



CURRICULUM POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Our aim is to fulfil the potential of each child in our care.

A Broad Curriculum

- In its most narrow definition, our remit is to prepare our pupils thoroughly for the academic entrance examinations of their chosen senior school.
- However, we believe that we are preparing children not only for their senior schools, but also for the life that lies beyond them.
- We regard these school years (from the ages of 4 to 13) as forming the base on which our pupils will build their future education.
- We therefore aim to give our pupils as broad an education as possible during their time with us.
- To this end, we place a strong emphasis on a broad curriculum, with Art, Dance, Drama, French, Computing, Music and PE all taught by specialist teachers from a child's first day in school.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also given strong emphasis and the school rule "Be Kind" along with the School Values of Kindness, Courtesy, Honesty, Respect, Perseverance, Independence, Confidence, Leadership, Humility and being Givers not Takers, underpin the aims and the delivery of the curriculum.
- We believe in the benefits of learning beyond the classroom and recognise that outdoor education offers pupils unique opportunities and experiences that cannot be taught within the constraints of everyday education and surroundings. Therefore, part of the curriculum is devoted to an outdoor learning programme with key areas of focus being Personal and emotional development, Group Development, Organising, Planning and Risk Management skills, Nature Pedagogy and Physical literacy. These five areas along with the life skills of critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, enquiry and reflection we believe will enable pupils to succeed socially, economically and environmentally in the ever changing 21st century.

AIMS

Each of the Thomas's Schools has their own school-specific curriculum designed to meet the needs of the age group attending that school. However, throughout the schools' group we undertake to:

- have high expectations of the children and ourselves

- raise levels of attainment for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best
- prepare pupils to the standards and style of entrance examinations to senior schools suited to their abilities and temperament
- offer opportunities to develop a growth mindset and a positive attitude to new challenges
- develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners who are able to make informed choices
- foster a love of learning and develop skills of independent enquiry
- foster self-esteem and personal responsibility, linked to respect for the needs and feelings of others
- facilitate considerate and positive relationships between all members of the school community
- ensure equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, class, special needs, and belief
- value and respect all cultures
- provide a safe, happy work place
- promote a thoughtful attitude towards the immediate and wider environment
- equip pupils with skills that will support their future lives, beyond education

PROCEDURES

Planning

Long Term Planning – Curriculum

- This is set by the Head, Deputy Heads (Academic) and Subject Leaders, is published and shows what must be covered
- It shows progression and ideas for teaching
- It does not prescribe lessons week by week but is a "menu" from which teachers pick to produce medium term planning
- It differs in format to suit different subjects

Medium Term Planning

- This consists of a Termly Overview and Detailed Termly Plans
- It will highlight what the child is to learn – the "learning intention".
i.e. what the child is:
 - to know (specific facts)
 - to be able to do (skills)
 - to understand (concepts)
 - to be aware of (attitudes, values, etc.)
- It determines the best activities to achieve the learning intention, but in general terms
- It enables cross curricular links, particularly PSHCE and Computing, and demonstrates how literacy and numeracy can be supported

Short Term Planning

- This is the teacher's detailed breakdown of daily or weekly teaching activities
- It is one of the vehicles for assessment and should include comments/observations on individual pupils made during or after the lesson
- It is personal to the teacher in style and format
- It should contain:
 - learning intention

- what the pupils are going to do (learning and teaching activities)
- how they are organised, including differentiation
- SEND and Most Able requirements
- assessment opportunities
- AfL classroom practice
- PSHCE and Computing, teaching opportunities
- literacy and numeracy links
- It must be flexible in response to assessment and observation of the pupils

Learning Intentions

The learning intention is the starting point for medium term planning. It states exactly what the teacher wants the child to know, to understand, to be able to do. It must provide for all children to be able to make progress and therefore prior knowledge must be taken into account. The learning intention may be referred to as “WALT” (We Are Learning To), “OLI” (Our Learning Intention) or “LO”/”LI” (Learning Objective/Intention).

Share the Learning Intention with the children

If a teacher explains the purpose of a task, has no more than two learning intentions and shares the success criteria:

- children are better focused
- they work on the task for longer
- the quality of the work is better
- dialogue between children is more likely to be about the task
- children become self-evaluative, especially in relation to individual targets

From the teacher’s perspective

- the standard of planning improves – is sharper
- you can be more alert to how children learn, where difficulties lie, what successes are achieved
- your questions and observations are better focused
- marking will be specific to the learning intention and so become part of the assessment process

There can be layers of learning, with some learning intentions set for the whole class some for the individual child.

Assessment and reporting

Assessment is an essential part of the teaching process. Regular assessments are made of pupils’ work to establish a level of attainment and to inform future planning. Teachers use assessment information to track the progress of individual pupils and Heads use it to monitor how effective the teaching and the curriculum is.

Record-keeping and assessment procedures are defined in the Assessment Policy and in department handbooks.

Reports to parents give clear, accurate and useful information on their child's progress.

Learning Enrichment

Each School has a trained SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator), Head of Learning Support or Learning Enrichment Leader. Their role is to support staff in identifying pupils' difficulties and planning teaching strategies, to liaise with parents and outside agencies, to co-ordinate any extra help that may be required and to offer support to small groups in class.

We identify and meet the needs of children who are particularly able and those for whom English is an additional language. Each school has a Most Able and an EAL Leader.

We work closely with specialists and professional agencies to ensure that children's needs are met and they are able to make the most of the curriculum.

Staff development

In-service training is provided in order to update and improve standards of teaching and learning. Training needs are regularly assessed. Initiatives in curriculum development and teaching and learning styles are monitored to ensure teachers are well-equipped to deliver the curriculum effectively.

See also: [Assessment Policy](#), [EAL Policy](#), [Equal Opportunities Policy](#), [Inclusion Policy](#), [Most Able Policy](#), [Outdoors Policy](#), [SEND Policy](#), [Wellbeing Policy](#)

This policy will be reviewed annually			
Reviewed: December 2009	By:	Jill Kelham, Vice Principal	
Latest Review: September 2019	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal	Changes made
Next Review: September 2020	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal	