



# **CURRICULUM POLICY**

Date of last review: July 2016

Date of next review: July 2019

## Curriculum Policy

### Introduction

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning, personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

This document sets out the school's policy on the curriculum. It is in five sections:

1. The Aims of the School Curriculum
2. The Balance of the School Curriculum
3. The Context and Structure of the School Curriculum
4. The Delivery of the School Curriculum
5. The Responsibilities of the Subject Co-ordinator

### 1. Aims of the of the School Curriculum:

The school intends to provide a curriculum that:

- develops the full potential of every individual pupil
- actively seeks to address the learning deficits of individual pupils
- gives access to all aspects of the National Curriculum wherever possible
- provides continuity in all subject areas from Reception - Key Stage 2
- improves the pupils' independent learning skills and strategies
- increases the pupils' rates of learning

### 2. Balance of the Curriculum:

All pupils within the school have statements of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs). It is important that the school has a curriculum that addresses these needs as well as the statutory requirements to provide full access to the National Curriculum. It is a logistical impossibility to provide all National Curriculum subject Attainment Targets *in full* as well as attempting to address the pupils' individual learning difficulties. This curriculum balance is reflected in individual Pupil Tracker Targets (PTTs).

*The school therefore prioritises within the curriculum:*

Learning Skills and Strategies, Literacy, Numeracy, Science, ICT and appropriate social skills (including behaviour) are predominant. Compensating for specific learning difficulties is an integral part of this.

Giving more emphasis to these subjects does not mean that the other academic areas of the curriculum are substantially weakened. The school still

offers programmes of study that cover every Attainment Target of the National Curriculum - it is simply selective about which individual targets are included in the school's own curriculum

The other way in which the weighting affects the balance of the curriculum is in the number of hours per week spent on each subject. It is again impossible to include all National Curriculum subjects at their recommended minimum levels and compensate for low Linguistic, Literacy and Numeracy skills.

Where pupils develop their skills (and learning abilities) to the point where this weighting of the curriculum is no longer necessary, then the school, in conjunction with parents and LA colleagues, will seek to place the pupil in a mainstream establishment.

Similarly, if a child is not progressing to its full potential with this curriculum weighting, the school will review the situation and possibly seek advice from LA colleagues. This may result in a re-structuring of the curriculum for the individual or referral to an alternative educational placement where the pupil's needs may be more appropriately met.

In order to minimise the disadvantages of pupils attending a fully segregated special education establishment, the school pursues an energetic programme of integration (see *Integration* policy). This also has an effect on the curriculum balance, as the school cannot guarantee that the pupils who attend mainstream schools will be able to follow the same time-table as their own class. This can lead to pupils missing certain subject areas over a short period.

### 3. The Curriculum Context and Structure:

The starting point is this Curriculum Policy Statement, which outlines the main issues and philosophies. The school uses the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and National Curriculum Attainment Targets as a starting point, and these are in turn broken down into more accessible teaching targets for the pupils:

Foundation Stage		Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2			
Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
National Curriculum Attainment Targets						
Breakdown of Attainment Targets into Teaching Targets, specifying: Knowledge . . . . Concepts . . . . . Skills . . . . .						
Themes and/or Topics (to ensure continuity)						
Resources and Activities for Teaching Targets						
IEP and Record-Keeping System for pupils						
Assessment Tasks						
Curriculum Monitoring Strategies						

## Woodsetton School

The Teaching Targets are defined in three areas: Knowledge, Concepts and Skills - this is essentially the Woodsetton Curriculum.

Where there is no clear guidance to give continuity throughout all four Key Stages, the co-ordinator builds in themes or topics that will ensure that this will occur (e.g. in History the pupils may study Romans, Tudors, Victorians, etc. and to give continuity they will look specifically at transport, houses, inventions throughout these periods).

The co-ordinator then identifies the whereabouts of useful teaching materials and resources and gives suggestions regarding successful activities that might help class teachers with their particular year groups.

The class teachers select modules of work from the teaching targets and prepare PTTs for the pupils. These include all the selected targets, the activities to be carried out, and the relevant cross-curricular activities. These PTTs are created individually for Maths and English.

In order to ensure that teaching has been successful it is essential to have appropriate assessment methods in place - it is also the role of the co-ordinator to establish set procedures that can be followed at the appropriate stages of any given module.

Standardised testing is acknowledged to be an inaccurate method of measuring individual progress for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The criteria used in such tests tend to be too broad and fail to take into account elementary factors like language development and reading skills. They are only useful when a comparison of raw data is required with mainstream peers.

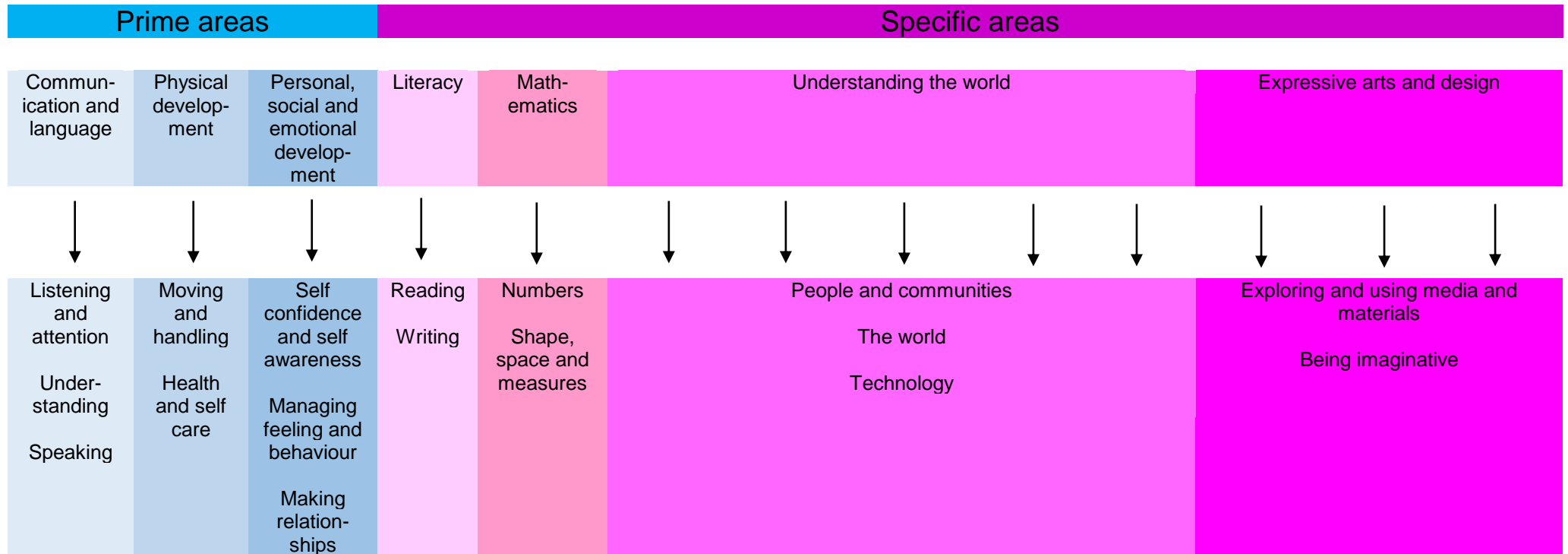
Pupils therefore need to have their progress assessed by using criterion-referenced assessments i.e. tests which measure the pupils' progress according to the school's own curriculum targets on an individual basis - not in comparison with their peers.

Historically, pupils' progress and attainment was assessed using 'PIVATS' criteria for English, Maths and science, however since September 2015, in light of curriculum changes and the withdrawal of national curriculum levels, progress and assessments have been measured against DAPA (Dudley Agreed P-Scale Assessments).

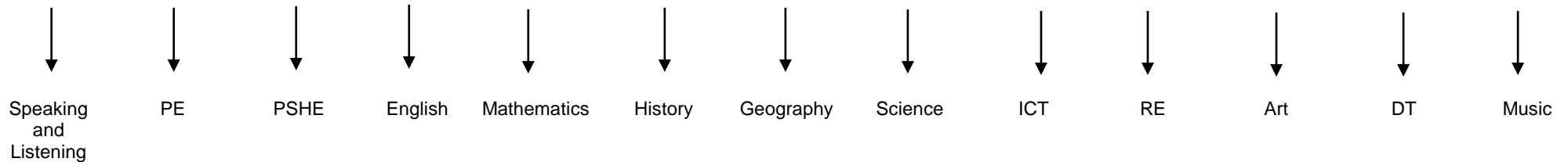
Woodsetton has been working alongside a number of cluster schools to create this robust and meaningful way of assessing SEND pupils and in April 2016 DAPA was shared with mainstream colleagues.

"Precision Teaching" is also used to support assessment strategies and this approach allows the class teacher to identify the pupils' rate of learning i.e. how much faster the pupil has become in acquiring new, similar skills. This is a critical factor in the education of pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

# Early Years Foundation Stage



## Key Stage 1 and 2



#### **4. The Delivery of the School Curriculum:**

The whole curriculum is largely delivered by class teachers to classes of pupils grouped according to age. Lessons are differentiated according to the abilities of the pupils within these classes.

The main expertise within the school is considered to be the teaching methods rather than the subject contents - the experts are not subject specialists but teachers who are gifted in imparting information and skills to pupils with learning difficulties in a stimulating, constructive and professional manner.

#### **5. Responsibility of the Co-ordinator:**

Each curriculum area is the responsibility of a member of staff. Each curriculum co-ordinator is responsible for developing the policy, schemes and guidelines for their subject area, managing a budget for the subject, advising colleagues on the delivery of the subject and assisting the Senior Leadership Team in monitoring the effective teaching of the subject.

#### **Monitoring the Curriculum:**

Each module is evaluated by the class teacher at the end of the half-term. Subject co-ordinators are responsible for reviewing modules in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team and colleagues throughout the school. Initially this will be done as part of the curriculum review process and will if necessary be specified in more detail as part of the School Improvement Plan.

#### **External Examinations:**

The school currently enters pupils for the End of Key Stage 1 and 2 tests if pupils are working at the required level. Year 1 and 2 pupils will also partake in the Year 1 phonics screening + re-sit in Y2, again, if deemed appropriate. Increasingly the school uses Teacher Assessment rather than the formal tests as pupils often are not working at the required levels to access the tests.

#### **Complaints:**

Any parent or carer who is concerned about the content, balance or structure of the school's curriculum is most welcome to discuss the matter with the Headteacher. If there is a significant complaint that cannot be resolved the parent (or whomsoever) may contact the Chair of Governors or a representative of the LA.

#### **Equal Opportunities:**

The school offers the curriculum equally to all pupils regardless of gender, cultural background, race or religion. Within its' current resources, the school attempts to discriminate positively on behalf of all pupils to compensate for any educational problems that are due to specific language difficulties, medical or physical disabilities or social attitudes caused by being in segregated specialist provision.