

## Plumtree School

### Curriculum Policy

#### Legal Status:

- Regulatory Requirements, Part 1 Quality of Education Provided (curriculum) (teaching) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended 2013.

#### Applies to:

- the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the out of school care and extra-curricular activities inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietors and volunteers working in the school

#### Available from:

- School Office and website

#### Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head Teacher.
- The Deputy Head, along with Key Stage Co-ordinators, is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. They monitor and review long-term, medium-term and weekly lesson plans for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the requirements of the courses and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives and teaching strategies.
- The Head Teacher will undertake an annual formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date:

April 2024

Phil Simpson  
Head Teacher

## Introduction

At Plumtree Primary School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning. We aim to provide an outstanding and holistic education within a distinctively family context, working creatively. Our shared motto is, "Roots and Wings." This policy, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.

Imagine the joy and excitement of learning in a vibrant, well-structured learning environment where each pupil's individual strengths, talents and aptitudes are nurtured and developed. It is the aim of Plumtree School to provide a broadly based academic curriculum, which will be delivered within the context of the School Ethos, Vision and Mission. The curriculum underpins the fundamental aims of the School. The curriculum must be seen as the major component of a pupil's education, which, together with the pastoral care and the extra-curricular activities offered, help pupils to develop a wide range of key and transferable skills so that they leave the school equipped to become a valuable member of society. Our planned curriculum activities are organised in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. We aim to provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum which encourages an enthusiasm for learning, intellectual curiosity, creativity, personal growth and development.

The School provides an academically challenging environment, which is vibrant, happy, creative and stimulating. Our teachers have high expectations but equally foster a nurturing environment in order to promote pupils' academic growth and to provide the support they need in order to make excellent progress in their studies.

The curriculum must be seen as the major component of a pupil's education, which, together with the pastoral care and the extra-curricular activities offered, help pupils to develop a wide range of key and transferable skills so that they leave the school equipped to become a valuable member of society. Our planned curriculum activities are organised in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. We aim to provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum which encourages an enthusiasm for learning, intellectual curiosity, creativity, personal growth and development.

It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of pupils. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the pupils learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave.

The educational journey at the School is organised into:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Key Stage 1 (KS1), which is formed of Year 1 and Year 2
- Key Stage 2 (KS2), which is formed of years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6

## Values

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear in our school. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating pupils in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives. The curriculum seeks to promote the reputation of Plumtree School as a school with excellent standards of study, which prepares pupils for a life-long involvement in learning. Its curriculum prepares pupils to contribute confidently to an ethnically pluralistic society.

- We value the way in which all pupils are unique, and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual pupil, as well as for people of all cultures. We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.
- We value the importance of each person in our community. We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community.
- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each pupil in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all the pupils in our school.
- We value our environment, and we aim, through our curriculum, to encourage respect for our world, and how we should care for it for future generations, as well as our own.

In order to achieve these values, the curriculum will seek to reinforce the following features of Plumtree School:

- The confidence, talent and high aspirations of its pupils.
- The enquiring atmosphere and enjoyment of discourse, which are a prominent feature of the School.

- The support given to pupils in and outside the classroom by well-qualified, enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff.

### **Pupil voice**

The interests of the children, as well as what they already know and want to find out about, will be investigated by all class teachers at the start of an academic year and used to help planning. Further pupil voice activities will be used regularly to inform teachers about what they need to teach to deliver the skills the children need. For example, School Council representatives, who are elected termly, giving all pupils a voice and staff monitoring subjects effectiveness and engagement via pupil voice surveys.

### **Aims and objectives**

We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows pupils to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. ‘Pupils learn and flourish when they are healthy, protected from harm and authentically engaged and stimulated.’

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable pupils to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster pupils’ self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop pupils’ self-respect and encourage pupils to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- cater for the needs of individual pupils;
- personalise learning;
- enable pupils to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- help pupils grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens;
- Instil the British Values of Democracy, Rule of Law, Mutual Respect, Individual Liberty and Tolerance of Different Cultures and Religion;
- Enable achievement and provide challenge appropriate to the ability, interests and needs of each pupil;

We ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

Above all, we believe in engendering in young people a love of lifelong learning. Plumtree School ensures that the curriculum gives all pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education.

**Linguistic** (including English and French) This area is concerned with developing pupils’ communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Throughout Early Years and KS1 there is a progressive phonics scheme; daily reading takes place from Early Years to Year 2 and at least weekly (often more) in Key Stage 2; guided reading and reading comprehension takes place weekly in KS1 and KS2; independent extended writing takes place weekly in KS1 and 2 and a focus write weekly in Early Years. Within lessons, teachers plan for opportunities for collaborative learning and a range of learning styles. All children have French lessons weekly with a specialist French teacher.

**Mathematical** This area helps pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics should be developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion. Children are encouraged to be mathematical thinkers right from Nursery and we are exploring a mastery approach to mathematics in line with up-to-date research from the National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics (NCETM). Children take part in weekly Number of the Week sessions to reinforce mathematical fluency.

**Scientific** This area is concerned with increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings. Lessons are planned to be practical where appropriate and additional investigations are planned during National Science Week.

**Technological** skills can include Computing; developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products; and evaluating processes and products.

**Human and Social** This area is concerned with people and with their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions.

**Physical** This area aims to develop the pupils; physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses, and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. Pupils should also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health.

### **Aesthetic and creative**

**Aesthetic and creative** (including Art, Drama and Music): This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. There are aesthetic and creating aspects of all subjects, but some make a particularly strong contribution, including computing and the study of literature, because they call for personal, imaginative, and often practical, responses. Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. We have regular musical/drama events throughout the year, including, School Productions, Christmas Carol Service and Nativity Play, Summer Concerts, Music Festivals, Speech and Drama Showcases and Informal Music Concerts. We are proud to be able to offer our pupils additional opportunities to work towards LAMDA qualifications during their school career.

### Time allocation

- The timetable is constantly under review and is subject to changes in staff and in staff responsibility. The aims of our timetabling procedure are to ensure that every pupil has access to all areas of the timetable.
- When allocating lesson times, we acknowledge current best practice for pupils within our age range.
- The time allocation for Computing is incorporated into the planning for other areas of the curriculum, alongside the planning of explicit Computing lessons.

### **Auditing**

We ask ourselves the following questions when auditing our current performance:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we compare with similar schools?
- What more should we aim to achieve?
- What must we do to make it happen?

### **Standards of attainment**

We carry out data analysis as a summative review each year as well as termly teacher assessment analysis and use the data provided to find out how well pupils in our school are achieving, compared with pupils in similar schools. We analyse the statistics to help answer the following questions:

- Do pupils perform better in some subjects than others?
- Are there significant differences between boys' and girls' performances?
- How well are the more able pupils doing, and do enough pupils achieve the higher levels?
- Can we identify any groups of pupils who may be underperforming?
- Can we identify any groups of pupils who are gifted and talented?
- Comparing expectations and estimates with final results.

### **Effective Teaching**

Our curriculum does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We effectively prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society in all aspects of the curriculum. For

example, enterprise schemes and money in Maths, rights and responsibilities in PSHEE. All children receive a rich provision of classroom and extra-curricular activities that develop a range of character attributes, such as resilience and grit, which underpin success in education and employment.

- Teachers plan using the agreed proformas for each Key Stage.
- Lessons will have a clear objective (I can statement) and success criteria. Lessons must have a clear challenge.
- Planning will show differentiation by task, outcome or support etc.
- AfL will take place through the lesson, using methods such as those in the Feedback guidelines agreed by staff.
- Children will know and be able to explain the objective and success criteria in each lesson when asked.
- Children will have a regular, planned opportunity to respond to marking.
- There will be regular use of the targets.
- The Head/ SLTs will monitor books at least termly and record this.
- Children will be aware of their English targets.
- Children will be aware of their targets in Maths.
- Targets will be in books or on cards, or Next Steps boards in EYFS. Planning will relate where appropriate to target sheets and targets will be regularly assessed.
- Children will be 'active learners' e.g. given the opportunity to discuss with each other, be active around the room.
- Children not making good enough progress will be supported by the teacher, teaching assistant support and interventions as appropriate. Interventions will be monitored in line with the plan, do, review cycle.
- Teachers will keep classrooms tidy and well-organised with clearly labelled areas and drawers.
- Children will be encouraged to respect other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- Teachers will promote respect and a culture of tolerance and diversity.
- Teachers will encourage pupils to respect other people, even if they choose to follow a lifestyle that one would not choose to follow oneself.

The purpose of the teaching at Plumtree School:

- enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
- fosters in pupils the application of intellectual, physical or creative effort, interest in their work, and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
- involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
- shows good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
- demonstrates appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject-matter being taught;
- utilises effectively classroom resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range;
- demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress; and
- utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

### **Effective learning**

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners.

We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and feel they belong, in which they enjoy being challenged, but in which they enjoy learning, and know that they will succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level) and know that mistakes are learning opportunities not failures.

All teaching is structured to maximise learning opportunities, and lessons are planned in accordance with the following principles:

- the teaching should build on previous learning;
- it should give pupils the 'big picture' of the lesson;
- the teacher should explain the learning objectives (I can statement), and why the lesson is important;
- the lesson should be presented in a range of styles;
- it should allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities;
- it should allow opportunities for the pupils to review what has been learnt;
- it should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the pupils, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- the teaching should indicate what the next step in learning will be.

We offer opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- watching television and responding to musical or tape-recorded material;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;

We encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Assessment and marking are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. As outlined in the Assessment and Feedback Policy, informal formative assessment takes place continuously in the classroom and comprises of:

- well understood learning objectives which are shared with the pupils (I can statements and success criteria);
- sharing or creating learning outcomes with the pupils to make them partners in their learning;
- plenaries (or mini plenaries throughout lessons) being used as assessment opportunities:
  - effective teacher questioning;
  - observations of learning;
  - analysing and interpreting evidence of learning to inform future planning;
  - sensitive and positive feedback to pupils;
  - individual target setting: SMART (specific, measurable, assessable, realistic and given in time);
  - pupils being actively involved in the dialogue of assessment;
  - pupils understanding how well they are doing and how they can improve.

### **Effective Planning**

When teaching we focus on motivating the pupils and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the school curriculum plan to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school and details what is to be taught to each year group.

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the pupils' level of attainment. Teachers make on-going assessments of each pupil's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons and adapt lessons accordingly to provide a more personalised and progressive curriculum. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their pupils. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the pupils. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each pupil's level of ability. When planning work for pupils with special educational needs we give due regard to extra information and targets for these children. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all our pupils, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion. We have high expectations of our pupils, and we believe that their work here at Plumtree School is of the highest possible standard.

We set academic targets for the pupils in each academic year and we share these targets with pupils and their parents/guardians. We review the progress of each pupil at the end of term. Our lessons have clear learning objectives (I can statement), based on the National Curriculum Programme of Study. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way we assess the pupils' work. We evaluate all lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

- We plan our curriculum in three phases. We agree a long-term plan for each key stage. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. We review our long-term plan on an annual basis.
- With our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that we use when teaching each topic.
- Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson.
- In the Foundation Stage we adopt an inter-disciplinary topic approach to curriculum planning. We plan the curriculum carefully, so that there is coherence and full coverage of all aspects of the statutory EYFS Statutory Framework (2021) supported by non-statutory guidance in the Development Matters (2021), and there is planned progression in all curriculum areas.
- At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the curriculum at our school places a greater emphasis on the core and foundation subjects than it does in the Foundation Stage, and we teach these subjects separately. This means that, for example, a child may concentrate in one term on a history topic, then switch to a greater emphasis on geography in the next term. Over the three terms of the academic year, each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects.
- In our curriculum planning we highlight these areas, so that the children's progress can be identified and monitored. All subject areas contribute to a child's progress in these skills. Our school believes that all children need to make good progress in these skill areas in order to develop to their true potential.

**Long term plans** schemes of work give an annual overview of what content of the curriculum will be taught with teachers extracting from the appropriate year groups curriculum that which they aim to cover. The overview policies and plans are updated by all teaching staff.

**Medium term planning** These indicate when the material will be delivered and are prepared on a termly basis from the Scheme of Work in response to individual group needs. They include teaching objectives and resources. Additionally we send home the Medium Planning at the beginning of each term to enable our parents to support their children appropriately.

**Short term planning** Short term plans are on a daily basis and include the individual lesson plan which details the learning objectives, strategies, activities and identify the resources we are going to use in the lesson. These plans are concerned with how material is taught and with the minutiae of delivery. There is a section for "Evaluation". This planning is discussed within Key Stages on a weekly basis with feedback given to the Key Stage Leader who systematically checks and supports teachers planning at regular intervals throughout the each term.

### **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

The Foundation Stage, which in our school covers the development of children between the ages of three and five years, is based on four main principles namely:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Play underpins the delivery of the EYFS Curriculum. We use the document “Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)” to inform planning in the Nursery and Reception classes. Our curriculum for the EYFS reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals from the *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook* (Standards and Testing Agency, 2021). The EYFS curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning; three prime areas and four specific areas:

- Three Prime Areas
  - Communication and Language
  - Physical Development
  - Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Four Specific Areas
  - Literacy
  - Mathematics
  - Understanding the World
  - Expressive Arts and Design

Our pupils’ learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across all the learning areas. We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment that encourages children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. Activities are planned for both inside and outside learning. Continuous provision in the EYFS includes water, tactile, sand and creative workshops, mathematics activities, drawing, writing and cutting areas and reading and role-play areas. We believe that learning is holistic and none of the mentioned areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. One experience may provide children with opportunities to develop a range of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. Each area of learning works towards a number of relevant Early Learning Goals, which most children are expected to achieve by the end of the EYFS (unless specific Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities have been identified and may impede some areas).

We are well aware that all children need the support of parents and teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents of each child by keeping them informed about the way in which the children are being taught and how well each child is progressing. Individual records are kept for each child in a Learning Journal via Seesaw and information is regularly sent to parents about the developing abilities of their children.

### **Effective Ethos, Classrooms and Learning Environment**

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all pupils in the class. We treat the pupils with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with pupils the class code of conduct. We expect all pupils to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise pupils for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards the school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When pupils misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school behaviour policy. We aim to provide a learning environment which:

- *is challenging and stimulating;*
- *is peaceful and calm;*
- *is happy and caring;*
- *is organised and well-resourced;*
- *makes learning accessible;*
- *is encouraging and appreciative;*
- *is welcoming;*



- *provides equal access and inclusion;*
- *provides a professional working atmosphere.*

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the pupils perform are safe. When we plan to take pupils out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. Parents/guardians are informed, and their permission obtained before the visit takes place. Learning assistants and other adult helpers are deployed as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual pupils and sometimes they work with small groups.

Our school is an attractive learning environment. We ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the pupils.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

### **Enrichment opportunities**

All pupils have the opportunity to develop existing interests and nurture new ones through a variety of clubs and enrichment activities, which operate after school. These reflect the talents and interests of the staff and pupils. The extra-curricular clubs range from sporting activities, to gardening and cookery.

### **The Role of the Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher determines, supports, monitors and reviews the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular the Head Teacher:

- supports the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensures that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitors teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- monitors how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment through assessments;
- monitors the teaching and learning through lesson observations;
- ensures that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- develops and monitors long and medium term planning;
- monitors the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes, which include reports from the Head of Key Stages and a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff;
- in liaison with the Senior Leadership Team, promotes and develops the process of school development planning.

### **The role of the subject co-ordinator**

The role of the co-ordinator is to:

- provide a strategic lead and direction;
- support and offer advice to colleagues;
- monitor child progress in that subject area;
- provide efficient resource management.

Each co-ordinator reviews the curriculum plans for their area ensuring that progression is planned into schemes of work. We keep a portfolio children's work, which is used to show the achievement of children at each key stage and to give examples of expectation of attainment.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)**

In our school we plan and provide effectively in order to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Pupils of all faiths and belief systems are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and a spirit of open and shared enquiry, whilst developing their individual potential and qualities of character so they can make a positive contribution to the world. Whilst SMSC is integral to all aspects of our curriculum, PSHEE, including British

values, and religious education make a strong contribution. Pupils are led towards distinguishing right from wrong, to respect the law and towards acting consistently with their beliefs and with a view to the consequences of their own and others' actions. In addition our school:

- actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
- enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- enhance further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England;
- preclude the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school; and
- take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils— (i) while they are in attendance at the school; (ii) while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school; or (iii) in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

### **Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education**

Plumtree School is committed to providing a comprehensive programme of PSHEE for all its pupils, which is appropriate to their age and needs. Each child's Personal, Social, Health and Economic education informs all aspects of the school day. The form this takes ranges from the way we treat each other to learning about an individual's cultural heritage. Our circle time/PSHEE lessons allow children to explore emotions, ways to express emotions and strategies to cope with emotions as well as promoting an awareness of the emotions of others and how our behaviour affects others.

We encourage respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

We plan our Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and citizenship through assemblies and 'circle time' to help our pupils acquire values and skills to enable them to develop independence and choose their path in life. We aim for our pupils to understand and appreciate the range of different cultures and faiths in modern democratic Britain. We use our schemes of work and other plans which enable pupils to develop an understanding of public services and institutions and to take their place in modern democratic British society. We provide a range of quality opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility in school and make a positive contribution to the school, local and wider communities. We know that our parents and children reflect the diversity that exists with our society and so we encourage pupils to respect other people, even if they choose to follow a lifestyle that one would not choose to follow oneself. **This takes place in the form of circle time and PSHEE lessons.**

### **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) including Pupils with an EHC plan:**

Our curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children in the School. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so only after parents have been consulted. If a child has a special need, our school complies with all legislative and best practice requirements to meet these individual needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, the teacher makes an assessment of this need and in most instances is able to provide resources and educational opportunities, which meets the child's

needs within the teaching group. If a child's need is more severe, consideration is given to involving appropriate external agencies. We always provide additional resources and support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The provision, in this respect is co-ordinated by the SENCo and the Class Teacher in agreement with the parents.

The school provides a register of children with needs. This sets out the nature of the special need. Should a pupil be in receipt of an EHC plan, we will endeavour to give them an education, which meets their needs as specified by their plan. In some instances, pupils in possession of an EHC plan cannot be accommodated at Plumtree School due to their needs being beyond the resources available, requiring greater readjustment than is possible. Where possible, this will form part of discussions during the admissions process. Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the SENCO liaises with the child's teachers to ensure that the education he or she receives fulfils its requirements and participates fully in the annual review the LA undertakes annually if applicable.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

We are committed to providing students with the necessary support and teaching who require English as an additional language. Where this is required an appropriate programme will be implemented.

### **Disapplication**

In accordance with the law the School has the right to respond to individual needs by modifying the curriculum programmes. It will allow a pupil to participate in extended work-related learning, allow a pupil with individual strengths to emphasise a particular curriculum area, allow a pupil making significantly less progress than other pupils of his/her age to consolidate his/her learning and progress across the curriculum. Decisions about any of the above will only be made by the Head Teacher after discussion with the parents.

### **The Curriculum and Staff**

Members of staff ensure that the learning outcomes required to achieve the goals in the foregoing paragraphs are embodied in the teaching that implements the curriculum. Teachers ensure that an appropriate level and standard of homework is regularly set and marked so that learning outcomes may be consolidated and the needs of individual pupils identified and met.

Our curriculum is well planned for each age group and key stage and ensures that pupils of all abilities and aptitudes, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to acquire knowledge and understanding, develop and practise new skills, and make progress in a range of areas of learning. Where a pupil has an EHC plan we make provision to meet the requirements set out in the policy. We design our curriculum to ensure that it is broad, well balanced and covers all the required areas of learning. We modify our curriculum and teaching to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils including our gifted and talented and disabled pupils or those with a special educational need.

### **Auditing our curriculum: teaching and learning**

When evaluating the quality of the curriculum, we consider:

- the impact of the curriculum on pupils' academic and personal development and in preparing them for the opportunities, choices, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- the contribution of the curriculum to the school's particular ethos and aims and the impact on pupils' academic and personal development and well-being;
- how well curriculum planning is supported by appropriate schemes of work, builds systematically upon pupils' prior experience and plans for progression;
- the extent to which the curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular opportunities and through collaboration with other schools and organisations, including, for example, to provide appropriate careers guidance for our senior pupils;
- the views of our pupils, parents and staff;

### **Expectations of Staff**

Staff are expected to actively promote the curriculum aims by:-

- having high expectation of pupils.

- employing a variety of learning and teaching methods.
- ensuring that pupils are enabled to access the curriculum and given opportunities to be successful.
- delivering lessons which build upon previous experience, providing continuity and progression.
- providing learning opportunities which offer depth and challenge and motivate and inspire children.
- involving children in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular formative feedback through discussion, assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging children to evaluate their personal achievements.
- developing pupil's skills to become independent learners.
- encouraging, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment.
- working in partnership with children, staff and parents to achieve shared goals.
- keeping parents/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their children through reports and parents evenings.

In our school the most important role of teaching is to promote learning in order to raise pupils' achievement. For us, teaching includes lesson planning, the implementation of plans, as well as marking, assessment and feedback. It also includes support and intervention strategies. In assessing the quality of the teaching in our school we take account of the evidence of pupils' learning, achievements and progress over time. When evaluating the quality of teaching in our school, we consider how successful the teaching is in promoting the learning, progress and personal development for every pupil by:

- extending the previous knowledge, skills and understanding of all pupils in a range of lessons and activities over time
- enabling pupils to develop skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics
- enthusing, engaging and motivating pupils to learn
- using assessment and feedback to support learning and to help pupils know how to improve their work
- differentiating teaching, by setting suitably challenging activities and providing support for pupils of different abilities, including the most able and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, so that they can all learn well and make progress
- enabling pupils to apply intellectual, physical or creative efforts and develop the skills to learn for themselves and setting high expectations
- setting appropriate homework
- using well-judged and effective teaching methods, deploying appropriate resources, managing class time and drawing on good subject knowledge and expertise to encourage pupils to make good progress
- managing instances of poor or disruptive behaviour.

We use lesson observations by colleagues and teacher self-evaluation which takes account of:

- how well challenging tasks are matched to pupils' learning needs and successfully engage all pupils in their learning
- how well pupils understand how to improve their learning as a result of frequent, detailed and accurate feedback from teachers following assessment of their learning as well as through their individual targets.
- pupils' attitudes to learning, behaviour and relationships in the classroom
- the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Direct observation **must** be supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable inspectors to evaluate the impact that teaching has had on pupils' learning. Such additional evidence should include:

- observing some lessons jointly with senior staff before discussing them also with the teacher who has been observed
- discussing with pupils the work they have done and their experience of teaching and learning over longer periods
- discussing teaching and learning with staff
- taking account of the views of pupils, parents and carers and staff
- taking account of the school's own evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning
- scrutinising the standard of pupils' work, noting:
  - how well and frequently marking and assessment are used to help pupils to improve their learning
  - the level of challenge provided.

## **Religious Education**

Religious Education is available to all pupils in the curriculum and as part of our assemblies.

## **Relationships and Sex Education**

The School provides Relationships and Sex education in the basic curriculum in which pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. The syllabus for the School's Relationships and Sex Education is available to parents. It forms a key part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHEE) course and has regard for the government's guidance in *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (0116/2000)*. In accordance with the law the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all pupils, but parents may withdraw their children from any other part of the sex education provided without giving reasons.

## **Political education**

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School is forbidden by law. Political issues are introduced in a number of courses and are presented in a balanced manner.

## **Games**

All pupils are expected to take part in the school's Physical Education and Games programme. Pupils can only be excused from PE and Games lessons for medical reasons, for which a note from a parent will suffice, or other reasons agreed with the school.

## **Educational visits**

The curriculum offers a series of educational visits that deepen the pupils' understanding of the world around them. Our experience is that pupils forge strong bonds of friendship during the trips, and their respect for one another grows as a result of sharing the experiences.

## **Extra curricular activities**

The School has a programme of activities that take place outside the formal curriculum.

## **Homework**

We recognise the importance and value of homework as an extension and consolidation of classwork. We have a separate Homework Policy. Homework assignments can be varied in line with the competency of the pupil. However, scope for this is limited by the nature of the courses in which outcomes are similar for all members of a class. The School sets homework as appropriate. Parents are encouraged to read with their children in all year groups. The school expects pupils to complete homework regularly: Reading every night throughout the school, spellings and handwriting from Year 1 upwards. Other homework as set, which will include topic work, Maths, English and Science.

## **Transition Support**

We ensure all children are prepared for their transition into the next academic year and Key Stage. We have a transition morning each end of year, where children spend the morning with their new teacher. We also hold an open/information evening where parents have the opportunity to meet with staff and to gain information about what will be covered in the next class as well as any routines etc. Pupils at Plumtree School are supported in their preparation for formal examinations at the end of Year 6. Pupils are encouraged to learn about their own academic strengths and weaknesses, and the type of learning method that best suits them as an individual.

Pupils receive interview training prior to attending pre-testing and selection assessments at senior schools. These are all ways in which they are prepared for the future beyond Plumtree School.

## **Concerns and complaints**

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the pupil's Class Teacher. If the issue is not resolved parents should contact the Head Teacher. If there is no resolution then parents should write to the Head Teacher. The School has a Complaints Procedure in place, which is in the policy available to parents.

## **Academic Excellence and Public Examinations**

Whilst accepting the need to prepare its pupils for their Senior School education, we also strive to ensure that the pursuit of these goals is consistent with achieving the other goals set out in this policy.

### **Communication with Parents and Guardians**

We believe that parents and guardians have a fundamental role to play in helping pupils to learn. Plumtree School provides advice to children and their parents about the progress of pupils in their studies at this school and choices made for the next school. We do all we can to inform parents and guardians about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding parents' evenings to explain our school strategies;
- sending information to parents and guardians at the start of each term our medium term planning in which we outline the topics that the pupils will be studying during that term at school;
- sending regular reports to parents and guardians in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents and guardians how they can support their pupils with homework. We suggest support for older pupils with their projects and investigative work;
- being available - we have an open door policy;
- regular, available email correspondence and telephone communication

We believe that parents and guardians have the responsibility to support their pupils and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents and guardians to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance and punctuality record possible;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school, staff and learning in general;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the homework agreement.

Plumtree School is a school characterised by academic, music and sport excellence, expert pastoral care and inspiring education. We enable children at a formative stage in their development to experience the joy and excitement of learning in an environment, which celebrates individual strengths and talents and allow pupils to develop the confidence, motivation and ambition that are the hallmarks of our school.