



## Curriculum Policy Document

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“Together we develop, improve and succeed”

## CURRICULUM POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

All children have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. Work in school should be designed to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

At Dryden School the staff, parents and carers, and governors are totally committed to the development of our pupils and students, to offer them the best education: An education that is rich in opportunities and experiences; one that meets the needs of each individual, is accessible and actively promotes achievement and progressions for all pupils and so allows them to achieve their full potential.

### RATIONALE

We believe that the curriculum offered to our pupils should reflect the aims of the school and the following fundamental principles.

<p><b><u>Breadth</u></b></p>	<p>Pupils should study within a variety of different areas of experience. The curriculum is broad and takes full account of the national curriculum programmes of study for KS3, KS4 and P16. Pupils should access a curriculum model that allows progression (vertical and lateral).</p>
<p><b><u>Balance</u></b></p>	<p>A balance through age related needs represented by progression in the curriculum content. Students entering school at 11 years of age will have the opportunity to access a wide range of subjects while the content for the Post 16 students requires a functional curriculum that emphasises practical, community based activities that focus upon the concepts, skills, knowledge and attitudes for adult life. A balance of ability and developmentally related needs represented by the possibility of a greater weighting of involvement in therapy based curriculum content (e.g. physiotherapy) for students with profound and multiple learning difficulties, and concentration upon the early cognitive and communication curriculum for students who have the most complex learning difficulties and who are likely to remain at the earliest stages of intellectual development for the majority of their school lives.</p>
<p><b><u>Relevance</u></b></p>	<p>All subjects should be taught in such a way as to make plain their link with the pupils' own experience and their continuing value in adult life. There is a strong focus on the students learning through practical experience so that their learning has meaning.</p>
<p><b><u>Differentiation</u></b></p>	<p>What is taught and how it is taught is clearly defined for all students and activities are matched closely to pupils' individual ages, abilities and aptitudes and needs.</p>

This is achieved through:-

- a structured yet imaginative teaching programme
- a variety of teaching styles and strategies including whole class teaching, practical work, and group or individual work
- access to bright and cheerful classrooms that are well equipped with modern, sturdy furniture and a good range of relevant materials and resources including computers and interactive Smartboards.

The Dryden curriculum is continually developed and reviewed and therefore is constantly evolving to ensure that we are responding to a rapidly developing world around us.

### **AIMS/PURPOSE**

Dryden school aims to provide a curriculum that:

- develops the full potential of every individual pupil
- gives access to all aspects of the National Curriculum
- ensures that each child's education has continuity and progression
- improves the pupils' independent learning skills and strategies
- caters for the needs of individual children of both sexes from all ethnic and social groups
- creates and maintains an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- ensure that there is a match between the child and the tasks he/she is asked to do
- recognise the crucial role which parents play in their children's education and make every effort to encourage parental involvement in the educational process;
- treats all pupils and students with respect.

Through the Dryden Curriculum, we encourage pupils and students to:-

- learn to be adaptable, how to solve problems in a variety of situations, how to work independently and as members of a team;
- develop the ability to make reasoned judgements and choices, based on interpretation and evaluation of relevant information from a variety of sources;
- be happy, cheerful and well balanced;
- be enthusiastic and eager to put their best into all activities;
- begin acquiring a set of moral values, e.g. honesty, sincerity, personal responsibility; on which to base their own behaviour;
- be expected to behave in a dignified and acceptable way and learn to take responsibility for their actions;
- care for and take pride in their school;
- be developing tolerance, respect and appreciation of the feelings and capabilities of others in an unbiased way;
- be developing non-sexist and non-racist attitudes;
- know how to think and solve problems mathematically in a variety of situations using concepts of number, measurement, shape and space, and handling data;
- be able to listen and, for some pupils, to read for a variety of purposes and be able to convey their meaning accurately and appropriately through speech and writing for a variety of purposes;

- develop an enquiring mind and scientific approach to problems;
- have an opportunity to solve problems using technological skills;
- be capable of communicating their knowledge and feelings through various art forms including art/craft, music, drama and be acquiring appropriate techniques which will enable them to develop their inventiveness and creativity;
- know about geographical, historical and social aspects of the local environment and the national heritage and be aware of other times and places and recognise links among family, local, national and international events;
- have some knowledge of the beliefs of the major world religions;
- develop agility, physical co-ordination and confidence in and through movement;
- develop skills for applying the basic principles of health, hygiene and safety.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

Long term curriculum plans have been devised in Dryden school that ensure access to a broad range of content at a developmentally appropriate level, and within age appropriate contexts for all pupils. All long term plans have been evaluated in light of new changes including the New secondary Curriculum, Every Child Matters (ECM) and Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLT's). This is over a 3 year cycle of curriculum coverage at Key Stage 3 and a 2 year cycle at Key Stage 4.

This is achieved through Schemes of Work, which are broken down into termly or half termly units of work. Each unit of work is written in the following way

- sessions (how long should be spent on each section)
- learning objectives (for each section)
- Personal Learning and Thinking (PLT's) objectives relevant to selected subjects/themes
- Links to Every Child Matters (ECM)
- activities (differentiated into 3 ability ranges including sensory activities)
- learning outcomes
- points to note (including Key Vocabulary, Health & Safety Issues)
- resources

At Post 16 the curriculum continues to evolve as we seek to offer more vocational options which reflect the interests and abilities of each cohort, each year. Whilst the context for delivery of the curriculum may change the skills that we seek to develop remain the same. In Post 16 the curriculum is a skills based curriculum which aims to encourage students to apply the skills acquired at KS 4 with greater independence.

### **Curriculum Content**

For pupils within Key Stages 3 and 4 the subjects of the National Curriculum, together with Religious Education form part of the whole curriculum. French is currently taught in Modern Foreign Language lessons in both Key Stages. For our students, who have severe and profound learning difficulties, and some who have additional multi-sensory impairments, challenging behaviour and emotional difficulties, the National Curriculum subjects cannot in themselves fulfil the requirements of a *broad and relevant* curriculum. A broad curriculum of opportunities is therefore achieved at Dryden School in all phases by;

- the inclusion of an enhanced curriculum which includes a range of therapies and therapy based class programmes some provided by and in consultation with our Health Authority colleagues. This includes Rebound Therapy, Speech and Language therapy, Occupational therapy, Physiotherapy Hydrotherapy, Sensory Integration and multi-sensory approach.
- giving pupils and students the opportunities to experience the world in which they live gives more meaning to the content of the curriculum. Units of work are often extended by regular and frequent visits within the local community and further afield through planned visits to many and diverse places of interest. Because of the high levels of adult supervision, students can enjoy visits to places such as local museums, art galleries, historical sites, local landmarks, and shops and to leisure facilities such as bowling alleys, restaurants, theatre and theme parks.
- giving pupils and students inclusive opportunities in other schools or in the local community to enhance the curriculum. (e.g. visits to use community facilities, work with staff from local mainstream schools or with visitors from a variety of backgrounds).
- giving pupils and students opportunities to use skills they have learnt in a more practical, fun, expressive and significant way (e.g. participating in whole school events – Artsweek, Enterprise Week, Drama Days, special themed assemblies, performing in school productions or working in Dryden Café)

### **Content of the curriculum at Post 16.**

At Post 16 greater emphasis is placed upon functionality. The independent application of existing skills and knowledge gained in Key Stages 3 and 4 are seen as being as important as the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. There are inbuilt opportunities for consultation and negotiation with the students over content, taking into account their needs and interests. Self-evaluation and subsequent target setting plays a major part in all subject areas. Core subjects , world knowledge , creative and cultural learning are delivered through different contexts depending upon the course running at any given time for example, sports and leisure, catering and general studies ( 2011-2012).

### **Religious Education**

Dryden School has a fully integrated R.E. policy and follows the Gateshead Agreed Syllabus and the Piper Hill School Curriculum. Should parents wish to withdraw their children from this part of the curriculum they may do so by contacting the Head of School. The School has no affiliation to any specific religious denomination.

### **Collective Worship**

The students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted through the wide range of daily activities that is on offer. During the week there are three whole school assemblies, one of which is a celebration assembly and another a singing assembly. This provides an excellent opportunity for all staff and students to join together as the whole school community. On other days class groups gather for collective worship after registration and before the start of the day. Acts of collective worship are broadly Christian in nature. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship,

and should contact the Head of School if they wish to do so.

### **Sex Education**

The Staff and Governors of Dryden School support the teaching of relevant sex education. (refer to Sex and Relationships Education policy) In partnership with parents and as part of the entitlement to the curriculum, great care is taken in matching the approach to sex education to the maturity and ability of the pupils and students.

The sex education programme is incorporated within the personal, social and health education programme, and the science curriculum.

Parents are informed of the sex education policy and the essential principles under which it will be developed;

- sex education will be delivered sensitively
- a variety of materials will be used including videos.
- sex education will be discussed with the children in the context of a stable relationship
- where appropriate, children’s questions will be answered honestly and factually as they arise. Particularly difficult questions will be referred to parents in consultation with the class teacher
- parents with views as to the suitability of sex education should in the first instance discuss the matter with the Headteacher

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from sex education lessons

### **Marking and Annotation**

Marking is part of the dialogue that exists between teacher and pupil. It is our policy that work is marked regularly both during and after a task is completed. Marking is a positive and constructive activity and not merely a record of what is right and what is wrong and is done in relevant and meaningful ways as appropriate to the ability of the student. (e.g stickers, symbols etc.)

### **Home/School Learning**

Home/School learning is a crucial element of the Home/School partnership. It gives parents the opportunity, from the outset, to support their children in their learning whilst enabling them to reinforce the work covered at school. Work or tasks will be sent home as appropriate to ability and the tasks being covered in school. This could include sharing reading books and tasks linked to themed work.

We see the value of parents supporting learning in the home environment as invaluable and helps to give pupils and students practical opportunities to put skills into real situations e.g. using money, making shopping lists and locating items they may have used at school, identifying social sight vocabulary when out, road safety, recycling or other activities linked to units of work the pupils/students are currently following. Some of the work may be of an investigative nature, in which other members of the family may wish to become involved.

Parents who support their children with homework tasks provide a powerful reinforcement of the status of School and of their child’s work and education.

## **Progress and Assessment**

At Dryden School:

- we consider accurate and focused assessment as the cornerstone of high quality teaching, as it allows the work to be planned and taught accurately as well as meeting the needs of the requirements of the children and ensuring high levels of expectation and support.
- the staff seek to promote achievement and progress in all areas of the curriculum for all students throughout their school lives.

Pupil progress is currently recorded and evaluated in the following ways:

- setting and evaluating Individual Pupil Targets
- building Individual Pupil Profiles (a rolling programme that provides multiple snapshots of attainment to demonstrate achievement and provide evidence)
- annually using PIVATS assessment (English, Mathematics, Science, ICT and PSHE) which produces data for individual and contributes to whole school target setting
- annually using CASPA analysis to assist in whole school target setting and individual target setting as well as analyse progress in a wide variety of contexts

## **Accreditation**

Due to the implementation of Foundation Learning we are in the process of revising the accreditation we offer.

### **Key Stage 4:**

The majority of pupils working within Key Stage 4 work towards achieving the ASDAN 'Transition Challenge'.

The 5 modules which comprise the 'Transition Challenge' include subject specific work (usually ICT, P.S.E., P.E., Science, Technology, R.E.) in the following focussed areas;  
Independent Living Skills

Self Advocacy

Positive Self Image

Personal Development

Personal Autonomy

For those pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties , Personal Progress(ASDAN) is being trialled.

Functional Maths and English is being trialled for those pupils working at or working towards Entry Level 1.

Duke of Edinburgh (bronze level) is offered to some pupils in KS4.

Pupils in Key Stage 4 work on AQA units in many different areas of independent living (e.g. making a hot drink, telling analogue or digital time, using a microwave oven, making a telephone call etc.)

**POST 16:**

Students in Post 16 are offered a range of courses to meet their individual needs. Some qualifications have yet to be recognised by foundation learning. Therefore we will be trialling a range of qualifications from different exam boards over the next year.

The range is as follows:

ASDAN 'Towards Independence'

Personal Progress \* trial

Duke of Edinburgh (bronze/silver)

Sport's Leader

Functional Skills (English, maths) \* trials

Team Enterprise \* trial

Workright (ASDAN) – catering course

AQA entry level – sport

AQA for many different areas of independent living

PSD Asdan (Personal social development) \* trial

**The Delivery of the School Curriculum:**

The students at Dryden School are organised into classes of equal size as far as possible, and by age, although at Key Stage 3, classes include Year 7, 8 and 9 students. Every effort is made to maintain the integrity of Key Stages as changes in the curriculum make mixed Key Stage groupings more complex for curriculum organisation. Each class is likely to include students who have profound and multiple learning difficulties, students who may have challenging behaviour and students whose pattern of learning is represented by steady attainment in many areas of the curriculum. Staff and the Governing Body consider the benefits of this inclusive approach to class organisation as worthwhile.

Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are taught as a group for three sessions per week. These sessions are delivered through a sensory approach and incorporate individual learning objectives which are created following very individualised assessments.

Class teachers are responsible for the planning and delivery of the curriculum for the students within their class, and typically small group and individual teaching form the main teaching styles employed within the classroom.

Pupils within Key Stages 3 and 4 are grouped broadly by ability for their English, Maths, Science, ICT, MFL and PSHE and are taught in these groups.

Teachers flexibly adapt elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategy in their planning and teaching, in line with the school's English and Maths curriculum which incorporate appropriate elements of both strategies.

Pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 are likely to be taught in their class groups for the majority of other subjects although a flexible approach is adopted to ensure that opportunities for maximising learning within appropriate groupings are established and resources (including the involvement of other professionals such as the physiotherapists) are efficiently deployed.

Students within the Post 16 department are grouped according to interest and the course they are following.

### **Responsibility of the Subject Leader:**

Each member of the teaching staff has the responsibility to lead and manage on teaching and learning in areas of the curriculum. (Newly Qualified Teacher’s do not have this responsibility until they have completed their NQT year) Each subject leader is responsible for managing the development of the subject including writing the policy, schemes and guidelines for their subject area, managing a budget for the subject, advising colleagues on the delivery of the subject and assisting the Senior Management Team in monitoring the effective teaching of the subject.

They should also lead on the development and delivery of any initiatives in the area.

### **Monitoring the Curriculum:**

Subject Leaders are responsible for reviewing modules in conjunction with the Senior Management Team and colleagues throughout the school. As part of the Curriculum Audit, an annual position paper is completed by Subject Leaders to report on the progress of each subject area and includes a bid for funding for resources or to support new initiatives and includes an action plan for the forthcoming year.

It is the responsibility of the Curriculum Co-ordinator in consultation with the Head teacher and Senior Management Team to monitor the curriculum with reference to balance, breadth and relevance for individual pupils, and with reference to the issues of vertical and horizontal progression and continuity for all pupils throughout all stages in their school career.

The process of monitoring will be conducted by the curriculum co-ordinator and the Senior management team using;

- classroom observations according to agreed criteria,
- scrutiny of teachers planning and evaluation formats for individual pupils, and across Key Stages,
- scrutiny of pupils work.

Subject co-ordinators will review their curriculum documentation at regular planned intervals (Subject Leaders are given a day per term for Subject Development) to ensure that changes in statutory requirements and new initiatives are considered and integrated into the school curriculum as appropriate.

Staff will be encouraged and supported in their professional development and in order to meet the requirements of the school as outlined in the School aims, the Curriculum policy, and the Planning, Recording, Reporting and Assessment policy.

Members of the Governing Body are linked to subject areas and as part of their monitoring role will meet with the subject leader, be invited (as are all Governors) to special events linked to their subject and visit some classes to see the subject being delivered.

### **Curriculum Queries and Complaints**

Any parent or carer who is concerned about the content, balance or structure of the school’s curriculum is most welcome to discuss the matter with the Headteacher or Head of School. If there is a significant complaint that cannot be resolved the parent (or whomsoever) may contact the Chair of Governors or a representative of the LEA.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The school offers the curriculum equally to all pupils regardless of gender, cultural background, race or religion. Within its' current resources, the school attempts to discriminate positively on behalf of all pupils to compensate for any educational problems that are due to specific language difficulties, medical or physical disabilities or social attitudes caused by being in segregated specialist provision.

### **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed regularly as part of the School Self Evaluation Process.

### **This policy should be read in conjunction with:-**

Curriculum Monitoring Policy and Governors Monitoring Policy  
Race Equality Policy  
Collective Worship Policy  
Teaching and Learning Policy  
Planning, Recording, Reporting and Assessment Policy