Cothill

ISSR 2: CURRICULUM POLICY

Curriculum Objectives

To encourage every pupil to make the most of his/her intellectual potential by:

- creating rigorous learning experiences and promoting high standards of achievement and equal opportunities for all pupils of all abilities in our school, irrespective of their gender, background, race or religious belief, including those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- creating lively and stimulating environments which enhance their powers of learning and reasoning
- delivering a broad curriculum in order to provide intellectual, moral, spiritual, emotional, cultural and physical education of the highest quality
- promoting a positive approach to learning and equipping the pupils with the skills necessary to become lifelong independent learners
- offering expert and rigorous teaching to all pupils regardless of their academic level
- supporting those with learning difficulties and challenging and stretching the more able
- ensuring that pupils are equipped with appropriate study skills to be able to evaluate, reflect on and manage their own learning.

In addition the curriculum aims to develop individuals by:

- providing experiences of a wide range of age appropriate activities (Art, DT, Music, Drama, Dance, Sport etc.) so that pupils can discover an interest and talent outside the classroom
- encouraging every pupil to be thoughtful, sympathetic and tolerant of others whilst developing the self-confidence to express and defend ideas and opinions
- enabling pupils to develop a respect for themselves and high self-esteem and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others
- developing in pupils a respect for other people, their property and their environment
- helping pupils to become physically fit and regard sport and physical exercise as an important part of a healthy and well-balanced life.

Implicit in these curricular objectives is the well-being of pupils as defined in section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004:

- physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- protection from harm and neglect
- education, training and recreation
- the contribution made by them to society
- social and economic well-being[1]

[1] These were previously known as the Every Child Matters objectives: Be healthy; stay safe, enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; achieve economic well-being.

The curriculum plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan, and do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Specific curriculum regulatory matters

- The school provides full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with Section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education.
- Lessons are well planned, enabling pupils to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills at a pace appropriate to their needs.
- The language of instruction (written and spoken) in all lessons is English. Where pupils do not have English as their first language, appropriate help and guidance is given in accordance with guidelines provided in the schools EAL policy which can be found on the website.
- A programme of personal, social, health (including physical and mental health awareness) and economic education (PSHEE) is provided for all pupils. This programme reflects the school's aim and ethos; and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act which are:
    - Age
    - Disability
    - Gender reassignment
    - Marriage and civil partnership
    - Pregnancy and maternity
    - Race
    - Religion or belief
    - Sex
    - Sexual orientation
- Pupils are prepared for a future beyond school, at their senior school and beyond, and thus are given age-appropriate careers guidance, in a number of ways. This guidance is presented in an impartial manner, usually through the PSHEE curriculum, enabling pupils to begin to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and helping to encourage them to fulfil their potential.
- Where there are pupils below compulsory school age, there is a programme of activities that is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills
- Pupils are encouraged and expected to learn and make good progress; they are given opportunities to facilitate this via the curriculum provided. This is monitored departmentally, by the Deputy Head (Academic), the SENDCO by use of standardised tests and via reports (monitored by class teachers) and sent to parents at regular intervals (see below). For further information, please refer to the Assessment Policy and the Teaching and Pupil Progress Framework.
- The curriculum is designed to enable pupils to develop individual talents and interests and to help to prepare them for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. The curriculum promotes the fundamental British Values of Democracy, the Rule of Law, Individual Liberty and Mutual Respect.
- The curriculum contains subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties and any with an EHC plan. Where appropriate, the curriculum in the EYFS follows the learning and development requirements set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework, comprising the seven areas of learning and development, the educational programmes, the early learning goals and the assessment requirements.

- Where a pupil has an EHC plan, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be created to ensure that identified needs are met in accordance with the Local Authority guidelines. Please see the SEND, Learning Support and Disability Policy for further information.
- The school enjoys a substantial reputation as an academic institution. We are not only concerned with scholarships or obvious awards, but we remain keen to stretch pupils as far as they can comfortably manage, but at the same time accept that making mistakes is part of the learning process.

Areas of experience

The delivery of the curriculum will enable pupils to develop skills and make progress in the following key areas of experience:

Linguistic

This area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. There are lessons in written and spoken English and these linguistic skills are also developed through the delivery of other subjects in the curriculum

Mathematical

Pupils are helped to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics is developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion as well as an emphasis on problem-solving.

Scientific

Pupils have the opportunity to increase their knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces whilst developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings.

Technological

Technological skills are developed through the use of Information and Communication technology (ICT) as well as Design Technology. Pupils have the opportunity to plan and develop their ideas, work with a variety of tools, equipment and products to produce an end product with which they should feel proud. They will have an opportunity to evaluate what they have done and the process behind it.

Human and social

Through the delivery of subjects such as history and geography, pupils will have an opportunity to learn about and reflect on people and their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions.

Physical

Through the delivery of regular sporting opportunities and timetabled Physical Education/Games, pupils develop physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills. A key part of the process is self-evaluation and reflecting on how performance could be improved. Pupils will also gain a working knowledge and understanding of the importance of health and this will be reinforced through the delivery of PSHEE. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, both boys and girls will be afforded equal sporting opportunities.

Aesthetic and creative

Through the delivery of art, music and drama, pupils have the opportunity to be creative and make things as well as having the opportunity to evaluate their work in order to make progress.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC)

SMSC development may be delivered through Religious Studies lessons or through other curricular areas. The school values are upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Please refer to our separate policy about RSE.

For further information on any of the above, please refer to individual department policies/handbooks and supporting schemes of work.

Pupils' Achievement and Personal Development

As with all areas of school life, the Curriculum is designed to promote and facilitate pupils' achievement and personal development. Individual departmental policies comment on how the following are met:

A1 – Exam results and change in attainment over time
A2 – Knowledge, skills and understanding
A3 – Communication
A4 – Numeracy
A5 – ICT
A6 – Study Skills
A7 – Academic and other achievements
A8 - Attitudes towards learning
P1 – Self-understanding
P2 – Decision making
P3 – Spiritual understanding
P4 – Moral understanding and responsibility for own behaviour
P5 – Social development and collaboration
P6 – Contribution to others, the school and the community
P7 – Respecting diversity and cultural understanding
P8 – Staying safe and keeping healthy

Implementation

Pupils ideally join Cothill in Year 3. The Year 3 curriculum is built upon the National Curriculum with an appropriate emphasis on English and Maths. Pupils begin each day with a lesson in these two subjects taught by their class teacher. The class teacher also takes them for Science and topic lessons where a termly theme is used to provide enriching teaching that will develop a wide range of skills that will help prepare pupils to thrive in the future. Other subjects (PSHE, French, Music, Art, Drama, Pottery, DT, Outdoor Learning, IT, PE, Games) are taught mostly by specialists depending on the class teachers' own strengths.

In Year 4, the class feel remains, with the majority of lessons being taught by the class teacher. If the year group reaches a critical size, the pupils will be split into ability groups for Maths. Rather than a Topic, pupils follow separate curricula for Geography and History delivered by the class teacher. During the year, prep begins gently.

Year 5 is a notable step up with all subjects now taught by specialists and pupils moving to a new classroom for each lesson. The 5s are closely guided by their form tutors who will teach their class for one or more subjects. Pupils start Reasoning lessons to further develop cognitive skills and prepare for senior school tests. The Year 5 classrooms are in Jackson's away from the busier Complex building. Prep begins in earnest with 30 mins assigned each day.

Year 6 is when many pupils sit the ISEB pre-test, an online screening process used by a number of senior schools as part of their admissions process. Pupils continue Reasoning lessons (which increase in frequency) up until November where these lessons become Latin. At this stage, pupils remain in mixed ability classes aside from Maths lessons. The Common Entrance curriculum begins for some subjects in the second half of the year. Form tutors will teach their class for at least one key subject where possible. Pupils complete 40 minutes of prep each day.

Year 7 is a step up again as the Common Entrance curriculum is now up and running for all subjects. At this stage, there is some streaming with one class working at a slightly faster pace with some pupils from that group likely to be academic scholarship candidates in future. New joiners into this year may choose to study Classical Civilization instead of Latin and this option may be taken up by existing pupils for whom Latin is not a key part of their curriculum at the senior school they are aiming to move on to. Where possible, form tutors will teach their classes. Pupils complete 1 hour of prep each day.

Year 8 is the culmination of six years of hard work. Pupils will be preparing for examinations to senior schools either by Common Entrance (the majority) or academic scholarship. Teachers will recommend pupils to sit academic scholarship exams after the Year 7 summer exams. A post exam curriculum will run in the summer term featuring a wide range of academic, practical and skills based learning alongside the Year 8 Leavers' trip and play. Pupils complete 1 hour of prep each day.

There is provision for all pupils to complete their prep at school under teacher supervision.

Maintaining High Standards

Our greatest asset is our teachers. We look to recruit specialists in each subject who know and love their subject but equally importantly, we recruit staff who we are confident are great communicators and role models for our pupils. Cothill staff buy into the values and vision of our school and work hard to ensure the best possible education for the pupils in our care.

Cothill aims to teach a traditional academic curriculum in a modern and engaging manner, developing a life-long love of learning and practical skills that will stand our pupils in good stead for senior school life and beyond. The curriculum is reviewed annually by Heads of Department and the Deputy Head (Academic). Teachers and form tutors hold pupils to high standards with their effort and attainment in lessons and during prep using weekly assessments of effort, weekly prep tasks and regular written assessments (termly or end of topic).

Data is shared between staff in line with the Assessment and Tracking Overview. Book checks are carried out by the Deputy Head (Academic) and via the Heads of Department on a termly basis.

Success in the curriculum is certainly not limited to academic results. Regular recitals take place for Music and LAMDA and Art shows take place too. Effort is rewarded through the Points System and is celebrated as part of the prize giving process as well as achievement.

Teachers are observed on a regular basis, usually three times a year by their Head of Department, a peer and a member of SLT. Regular discussions of best practice take place during fortnightly departmental meetings and termly INSET. Pupils and parents regularly discuss learning and classroom environments. When issues occur they are dealt with swiftly and professionally.

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