



HEATHSIDE SCHOOL
HAMPSTEAD

Curriculum Policy

Introduction

At Heathside, our aim is for our pupils to become independent learners, who are able to explore their ideas within a curriculum which is relevant and engaging. As well as wanting our pupils to “know things”, we also encourage them to weigh evidence, reflect on outcomes and apply their learning elsewhere.

The school is non-selective and takes account of the ability of every pupil, ensuring that each is challenged and his/her talents are fostered. When pupils leave Heathside, we want them to be knowledgeable independent thinkers who are well-prepared for the next stage of their education and, going forwards, into their adult lives.

Our Schemes of Work have been developed by subject coordinators. They enable the delivery of a creative curriculum which takes into account the ages, abilities and needs of all our pupils, including more able children, pupils on our SEND Register, pupils with Individual Education Plans, or those with other needs such as having English as an Additional Language or responsibilities as a young carer.

The curriculum shadows the National Curriculum and offers a balanced range of subjects which allows pupils to acquire skills in:

- English
- Phonics
- Handwriting
- Mathematics
- Science (STEM)
- French
- Latin and Classical Civilisation
- Art (Art & Design)
- Drama
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physical Education
- Personal, Social, Health & Education (PSHE)
- Computer Science
- Forest School
- Mindfulness
- Reasoning

Alongside the core curriculum, pupils are also able to benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

At Heathside, we endeavour to bring the curriculum to life through cross-curricular, practical, real-life, fun and challenging activities that extend our pupils' thinking and skills.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Through our Physical Education curriculum, pupils are able to develop both physically and socially. All pupils participate in weekly games, and alongside this, there are regular sports fixtures. Those naturally interested in sport are encouraged and fostered to develop their sporting talents to a high level.

The School Council develops leadership skills, teaches pupils about democratic processes and gives all pupils a voice in the running of the school.

We have popular and well-attended clubs in a range of subjects including Art & Design and Science, as well as a wide range of sporting options.

At Heathside, we make as much use of the many resources around us as possible, to enhance our delivery of the curriculum. This includes regular visits to the school by external professionals, making much use of nearby Hampstead Heath, and frequent other off-site visits.

Throughout the year, we also seek to emphasise particular topics and annual important events such as:

- Science Week
- Writing & Reading Week
- World Book Day
- Prose & Poetry Performance
- Black History Month
- Children's Mental Health Week (Dress to Express Day)
- Sustainability Week
- Walk to School Week
- International Day
- Careers Day

Homework / Independent Learning

We view homework as an important aspect of our pupils' learning and development. Our aim is to provide opportunities for pupils to think and work independently, away from the classroom, and to extend their knowledge. Homework also helps parents to have direct knowledge of their child's learning.

However, we do not seek to overburden our pupils with homework at the expense of family time; we believe the balance between study and home life is an important one which needs to be maintained.

Monitoring and Assessment of the Curriculum

Teachers use a variety of methods to assess the progress of their pupils. Of course, at the most basic level, a primary assessment tool is the marking of pupils' work and the feedback given, which seeks to praise pupils on their understanding of learning objectives, as well as providing guidance and encouragement about how things could be improved, and targets for future progress. The requirements for teachers' marking can be found in our marking policy.

Regular book scrutinies and Learning Walks are conducted throughout the year, to ensure that all pupils are receiving appropriate and timely feedback and guidance on the work they have completed during lessons and at home.

Alongside the day-to-day marking, all pupils are required to undertake some formal assessments during each year. For more information on this, please see the Assessment Policy.

Our Schemes of Work are also assessed regularly, to ensure they are up-to-date, remain relevant and continue to be in line with any changes to the National Curriculum. All scrutiny of student books / Schemes of Work is carried out by the most experienced members of our senior team.

For further information, see assessment policy.

Values and Inclusivity in The Curriculum

We actively seek to include fundamental values within our curriculum, including:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Respect
- Tolerance

It is our policy to respect those with different faiths or no faith. Throughout the year, we celebrate world events such as Christmas, Hanukkah, Eid, Diwali.

Equally, pupils at Heathside can be confident that all similarities and differences in regard to fluidity of gender identity will be accepted, respected and celebrated.

Curriculum Policy – EYFS

Play and Exploration

The EYFS at Heathside has a play-based approach to learning and development. Well-planned and purposeful play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. Through play, children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. They develop thinking skills,

independence and self-discipline. Children have opportunities to be creative, experiment and test ideas.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning opportunities ensure children develop physically, linguistically, intellectually and emotionally. It builds on what children already know and can do and inspires a confident disposition to learning through meaningful, imaginative, challenging and enjoyable experiences. We value the development of the whole child and children at Heathside are highly resilient. Specialist Lessons include: Gymnastics, Mindfulness, French, Music, Swimming, P.E. and Forest School (from Upper Nursery) Extra-Curricular clubs include: Capoeira, Science, Chess, Art and Craft, Dance, Creative Movement and Spanish.

Planning the Curriculum

The curriculum is planned around observations of children, their strengths, interests and needs, as well as the teachers' understanding of what necessary skills will help each child to achieve their objectives. Indoor and outdoor play-based activities encourage child-initiated as well as adult-led activities.

We meet the varying needs of children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on children's knowledge and experience
- Using a range of teaching and learning strategies based on children's needs
- Provide a stimulating environment to motivate children's learning where the contribution of all children is valued
- Use resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- Valuing the local community and environment as a source of learning opportunities
- Using displays, resources and equipment that reflect the community in which the children live including role-play areas
- Provide activities relating to a wide range of religious, ethnic and cultural celebrations
- Planning challenging activities according to children's level of development
- Monitoring children's progress and take appropriate action to support as necessary
- Please also see school SEN Policy

Key Stage 1 and 2 - Geography and History

At Heathside, we base our Geography and History planning on the Primary Knowledge Curriculum.

The three principles of a knowledge-rich curriculum that underpin the Primary Knowledge Curriculum:

- Knowledge is valued and specified
- Knowledge is well-sequenced
- Knowledge is taught to be remembered

The content in our curriculum has been carefully chosen by subject experts and has been sequenced in a meaningful way that enables children to make connections and progress from unit to unit, term to term and year to year. We value each subject and teach them discretely, ensuring that our children develop a deep understanding and love of each distinct

discipline. Where appropriate, links are made across disciplines to enable children to make meaningful connections (e.g. our children learn about Northern Europe in geography before learning about the Vikings in history). Links are made to local history and geography and this often supports visits to the Heath to explore this further.

Our intended curriculum is translated over time in the classroom following a structured approach. Teachers are provided with detailed documents for each unit to support with subject knowledge and planning.

Each lesson starts with a prior learning review, where children are supported to retrieve prior knowledge and make connections. We have an emphasis on explicitly teaching vocabulary, and each lesson introduces, orally rehearses, and engages with key vocabulary (e.g., looking at the etymology of new words). Key vocabulary is contextualised throughout the lesson and children are given multiple opportunities to apply new words. Our teachers enact our intended curriculum using research-based pedagogy, such as Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, to ensure information is presented in small steps, clearly explained and modelled, and children have many opportunities to talk, answer questions, explain their learning and work independently. Throughout lessons, teachers assess/monitor pupil responses (e.g., through questioning, written and oral responses, multiple-choice quizzes, using Knowledge Organisers) and provide effective feedback.

As we have clearly specified what we want our children to know, do and remember, when reviewing impact, we assess against the Knowledge Goals laid out in the intended curriculum, enabling us to check whether children can remember what we set out for them to learn. We carry out subject-specific monitoring and curriculum reviews to assess impact and use these to plan for future development.

As we know that curriculum intent, implementation and impact go hand in hand, the curriculum cannot be successful without careful thought in all three areas. We are always reflecting upon the impact of our intent and implementation and identifying ways in which we can improve outcomes for our children. Our curriculum work is never finished - it is at the very core of our purpose and our children deserve the very best curriculum we can create.

Maths across the curriculum

KS1 Maths

Heathside follows the National Curriculum as a guideline and we use a range of resources including Galore Park, Maths on Target, Hamilton Trust and White Rose Maths to challenge our more able students. The classwork and homework are differentiated for different abilities. The children work through written activities, maths problems and interactive whiteboard games for one hour per day. Once a week the pupils are tested on their mental arithmetic.

KS2 Maths

In years 3, 4, 5, and 6 maths becomes focused on the subject areas that are required for the 11+ exams. Alongside covering the national curriculum and Galore Park, syllabus questions

taken from 11+ papers are studied both in class and for homework. KS2 classes are organised into three small groups.

English across the curriculum

KS1 & 2 English

The implementation of our English curriculum is supported by carefully structured unit plans, leading pupils through component knowledge and skills to composite knowledge and skills in all subjects.

In our school, there is a strong emphasis on the teaching of writing. The English curriculum has been developed to ensure high quality texts are used to enable children to produce good writing.

The writing genre, book titles and writing outcomes are specified on the curriculum maps. The writing outcomes ensure that the teachers are very clear on what the children need to produce at the end of every week. An overview of each unit (unit plan) gives the teacher a clear outline of the progression of lessons. The outcomes are in line with ISEB expectations.

The following text types are taught throughout the year:

- KS1: Narrative – retelling stories, writing in role, writing sequels to stories, descriptive writing, poetry and comics. Non-fiction- author studies, newspaper reports, report writing and instructions.

-KS2: Narrative – retelling stories, writing in role, descriptive writing, writing extended versions of stories, writing prequels, poetry, diary entries, action and adventure stories. Non-fiction – persuasive texts, letters, discursive texts, reports, explanations, recounts and emails.

What a week of English teaching looks like

- Monday – Reading comprehension – lessons are linked to text (i.e. immersion into the text, role play, drama, responding to a text, identifying features of a text).
- Tuesday- Reading comprehension – lessons are linked to text (i.e. immersion into the text, role play, drama, responding to a text, identifying features of a text).
- Wednesday- Writing - vocabulary, grammar and punctuation
- Thursday- Writing composition - planning
- Friday- Writing composition - writing and editing.

The non negotiables for teaching English at Heathside to ensure the consistency of learning across the school are as follows:

Key Stage One: Year 1 & 2

- The learning objective will always be displayed at the beginning of the lesson. It will be specific about the skills the children are going to learn in that lesson, e.g. To start my sentence with a capital letter.

- All lessons will be differentiated to ensure every child is able to access the lesson and make progress.

Reading

- Children will read to an adult at least twice a week
- Children encouraged to talk about what they have read
- Phonics to be taught daily

Writing

- All units will have a 'hook'. This can be a book, an extract, video clip etc.
- WAGOLLS to be used throughout a writing unit
- Start to look at the simple features of texts
- Teachers to use modelled writing before children carry out their written pieces
- A good balance of fiction, non-fiction and poetry will be taught
- Handwriting to be taught weekly and practised a couple of times during the week
- Children should be doing a piece of writing each week.
- Children to complete an independent piece of writing fortnightly for their Writing Portfolios.
- Children taught to use success criteria to assess their work

Key Stage Two: Year 3 – 6

- The learning objective will always be displayed at the beginning of the lesson. It will be specific about the skills the children are going to learn in that lesson, e.g. To punctuate direct speech correctly in a story.
- All lessons will be differentiated to ensure every child is able to access the lesson and make progress.

Reading

- Children should be changing their home readers weekly (or fortnightly for longer books).
- Adults to listen to children read by asking them to read aloud in lessons, particularly in reading lessons
- Reading strategies for reading unknown words should be taught
- Comprehension skills to be taught weekly
- Reading groups organised according to reading age take place daily. Adults hear children read aloud in these daily sessions, ask comprehension questions and teach new vocabulary.

Writing

- All units will have a 'hook'. This can be a book, an extract, video clip etc.
- WAGOLLS to be used throughout a writing unit
- At the beginning of a unit, children should be looking at the features of a text and building success criteria
- Children should be taught how to use the success criteria to assess their own work and to set themselves targets
- Teachers to use modelled writing before children carry out their written pieces
- A good balance of fiction, non-fiction and poetry will be taught
- Children should be aware of the purpose of their writing and the intended audience
- Grammar and punctuation skills are taught in context.
- Handwriting to be taught weekly and practised a couple of times during the week
- Spelling rules to be taught weekly
- Children should be doing a piece of writing each week. This doesn't need to be a full piece of writing; it could be a setting description or the opening to a story.

- Children to complete an independent piece of writing fortnightly for their Writing Portfolios.

Science across the curriculum

A high-quality science education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of the world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity about natural phenomena to know more and remember more about the world in which they live. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. Our intent is to build systematically on their knowledge acquisition and retrieval giving them insights, ready for the next stage in their learning journey. Children must be able to talk about what they have learned in a knowledgeable and articulate way, using their 'public voice'.

Our science curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

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

We provide our children with a curriculum which is engaging and stimulating and develops not just their scientific knowledge, but builds on prior learning of concepts and the processes of scientific investigation. At our school we see the Y1 to Y6 curriculum as a body of subject specific knowledge defined by our school and so we take a knowledge led approach. Skills are an outcome of the curriculum, not its purpose. When children are 'fluent' in knowledge they can then apply that knowledge as part of skill acquisition.

We have a clear focus on subjects as units to deliver the curriculum. Our Curriculum Map and units of work in every subject contain the knowledge that we have identified as essential in our school.

Our Units of Work in each subject have been carefully crafted by expert teachers across our school partnership, identifying composite tasks and breaking them down in to component tasks to ensure sequential, layered knowledge acquisition. These Units of Work also support our particular 'instructional' style of teaching and help with the speedy and effective induction of new staff. This is particularly important in an inner London environment where the cost of accommodation prevents most of our staff from being able to stay with us long term.

We use Knowledge Organisers in order to help children with knowledge retention and issues around working memory to ensure that children know more and remember more. Our teaching style has a strong focus on the effective retention and use of subject specific vocabulary using "Walk The Word" techniques.

The implementation of our curriculum is supported by carefully structured unit plans, leading pupils through component knowledge and skills to composite knowledge and skills in all subjects.

Science resources related to each year group should be stored in classrooms or Heathside's dedicated laboratory for Science lessons. Depending on the size of equipment, some items may be stored in a resources room e.g. large skeleton when not in use. Teachers ascertain that they have all of the practical resources that they need for experiments in advance of the lesson.

PSHE, SRE & British Values

PSHE in KS1 & 2 is mapped through the cornerstones curriculum. Across the school, pupils have dedicated PSHE lessons each week plus cross curricular links are mapped into all other subjects through the schemes of work.

For further information, see the PSHE policy.