

Cognita Schools Ltd

Curriculum Policy

Meoncross School

Including EYFS



Reviewed January 2017

CURRICULUM POLICY

AIMS AND VALUES

MEONCROSS IS COMMITTED TO.....

- Academic excellence
- Achievement in a wide range of activities
- Care and respect for the individual
- Creating opportunities for challenge and leadership
- Good discipline and a sense of order
- Service to others – in school and in the community

A Meoncross child, under our central tenet of **Striving for excellence**, should be;

- Responsible and considerate
- Outward looking and globally aware
- Confident and well informed
- Resilient
- Reflective
- Willing to challenge themselves and others

We aim in the delivery of our curriculum to maximise their opportunities to develop these characteristics and these values are evident in all curriculum planning.

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum at Meoncross aims to promote the highest levels of learning and personal growth; it is broad and balanced, taking account of the principles of the National Curriculum without being bound by it and the core values of the school. Academic subject opportunities have been designed in order to maximise choice in the Upper School, including three Sciences, Computing, Classics, three languages, Latin and creative subjects, including Drama, Art and Textiles. Pupils are also enriched through their study of Global Perspectives, European Studies and Personal Finance. The curriculum also incorporates a wide range of extra-curricular activities, supported by the Passport programme, including sport, music and drama, to enrich pupils' experience and embed those skills of resilience, reflection and confidence, which we want our pupils to have. The nature of Beach School and its place in the curriculum also works to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they can achieve their true potential.

THE LOWER SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (INCLUDING RECEPTION)

There is an inter-disciplinary topic approach to curriculum planning which ensures coverage of the desirable aspects of the National Curriculum and Early Learning Goals. Learning through play, as well as more structured activities are promoted. The assessment of children is ongoing and observations, photographic evidence, quotations from the children and their work, are displayed in an online Learning Journal, which stays with the children throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Early Years Foundation Stage education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- Children can develop as individuals.
- Children are offered activities to promote positive self-image.
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- 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.
- Planned activities on a daily basis for early numeracy and language skills.

ORGANISATION AND PLANNING in KS1 & KS2

Our curriculum is planned and organised in three stages.

We agree a **long term plan** for each year group which outlines which topics will be taught over the years and to which groups of children. These plans are then reviewed regularly. Our planning helps to ensure continuity across Year Groups, especially at Key Stage boundaries, and also progression between years in individual subjects although cooperation between subjects on a cross-curricular topic is also valued. Currently parents have access to these plans in outline via the VLE. Pre-term curriculum updates for each year group are also available on the VLE; these prove invaluable in helping parents to assist their children.

Our **medium term plans** aim to give clear guidance on the objectives to be reached. They also make reference to a variety of resources including text books, Read, Write, Inc. and Active Learn resources, as well as interactive media.

Our **short term plans** are those that teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. These clearly state the learning objectives and identify specific resources to be used and activities to be completed within the lesson, and include full differentiation.

KEY STAGE 1

Children are taught in groups for *Read Write Inc.* These groups are vertically organised to allow free flow across year groups both up and down, when appropriate. This policy currently also extends to written English. In Mathematics, the pupils are also grouped flexibly and in mixed ability year groups for the remainder of subjects and mostly taught by their Form Teacher. Specialist staff provide lessons in Music, Games/PE and French. Units of work are planned collaboratively to ensure consistency, progression and coverage.

KEY STAGE 2

In Lower Key Stage Two, the delivery of the English and Mathematics curriculum takes place in three differentiated groups. Planning is monitored and developed centrally by the Subject Coordinators. In Upper Key Stage Two, the delivery of English and Mathematics curriculum is through the form teachers wherever the timetable allows, and planning is also monitored and developed centrally by the Subject Coordinators. This helps to ensure structural progression in preparation for their entry into the Upper School in Year 7. Those Coordinators also work closely with the Upper School Heads of Department to ensure progression in knowledge skills and understanding.

Classes are organised into mixed ability year groups although staff are deployed according to their individual strengths and specialisms. Booster and catch up sessions are available in Mathematics to ensure that progress is sustained.

In English, pupils are fully set for all skills although within creative writing there are some opportunities to work within mixed ability groupings so that all ideas may be shared and discussed by the full cohort.

Games /P.E are taught in separate gender groups wherever practical, with the exception of swimming.

Lessons in Computing, French, Music and Games/P.E in all year groups, as well as Latin in Year 6, are taught by specialist staff, where appropriate aiming to introduce pupils gradually to the framework they will encounter in Key Stage 3. In Year 6, pupils study one term each of French, German and Spanish in preparation for Year 7. Year Group teams continue to plan collaboratively, liaising with one another over content and delivery. Standards are monitored and evaluated and the progress of each pupil is tracked and reviewed regularly. This information forms the basis of year group teams' planning.

THE UPPER SCHOOL

Specialists teach all subjects and the curriculum continues to be broad and balanced, contributing effectively to the pupils' intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and social attainment and development.

KEY STAGE 3

At Key Stage 3, the curriculum makes reference to the National Curriculum Framework but is not bound by it and is supported by the opportunity to become a dual linguist in Year 9. In year 7 pupils experience a roundabout system for Modern Languages, so that all pupils experience French, German and Spanish for a term, in order to make their option decisions informed by experience. Pupils are currently taught English, Mathematics and French (along with Science from Year 9) in two or more ability groupings with other subjects being set as and when the needs of a particular cohort, either numerical or intellectual, require it. Computing is currently taught discretely in Years 7, 8 and 9 with functional ICT skills embedded into other curricular subjects. In addition, it will often be the vehicle for the delivery of a variety of lessons. In year 7 pupils also study Latin. In year 9 pupils who are not dual linguists take part in a roundabout consisting of: Global Perspectives, European Studies and Personal Economics. Pupils also take part in a roundabout consisting of: Computer Science, Art and Music. Every Year 9 pupil takes part in Drama, which we believe to offer fundamental skills in terms of developing confidence, analytical exploration, understanding of current issues, empathy, public speaking and teamwork.

KEY STAGE 4

In Key Stage 4 we aim for all pupils where possible to qualify for progress 8 attainment and to obtain an English baccalaureate, thus, in the vast majority of cases, pupils follow a common core of English and English Literature, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, a foreign language, Games and PSHE. In addition, pupils choose from a range of subjects which must include a humanity (from History, Ancient History or Geography) and usually, but not exclusively, one practical/aesthetic subject. Meoncross, however, prides itself on the flexibility of choice we offer in Key Stage 4 where the needs of each pupil as an individual are of paramount importance.

We also stress the importance of quality rather than number of GCSE passes and as a result the majority of pupils will sit 9 or 10 subjects.

Heads of Department are responsible for monitoring the way their subject is taught throughout the school and they also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

KEY STAGE 5

In Key Stage 5, students select a minimum of 3 A Levels and up to 4, with the norm being 3 full A Levels and 1 AS Level. Students may select from up to 21 offered subjects and will be advised as to the appropriateness of their selection, based on

future aspiration and ability. Ideally students need to have attained at least a B grade at GCSE in their subject choices. If students have not secured GCSE English or Mathematics they will also be expected to take this as part of their enrichment programme. Each subject is allotted 8 periods per week.

In addition, the majority of students will complete an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in year 13 in a subject area of their choice. This will usually be (but not exclusively) related to the subjects they are studying or to their future academic aspirations at university. Exceptions to this may be if students are taking four complete A levels or have other academic demands on their time such as modular re-takes or additional, complementary GCSEs (such as Latin).

CHILDREN WITH LEARNING SUPPORT NEEDS

The curriculum at Meoncross is designed to provide access and opportunity for all who attend the school. We will amend the standard curriculum as and when necessary to meet the needs of individual children.

We do all we can at Meoncross to meet the needs of any pupil with a special educational need. We comply fully with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice in providing for children with special needs. The process for identifying a pupil who may have special needs is fully laid out in the Special Needs Policy. In the main, we aim to meet the pupil's need within the normal classroom environment supported as and where necessary by a suitably qualified/experienced LSA and all staff receive regular training and updates and will liaise with the SENCO over any specific concerns.

GIFTED/TALENTED AND MORE ABLE PUPILS

- 'Gifted' learners are those who have abilities in one or more subjects in the statutory curriculum other than art and design, music and PE;
- 'Talented' learners are those who have abilities in art and design, music, PE or performing arts such as drama.

The term 'gifted and talented' is not to be understood as referring only to the most highly achieving children in the school population and often potentiality is a defining factor.

Within the school, we recognise that gifted and talented pupils can be either non-specifically gifted and talented across a wide range of subjects or gifted and talented in one or two highly specific areas. As a result of MIDYIS testing in Year 7, any pupil scoring over 126 is automatically judged to be academically gifted by our current definition. Other pupils may be recommended for the A, G & T register based on qualitative data and teacher assessment.

Important strategies used within our curriculum to challenge these pupils include:

- The development of independent learning by encouraging pupils to organize their own work, to carry out tasks unaided, evaluate their work and become self-critical. To this end, the school aims to share best practice across the school and encourage whenever and wherever possible the use of higher order thinking skills such as those mentioned in Blooms Taxonomy, as well as developing the skills of evaluation, synthesis and questioning.
- The encouragement of thinking skills which underpins the school's core values of resilience and willingness to challenge oneself and nurtures a growing active involvement in the learning process
- The coherent management of pupil groupings (whether in mixed ability groups or ability sets) and recognition that whilst there may be a higher concentration of gifted and talented pupils in some groups there will be pupils who have gifts and talents in all groups.
- The provision of opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to work with other pupils of a similar ability. This may mean that it is appropriate for pupils to be accelerated occasionally.
- Differentiation within subject areas which must include provision of enrichment/extension activities and tasks.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Headmistress, often by delegation to the Senior Team, is responsible for the curriculum. Annual timetabling is tailored to serve the needs of the pupils, determined by Year Group profiles. Setting and staffing are then based on this analysis so that Year Groups never inherit a timetable and changes are made to facilitate learning in a variety of curriculum areas.