



Curriculum Policy

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1. Curriculum Aims

At Ashwood Spencer Academy, we follow a holistic, knowledge and skill-based curriculum that aims to ensure that all children achieve their full personal and academic potential. We believe that all children should be aspirational, resilient, respectful and tolerant with a deep moral compass, and have a true love for learning.

We recognise that providing children with a wealth of experiences, opportunities and support can be challenging. Therefore, at Ashwood, we are passionate about promoting equality for all our pupils and strive to ensure that they leave our school ready for the next stage of their lives – aiming to open the door to a positive, successful and happy future. This is evident in our DREAM ethos:

- D** Determined risk takers who want to succeed
- R** Resilient and respectful learners
- E** Expressive communicators
- A** Ambitious achievers, unafraid of mistakes
- M** Magic happens when you dream

We aspire to achieve these aims by ensuring that our curriculum is creative, with a book at its heart, creating a real passion and purpose for all learning. Our timetable is carefully planned, with each day focusing on a different life-skill that we feel our children need to understand and exercise.

Furthermore, through providing a range of experiences and events whilst children are at school, we hope to stand children in good stead for their journeys in later life and in the world of work. We also explore topical issues which are relevant to our community and the modern world in which we live, so that our children become well-rounded citizens. Additionally, in line with our view of each child as an individual, we place great emphasis on developing children's mental wellbeing, physical health and social skills, whilst working to ensure that all children receive challenge and support in line with their specific needs.

We have taken great care to design our curriculum to achieve our vision and ensure that our values underpin it.

Our curriculum intends to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that's coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and 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/vocational/technical ambition for all pupils
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the [Academies Act 2010](#), and the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#) which we have chosen to follow. It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a 'broad and balanced curriculum' which includes English, maths, and science, and enough teaching time is provided to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

3.2 The Principal

The Principal 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
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing board is fully involved in decision making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEND

3.3 Other staff

The Vice Principal will:

- Ensure that the curriculum is consistent with the National Curriculum
- Builds on the foundations of the Early Years curriculum and is a gateway to success in secondary education
- Prepares children for life in modern Britain, supports personal development and contributes to children knowing how to keep themselves safe.

The SENDCO will:

- Ensure proper provision is in place for children with SEND.

Subject Achievement Leaders will, for the subject that they are responsible for:

- Outline the subject intent, implementation and intended impact
- Ensure the progression of skills and coverage across both key stages
- Quality assure the coverage over the year

Teaching staff will:

- Ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy

4. Organisation and planning

4.1 Curriculum approach

The Ashwood Spencer curriculum is designed to make remembering almost inevitable. It is a strategically planned 3-dimensional curriculum made up of knowledge, skills and concepts to be learned and understood. These have carefully been knitted together to promote understanding at a conceptual level, allowing for key concepts and vocabulary to be reinforced. A conceptual approach promotes inquiry which leads to intellectual engagement.

Our ultimate goal is to develop conceptual thinkers. Conceptual thinking requires the ability to examine factual information critically, relate new learning to prior knowledge, see patterns and connections, draw out significant understandings, evaluate the truth based on evidence and most importantly, transfer these conceptual understandings across time or situation, and use the conceptual understanding to creatively solve a problem or invent a new product.

4.2 Curriculum Design

Our curriculum has been designed to revisit and build on key concepts throughout the Ashwood Journey. This ensures that the knowledge and skills contribute to core understandings and values. The systematic curriculum design means that key concepts and vocabulary are reinforced because new words and concepts are encountered repeatedly in meaningful concepts. We know that children cannot understand at the conceptual level without the supporting facts and skills.

The 'global themes' are designed to be built upon each year, with a clear progression and links across subjects, so that the children will have a deeper understanding and ability to transfer their knowledge and skills to new contexts. The global themes that children explore and revisit across all year groups are: Identity, Diversity and Equality, Transformations, Significance, Global Awareness and Sustainability, Peace and Conflict, and Enterprise. Over the course of an academic year, the children will study under each of the global themes. One theme per half term.

Each global theme is a conceptual lens. Information for each subject has been carefully organised and prioritised to deepen the understanding of the concepts. The global themes are a 'coat hanger' on which to hang new knowledge. The conceptual lens uses an idea or concept to bring focus and depth to a topic, facilitating the transfer of understanding and ensuring that connected thinking

between being able to know, do and understand. Children develop their skills and knowledge by linking and thinking deeply about the relationship it has to the global theme. The conceptual lens allows the children to bring to the learning, their previous knowledge and understanding of the global theme, so we are not starting from scratch every time. It happens on purpose; we are not hoping it will happen by accident.

Ashwood Spencer Academy's curriculum meets the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum and is designed to reflect the needs of our school and its community. We gather important information about our children from a range of sources – discussions with our families, questionnaires and local news sources. We aim to ensure that the curriculum is exciting and challenging and reflects and nurtures children's interests and needs and celebrate traditions that are important to our community. Links between subjects are made to ensure an engaging and relevant context within which to learn. We strive to create and provide opportunities for the children to develop their creativity and imagination; promoting new interests and an awareness of the wider world. We are fully committed to teaching the vital life skills children need in order to be safe and happy in and out of school.

4.3 Curriculum around a book

Promoting enjoyment of reading and a love of books underpins our curriculum and the use of exciting and stimulating texts is a key feature across school. We ensure that we deliver a broad and balanced curriculum using appropriate resources including texts that we believe champion diversity and equality and challenge disadvantage and stereotyping.

We aspire to achieve the aims of our DREAM curriculum by ensuring that our curriculum has a quality text at the heart of it. We believe that this creates a real passion and purpose for all learning, allowing the children to enjoy connecting their learning to a quality text. We work hard to instil a love of reading in all of our children at Ashwood, and we use this as a perfect opportunity to hook them in to a range of carefully chosen texts and authors.

Each and every child will receive their very own copy of the carefully selected core text, each half term. Core texts are linked to the global theme and main topic each half term. The book supports the learning and provides a 'way in' to explore the topic in more depth.

4.4 Creative Curriculum

Subject specific policies outline detailed information for each subject.

History and Geography topics are the main drivers for the Creative Curriculum. The topics have been chosen and arranged to ensure that children develop the knowledge, skills and understandings with a clear, meaningful progression. The curriculum has been designed with many links, building on previous learning. Each foundation subject topic has been carefully considered under the global themes and topic links.

4.5 Core subjects

Mathematics lessons follow the White Rose sequence and are structured to ensure that children develop their fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills.

Writing is taught in blocks, that can stretch up to three weeks. The clear structure and sequence of learning ensures that children are able to apply skills independently whilst sharing their creativity.

The science curriculum has been organised to ensure that conceptual understandings build on those explored in the humanities. Each topic has been considered under the global themes.

More detail is outlined in subject specific policies.