is central to the National Curriculum and examples of relevant and appropriately challenging work is outlined in the National Curriculum Handbooks.

Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils:-

All pupils in Holmwood School have particular learning, behavioural or assessment requirements that could cause barriers to learning if not addressed.

- Most of our pupils need help with communication, language and literacy.
- We aim to develop pupils' understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences
- We enable pupils to record their work in a variety of ways
- We offer enhanced participation in learning and in physical and practical activities
- Holmwood School has a strong reputation for helping pupils manage their social and emotional difficulties. We use a variety of approaches built on raising self esteem and rewarding good choices.
- We also have a strong reputation for helping pupils to manage their mental health. The school offers unconditional support and believes in helping children understand their own emotions and how they can be affected by external influences.

4. The Delivery of the Curriculum

A key feature of the recommendations across Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 initiatives is the attention given to the teaching of thinking skills. English and Maths make specific contributions to the development of information processing, reasoning, enquiry, creative thinking and evaluation.

Planning

Outstanding planning underpins outstanding practice by helping to ensure that teaching is well focused on what pupils need to learn to make good progress. Planning for all subjects in Holmwood School addresses the long, medium and short term. A long-term plan covering N.C. entitlement is used and Medium-term planning is addressed through questions, which in turn provide objectives within which teachers can adapt and carry out short-term lesson planning to meet the needs of individual classes and/or pupils. We are increasingly utilising active learning experiences within cross-curricular approaches in Holmwood, enabling us to provide a full and challenging curriculum at the same time as understanding our pupils' needs and learning styles.

Developments in our Daily Planning have led to a format which uses age-appropriate learning objectives as a starting point but the planning will be tracked back to match the needs of individual pupils modified accordingly.

5. Assessment

Statements of Special Educational Needs

All pupils have a statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan or are in the final stages of the plan, when they start the school as a result of in-depth assessment by Educational Psychologists, teachers, parents and other professionals. It is the statement that provides the basis for monitoring progress. Every child is assessed according to needs, with a programme set through IEPs. Pupils' IEPs become an integral part of the monitoring process.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

All pupils in Holmwood have IEPs. Teachers write these at the beginning of each school year and update them at the beginning of each term. These are shared with parents. Each pupil is given specific targets for English, Maths, Science, Spoken Language and Social/Emotional/Wellbeing development. Pupils are fully aware of their individual targets where appropriate. IEPs are monitored each term by the Head teacher and Leadership Team.

Baseline Assessment

The school uses the Foundation Profile as well as the Durham 'Flying Start' Baseline profiles in line with other schools to inform planning and project future targets and results.

Curriculum Assessment

The pupils are assessed by their classroom teacher with support from their teaching assistants. The Learning Ladders are used to assess what the child has mastered and their future targets.

Children that are able access the National Curriculum are assessed at the end of each term by an external exam for reading, maths and spelling, punctuation and grammar (Rising Stars). Teacher assessment will be solely used to assess children who are on P scales or early learning goals.

The pupils' writing is assessed using a team approach, books and independent writing is scrutinised by a number of teachers to ensure an accurate level is obtained.

At the end of each term pupils are assessed against their IEP. Pupils' levels in reading, writing numeracy and SPAG are entered onto tracking sheets. The results are monitored and evaluated to inform the teachers and the school on progress and trends. Where progress is a cause for concern intervention strategies will be introduced.

Moderation

Pupils' work is levelled by the teachers, supported by a programme of moderation where different areas of the curriculum are scrutinised and moderated on a half-termly basis.

Records of Achievement (RoA)

A portfolio of evidence is collated during the child's time in the school. This contains evidence of work and progression from the Core Subjects and a range of foundation subject areas. The child takes this RoA home at the end of KS2 or when they leave Holmwood School.

Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs)

All pupils are given the opportunity to take SATs when appropriate.

School Transfer

Where pupils move to another school during KS1 or KS2, the RoA is given to the receiving school along with Assessment data, IEPs, the current statement and any other professional reports e.g. speech therapy.

Reporting to Parents

Teachers write an end-of-year report for each pupil. This is discussed with parents at a parents' evening during the summer term. Early in the school year we invite parents to an Open Evening to share information on the children.

6. Marking

Marking is an implicit part of assessment, complementing and assisting teaching and learning. It is an integral part of the National Curriculum statutory procedures. Please refer to the Marking Policy for additional information.

7. Homework

All children have access to a Holmwood School Homework Bag.

Aims

During Foundation Stage and KS1, children will be given homework regularly. Children take this home to either work independently, or to be supported by an adult. This helps children improve and widen their educational experience through school and home working in partnership and offering support for learning.

By the end of KS2, children will be able to apply themselves to a range of homework activities, consolidating learned strategies by independent revision and adult support. They will improve their attainment through regular weekly educational activities completed at home in addition to daily schoolwork.

8. Parental Involvement

Research demonstrates the beneficial effect which parental involvement can have on children's learning. The involvement of "adults other than teachers", both parents and members of the community, is also helpful in enriching the learning experience available to pupils. Consequently, Holmwood is pro-active in encouraging parents, students and volunteers to become part of the school work-force, enhancing school life and supporting the education of the pupils. Our PSA supports parents who want to help pupils with homework but who may need training themselves. Eg. ICT

9. Guidance and Welfare

There is a strong emphasis on pastoral care and personal development in Holmwood. This is particularly strong due to the numbers and quality of staff alongside the high-quality environment and support systems.

APPENDIX 1

Focus Education's Learning Challenge Curriculum

The Learning Challenge Curriculum is an approach to curriculum planning which is now being used in over 1,000 primary schools in England. The approach is based on securing greater learner involvement in their work. It requires deep thinking and encourages learners to work using a question as the starting point. It has been described as a curriculum for 'intelligent schools'.

In designing the curriculum, teachers and learners are using a prime learning challenge, expressed as a question, as the starting point. Using the information gained from pre-learning tasks and the school's context a series of subsidiary challenges are then planned. Each subsidiary learning challenge is also expressed as a question. Importantly the learning challenges need to make sense to the learners and it is something that is within their immediate understanding.

The key drivers of the Learning Challenge approach are:-

- Planned around distinctive needs of your children
- Enquiry based learning which promotes curiosity
- Outcomes driven to raise standards
- Embeds the application of basic skills
- Allows writing to be meaningfully embedded
- Cross curricular (where meaningful)
- Interesting for the teacher as well as the children

1. The Whole Curriculum

The Curriculum aims:-

To offer a curriculum that is a balanced and broadly based which:-

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at Holmwood School and of society
- Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

2. The Foundation Stage Curriculum for 3 to 5 Year Olds

The Foundation Stage curriculum is planned to provide a range of activities and experiences through which children have opportunities to make choices and decisions, manipulate materials, use language for a variety of reasons and receive appropriate adult support and guidance. Planned and purposeful activities should provide opportunities for teaching and learning, both indoors and outdoors. Please refer to the Early Years policy for further guidance.

3. The National Curriculum for 5 to 11 Year Olds

Communication, language and Literacy Development

Teachers develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing, punctuation, spelling vocabulary and grammar as an integral aspect of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in his own right and the medium of teaching. Understanding language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.

Spoken Language

Pupils are taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English.

They learn to justify ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary and build knowledge; negotiate; evaluate and build on the ideas of others; and select the appropriate register for effective communication.

They are taught to give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. This enables them to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

Reading and Writing

Teachers develop pupils' reading and writing in all subjects to support their acquisition of knowledge. Pupils are taught to read fluently, understanding extended prose and are encouraged to read for pleasure. Wider reading is promoted through an accelerated reading programme and the library's reading for pleasure programme.

Pupils develop the ability to write with accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation. They are encouraged to write for a purpose and build on what they have been taught to expand the range of their writing.

Vocabulary Development

Pupils' acquisition and the command of vocabulary are the key to their learning and progress across the curriculum.

Teachers therefore develop vocabulary actively, building systematically on pupils' current knowledge. They increase pupils' store of words in general. Simultaneously, they make links between old and new vocabulary and discuss the shades of meanings in similar words. In this way, pupils expand the vocabulary choices that are available to them when they write. In addition, it is vital for pupils' comprehension that they understand the meaning of words they meet in their reading across all subjects, and the older pupils are taught the meaning of instruction verbs that they may meet in examination questions. It is particularly important to teach pupils the language which defines each subject in its own right.

Mathematical Development

Confidence in numeracy and other Mathematical skills is a precondition of success across the national curriculum.

Teachers develop pupils' numeracy and mathematical reasoning in all subjects so that they understand and appreciate the importance of mathematics. Pupils are taught to apply arithmetic fluently to problems, understand and use measures, make estimates and check their work.

Pupils apply their geometric and algebraic understanding and relate their understanding of probability to the notions of risk and uncertainty.

They also understand the cycle of collecting, presenting and analysing data. They are taught to apply their mathematics to both routines and non-routine problems, including breaking down complex problems into a series of simpler steps.

Scientific and Technological Development

Science education provides the foundation for understanding the world through specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics.

Science aims to ensure that all pupils:-

- Develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics.
- Develop understanding of the nature, the processes and methods of science through different types of science enquires, that help to answer scientific questions about the world.
- Being equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future.

Computing

Computing education equips pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computing has deep links with mathematics, science and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems.

The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work and how to put this knowledge to use through programming.

Computing also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

Geographical Development

Geography education inspires in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people. Teaching equips pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes.

Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide in the framework and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at the different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

Historical Development

History education helps pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It inspires pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching equips pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift agreements, and develop perspective and judgement.

History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

Languages

Languages education foster pupils' curiosity and deepens their understanding of the world. The teaching enables pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and writing.

Design and Technology

Design and technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. Using creativity and imagination, pupils design and make products, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values.

They acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art.

Pupils learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens.

Through the evaluation of past and present design and technology, they develop a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world. High-quality design and technology education makes an essential contribution to the creativity, culture, wealth and well-being of the nation.

Creative Development - Art

Art, craft and design equips pupils with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own work of art, craft and design.

Creative Development - Music

Music education engages and inspires pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians and so increase their self confidence, creativity and sense of achievement.

Physical Development

Physical education inspires all the pupils to succeed and excel in competitive sport and other physically demanding activities. It provides opportunities for pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness. Opportunities to compete in sport and other activities builds character and helps to embed values such as fairness, sportsmanship and respect.

Personal and Social Development

Personal and social development is an integral part of both the taught curriculum and the whole school ethos. Please refer to our SMSC policy for further details.