



THE UNICORN SCHOOL

20 Marcham Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 1AA

Tel: 01235 530222 Fax: 01235 536889

e-mail: info@unicornoxford.co.uk

www.unicornoxford.co.uk



Curriculum Policy

Policy written by: Vita Parvin

Date Agreed by: Andrew Day

<i>Date of Review</i>	<i>Completed By</i>	<i>Signed</i>
January 2015	Vita Parvin	
January 2017	Andrew Day	

THE UNICORN SCHOOL

CURRICULUM POLICY

January 2017

THE UNICORN SCHOOL HAS A WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY TO SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY

This means:

- i. Only children who are underachieving because of SpLD are admitted
- ii. All pupils are taught English and Maths according to their current skill levels
- iii. All pupils have access to the full National Curriculum – differentiated on an individual basis as required
- iv. All pupils receive remedial help specific to their individual needs

Special Needs

The emphasis at The Unicorn School is upon identifying the pupil's particular difficulties, and attempting to remediate these areas, while teaching to each pupil's strengths. Identification of both strengths and weaknesses is key to this approach. Where remediation is not feasible, or effective, teachers seek to find strategies which help pupils around their difficulties. These strategies will be different for each pupil: again identification of what works for the individual concerned is paramount.

Each child at The Unicorn School has an Individual Education Plan devised to address and offer remedial help for the particular specific learning difficulties of the pupil concerned.

A Pupil Passport is produced for each child that forms the basis of the IEP, and this is modified as more is known and the child develops.

The remedial programme is reviewed every term, and full records are kept of current and prior attainment.

The remedial help available includes Speech and Language Therapy for language support (not dysfunction), Specialist teaching for Dyslexia, a gross and fine motor programme for children with these difficulties (Dyspraxia) delivered by the Occupational Therapist.

GCSEs

We have carefully selected a GCSE programme which will enable our pupils to achieve a sound bank of essential qualifications.

By focussing on a small number of key subjects, we give our pupils the best opportunity to succeed.

Our GCSE teachers are highly qualified professionals. Specialist teaching makes the GCSE syllabus accessible to pupils with dyslexia and related learning difficulties.

All pupils will undertake at least 6 GCSEs: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Combined Science (equivalent to 2 qualifications) and Food Preparation & Nutrition. In addition to this they will be studying for a Level 1 BTEC in Construction, which is equal to one GCSE. Pupils will have the option to undertake an additional GCSE in Art & Design.

Our GCSE courses have been chosen to play to our pupils' many strengths, avoiding subjects with a heavy bias towards writing, spelling and punctuation; or with an extensive research element.

The core subjects National Curriculum

English:

Many of our children have literacy problems which is why they come to our school. We teach reading and spelling as specific topics each day and offer remedial help with both.

We have a number of computer spelling programmes to encourage and reinforce learned spelling patterns and sound symbol correspondence.

For Reading we use a number of different schemes to help support the children.

Every child in the school has an English lesson 4 days a week plus daily 1:1 sessions, the emphasis of which is upon creative writing, comprehension and grammar. Current and prior attainment is carefully monitored and strategies are taught to help them overcome their difficulties. When they are successfully working at age appropriately, they are able to access the full National Curriculum.

Maths

A similar policy is followed in Maths, and Maths is taught to each pupil daily or on 4 of the 5 days. In this subject the children are grouped according to their current Maths level of competence. If there is reading difficulty, but Maths competence, the teaching will ensure that the reading problem does not impede the acquisition of numeracy skills. Again the aim is that with intensive and individual help pupils will reach age appropriate attainment targets during their time with us, and access the full National Curriculum in this subject.

We use a variety of online and paper resources to support the children including Mymaths, New Framework maths and ABACUS maths. For those with particular difficulty 1:1 sessions can be used to help support their maths and encourage the pupils to 'talk' maths: this also allows for extra hands on exploration of maths shapes and concepts. Mental arithmetic is part of the weekly programme and is also practised in maths games on the computer, and tables are introduced early and taught systematically with much reinforcement.

Note: Generally in Maths and English teaching we may have to choose content from earlier key stages than the age appropriate ones when pupils first join us, and develop our teaching from that earlier point to be developmentally relevant to a particular pupil: as skills are mastered we move towards more age appropriate key stage targets.

Maths fun days are part of the science curriculum promoting experimentation and enquiry.

Science

We follow the National Curriculum in Science in age appropriate classes, facilitating access to it for pupils with literacy and numeracy problems.

We differentiate the access and recording methods used so as to be appropriate to each pupil progressing towards more independent access and recording as the children attain age appropriate literacy and numeracy skills.

Science fun days are part of the science curriculum promoting experimentation and enquiry.

History/Geography/RE

We follow the New Guidelines in these subjects facilitating access as above as required. We teach from age and developmentally appropriate levels of the National Curriculum, and utilize an alternative topic syllabus if pupils have already covered areas and repetition would occur, or if previously covered material requires reinforcement.

Throughout the year outings of specific historical and geographical interest are organised.

IT

We follow the National Curriculum. Our aims in teaching IT are that all children will:

- Have access to a variety of IT equipment and software throughout their schooling
- Learn to use IT to meet their educational needs at the appropriate level
- Be computer literate to an appropriate level in order that they may use their computer skills to enhance their presentation of curriculum work
- Be aware that IT affects many simple everyday acts, e.g. machine washing clothes
- Be able to use the Internet as an information resource
- Be confident in the use of E-mails as a communication vehicle
- Be aware of and kept safe from inappropriate internet use and inherent strange dangers
- For those pupils for whom it is appropriate a touch typing programme is available

Art/Craft/Design

Within the resources of a small school again we follow the National Curriculum and offer our pupils a range of art and design mediums in which to work. These include computer-aided design.

PE/Swimming

All children have an afternoon of sport which is held at Tilsley Park. In addition Friday afternoon is an Activity afternoon where children can try different activities ranging from swimming, martial arts, sailing etc.

Drama

This is offered as part of our English curriculum. We have our major school drama production at the end of the Summer Term and smaller events during the year.

Music (making and appreciation) and Singing

This is offered as part of our curriculum as a class lesson – not individual tuition. We have a choir that takes part in carol concerts.

Modern European Language

French is offered to all children from Y6 to Y9.

Moral Health and Sex Education/PHSE

Sex education is included in the science curriculum. Parents are advised of when it is being introduced, by whom, and are requested to sign a consent form.

Moral and Health education is included in the Science and RE curriculum's. It also forms part of the general debate and current affairs time, and forms the basis of discussion in assembly at appropriate times. PHSE is well resourced and forms a structured teaching programme.

The teaching of philosophy throughout the school promotes enquiry both as a learning and teaching methodology

Organisation

Core Subjects

Literacy and Numeracy teaching takes place in the mornings together with all remedial work.

IT skills and Science are taught mainly in the afternoon to accord with National Curriculum requirements.

Humanities, general subjects and PE are taught in the afternoons.

Generally schemes of work are devised by the individual member of staff responsible for the teaching of a subject, with guidelines as to the topics to be covered and the materials to be used from the Head. There is ongoing specialist input as to teaching methods best employed for individual pupils, and twice termly meetings are held with all staff and specialists to coordinate and discuss the application and effectiveness of remedial strategies to the teaching of main subjects as well as the ongoing remedial programme. All aspects of delivery of the curriculum is monitored by the Head who will attend at will sample lessons as well as receiving reports.

The whole syllabus in each curriculum area is coordinated by the Head. The Head maintains each subject syllabus and each subject curriculum statement. Subject heads hold departmental meetings at least every 6 weeks and devise and monitor short term targets reporting these back to the Head. Syllabus development is ongoing and formally reviewed annually. Class teaching staff meet every week with the Head to discuss syllabus implementation.

The planning and implementation of teaching is the responsibility of each teacher in conjunction with the subject leaders. Teachers feed back to the whole staff the continuing pupil assessment and evaluation. In this way progress is monitored and adjustments can be made as required to the pupils' Individual Educational Plans, and to the teaching strategies employed.

Individual National Curriculum records are maintained for each child and regularly updated by subject teaching staff. This record is monitored by the Head and is kept in the office. Formal testing/assessment is conducted once a year on each pupil. The records are produced to parents each term at parents evening and reported in writing in the termly end of term written reports to parents.

The Staff Handbook, together with curriculum and remediation files, introduces The Unicorn School teaching methods to incoming staff: this is an evolving issue and in-service training is ongoing. All staff are involved in curriculum development and in contributing to the ongoing monitoring of pupil's needs.

Reviewed January 2017

To be reviewed again in January 2019