

WALTHAMSTOW MONTESSORI SCHOOL (WMS)

CURRICULUM POLICY

INTRODUCTION

At WMS, our aim is to fulfil the potential of each child in our care.

We offer a broad Montessori curriculum, with the core aim being to fully prepare our pupils for their future. However, we believe that we are preparing children not only for their next schools, but also for the life in the wider world. We regard these school years (from the ages of 2 to 6) as forming the base upon which our children will build their future education and develop tools for later life.

We therefore aim to give our pupils as wide an education as possible during their time with us. We place a strong emphasis on a broad and exciting curriculum, with Art, Dance, Drama, Music, languages and PE all taught by specialist teachers.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also given strong emphasis and the school values of Kindness, Courtesy, Honesty, Respect, Perseverance, Independence, Confidence, Leadership, Humility and being Givers not Takers, underpin the aims and the delivery of the curriculum.

We believe in the benefits of learning beyond the classroom and recognise that outdoor education offers pupils unique opportunities and experiences that cannot be taught within the constraints of everyday education and surroundings. Hence the children will experience much outdoor learning and Forest Schooling beginning with their weekly 'Out and About' sessions. Therefore, part of the curriculum is devoted to an outdoor learning programme with key areas of focus being Personal and emotional development, Group Development, Organising, Planning and Risk Management skills, Nature and Physical literacy. These five areas along with the life skills of critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, enquiry and reflection we believe will enable pupils to succeed socially, economically and environmentally in the ever-changing world.

AIMS

Both our Children's House and lower schools have a Montessori based curriculum, developed to meet the needs of the specific age-groups.

Throughout WMS, we undertake to:

- have high expectations of the children and ourselves
- raise levels of attainment for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best
- prepare pupils to the standards and style of entrance examinations (where appropriate) to senior schools suited to their abilities and temperament
- develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners who are able to make informed choices and foster a love of learning
- foster self-esteem and personal responsibility, linked to respect for the needs and feelings of others
- facilitate considerate and positive relationships between all members of the school community
- ensure equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, class, special needs, and belief
- value and respect all cultures
- provide a safe, happy work place
- promote a thoughtful attitude towards the immediate and wider environment

PROCEDURES

Planning

Long Term Planning -Curriculum

- This is set by the Head, and class teachers
- It shows progression and ideas for teaching
- It does not prescribe lessons week by week but is a "menu" from which teachers pick to produce medium term planning
- It differs in format to suit different subjects

Medium Term Planning

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

Short Term Planning

- This is the teacher's detailed breakdown of daily or weekly teaching activities

- It is one of the vehicles for assessment and includes comments/observations on individual pupils made during or after the lesson
- It is personal to the teacher in style and format
- It should contain:
 - learning intention
 - what the pupils are going to do (learning and teaching activities)
 - how they are organised, including differentiation
 - SEND and Most Able requirements assessment opportunities
 - AfL classroom practice
 - PSHCE and ICT teaching opportunities
 - literacy and numeracy links
- It is flexible in response to assessment and observation of the pupils

In addition, children have individual targets set for them. In the upper school these are shared with the children when they are created and a copy of them is kept accessible by the children so that they are able to reflect upon these themselves.

Learning Objective

The learning objective is the starting point for medium term planning. It states exactly what the teacher wants the child to know, to understand, to be able to do. It provides for all children to be able to make progress and therefore prior knowledge is taken into account.

The learning intention may be referred to as the "LO" (Learning Objective).

Share the Learning Objective with the children

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

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

From the teacher's perspective

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

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

Assessment and reporting

Assessment is an essential part of the teaching process.

Regular assessments are made of pupils' work to establish a level of attainment and to inform future planning. Teachers use assessment information to track the progress of individual pupils and the Head uses it to monitor how effective the teaching and the curriculum is.

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

Learning Enrichment

WMS has a trained SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator) and

other learning support assistants. Their role is to support staff in identifying pupils' difficulties and planning teaching strategies, to liaise with parents and outside agencies, to co-ordinate any extra help that may be required and to offer support to small groups in class.

We identify and meet the needs of children who are particularly able and those for whom English is an additional language. We work closely with specialists and professional agencies to ensure that children's needs are met and that they are able to make the most of the curriculum.

Staff development

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

Other useful policies linked to this one:

Assessment Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Inclusion Policy

SEND Policy

This policy was adopted on/dated 1 October 2017

Date Reviewed: 01-09-2024

To be reviewed: 01-09-2025