

West Lea Curriculum Policy - September 2021

Rationale

The purpose of this Curriculum Policy is to ensure that, through our curriculum we meet our statutory duties by law and bring West Lea's Mission Statement to life.

This statement adheres to the principles laid down in the following West Lea policies:

- ✚ Health and Safety Policy
- ✚ Equality and Community Cohesion Policy

Purpose

We endeavour to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which has elements of personalisation, intended to be motivating, engaging and fun. A curriculum that provides first hand, practical and creative opportunities, that allows for pupil independence and choice, helping pupils to learn the skills, knowledge and attitudes that are necessary for them to live as rich a life as possible. Everything we do starts with the pupil, a thorough knowledge of them and a determination to meet their learning needs in the most meaningful way. We provide a curriculum tailored to individual strengths and needs. All children are unique and valued. We acknowledge that all children learn in different ways and that all children have the right to be taught in a way that maximises their learning potential. We work closely with pupils, their families and other professionals to provide a holistic approach to learning.

Taking into consideration the views of pupils, parents, carers, staff and Governors, the following areas emerged as important to the formulation of our curriculum:

- ✚ Preparing for adulthood with the highest level of independence as possible
- ✚ Work related learning to enable students to become employed in the local community, and beyond
- ✚ Keeping safe
- ✚ Developing friendships and appropriate relationships
- ✚ Regulating emotions and behaviour
- ✚ Availing of opportunities independently
- ✚ ICT knowledge and skills

Pupil Context:

All our students have medical, developmental and/or complex needs that may inhibit the overall learning experience. Some are complex and profound and may give rise to secondary emotional and behavioural problems. A number also have low self-esteem in some cases exacerbated by prior educational experience. It is therefore of the highest importance that every aspect of the school environment and the curriculum take account of these factors and build in systems that will enable positive communication, positive attitudes and high expectations.

Using a flexible approach West Lea seeks to provide a curriculum tailored to individual needs and strengths. This will be reflected in the student's Annual Review Statement Objectives and also in the more immediate termly Smart Targets.

Staff commitment:

In order for such an environment to develop, and lead to an effective, enabling curriculum, all staff are committed to the following:

- ✚ To plan thoroughly in accordance with agreed schemes of work, ensuring that such plans are accessible and available to other staff (in case of absence) to Parents, Governors and members of the Advisory and Development Service (LBE School Improvement Team).

- ✚ To use a variety of teaching methods and materials in order to meet the diversity of need and ability, including a multi-sensory approach and augmentative education as required.
- ✚ To provide opportunity for group work (discussion, collaboration and negotiation). To promote individual investigation, practical exploration and role play and thinking skills.
- ✚ To encourage experiential learning.
- ✚ To give clear written, visual and oral instructions so that pupils understand what is expected of them.
- ✚ To provide opportunities for pupils to experience success.
- ✚ To review work regularly to check for pace, content and style.
- ✚ To promote self-motivated learning and independent study skills so that pupils can make informed choices and take increasing control of their learning.
- ✚ To maintain a classroom atmosphere that motivates, challenges and fosters high expectation.
- ✚ To keep full and accurate records of marks and assessments so that planning and future learning can be informed.
- ✚ To incorporate self-assessment in the learning process, so that all pupils can deal critically with mistakes and make judgements about their progress.

The Planning Process at West Lea

- ✚ Previous priorities incorporated Whole School process managed by SLT.
- ✚ Generate 3-year SDP incorporating plans to raise achievement.
- ✚ Input from DfE / QCA / LA
- ✚ Monitoring by SLT / Governors which Informs progress, allows support and informs future need
- ✚ A one-year specific school improvement/development plan.
- ✚ Reflection and professional conversations regarding the Teaching and Learning process. A developing CPD programme and training opportunities supporting the development of teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogical competence.
- ✚ New initiatives from DfE/QCA/LA incorporated via INSET, staff meetings, TLR meetings.

West Lea is currently reviewing its curriculum as a response to the changing needs of the pupils.

Curriculum Pathways

West Lea School offers children and young people four pathways that progress from Early years to Post 16. Each pathway is ambitious in its expectations of children and young people's capacity to make progress, to learn, thrive and be happy and to prepare for fulfilling and purposeful adulthoods.

Each of the four pathways delivers a broad curriculum consisting of a balance between academic (national curriculum) programmes of study, life skills and preparing for work and adulthood. Each pathway recognises the needs of the child as expressed in the EHCPs and seeks to support the child to overcome the barriers to learning that inhibit progress and development.

Children in all pathways have equal access to resources, therapies, support and enrichment opportunities. Children move between pathways freely when this is appropriate and are therefore never limited by a pathway. All pathways focus on personalised learning and practitioners craft their own plans around the particular needs of each learner, breaking down any barriers to learning.

Willow Pathway:

Children following the Willow Pathway may have a range of complex needs and/ or medical conditions. These children may experience significant barriers to learning in the areas of communication and interaction as well as cognition and learning. They may need targeted support to help them develop their socialisation, language and life skills as well as learning and study skills.

Children will make progress through targeted teaching approaches designed to educate them in key aspects of the national curriculum and to prepare them for adulthood. Independence, in life and work are significant elements of the curriculum for all West Lea pupils. In order to ensure full and equal access for all pupils, adaptations and adjustments are made as necessary.

Academic and vocational learning sit alongside social and life skills, to provide a practical and purposeful curriculum experience. As the children progress up the school the focus on employability and vocational learning intensifies and they will work towards personalised qualification targets.

At post 16 the potential for supported employment becomes a real goal for those young people ready to take that path in society and many will access pathways through West Lea's Horizon Campus.

Oak Pathway:

Children on the Oak Pathway may also have complex needs and some may have moderate learning difficulties, medical conditions or other developmental, social or emotional needs.

Children will experience a full range of the national curriculum programmes of study appropriately scaffolded to recognize the barriers to learning which they may face. This pathway also focuses on functional independence and supports pupils to independently travel and access work experience within their local area, where appropriate.

Opportunities to sit formal examinations mean that young people on this pathway will leave school with qualifications for work and life. Most young people on the oak pathway will achieve qualifications in Functional Skills (up to level 1) in English, mathematics and ICT and in vocational awards in the Arts, as well as broad skills accreditation through the Duke of Edinburgh Award and the Princes Trust Achieve programmes.

Young people on this pathway typically move on from West Lea's one year bridging course to follow college courses, Supported Internships and paid employment.

Sycamore Pathway:

Children and young people on the Sycamore Pathway may also be described as having complex needs and moderate learning difficulties, however they may experience less significant barriers to learning than pupils on other pathways. This Pathway provides an appropriately adjusted and scaffolded National Curriculum to allow the children and young people to enjoy programmes of study similar to those delivered in mainstream schools.

Young people will access both academic and vocational subjects to educate them for adulthood. Work placements and community engagement feature in the weekly diet of young people as they move up the school, and the majority will learn to travel independently within their local area. Where appropriate, some young people access aspects of their learning through partnership delivery with mainstream secondary schools. as well as develop life skills in order to prepare for adulthood.

Functional skills qualifications to level 2 or GCSEs in English, Mathematics and ICT are available for those young people who have the ability. Entry level courses as well as vocational qualifications in the Arts and Duke of Edinburgh or Princes Trust Achieve programmes, sit alongside the core subjects to create a full and ambitious curriculum at key stage 4 and key stage 5. Pupils on this pathway usually move from West Lea's one-year bridging course to sixth form or to full time college provision. Many later access Supported Internships and paid employment.

Birch Pathway:

Young people on the Birch Pathway typically join West Lea School when their mainstream school education has been disrupted as a result of social, emotional and mental health difficulties or as a result of a serious medical condition.

Young people may exhibit disengagement, anxiety or distress through poor attendance, relationship difficulties, dysregulation or negative attitudes. For many pupils, although academically able, high levels of anxiety may cause significant barriers to learning as they struggle to cope within a mainstream setting and exhibit difficulties in developing social relationships. Students on this pathway access fully personalised intervention, which is delivered through a solution-focused philosophy. Multi agency involvement is significant in the provision for young people on this pathway.

Young people on the Birch Pathway are supported to address their emotional needs whilst maintaining their engagement with the National Curriculum and a qualification regime in which they may already be invested. Each young person's curriculum is adapted to enable, as much as is possible, a continuum of provision in order to enable the student to gain confidence in re-engagement back into the school community. Young people have the opportunity to achieve functional skills and GCSE qualifications where appropriate as well as BTEC in Personal and Social Development.

Curriculum Overview:

Early Years Foundation Stage – 'Exploring'

The Early Years foundation stage (EYFS) curriculum inspires children, provides development and learning opportunities, ensures learning takes place, develops key relationships and makes sure children feel secure in line with EYFS documentation. There are seven areas of the EYFS curriculum divided into three prime areas; (Communication and Language, Personal, Social Emotional Development (PSED) and Physical Development) and four specific areas (maths, literacy, expressive arts and design and understanding the World). We recognise that young children are active learners and they learn through their senses, through exploration, investigation, experimentation, listening & watching as well as through play.

It is important that our pupils have opportunities to interpret their environment, learn to make choices for themselves and grow in confidence understanding their value in our school community. Within our continuous child initiated and child and teacher led provision, we provide play-based learning opportunities aimed to motivate and engage children developing the characteristics of effective learning. This allows us to work towards building and developing relationships and enables us to assess their individual learning styles to prepare children for lifelong learning.

Key Stage 1 – 'Broadening'

The curriculum at Key Stage 1 builds on the EYFS foundations, still using the continuous provision model, but with more adult-directed learning introducing specific, essential knowledge in preparation for more formalised subject-based learning at Key Stage 2.

We support our pupils to develop their independence and self-help skills, and develop a robust and flexible communication pathway. Pupils freely explore a range of motivating and engaging learning opportunities that are skilfully facilitated by adults who are aware of intended learning outcomes and individual next steps.

Taught knowledge is applied in a range of play-based and real-life contexts to ensure flexibility and depth of understanding. We also deliver short bursts of direct, structured teaching of Maths and English as pupils become developmentally ready. We use pupil interests and motivations to guide topic-based planning. Classrooms have continuous provision spaces for playful, child-led learning (such as a role play area, a small world area, construction area, reading area).

Key Stage 2 – “Taking off”

The curriculum at KS2 develops independence; builds on prior learning to ensure a firm foundation from which to progress and supports pupils to discover their own identity; to find their voice, make it heard and be understood, continuing our emphasis on developing communication, personal and social skills. The needs of each pupil are taken into consideration

Through the use of appropriate and varied resources, we aim to encourage our pupils to be independent learners, using a small steps approach to deepen and build upon prior learning.

In Key Stage 2, there are subject-specific, knowledge-based learning opportunities that are differentiated against a sequenced structure. Our core subjects of Maths, English and PSHE are taught across the week through discrete sessions tailored to individual needs and interests. Foundation subjects of history, geography, creative arts, science, information and communication technology (ICT), music, Religious Education (RE) and Physical education (PE) are covered throughout the academic year and delivered through termly topics. Topics maybe based on National Curriculum programmes of study, current events or pupil motivation. The foundation subjects enrich the curriculum and offer opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and provide a context for learning. This allows us to provide a curriculum responsive to individual needs in a stimulating and accessible environment.

Key Stage 3 – “Flying High”

The curriculum at KS3 is structured to support learners in making links and connections between areas of knowledge, embedding learning in long-term memory. It builds on prior learning so that pupils reach their optimum potential in core subject areas.

The curriculum supports pupils to make decisions; further develops problem solving skills and builds individuals self-esteem and self-awareness through accessing and evaluating a wide range of learning opportunities.

All Pupils access core National Curriculum subjects of Maths, English and PSHE through discrete sessions tailored to individual needs and interests. There is a strong focus on phonics, reading, mathematics and PSHE due their significant impact on future life chances. Some pupils that are excelling in Maths, or English can access lessons taught in KS4 to further develop their skills and knowledge.

Science and Foundation subjects (History, Geography, Art, Music, Drama, ICT, D+T, R.E.) provide a context for learning and are taught in themed blocks or sessions throughout the year to allow pupils to use and apply knowledge and skills developed in the core subjects. PE and swimming are taught throughout the year in individual, group and/or inclusion sessions.

PSHE provides an opportunity for pupils to think about themselves, their future and any vocations that they may wish to pursue, looking ahead to KS4 where they can choose their options. Some of our pupils experience job related learning within school such as working with the nursing team or assisting in a primary class.

Key Stage 4 and Post 16 – “Soaring”

Key Stage 4 students access a functional curriculum that supports them to utilise the skills that they have acquired as they have progressed through the school and apply them in practical, real-life situations. The focus is on practical application and a deepening of the significance and use of knowledge and skills.

They are encouraged to use decision making skills based on knowledge, personal experience and individual preference, while learning to recognise the impact of decision making on self and others. For all students we continue to offer a personalised, enriching and individual curriculum very much focusing on skills for life and preparation for adulthood.

Our core curriculum offer includes Maths, English, PSHE, Life Skills and PE with Communication underpinning everything we do to ensure all our students are the best communicators they can be. Students will access these subjects through different pathways depending upon their individual needs.

Students have the opportunity to have taster sessions of the foundation subjects on offer and are supported to choose their own options. These vary from year to year and we encourage students to suggest subjects and be involved in the planning of their learning. For students that are able to access appropriate Edexcel and/or BTEC qualifications in certain subjects, the units of work taught are taken from the functional skills and entry pathways. Students may be entered for external moderation and accreditation if appropriate.

Pupils may also have opportunities to undertake work related learning and where appropriate work experience placements. Along with Enfield Careers, we support and prepare our year 11 students to make their own choices regarding their post-16 journeys.

We recognise the importance of developing confidence, self-esteem and resilience in our young people as they transition into adulthood. This underpins all learning. We ensure that our young people are able to develop and use critical thinking and problem-solving skills in real life situations. There is a strong emphasis on Work Experience and work-related learning within the Department, working towards potential employment opportunities as a future outcome wherever possible in a young person's local community.

The FE curriculum also offers a select range of opportunities for students to achieve accredited qualifications which are realistic and relevant to their personalised future outcomes. Students are provided with opportunities to access the community safely and as independently as possible. They are also supported to learn new skills which they can then transfer to wider contexts and settings. Enrichment activities are also embedded throughout the curriculum.

Monitoring

The curriculum provision will be monitored at several levels:

- ✚ Governors Standards Committee will monitor relevant developments and report at the appropriate point in the Governors' meeting.
- ✚ By the Senior Leaders in collaboration with the Heads of School and teachers. They will ensure that:
 - ✚ Lesson plans are monitored by Leaders at Campus level looking at a selection of lesson plans, making sure that all areas are covered and appropriate objectives are set for the pupils.
 - ✚ Observations of lessons take place, which includes book scrutiny and pupil voice, giving opportunities for peer observation and providing support with planning and presentation of lessons.
 - ✚ Leaders monitor pupil progress through termly progress meetings with teachers.
 - ✚ Monitoring the suitability and effectiveness of provision and resource.
 - ✚ There is a Performance Management Cycle in accordance with statutory legislation.
 - ✚ The school produces a Monitoring, Evaluation and Review (MER) Calendar on an annual basis.

EAL

West Lea has a number of pupils with 'English as an Additional Language' (EAL). We offer all our students' equal opportunities and access to the curriculum. We have Turkish speaking members of staff who act as Interpreters and translate at meetings with parents/carers. We support pupils in the classroom who have EAL. The school has a Parent Support Advisor whose role includes working with families, parents, carers, and pupils who have English as an additional language. This work enables pupils to have full access within the school context to educational opportunities. This support is designed to overcome any language barriers.

Safeguarding

Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding children and young people. “Keeping Children Safe in Education” makes the link between safeguarding and the curriculum. Our Governing body and school leaders have considered how children may be taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes covering relevant issues through personal, social health and economic education (PSHE), and/or through relationship and sex education (RSE).

Great importance is placed on identifying opportunities in the taught curriculum for children to learn about safeguarding. We have developed an open and safe learning culture in which pupils express their views, seek help and help others.

Pupils at each key stage are supported to make good choices. Our broad curriculum gives pupils opportunities to experience life in all its diversity, to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills that significantly impact on personal development, behaviour and welfare and equips every child with the knowledge and skills required for personal safeguarding.

Our PSHE curriculum covers all areas of Safeguarding through each of the strands to a different degree, however some go into more detail. We are sensitive in our teaching and recognise that some more sensitive subjects need to be taught at an age- appropriate level, or at a small group or 1:1 level where a more urgent need arises. To enhance our curriculum around safeguarding we also involve external agencies (where appropriate) to deliver workshops and mentoring around gang awareness, positive choices and risky behaviours. This can include more targeted work for pupils at risk.

Employability

There is a strong emphasis on Work Experience and work- related learning within the school, working towards potential employment opportunities as a future outcome wherever possible in a young person’s local community. The Post 16 curriculum also offers a select range of opportunities for students to achieve accredited qualifications which are realistic and relevant to their personalised future outcomes. Students are provided with opportunities to access the community safely and as independently as possible. They are also supported to learn new skills which they can then transfer to wider contexts and settings. Enrichment activities are also embedded throughout the curriculum.

Assessment

Our assessment links directly to our curriculum and comes in a range of formats – both formative and summative. We believe that assessment for our students should influence future teaching. Therefore, our assessment is intended to build on previous learning and lead practitioners to improved delivery.

Parents are kept up-dated regarding assessments on a regular basis.

The Curriculum and compliance with the Equality Act (2010)

There are two strands to reviewing equality in the curriculum:

1. Ensuring all pupils regardless of profile have access to the same resources and facilities ensuring that all pupils have an equal chance of success
2. Bringing up issues of equality as part of the curriculum encouraging social inclusion and education about a range of people profiles

West Lea addresses these two areas through:

- ✚ Providing effective training for staff to understand equality and develop ownership and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- ✚ The curriculum meets the needs of all people with protected characteristics
- ✚ Teaching teams are encouraged to review what is being taught and resources used to explore a range of ideas and issues
- ✚ There is a range of assessment strategies to ensure all pupils can participate
- ✚ The pupil and parent voice are heard through surveys and questionnaires
- ✚ The environment is accessible
- ✚ There is flexibility to make use of reasonable adjustments
- ✚ No avenues/experiences are closed to any specific group/individual pupil
- ✚ The school works with a range of agencies to ensure seamless transitions for learners with disabilities