Curriculum Policy Inc Early Years

Longford Park School

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Our positive school

Longford Park is a school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and its policies must reflect this. Due to the nature of the difficulties experienced by the pupils, the curriculum has to be flexible and adaptive to individual needs. A great deal of emphasis is placed upon the social and emotional development of the pupil, the ability to co-operate, share, to tolerate each other, respect themselves and each other and to contribute to a positive atmosphere within the school. The school is dedicated to creating a safe and secure learning environment with the intention of raising the pupils’ self-esteem and eradicating any feelings of worthlessness and failure. In order to reach these goals the school encompasses a variety of teaching methods and learning styles together with a positive rewards and sanctions policy which is delivered by all staff in a consistent manner.

The curriculum provided is flexible in its approach and delivery. This is to facilitate learning at all levels, accommodating pupils who have not had recent experience of the National Curriculum. In response to this each overview for the core curriculum areas is a basic framework from which to work from so as to allow for the needs of a changing pupil population.

Aims of the school

- To provide a positive and challenging experience of school as a community for learning and the development of personal and social skills.
- To provide a wide range of high quality learning experiences which enable pupils to taste success.
- To provide flexible educational programmes to meet each pupil’s changing individual needs.
- To deliver an appropriate and challenging curriculum with realistic goals for pupils to achieve.
- To raise self-esteem by providing a safe, secure and nurturing environment
- To promote and reward attendance at school.
- To celebrate all successes appropriately.
- To work in partnership with agencies, parents and carers to meet the needs of the pupils.
- To prepare pupils for adult life after school.
- To encourage positive role models within the school community.
- To support the re-integration of pupils to mainstream provision where appropriate.
- To support and facilitate a fully integrated Behaviour Support Service.
Preamble

The purpose of this curriculum policy statement is to give a clear and unequivocal message to all, that Longford Park School is dedicated to continual development of curriculum continuity, consistency, balance, match and progression. It is the school’s response to questions of accountability.

It is the written expression of the school’s beliefs, intentions and practices. It takes account of National Curriculum, LEA policies and statements of curricular aims from the governing body. It is concerned at once with both teaching and learning.

Evaluation, implementation and review are key aspects in this ever changing document which is intended to take us from where we are into the future to the benefit of all our children.

In presenting the curriculum to pupils, Longford Park aims to offer opportunities to access a positive future.

While it is convenient and necessary to discuss the curriculum in terms of subjects to be taught, and the arrangements for teaching those subjects, this aim is being conveyed through the interactions that make up the life of Longford Park. From it, pupils will derive images of their own significance and potential. While it is true that what pupils can achieve is to some extent determined by factors outside the school’s control, for example, their socio-economic background, we also know that the school’s atmosphere which surrounds them can enable them to challenge such apparent limitations.

To develop good teaching to provide children with an environment in which to thrive both social and academic, of which all can be proud.

Aims

The principles will be reflected in a curriculum that has the following broad aims:-

- to help pupils to become independent, self-confident learners competent in their approach to education;
- to help pupils to develop confidence in themselves and to acquire the ability to meet challenges and to sustain an appropriate response;
- to help pupils to develop awareness of themselves and sensitivity to others and to their environment;
- to help pupils to develop the capacity to sustain good sound relationships and willingness to contribute to society.

Activities and learning experiences should:-

- ensure positive attitudes towards cultural diversity as reflected in the policies of the LEA and the school;
- adopt positive strategies to promote equality of opportunity as reflected in the policies of the LEA and the school;
- ensure access to the curriculum for those with Special Educational Needs;
ensure a harmonious relationship between the overt and the hidden curriculum;
embody a variety of learning styles including active learning;
establish continuity from home to school and between the educational phases namely primary, secondary and tertiary;
provide a curriculum that is broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated;
employ strategies for assessment that are positive in their intentions, varied in style and appropriate to the circumstances.

Objectives

The principles and aims will be reflected in the following objectives for all children:

- to acquire the ability to read fluently and with understanding and enjoyment;
- to acquire the ability to communicate in spoken and written language and to listen with appreciation and discrimination;
- to acquire the ability to communicate in symbolic systems of mathematics, science, the arts and movement and to employ their techniques and systems purposefully;
- to acquire the ability to manage enquiries in a disciplined way and to bring to bear coherent approaches to problem solving;
- to acquire the ability to handle information using traditional methods and modern technologies;
- to acquire competence in manipulative and practical skills;
- to develop an understanding of a positive attitude to their own and other cultures and to empathise with peoples and their situations in all points of the world;
- to acquire insight into personal development and relationships and be encouraged to adopt the principles of a healthy lifestyle including physical, emotional and social well-being;
- to develop critical and self-critical faculties that will enable sound distinction to be made between fact and opinion, between reality and illusion and between right and wrong.

The Needs of Learners

The school and the teacher will try to provide the learner with:

- a secure and happy atmosphere;
- a stimulating environment;
- new experiences and ideas;
- quality first hand experiences;
- a wide and varied curriculum geared to the needs of all;
- a positive attitude to all tasks;
- appropriate language to deal with individual tasks;
- appropriate materials to deal with individual tasks;
- opportunities for every child to succeed and to develop a sense of self-esteem;
- situations where children can reflect on their own experiences;
- situations which encourage children to ask questions;
- good quality, accessible and appropriate resources;
well prepared, clearly planned activities;
opportunities to be involved in the assessment of their own learning;
future learning targets.

Planning and the School Development Plan

The planning of a coherent curriculum programme will require consideration of four principal features designed to ensure continuity and progression of learning:

**Breadth:** the scope of the curriculum;
**Balance:** the relationships among its parts;
**Relevance:** the significance of the curriculum to the lives of pupils and of their society;
**Differentiation:** the capacity of the curriculum to cater for individual needs and abilities.

Consideration of these features raises further questions regarding the organisation and delivery of the curriculum programme. Issues such as the grouping of pupils for different purposes, the range of teaching and learning styles employed, the use of resources and the capacity of a school to monitor and evaluate its working processes, need to be discussed and agreed by the staff and the governing body. Decisions taken then will be incorporated into the School Development Plan on an annual basis.

Meeting the Needs of Disaffected Pupils

The school works proactively to meet the needs of children and young people who are showing signs of disaffection including; poor school attendance, truancy – external and internal, changes in behaviour patterns and an increase in behavioural incidents.

Strategies for tackling disaffection include the use of individual counselling, Mentor support, behavioural contracts, meetings with parents and multi-agency meetings.

Curriculum Organisation

The curriculum is taught largely by the class teachers, supported by teaching assistants.

The class teachers are responsible for:
- Co-ordinating the production of each pupil’s IEP
- Monitoring, assessing, recording and reporting on each pupil’s progress
- The production of each pupil’s Annual Review Report and reports required for case management or Child Protection meetings
- Identifying and representing each pupil’s needs

Curriculum Entitlement

All pupils are able to access the full National Curriculum, which is moulded to optimise the progress of every individual pupil.
Quality Assurance

The systems and procedures for quality monitoring seek to account for and to improve the standards of planning, recording and reporting and the standard of classroom teaching.

The Head Teacher is responsible for establishing the quality standards and expectations for all pupils and staff.

The Head Teacher is responsible for establishing the systems and procedures for developing and monitoring; the quality of the curriculum planning; the quality of teaching and learning and the quality of support and guidance provided by the specialist staff.

All teachers who lead subjects are responsible for the quality of specialist subject resources.

All teachers are responsible for implementing a planned curriculum matched to the needs of pupils in their care.

For coherency and efficiency, a lesson plan may cover more than one lesson. This level of planning allows for the teacher to focus much more on the practical delivery of the lesson. Learning outcomes need to be specific and clear, so that they can form the basis of a meaningful assessment process that identifies what a pupil knows, understands and what skills that they may have gained.

i) Individual Education Plans

Where a curriculum is based on specific learning outcomes, these can be used to form the basis of the targets for the IEP’s. The format of the IEP has been agreed and should be completed in respect of each pupil for Literacy, Numeracy and Behaviour.

Targets should be updated on at least a termly basis. It is recognised that individual pupil’s progress will vary and this in turn will affect how often the targets can be updated.

Physical well-being will be prioritised here. IEP content will ensure that no pupil faces disadvantage.

ii) The Role of Teaching Assistants

Longford Park School recognises that Teaching Assistants are a vital part of the school and classroom team, in supporting teachers so those pupils can access education most effectively. Teaching staff need to plan for the appropriate deployment of teaching assistants when drawing up lesson plans. Teaching assistants can be deployed in a variety of ways, including working with individual pupils, both within and outside of the classroom, working with pairs or other groups of pupils.
iii) The Role of Information Communication Technology

It is recognised that ICT can be a very powerful tool in providing motivating learning experiences for all pupils and for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties in particular. ICT can provide a buffer for the pupil between the teacher, learning activities and other pupils. As such pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties may be more willing to carry out curriculum based activities that they may have previously found difficult to access. In addition, the use of ICT for those pupils who have low levels of literacy can help them to practice skills as well as to gain self-confidence through the production of a high quality end product of which they can be proud.

Subject Policies

All subject areas need to have a policy statement, which forms a structured framework providing guidance and direction to the classroom teacher for the delivery of the subject.

In general, subject policies will follow a standard format that addresses the following areas:

**Introduction**
sets the scene and states the purpose of the subject within the curriculum

**Aims**
purpose of the policy

**Background**
description of the school

**Mission Statement**
the school’s mission or vision

**Legal Framework**
if appropriate

**Organisation of the policy**
an outline of responsibilities

**Resources**
what is required physically to meet policy aims

**Policy Administration**
monitoring and evaluation, training needs, familiarisation arrangements

**Policy Details**
pertinent information about subject organisation e.g:
Class groupings, teaching staff

**Appendices**

Policy date and working party members
Plan for Development
**Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment records should, in the short term, identify individual success from which the next steps for individual pupils can be planned. In the long term, these records develop a comprehensive picture of a pupil’s attainments and achievements across each key stage.

Appropriate assessment records should include:

a) Individual records of national curriculum levels
b) Individual portfolios of pupil’s work appropriately annotated – ‘Golden Books’
c) School Portfolio of Evidence – this provides evidence of the school’s ability to judge levels of attainment consistently
d) Individual pupil records of achievement
e) SAT’s results at Key Stages 1 & 2
f) Reading scores

**The Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body has a vital role to play in monitoring and helping to evaluate the curriculum offered by the school. In the main, the Pupil Welfare, Curriculum and Standards subcommittee of the Governing Body will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of any elements of the School’s action Plan or Development Plan which are related to the curriculum.

The Head Teacher will make regular reports to the Curriculum and staffing subcommittee to allow progress to be monitored. Some strands of curriculum monitoring, such as the Sex Education Policy, are issues that are a legal responsibility of the whole Governing Body.

In addition, the Governing Body will assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum in the following ways:

- Presentation of the school timetable, curriculum entitlement and curriculum policy on an annual basis
- Presentation of data on the quality of teaching and learning on an annual basis
- Presentation of statutory targets for KS1 and KS2 on an annual basis
Philosophy

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just preparation for the next stage – it is vitally important in itself.

Introduction

The Early Years Policy of Longford Park School applies to all children who join the school at the beginning or during the academic year in which they are five. This year group is often known as Reception and will follow the EYFS curriculum. We may make the decision based on ability and emotional development for our children to follow the Foundation Stage curriculum even though they may in fact be older in age.

The Foundation Stage is part of the National Curriculum and prepares children for learning in Key Stage 1.

Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Family or Carers are their main educators and many have attended a nursery or main stream school in our community. The early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that all children are included and have access to the whole curriculum;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children and activity that provides opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The curriculum of the EYFS underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing three prime areas:

Personal, social and emotional development

These outcomes focus on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. They cover important aspects of personal, social, moral and spiritual development including the development of personal values and an understanding of self and of others.

- Children are confident, show appropriate self-respect and are able to establish effective relationships with other children and with adults.
- They work as part of a group and independently, are able to concentrate and persevere in their learning and to seek help where needed.
- They are eager to explore new learning, and show the ability to initiate ideas and to solve simple practical problems.
- They demonstrate independence in selecting an activity or resources and in dressing and personal hygiene.
- Children are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for people of other cultures and beliefs.
- They take turns and share fairly.
- They express their feelings and behave in appropriate ways, developing an understanding of what is right, what is wrong and why.
- They treat living things, properly and their environment with care and concern. They respond to relevant cultural and religious events and show a range of feelings, such as wonder, joy or sorrow in response to their experience of the world.

**Communication and language**

These outcomes cover important aspects of language development and provide the foundation for literacy. The Early Years Policy places a strong emphasis on children’s developing competence in talking and listening and in becoming readers and writers. Other areas of learning also make a vital contribution to the successful development of literacy.

- In small and large groups, children listen attentively and talk about their experiences.
- They use a growing vocabulary with increasing fluency to express thoughts and convey meaning to the listener.
- They listen and respond to stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems.
- They make up their own stories and take part in role play with confidence.
- Here drama is delivered as a discrete lesson

**Physical development**

Physical development is implicit in all areas of the Early Years Programme. Teaching concentrates on children’s developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulate skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Positive attitudes are encouraged towards a healthy and active way of life.

- Children more confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordinated and an awareness of space and others.
- They use a range of small and large equipment and balancing and climbing apparatus, with increasing skill.
- They handle appropriate tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.

From these three prime areas specific areas grow outwards:
Literacy

These outcomes come out of the communication and language prime area

- They listen and respond to stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems.
- They make up their own stories and take part in role play with confidence.
- Children enjoy books and handle them carefully, understanding how they are organised.
- They know that words and pictures carry meaning and that, in English, print is read from left to right and from top to bottom.
- They begin to associate sounds with patterns in rhymes, with syllables and with words and letters.
- They recognise their own names and some familiar words.
- They recognise letters of the alphabet by shape and sound.
- In their writing they use pictures, symbols, familiar words and letters to communicate meaning, showing awareness of some of the different purposes of writing.
- They write their names with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters.

Mathematics

These outcomes cover important aspects of mathematical understanding and provide the foundation for numeracy. They focus on achievement through practical activities and are using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas.

- Children use mathematical language, such as circle, in front of, bigger than and more, to describe shape, position, size and quantity.
- They recognise and recreate patterns.
- They are familiar with number rhymes, songs, stories, counting games and activities.
- They compare, sort, match, order, sequence and count using everyday objects.
- They recognise and use numbers to 10 are familiar with larger numbers from their everyday lives.
- They begin to use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems.
- Through practical activities children understand and record numbers, beginning to show arenas of number operations, such as addition and subtraction, and begin to use the language involved.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

This is a major area of learning and enquiry focussing on children’s developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world. It provides a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.

- Children talk about where they live, their environment, their families and past and present events in their own lives.
• They explore and recognise features of living things, objects and events in the natural and manmade world and look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change.
• They show an awareness of the purposes of some features of the area in which they live.
• The talk about their observations, sometimes recording them and ask questions to gain information about why things happen and how things work.
• They explore and select materials and equipment and the skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building for a variety of purposes.
• They use technology, where appropriate, to support their learning.

**Expressive Arts and Design development**

This area of the Early Years Curriculum focuses on the development of children’s imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways.

• Children explore sound and colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions.
• They respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel.
• Through art, mimic, dance, stories and imaginative play, they show an increasing ability to use their imagination to listen and to observe.
• They use a widening range of materials, suitable tools, instruments and other resources to express ideas and to communicate their feelings.

In each of the areas there are markers that show the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that the children need to learn and the experiences met often enable the children to develop a number of competencies across several areas of learning and development.

• Weekly literacy and numeracy planning takes into account the needs of individual or groups of children using ongoing observations and informal assessment.

These plans must be flexible, to take account of the interests and needs of the children and to capitalise on unplanned events, particularly those initiated by the children.

**Approach to Learning**

The general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:-

• partnership between teachers and parents or carers, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
• the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
• a range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
• carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve against comparable pupils by the end of the Foundation Stage;
provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations;
good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;
clear aims for our work, and the regular monitoring to evaluate and improve what we do;
Regular identification of training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

Play in the Foundation Stage

Children at this stage do not differentiate between work and play and well-planned play is a key way in which children learn with enjoyment and challenge. It is also important that children have the opportunity to initiate their own play on a regular basis. They need time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. They are able to take risks and make mistakes.

Equal Opportunities (Inclusion)

Resources and learning experiences will be accessible to all children. In the Foundation Stage we give all children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of their range of life experiences and abilities when planning for their learning.

Assessment, Record Keeping, Reporting

Regular assessment of children’s learning is made and used to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of observation and discussion carried out by the teacher and other adults as appropriate.
The following assessments are also used:-

- Baseline end of term assessments.
- School Records; Regular checks are made on the progress of word and phonic recognition, basic mathematics, fine and gross motor skills.
- Profiles to be the individual child’s official record of achievement compiled using the information gained from the above assessments and observations.
- Each term a piece of work is entered into each child’s “Golden Book” assessment.
Resources

A range of equipment is available for both indoors and outdoors, providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children. The materials and equipment used reflect both the community and the wider world and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.

Children’s independence is encouraged through a well-organised environment where resources are easily accessible and stored suitably. The children are expected to take responsibility for their own belongings and the environment wherever possible.

All staff are constantly aware of issues concerning health and safety and resources are constantly monitored before, during and after use.

Health and Safety

Longford Park School Health and Safety Policy is adhered to. The school promotes healthy eating so the children receive fruit, and milk or water is provided.

Home/School Liaison

It is recognised that all parents or carers have an important role to play in the education of their child. All parents are given a parent booklet.

During the first weeks the child’s admission is staggered. The Foundation Home-School information is completed by parents so we learn more about the family and child and build a good relationship between school and home.

Parents are also involved through the regular communication of the reading record and Home-School book and phone calls.

Parents are encouraged to talk to the class teacher as soon as possible if they have any queries or concerns and throughout the child’s first year at school we promote an "open door" policy.