

CURRICULUM POLICY

Last Reviewed – October 2023

Next Review – October 2024

Review Information – Annually or following a change in legislation

Read and signed by

Richard White, Chair of Managing Council

Date:

A copy of this policy is published on the school website for parents.

REVIEW JOURNAL

Version	Approved By	Revision Date	Description of change	Author
V11	HM	October 2023	Reviewed by the Director of Studies.	LTE/HM
V10	HM	October 2022	Reviewed by the Director of Studies.	LTE/HM
V9	HM	October 2021	Reviewed by relevant staff. Check through of corresponding forms and paperwork.	LTE/HM

In addition, this policy is based on:

DOCUMENTS & GUIDANCE REFERED TO IN REVIEW

Document/Guidance	Date
ISI Commentary 2021 – 2022	Oct 2021
DfE Character Education	Oct 2021
DfE Teaching a broad and balanced curriculum for education recovery	Oct 2021
EYFS Framework 2021	Oct 2021
Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2021.	Oct 2021
UKCIS Education for a Connected World	Oct 2022
ISI Commentary 2022 -2023	Oct 2022
EYFS Framework 2023	Oct 2023
KCSiE 2023	Oct 2023

THIS POLICY SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH:

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
Online Safety Policy
Life Skills Policy
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities & Learning Support Policy
SEND Offer for Parents
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
Mental Health Policy
SMSC Policy (including British Values)
Behaviour, Rewards & Exclusion Policy
Assessment Policy

EAL Policy
Able & Interested Policy
Relationships & Sex Education Policy

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1. CURRICULUM AIMS

Our curriculum aims to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils, that's coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills, future learning and employment
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Have a high academic and technical ambition for all pupils
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life and become citizens of British society
- Provide subject choices that support pupils' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their potential
- Provide a broad curriculum prioritising a strong academic core of subjects
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment
- Promote the learning and development of our youngest children and ensure they are ready for Key Stage 1

Expectations: We strive to have high expectations of the children and ourselves.



Breadth: The curriculum is broad as a whole and in the various constituent parts. Throughout this broad curriculum British Values and the school's ethos such as mutual respect and courtesy are reinforced. The school values are threaded across and throughout all subjects.

Balance: The timetable ensures that there is a balanced curriculum, giving the children experience in the following educational areas:

- linguistic
- mathematical
- scientific
- technological
- human and social
- physical
- aesthetic and creative
- social, moral, spiritual and cultural

Each area is allocated the time and resources to make its specific contribution to the curriculum as a whole.

Relevance:

The learning objectives:

- are appropriate to the age and ability of the children and help to prepare them for the requirements of the next stage of education, including appropriate careers guidance in KS3 and an awareness of their personal abilities and character
- actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; and
- include effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society

Parity:

All of the curriculum areas are valued equally. As the children move through school some components have a greater weighting but the importance of each is not diminished. We place a strong emphasis on specialist taught areas of learning, often from the earliest years including Art, Dance, Drama, MFL, Music and PE & Sport.

Entitlement:


All children regardless of race, nationality, gender, religion, sexuality, age or disability have an entitlement to an appropriate curriculum. This is reflected in our curriculum and values which actively promote and uphold the fundamental British Values, including mutual respect and tolerance for others.

Relationships:

Teaching and learning is based on considerate and positive relationships between all members of the school community. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is given strong emphasis and underpins the aims and the delivery of the curriculum.

The curriculum aims are underpinned by our School rules and the values of our Pupil Code of Conduct (which was created by the children):

READY	RESPECTFUL	SAFE
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Our school values the importance of diversity and respect, so our curriculum promotes cooperation and represents diverse voices. The curriculum at Polwhele House is planned and implemented with active promotion of British Values and positive reflection of the Protected Characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010.

We believe that these school years at Polwhele House (from Nursery to Year 8) are an important base on which our pupils will build their future education and lives. We explore economic wellbeing and give the children opportunities to consider, discuss and explore their aspirations for their future. Life skills of critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, enquiry and reflection are developed through all areas of the curriculum and will enable pupils to succeed socially, economically and environmentally in our ever-changing world.

We believe in the benefits of learning beyond the classroom and recognise that outdoor education offers our pupils unique and memorable opportunities and experiences that cannot be taught within the classroom. We believe that promoting a thoughtful attitude towards the local and wider environment creates a sense of social responsibility which will benefit future generations.

2. LEGISLATION & GUIDANCE

As an independent school, we are not required to follow the National Curriculum. We recognise, however, the excellence of the National Curriculum in many areas, and use appropriate resources when we believe them to be in line with our curriculum aims.

In addition, this policy acknowledges and follows the statutory requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#).

See the EYFS Policy.

All children have access to the experiences, people and resources necessary to realise their potential in education. Individual Learning Support Plans are provided for children who would benefit from structured support as per their individual needs. Please see the SEND Policy and SEND Offer for Parents for more information and guidance.

As per statutory expectations we ensure that our curriculum includes all areas of the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2021.

3. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Managing Council (ManCo)

The ManCo will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the head to account for its implementation.

The ManCo will also ensure that

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided for pupils below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs, are approved by the secretary of state
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Pupils from Year 8 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance.

3.2 Headteacher

- The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:
- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met as set out in the Teaching and Learning Policy which compliments this document.
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the ManCo
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The ManCo is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEND.

3.3 Other staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

4. ORGANISATION & PLANNING

Thematic approach

The school follows the National Curriculum where applicable, which is enriched further with additional experiences and appropriate content to further the children's opportunities to master the curriculum and extend their learning. Thematic instruction is based on the idea that people acquire knowledge best when learned in the context of a coherent whole and when they can connect what they are learning to the real world.

EYFS to Year 6 follow set themes which run throughout each term. EYFS includes a child-led approach as per best practice and is responsive to the children's interests and needs.

Year 7 and 8 follow their own specific curriculum for each subject to ensure that they are prepared for Year 9, KS4 and further education.

Our aim is to develop a thematic approach so that as many areas of the curriculum as possible are connected together and are integrated to create a powerful, meaningful and memorable learning experience for our pupils. Links are encouraged and nurtured to include all core and foundation subjects across the curriculum. In order to make this exciting and more creative process work, we organise the learning objectives of the curriculum, both key process skills and content knowledge, around the theme. This also means that each subject stands as an equal and important part of our wider curriculum.

Progression:

Pre-Prep: EYFS

On entry to the Nursery, pupils follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Framework through a range of structured activities and free play which continues into the Reception year with the aim of fulfilling the Early Learning Goals. The seven areas of learning and development

shape the play-based curriculum which considers the individual needs, interests and development of the children and gives them a wide range of indoor and outdoor provision opportunities to investigate and explore the amazing world around them. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.

As children grow older and move into the Reception year, there is a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas below, helping them to prepare for Year 1. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are used to develop meaningful and appropriate provision and learning experiences.

Area	Title	Information
Prime	Communication and language	Underpins all seven areas and development.
	Physical development	Vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Includes gross and fine-motor experiences.
	Personal, social and emotional development (PSED)	Crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development.
Four specific areas	Literacy	Crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech before writing).
	Mathematics	Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically.
	Understanding the World	Children are guided to make sense of their physical and diverse world and their community. Includes trips and visits for enrichment.
	Expressive Arts and Design	The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity.

See our EYFS policy for information on how our early years curriculum is delivered.

Pre-prep: KS1

From Year 1 pupils follow our enriched National Curriculum provision. Pupils in KS1 begin to make use of facilities such as the school Library, Art Room and ICT suite, having some of their lessons with specialist subject teachers, to prepare them for the next phase of their education. Please see the information in the table below regarding our beliefs and values in our broad and balanced curriculum across the school.

KS1 is the bridge between the EYFS and the essential play and development elements, to the more formal nature of KS2 and beyond. Following and developing the provision of the National Curriculum, Polwhele children have an enriched curriculum which develops educational resilience alongside the joy of learning.

Challenge and support are given as per individual child need and time is given to transition to allow the children to make measured moves into more formal experiences as and when they are ready.

Curriculum Areas	Subjects	Information
Core	English	A cross-curricular approach allows literacy to be at the heart of every learning experience. Speaking and listening skills are key, using drama and storytelling approaches immerse the children in story and language and the children have experience in prepared performances such as the Nativity Play, to group presentations and individual question answering. Reading is an essential skill which informs the children's current and future educational development; in KS1 the children follow the Read Write Inc programme, with individual reading to an adult three times a week, with a focus on daily phonics sessions alongside building the fluency of the more able readers. Developing writing skills include the various genres of writing as well as SPAG skills and handwriting as well as exploring segmenting in applying phonics skills in composition. Developing a love of reading and a joy in writing with confidence is an integral part of Literacy in KS1.
	Mathematics	Making connections and developing number sense, consolidating working with numbers within and to ten and then extending to 100 by the end of the Year 2 curriculum creates firm foundations for starting introductions to calculations strategies, fractions and reasoning with numbers. Hands-on, practical mathematical tasks reinforce what numbers are; the world of numbers starts to come alive in KS1.
	Science	Developing an awareness of the amazing world around them and growing a sense of curiosity is the key thread across all science activities in KS1. Applying everyday language and starting to explore using scientific vocabulary continues the children's focus on cross-curricular key skills of speaking and listening. Creating a sense of awe about the natural world, as well as starting to respond to questions and practical investigations builds skills and knowledge

		for future years.
Wider Curriculum: Life Skills	Life Skills (PSHEE), including RSHE	Life Skills is the overarching term for our approach to teaching and developing a culture of wellbeing so that we live both positively and healthily at school and beyond. We equip our pupils with the societal skills they need to thrive as individuals, family members and global citizens, whilst preparing them to navigate an increasingly complex, competitive and connected world. Following the themes of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World, our Life Skills curriculum permeates throughout all other areas of the curriculum as well as our assemblies and collective worship. We fulfil our responsibilities regarding the teaching of Relationships and Health Education as appropriate for KS1.
Wider Curriculum: Humanities	Geography	The Humanities subjects are taught in rich topic work lessons with meaningful cross-curricular links. Learning more about the world, thinking about the past and present and starting to build cultural and philosophical understanding and awareness allows the children to develop their topic work from previous years. Going on trips and visits to places of interest in the local community, taking part in workshops and using hands-on artefacts gives children memorable experiences in each topic. Connecting with and exploring nature, identifying, classifying and investigating in the woodland develops an appreciation of living things, complimenting topic and science work. Boosting wellbeing and mental health from these experiences has positive effects across the curriculum and school life.
	History	
	Religious Studies	
	Enquiry	
Wider Curriculum: Creating & Inventing	Art & Design	Learning to control a range of artistic materials and equipment, letting imagination fly, building fine and gross-motor skills are important parts of the KS1 creating and inventing lessons. Developing cultural awareness, self-esteem and technological knowledge continue developing a sense of self as well as giving children analytical and problem-solving skills that they will need in adult life. Work is usually linked to the topic and enriches the theme significantly.
	Design Technology	
	Computing	
Wider Curriculum: The Performing Arts	Music	The performing arts are deeply rooted in our ethos and practice. Drama is taught through English lessons, linked to storytelling, exploring imaginative non-narrative texts and language development. Wellbeing continues to be supported in our music lessons as children immerse themselves in song. Elements of music are introduced in more formal ways with children experiencing a range of notational methods. Small and larger scale performance opportunities are given to the children to allow them to build confidence in presenting music,
	Drama	

		dance and drama to an audience.
Wider Curriculum: Language and Culture	Modern Foreign Languages: French	Languages are taught from Key Stage One onwards. Through song, rhymes, games and lots of oral practice, the children start to explore languages and develop their speaking and listening skills, building a vocabulary for Year 3 onwards.
Wider Curriculum: Physical Education	P.E.	Gross and fine-motor skills, co-ordination and balance are developed through indoor and outdoor P.E. provision. Children are introduced to more complex games and rules as they explore what it means to work as a team and compete with good sportsmanship. We aim to build the children's physical stamina as well as their ability to be accurate with throwing, catching and moving in different ways.
Co-curricular activities	Co-curricular	Our pupils enjoy a rich school day and through our extra-curricular programme of a wide range of enrichment opportunities we extend, challenge and enhance the day to day experiences. Our Grow Further prospectuses, which feature areas as diverse as woodland adventures, crafts, yoga etc, demonstrates the breadth of our provision and are designed in related to pupil voice.

Prep School: KS2 and KS3

Pupils in Years 3 to 8 are taught the following subjects by teachers with a special area of interest:

Curriculum Areas	Subjects	Information
Core	English	Literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening are fundamental to the educational, social and personal progress of our pupils and are taught explicitly and systematically. Learning is pupil-centred, thought-provoking and purposeful. We teach reading and spelling through a systematic approach using synthetic phonics, followed by grammar and punctuation, to encourage fluent, accurate and willing writers. We foster a love of reading and storytelling, whilst developing a lifelong appreciation of the power and beauty of language. Through links across the curriculum we aim to make English permeate all areas of our children's learning experiences.

	Mathematics	Our teaching of Mathematics builds a secure foundation of understanding, an ability to apply and reason mathematically and a sense of excitement and curiosity about the subject, which develops our pupils' ability to tackle complex problems. Every opportunity is taken to demonstrate cross-curricular and real world links with other subjects. Our aim is to ensure that children become confident, creative users and communicators of Mathematics.
	Science	Children naturally have many questions and great excitement, both about the world they live in and beyond it. We believe that investigations are the driving force behind the teaching and learning of Science. Pupils develop skills of hypothesising, planning, designing, observing, recording, classifying, grouping and drawing conclusions from evidence. In addition, they learn scientific enquiry skills to help pose and answer open-ended questions.
Wider Curriculum: Life Skills	Life Skills (PSHEE), including RSHE	Life Skills is the overarching term for our approach to teaching and developing a culture of wellbeing so that we live both positively and healthily at school and beyond. We equip our pupils with the societal skills they need to thrive as individuals, family members and global citizens, whilst preparing them to navigate an increasingly complex, competitive and connected world. Following the themes of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World, our Life Skills curriculum permeates throughout all other areas of the curriculum as well as our assemblies and collective worship. We fulfil our responsibilities regarding the teaching of Relationships and Health Education for KS2 and Relationships and sex education, and health education and careers guidance for KS3.
Wider Curriculum: Humanities	Geography	We develop our pupils' understanding of the world by building historical, geographical, religious, cultural and philosophical knowledge and skills. These areas of learning are typically interlinked and form the basis of much of our curriculum, as well as the unique opportunities our 'Enquiry' lessons provide about our natural world, sustainability and appreciation of wildlife on a global and local scale. Getting outside, being mindful and being immersed in nature pedagogy has deep and significant impact on our pupils' wellbeing as well as their experiences of risk, reflection and collaborative activities.
	History	
	Religious Studies	
	Enquiry	
Wider Curriculum: Creating & Inventing	Art & Design	Art, Design and Computing provide rich opportunities for creativity and invention. In addition, teachers help pupils to develop strong connections between these and other subjects.
	Design Technology	

	Computing	
Wider Curriculum: The Performing Arts	Music	<p>The performing arts are deeply rooted in our ethos and practice. Natural creativity, imagination, self-expression, communication and physical development are a strong thread across our drama, music, musical theatre and dance experiences. The collaborative impact of these areas of performing arts increases pupils' physical skills, stamina, creativity, expression, musicality, empathy, listening skills as well as performance and confidence. Children are encouraged to get involved in extracurricular musical activity and drama sessions, including specialist, individual instrumental lessons, LAMDA and taking part in enrichment clubs. Our Performing Arts Scholarship provides children with additional opportunities.</p>
	Drama	
Wider Curriculum: Language and Culture	Modern Foreign Languages: French (KS1 to KS3)	<p>Languages are taught from Key Stage One onwards. Learning languages helps pupils to develop their skills of creative problem solving and lateral thinking. We aim to prepare children for a world of increasing globalisation by equipping them with an understanding of global compassion, empathy and interest.</p>
	Latin (Upper KS2)	
Wider Curriculum: Physical Education	P.E.	<p>The PE curriculum is very generously provisioned. We have a fully inclusive approach through which all pupils progress at their optimum pace and fulfil their potential with confidence and enthusiasm. All year groups are taught by specialist PE staff. They learn age-appropriate skills and sports. We enjoy and promote active participation in fixtures, competitions and tournaments as well as our special inter school competitions. Whatever their skill level or ability, our aim is for all pupils to enjoy being involved in sport and to strive to be the best that they can be.</p>
	Games	
Co-curricular activities	Co-curricular programme	<p>Our pupils enjoy a rich school day and through our extra-curricular programme of a wide range of enrichment opportunities we extend, challenge and enhance the day to day experiences. Our Grow Further prospectuses which feature fencing, woodland adventures, woodwork, horse-riding etc, demonstrates the breadth of our provision.</p>

Across all areas of the school, Life Skills coverage and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development permeate throughout everyday school life. Our Assemblies and Collective Worship programme supports this further with special events, celebrations and topics covered linking to British Values, the Protected Characteristics and the UN Rights of the Child.

Planning

Long Term Planning:

Each subject has a knowledge and skills based curriculum overview which sets the age-related expectations for each year group. EYFS provision is driven by the children's interests and motivations. Our knowledge of the children is also applied in the development of the KS1 areas of study/topics along a range of exciting themes. The Years 1 to 6 curriculum is based on a set list of termly thematic topics which create meaningful and cohesive learning experiences and content for our pupils, as explained above. KS3 subjects are delivered by teachers with a special interest and experience in each area of study, following the KS3 curriculum content.

Progression, skills and curriculum content are linked with assessment in the curriculum overviews, which are reflected in the assessment spreadsheets for each subject. These track progress and attainment. Please refer to the Assessment Policy for more information.

The content of each subject curriculum overview is organised as follows:

1. National Curriculum expectations and information: an overview
2. SMSC, BV and PC statement
3. Online Safety statement
4. Curriculum review: Best practice as per OFSTED Research Review papers (as appropriate to subjects)
5. Polwhele House Curriculum Values, including Intent, Implementation & Impact
6. SEND
7. EYFS, KS1 and KS2 content
8. Termly Overview LTP: EYFS, KS1 & KS2 with Life Skills Curriculum links
9. Progression: Key Skills and year group overview: EYFS, KS1 & KS2
10. KS3 National Curriculum expectations and information: an overview
11. Termly Overview LTP: KS3 with Life Skills Curriculum links
12. Progression and assessment ladder KS3

Short Term Planning:

Short Term Planning is each teacher's detailed breakdown. There is no set format (although there are suggestions made).

- It will always include individual lesson learning Intentions/objectives
- Success Criteria can be noted
- Short Term Planning is a vehicle for assessment and is useful in evaluating children's progress, attainment and barriers to learning
- Assessment for Learning strategies are noted
- Lesson plenaries and reflection are used as assessment opportunities
- Differentiation for individuals and groups is integral to STP, working with the SENDCO and with guidance from the Director of Studies/Head following data analysis and pastoral related communication.

Please see the Teaching and Learning Policy.

5. INCLUSION

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment

- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject and further provision provided by our wide curriculum, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

We endeavour to run peripatetic lessons on a rolling timetable to support children in attending wider learning opportunities in their chosen fields of interest and talent.

Further information can be found in our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy, SEND Offer for Parents, SEND Policy and EAL Policy.

6. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The responsibility for the whole-school curriculum in subject areas lies with the Director of Studies. This includes producing policies and the planning and monitoring of both the syllabus and schemes of work. The overall responsibility for the curriculum is held by the Head and Managing Council. In addition to regular observations by the Head and Deputy Head/Director of Studies, the Managing Council has visited various classes prior to their meetings on an annual basis. Book looks, informal teacher discussion groups (e.g. those held during INSET or staff meetings), planning reviews and learning walks are used to monitor the way subjects are taught throughout the school.

Created: September 2009

Reviewed: July 2011 (DM), Feb 2012 (DM), October 2012 (SMT), September 2015 (SMT), March 2017, September 2018, November 2018, September 2019, October 2021, October 2022, September 2023

Review date: Annually, according to the school's policy review cycle