



# **Applebee Wood Community Specialist School**

## **Curriculum Policy**

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## Statement of intent

At Applebee Wood Community Specialist School, we value pupils' education and aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that is accessible to all. We do not tolerate discrimination of any kind and our curriculum celebrates the diverse nature of our society, enabling pupils to embrace the world around them – encouraging adherence with the fundamental British values. It also promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at our school and of society.

This policy outlines our dedication to establishing a well-rounded and robust curriculum, as well as the provisions surrounding its creation.

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# 1. Curriculum intent and aims

Pupils' learning and development is at the heart of our school's curriculum; it is broad and balanced and equips pupils with the skills necessary to succeed in life after school.

This curriculum intent statement outlines how the school has created the curriculum and the benefits it will bring to pupils' learning and self-improvement.

## **Curriculum intent - One Curriculum, Three pathways**

At Applebee Wood School our curriculum is designed to inspire enthusiasm for learning, to ensure achievement and to support pupil well-being and happiness.

The curriculum at Applebee Wood is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that meets the needs of all children. It provides opportunities for children to develop as independent, confident and successful learners, with high aspirations, who know how to make a positive contribution to their community and the wider society.

We provide first hand learning experiences that allow children to develop interpersonal skills and build resilience. Our cross-curricular approach at primary and within our pre-formal and semi-formal curriculum enables our children to make meaningful links with their learning. Throughout each Key Stage, the curriculum is designed to develop the skills, attributes and knowledge that our children will need to successfully take their place in society.

Early years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Key Stage 1 – during this time, pupils learn classroom routines in a calm, learning focused environment, which is safe, caring and nurturing.

Key Stage 2 – Pupils learn how to become more independent around school. They are provided with a holistic education which incorporates guidance and strategies from support agencies and partnerships.

Key Stage 3 – Pupils learn how to work with other groups. Pupils are out and about in the community more. They have an increased resilience developing the skills to self-regulate.

Key Stage 4 – Pupils work for a wide variety of accreditation in Functional Skills and ASDAN, alongside learning employability skills through their personalised learning programmes. They are prepared for the next stage in their education.

We celebrate our own special school identity through the unique experiences that our curriculum provides. We have developed a rich and varied menu of enhancement opportunities to engage learning and recognise individuality.

Our curriculum enables us to build strong relationships, celebrate diversity, encourage respect and build a sense of community. It provides and acknowledges success for all children, in all aspects of their development and it recognises, encourages and celebrates all types of talent. Our house teams, PSHE lessons and assemblies promote positive attitudes which reflect the values and skills needed for future learning and success.

Teamwork and responsibility are an essential part of our curriculum, and we enable children to take on key roles, becoming involved in the community, through celebration of local traditions, by learning new skills and enabling them to take an active part in events throughout the year.

Children leave Applebee Wood School with a sense of belonging and are proud that they have developed the confidence and skills needed to be learners for life.

The curriculum is designed to help our pupils become:

**Successful learners** who enjoy learning and make outstanding progress.

**Effective communicators** who can express themselves, make choices and build positive relationships with other people.

**Confident individuals** who take a full part in activities within school and the community.

**Responsible citizens** who behave well and make a positive contribution to the school and the wider world.

**Lifelong learners** who leave school equipped for the adult world whether in paid employment, education or supported living.

Applebee Wood's curriculum is designed around

**three Strands or pathways:**

### **Pre-formal – Reaching Out**

A sensory curriculum for life and learning

Pupils with multiple complex needs learn through consistent routines, sensory experiences and interaction with adults. The curriculum supports pupils to:

Develop a sense of security through building positive relationships.

Develop an awareness of the world around them through sensory exploration.

Develop the physical skills through which they can control and explore their environment.

Establish behaviours through which they can express their feelings, make choices and communicate with other people.

Experience life within the school community, responding to other people and sharing activities with them.

### **Semi-Formal – Stepping On**

An exploratory curriculum for life and learning

Pupils learn through play, exploration, practical activities and community involvement. The curriculum supports pupils to:

Develop communication skills in speech, gesture, sign or symbol so that they can interact with other people, make choices, follow instructions and explanations and access the key concepts needed for learning.

Establish key skills in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT.

Learn to co-operate with other people, to build positive relationships and to take responsibility for themselves.

Learn the skills which will help them be more independent in adult life.

Learn about the world around them and the wider community.

### **Formal – Climbing Up**

An academic curriculum for life and learning with provision for pupils' specialist needs.

Pupils access the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, adapted and augmented in the light of individual needs. The curriculum supports pupils to:

Develop effective communication through speech or total communication and to interact confidently with other people.

Study as wide a range of academic subjects as is appropriate for individuals, leading to accredited courses and qualifications.

Develop self-awareness, respect for others and a sense of responsibility, so that they can play their part in the school community and become active citizens as adults.

Develop confidence and personal independence.

Learn about the world of work and develop the skills and understanding which will enable them to move into paid employment or voluntary work in adulthood.

All secondary aged pupils access accredited courses including GCSE, Functional Skills and Entry Level where appropriate. Applebee Wood works in partnership with alternative education providers to offer a range of courses to meet individual needs and aspirations.

We aim to ensure pupils enjoy learning and feel prepared for life after school. We also intend to offer our pupils new and exciting experiences through extra-curricular activities that are designed to build resilience, confidence and self-esteem. Our curriculum will be delivered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, through a variety of methods, including those outlined below.

**Classroom-based learning:** Accessing different learning resources and equipment to broaden pupils' knowledge, and making cross-curricular links where possible within lesson plans, so that pupils can draw upon knowledge from different subjects and understand how each topic plays a part in everyday life. Classroom teaching also includes one-to-one and small group tuition for pupils who require additional support.

A full list of the subjects available to our pupils can be found in [section 5](#) of this policy.

**Extra-curricular activities:** We provide a variety of extra-curricular activities for pupils that enhance their learning experience, form personal connections with their peers, and teach skills essential for life after school.

## **2. Legal framework**

2.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2017) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2013) 'The national curriculum in England'
- DfE (2017) 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'
- DfE (2019) 'School attendance'

2.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Homework Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- SEND Policy

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

3.1. The governing board is responsible for:

- Approving and monitoring the content of this policy.
- Liaising with the headteacher, subject leaders and teachers with regards to pupil progress and attainment.
- Formulating a curriculum committee who assists the school with the creation and implementation of the curriculum.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.

3.2. The headteacher is responsible for:

- Devising long- and medium-term plans for the curriculum in collaboration with teachers, subject leaders and other members of the SLT.

- Communicating the agreed curriculum to the governing board on an annual basis.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Assisting teachers with the planning and implementation of the curriculum, ensuring their workload is manageable.
- Ensuring the curriculum is implemented consistently throughout the school and ensuring any difficulties are addressed and mitigated as soon as possible.
- Receiving reports on the progress and attainment of pupils and reporting these results to the governing board.
- Making any necessary adjustments to the curriculum where required.
- Keeping up-to-date with any relevant statutory updates and taking action where required.
- Creating and maintaining an up-to-date curriculum intent statement.
- Ensuring the curriculum is created in accordance with this policy.
- Updating and maintaining this policy.

3.3. Teachers are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy consistently throughout their practices.
- Ensuring lesson plans are reflective of the school's curriculum.
- Implementing the curriculum in creative ways, appealing to different learning types and keeping pupils engaged in content.
- Creating short-term plans for the curriculum with fellow colleagues and reporting these plans to the headteacher.
- Creating weekly lesson plans in collaboration with colleagues and sharing these with the SLT where required.
- Collaborating with the headteacher and the SENCO to ensure that the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Working closely with the SENCO and TAs to ensure those in need receive additional support in lessons.
- Ensuring academically more able pupils are given additional, more challenging work to celebrate their talents.
- Celebrating all pupils' academic achievements.
- Reporting progress of pupils to the Subject Leader and ensuring any difficulties identified are discussed and resolved.
- Monitoring the progress of all pupils and reporting on this to the Subject Leader.
- Working to close the attainment gap between academically more and less able pupils.

3.4. Subject leaders are responsible for:

- Providing strategic leadership and direction to their team.



- Supporting and offering advice to colleagues on issues relating to the subject or curriculum area.
- Monitoring pupil progress within the department and reporting on this to the SLT.
- Providing efficient resource management for their department.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Ensuring there are specialist resources and equipment available for pupils in need so that everyone can have full access to the curriculum.
- Producing and maintaining a Subject Leader File including the following documents:
  - Subject Policy including Long Term Plans
  - Monitoring Procedures (lesson observations, work & planning scrutiny, walk throughs)
  - Resource directory, audits and orders
  - Action plan with SEF budget
  - Assessment records including data analysis
  - Reports to Governors
  - Examples of good work, special days.
  - CPD

3.5. The SENCO is responsible for:

- Collaborating with the headteacher and teachers to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all.
- Ensuring teaching materials do not discriminate against anyone in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Carrying out SEND assessments where necessary and ensuring pupils receive the additional help they need.
- Liaising with external agencies where necessary to ensure pupils who require additional support receive it.

## 4. Organisation and planning

- 4.1. The school's curriculum will be delivered over 190 days and will be delivered equally throughout the school week.
- 4.2. Each school day will be split into two sessions and pupils will receive at least one break (lunch).
- 4.3. In general, lessons will be separated into three core stages:
- **Introduction to the topic and thinking time** – this is the time where lesson objectives will be set.
  - **A main teaching event** – this will vary day-to-day based on the teacher's plan.

- **Plenary** – this will summarise what pupils have learnt in the lesson and will address what will be covered in the next lesson.
- 4.4. Lessons will use a range of teaching techniques to appeal to different learning types, e.g. visual, audio and kinaesthetic.
- 4.5. The different learning techniques include:
  - Exposure to new experiences and routines.
  - **Sensory play** and child led interactions.
  - TEACCH and Attention Autism strategies and other specialist approaches.
  - **Using different kinds of questions** to engage pupils and prompt them to apply their knowledge to different examples, e.g. using why and how questions.
  - **Opening discussions** around topics so pupils can learn from their peers and learn how to hold conversations with others.
  - **Holding structured debates** to expose pupils to different points of view and teach them how to negotiate situations where there is a potential conflict of interest, whilst still respecting others' beliefs.
  - **Using assessments** to test pupils' knowledge and consolidate learning; these can be through both informal and formal assessments.
  - **Role playing and acting** to develop pupils' empathy and give them the opportunity to explore topics in a more interactive way.
  - **Labelling, ordering and identifying** key themes within texts, dialogues and films to help pupils' coordinate series of events.
  - **Written and spoken tasks** to encourage different methods of expressing ideas, as well as identifying key differences between writing and speaking conventions.
- 4.6. Teachers will plan lessons which are challenging for all pupils and ensure that there are provisions in place for more academically able pupils, e.g. completing additional work that is above the academic level of their peers.
- 4.7. Teachers will plan lessons to accommodate for pupils of mixed ability, making cross-curricular links where possible.
- 4.8. A full list of subjects covered in school can be found in [section 5](#) of this policy.
- 4.9. Teachers will have due consideration for pupils who require additional help within their planning and organisation of lessons.
- 4.10. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND and EAL will receive additional support – this will include dedicated time with TAs and access to specialist resources and equipment where required.

- 4.11. TAs will be deployed within lessons strategically so that they can assist with pupils who require additional help, but are also able to minimise disruptions where necessary.
- 4.12. Pupils with EAL will be given the opportunity to develop their English/ Communication ability throughout lessons where necessary.
- 4.13. Planning will be used to identify any possible difficulties within the curriculum and will break down barriers to learning.
- 4.14. Any difficulties identified will be addressed at the outset of work.
- 4.15. Classrooms will be organised so that pupils have full access to resources and equipment – they will be provided with a rich and varied learning environment that will enable them to develop their skills and abilities.

## **5. Subjects covered**

- 5.1. The school will have due regard to the national curriculum throughout the academic year.
- 5.2. The school will have due regard for the ‘Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage’.
- 5.3. The school will have due regard for the pathway and individualised needs of pupils.
- 5.4. The school will ensure every pupil has access to the following core subjects:
  - English
  - Maths
  - Science
  - RE
  - Relationships and health education
- 5.5. The school will ensure pupils also have access to the following foundation subjects:
  - Art and design
  - ICT
  - Communication (Including Total Communication and Signing as appropriate)
  - Geography
  - History
  - Music
  - PE
  - Sex education

## **6. PSHE**

Part of the national curriculum includes PSHE lessons where everyday topics, e.g. raising awareness of different cultures or anti-bullying, can be addressed. The curriculum is split into 3 key themes: Health and Well Being, Living in the Wider World and Relationships. Each class is given at least one dedicated lesson to PSHE a week.

- 6.1. The schools will hold five PSHE days per year. Topics covered within these PSHE days are:
  - Antbullying
  - Celebrating different cultures
  - Environmental issues
  - Crime and punishment
  - British values
- 6.2. All provisions made regarding PSHE lessons will be made in line with the school's PSHE Policy.

## **7. Reporting and assessment**

- 7.1. Homework will be challenging and assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of concepts covered within lessons.
- 7.2. Homework will be set on a weekly basis in accordance with the school's Homework Policy.
- 7.3. Informal assessments will be carried out termly to measure pupil progress. The results of the assessments will be used to inform future planning and target setting.
- 7.4. Results of informal assessments will be recorded and reported back to the Subject Leader, SLT, pupils and pupils' parents.
- 7.5. Pupils will also complete national assessments where they are able to access these. The results of these assessments will be reported back to the Subject Leader, SLT, pupils and their parents.
- 7.6. Assessment of pupils with EAL will take into account the pupils age, length of time in UK, previous education and ability in other languages.
- 7.7. Special measures will be given to pupils who require them, e.g. pupils with SEND, pupils who are ill, or pupils who suffer from conditions that inhibit their academic performance.
- 7.8. All reporting and assessments will be conducted in line with the school's Assessment Policy.

## **8. Equal opportunities**

- 8.1. There are nine protected characteristics outlined within the Equality Act 2010, these are:
- Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Race
  - Religion or belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation
- 8.2. The school does not tolerate any form of bullying or discrimination against people with one or more of these characteristics. Any pupil or teacher found to be discriminating against any of these characteristics will be disciplined in line with the relevant school policies.
- 8.3. The school's curriculum will celebrate diversity and the SLT has a responsibility to ensure that the curriculum does not discriminate against any of the above characteristics.
- 8.4. The school will have due regard for the Equal Opportunities Policy at all times when planning and implementing the curriculum.

## **9. Supporting pupils with SEND**

- 9.1. All of our pupils have a statement for Special Educational Needs in a range of categories. The curriculum pathways in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all pupils. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individuals, then we do so only after the parents of the child have been consulted.
- 9.2. Our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice in providing for children with special needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, not previously identified, his/her teachers will make an assessment of this need.
- 9.3. In most instances the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. If a child's need is unable to be met, we consider the child for additional support and resources, and we involve the appropriate external agencies when making this assessment. We always provide additional resources and support for children with special needs.
- 9.4. Support for engagement. This will be provided in a way that is appropriate to the individual pupil. Amongst the ways in which we promote engagement are: approaches informed by mindfulness; understanding of 'self' (especially the

impact of autism); and trying to understand the world from the perspective of the pupil and supporting them accordingly.

- 9.5. Emotional health and wellbeing. We draw upon a number of frameworks to inform our practice. Key amongst them are systems theory, attachment theory and PLACE (Playfulness, Loving attitude, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy).
- 9.6. The school provides an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for every pupil in the school, which is reviewed termly. Personalised targets are set working towards outcomes on each pupil's EHCP.

## **10. Extra-curricular activities**

- 10.1. The school offers pupils a wide range of extra-curricular trips and activities to enhance their academic learning and personal development.
- 10.2. Extra-curricular trips and activities occur outside school hours and can include overnight stays both in the UK and abroad.
- 10.3. All pupils are able to participate in the activities and trips available. Wherever there is an instance where a pupil cannot participate, the trip or activity will be adapted so that the pupil can take part.
- 10.4. Extra-curricular activities and trips will be planned and executed in accordance with the school's Educational Visits Policy.

## **11. Monitoring and review**

- 11.1. This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher and the governing board.
- 11.2. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and relevant stakeholders.
- 11.3. The scheduled review date for this policy is 20/12/2023.