



# Curriculum Policy

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## Queens' Federation Curriculum Policy

### **Introduction**

As state-funded primary schools, the Queens' Federation provides a curriculum that fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum (as outlined in the 2002 Education Act) and of the Early Years Foundation Stage (established in the 2006 Childcare Act). However, from this starting point of every child's entitlement, we are also committed to creating a unique and dynamic curriculum, tailored to the needs of the children we teach.

Mick Waters has described the curriculum as "the entire planned learning experience of a young person," encompassing not only lessons, but also events and activities, routines, the learning environment, extra-curricular clubs and learning outside the classroom. Through all of these different activities and contexts, we aim to offer a broad and balanced curriculum that stimulates and stretches, nurtures and empowers all learners.

This policy outlines our approach to the curriculum. It is best read in conjunction with our Teaching, Learning and Monitoring Policy and Assessment Policy, which provide further detail of how we encourage and enable learning at the Queens' Federation, and with our policy for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

### **Aim**

Our central aim is to foster 'Learning for Life.' We will provide a rich, relevant and inspirational curriculum that promotes a lifelong love of learning and equips our pupils with the key knowledge and understanding, skills and personal qualities that they will need to thrive in a rapidly changing world. Our curriculum is designed to be relevant to our children and is linked to the context of the school and the local community.

As a result of our aim, our children will...

- achieve the highest attainment and best possible progress that they can,
- be successful and confident learners who demonstrate the Federation values and the '7 Habits' in their learning and behaviour,
- make the right choices for their safety and learning,
- be responsible, caring citizens who make a positive contribution to their community,
- understand and appreciate their own and different beliefs, ideas, values and opinions,
- demonstrate respect for themselves, each other and the world around them,
- develop a 'lifelong love of learning.'

### **Our Curriculum**

Our curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced and enables children to build on prior knowledge, skills and experiences. Our 'subject skills' grids break the aims of the National Curriculum into smaller steps. Subject 'progression maps' identify how key skills are built upon and developed from one year group to the next. Key knowledge and vocabulary for each subject are identified on 'unit overviews.' We map our topics across the year to ensure appropriate coverage is given to each subject. Subjects may be taught discreetly or through a blocked approach.

Our curriculum fully meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are clear contexts for learning and purposeful outcomes are reached at the end of each learning journey. Subject skills and assessment criteria have been developed for each subject. These skills, alongside targeted vocabulary are mapped for each year group to ensure coverage and progression. Our curriculum meets the needs of all learners, challenging them, enabling them to think creatively and critically, problem solve and undertake learning at a deeper

level. It also places a high priority on the development of self-esteem and emotional well-being and the creation of compassionate and respectful citizens.

Integrated into our curriculum are our Federation rules and values and 'The Seven Habits of Effective People.' These highly effective habits enable our children to develop the leadership and life skills needed to contribute positively to the world at large. At the Queens' Federation, we believe that everyone can be a leader!

### **Learning Behaviours**

Lifelong learning behaviours are interwoven throughout our curriculum in the form of our school rules...

- Be Ready
- Be Respectful
- Be Safe

and the 'Seven Habits of Effective People...'

- Habit 1 - Be Proactive
- Habit 2 - Begin with the End in Mind
- Habit 3 - Put First Things First
- Habit 4 - Think Win-Win
- Habit 5 - Seek First to Understand, then to be Understood
- Habit 6 - Synergize
- Habit 7 - Sharpen the Saw

These learning behaviours are displayed in each classroom and around school and are celebrated weekly by children receiving certificates. Children in EYFS focus on the development and the use of Habits 1 to 3.

### **Topic Curriculum and Events**

Meaningful cross-curricular links are developed within subjects and opportunities to develop key literacy and numeracy skills are promoted across all subjects. Learning is enhanced and enriched through a wide range of practical, first-hand experiences, local community visits and projects, school trips, visiting speakers, residential activities and extra-curricular activities. We firmly believe that real life experiences create lasting memories and strengthen the learning happening in school.

Each half term or term, (where possible) several subjects may link to an overarching theme. For example, in Year 6 when studying World War 2, Anne Frank may be studied in English; Blitz artwork created and artefacts and evidence evaluated in history. Our aim is for each theme to be as exciting as possible, with lots of learning opportunities. It is for this reason that themes start and end in exciting ways.

A range of possible starting points are used as appropriate, including:

- Educational visits (e.g. YR Nightingale Park, Y1 Castle Hedingham, Y2 Teddy Bears Hospital, Y3 Cambridge Botanical Gardens, Y4 The Cambridge Mosque, Y5 West Stow, Y6 Duxford Air Museum)
- Special themed days, sometimes supported by outside visitors (e.g. Y1 Castles Day, Y3 Ancient Greeks Day, Y5 Space Day, Y6 World War 2 day)
- Setting up a project or challenge for the half term e.g. a mini-enterprise project

A range of possible outcomes are used as appropriate, including:

- Producing a final product (e.g. Y3 IMovie presentation, Y6 fairground rides)
- Staging a special event, either for parents or for a different year group (e.g. musical performance, Y2 bakery, Y6 Fairtrade café)

### **Timetabling**

Effective teaching is flexible. We believe in giving teachers the autonomy to organise the curriculum to fit their own ways of working, strengths, and the needs of the children they teach.

Teaching every subject every week does not necessarily lead to the most effective teaching and learning. Teachers may choose to block certain subjects and teach them in alternate weeks, half-terms, etc. For example, Year 4 may cover a History topic on the Romans for several weeks, before moving onto an RE topic on Christian beliefs and practices. Similarly, several year groups find Design and Technology work lends itself to an intensive, focused approach and may tackle an entire Design and Technology unit of work in a single week, over a number of sessions. This practice of 'blocking' subjects can have the advantage of making learning more meaningful, can reduce the need for recapping of the previous week's learning, and can make juggling a crowded and demanding curriculum more manageable for teachers.

We may use staff meeting time to share ideas for timetabling learning and seek to learn from each other and try new things out. Some year group pairs swap classes for certain subjects to allow teachers to play to their curriculum strengths and inspire the children with their love for those subjects.

A cycle of lesson observations and work scrutiny by subject leaders, allows us to ensure that subject-specific coverage and progression is maintained within this flexible framework.

### **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

At the Queens' Federation, we value each child as a unique individual. We strive to cater for the needs and interests of all our children and to ensure that we are truly inclusive in the curriculum we offer. In our curriculum planning, we take account of relevant equal opportunities legislation, covering areas such as race, gender and disability.

We strive to ensure that all tasks planned are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs, we use targets and approaches contained in their SEND Pupil Support Plans (SPSP) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). We ensure tasks provide sufficient additional stretch and challenge, or offer open-ended opportunities for extension. In planning for learning across the curriculum, teachers will modify activities and approaches as appropriate in order to fully include children with any disabilities.

All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to behaviour and classroom management. We set and agree classroom expectations and expect all children to comply with them so that we can create the best learning opportunities for all. We treat children with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly, and offer them equal opportunities. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general.

In a school with children from such a wealth of different ethnic and language backgrounds, we aim to celebrate diversity across the curriculum. We ensure that we have high expectations for bilingual learners and those new to English, and we deploy teaching staff to help them make the best possible progress.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities at Queens' Federation**

As part of our curriculum offer to all pupils, we provide a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, run by school staff and partnership organisations such as Premier Sport. These draw on the expertise and interests of both our staff and the wider community: as well as a range of sports clubs and music tuition, clubs have included areas such as: choir, gardening, reading, coding, crochet and cookery. We also provide children with the opportunity to run their own child-initiated clubs,

supervised by school staff – examples have included: sewing, sign language and computer programming. Provision of extra-curricular activities is overseen by designated members of staff in consultation with our Clubs Administrator.

Sports clubs are subsidised by Pupil Premium funding to ensure they are as accessible as possible to all pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding. A designated member of staff tracks pupil involvement in sports clubs closely and targets new provision in order to increase participation, especially amongst groups such as children in receipt of Pupil Premium funding. Through our involvement with the Cambridge School Sports Partnership, we have developed a wide-ranging programme of sporting competitions, with end-of-unit intra-school competition and inter-school fixtures in sports such as football, netball, tag rugby, hockey, cricket, cross-country and athletics.

The development of pupils' leadership skills is another school priority at Queens' Federation. Pupils in Later Years undertake Sports Leader training and are then given the opportunity to lead and support a variety inter-class and cross-federation sporting activities.

The curriculum in all year groups is enriched by a range of visits, visitors and special events. A 3-day residential trip takes place in Year 6.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Curriculum Leader**

The Federation Curriculum Leaders are responsible for taking the 'big picture' view of teaching and learning and curriculum development across the federation. In particular, they will:

- oversee the development of our knowledge and skills based curriculum and ensure it meets the aims set out in this document
- coordinate curriculum planning and development across the federation to ensure continuity, coverage, consistency and progression across all year groups
- collaborate closely with all subject leaders in implementing the National Curriculum, ensuring skills progression across the federation and offering support in the continued development of their subject
- keep the SLT regularly informed about curriculum development and work alongside them in overseeing planning in their phases
- report regularly to governors about progress in curriculum development.

### **Curriculum Subject Leaders**

Individual subject leaders are responsible for monitoring and reviewing teaching and learning in their subject across either the federation or one of the schools. They do this by:

- reviewing the curriculum documents regularly to ensure they continue to reflect best practice
- using the curriculum documents as the basis for planning reviews, classroom observations, work scrutiny, teaching and learning support and discussion with colleagues in other year groups
- using staff meeting time to champion and develop teaching and learning in their subject
- review resourcing for their subject and keep abreast with new resources, including ICT software.

### **Class Teachers**

Class teachers are the workers at the coal-face; they are where the actual teaching and learning takes place day by day. They have the crucial role of:

- planning based on the curriculum documents for their phase to ensure development of knowledge and skills
- making children familiar with the knowledge, skills and learning behaviours and applying them to the learning which takes place in their classrooms

- considering curriculum organisation and timetabling in their year group to maximise the effectiveness of teaching and learning, including considering entry and end points
- ensuring their classroom is a positive, stimulating and accessible learning environment for all learners.

### **Governors**

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the federation's approach to curriculum. In particular, they:

- ensure our curriculum is broad and balanced, and meets both statutory requirements and the needs of all learners
- support our delivery of the curriculum by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the schools' buildings and premises are used optimally to support teaching and learning across the curriculum;
- ensure our curriculum, particularly our provision for visits and visitors, meets current health and safety and safeguarding regulations
- monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum through the federation's self-evaluation processes, including regular reports from subject leaders and the curriculum leader.

### **Parents**

We believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in helping their children learn and make progress across the curriculum. They do this by promoting a positive attitude to school and to learning, by supporting that learning through home learning and other activities, and by working in close partnership with adults in school. We do all we can to inform parents about the curriculum, including:

- holding parent afternoons to meet teachers at the beginning of the year and hear about the curriculum;
- regular parent consultations with teachers to discuss progress
- sending home half termly topic overview and optional home learning grids which outline the learning to take place in each theme and suggesting ways in which this could be supported and build on at home
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with home learning, and suggesting, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.
- having parent open afternoons when parents can view their child's work with them in different curriculum areas
- inviting parents into school for workshops to support home learning effectively
- inviting parents to periodic topic 'end points' where their children can share with them the learning that has taken place.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Our Federation's curriculum policy will be reviewed and updated regularly by our Curriculum Leaders. This review will take into account current government reviews of the curriculum, incorporate our own ongoing curriculum developments and innovation, and ensure that we continue to offer a curriculum that inspires and engages all children as lifelong learners.

