

Curriculum Policy



"More important than the curriculum is the question of the methods of teaching and the spirit in which the teaching is given"

Bertrand Russell

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INTRODUCTION

The Unicorn School has a whole school policy to specific learning difficulties

This means:

- i. All students are taught English and Maths according to their current skill levels
- ii. All students have access to the full National Curriculum – differentiated on an individual basis as required
- iii. All students receive remedial help specific to their individual needs

Special Needs

The emphasis at The Unicorn School is on identifying each student's particular difficulties and attempting to remediate these areas, while teaching to each child'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 children around their difficulties. These strategies will be different for each child; 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 specific learning difficulties of the student concerned.

A Learning Profile outlines the strengths and difficulties and an Outcome Planning document provides longer term outcomes based on the individual's need; these are broken down into termly targets presented in an IEP. All documents are updated and modified regularly as the child develops.

The programme is reviewed every term, and full records are kept of current and prior attainment. The remedial help available includes Specialist Teaching for Dyslexia/SpLDs, Speech and Language Therapy for language support (not dysfunction) and a gross and fine motor programme for children with DCD/Dyspraxia delivered by the Occupational Therapist. It may also include support for emotional well-being if required.

Specialist Teaching

In Years 3 to 8 every child has an allocated one-to-one teacher who is a qualified specialist teacher of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties.

GCSEs

We have carefully selected a GCSE programme which will enable our students to achieve a sound bank of essential qualifications. By focusing on a small number of key subjects, we give our students the best opportunity to succeed. Our GCSE teachers are highly qualified professionals; specialist teaching makes the GCSE syllabus accessible to students with dyslexia and related learning difficulties.

Students at the Unicorn School will be able to access the following:

- English Language IGCSE
- English Literature GCSE
- Mathematics IGCSE
- Maths Entry Level
- Science Trilogy (equivalent to three GCSEs)
- Combined Science (equivalent to two GCSEs)
- Science Entry Level
- Art GCSE
- Film Studies GCSE
- IT qualification (BCS)
- Food Preparation & Nutrition GCSE
- Construction BTEC (Level 1)

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

SpLD STUDY SKILLS and LEARNING SUPPORT

Introduction

This statement outlines the purpose and management of the SpLD Study Skills programme taught in our school.

Philosophy

In KS4, students begin to study their GCSE subjects and the associated increase in the demands of the curriculum presents a particular challenge for them. Sound study skills are essential if students are to achieve their academic potential and yet can be particularly difficult for students with dyslexia/SpLDs to acquire. From Year 9, our students therefore receive specialist teaching through our SpLD Study Skills programme, specifically designed to meet their needs. In Study Skills lessons – one hour a day, three days a week – we nurture students to become effective, independent learners, helping them to learn the strategies they need to succeed, both in school and in life.

Aims and Objectives

Throughout KS4, we focus on the development of effective study skills, widely acknowledged to be critical to academic success. Students are taught these skills explicitly, which reduces the cognitive load of trying to assimilate them whilst learning curriculum subjects. Each skill is introduced in a carefully structured and scaffolded way, with plenty of opportunities for practice and overlearning. We liaise closely with GCSE subject teachers to ensure we cover the skills required across the curriculum. Our programme is intentionally flexible and reactive; each year we tailor our offering to the presenting needs of each cohort of students, as identified in conjunction with their subject teachers.

SpLD Study Skills lessons are delivered as whole-class sessions by a team of four specialist teachers. For the most part, one teacher leads the session with the other teachers supporting individual students, working with pairs or with a small group.

In Study Skills, students will cover topics including:

- Personal organisation
- Time management
- Metacognitive awareness
- Growth mindset
- Assistive Technology and ICT
- Vocabulary development
- Reading strategies
- Critical reading skills
- Planning techniques

- Writing skills
- Research skills
- Information handling
- Revision techniques
- Exam preparation

In Year 10, we assess all students for Examination Access Arrangements. The majority will qualify for exam concessions, whether that be extra time, a scribe, a reader/text-to-speech software or use of a word-processor. In Study Skills lessons, we ensure that students understand their individual access arrangements and can use them effectively. We recognise the particular challenges and stresses faced by our students when preparing for and sitting GCSEs and work hard to build their resilience and self-esteem. In partnership with the subject teachers, we ensure that students are fully prepared, so that they sit their exams feeling confident and secure and are able to achieve their potential.

Throughout KS4, students continue to be supported in the development of their literacy skills; where a student is still struggling to attain basic functional literacy, they are offered Learning Support in the afternoons, either one-to-one or in a small group. Year 11 students benefit from Learning Support sessions in preparation for their exams and the specialist teachers may also provide support for individual students in their English, Maths and Science lessons.

ENGLISH

In the context of this document the term 'literacy' is used to embrace all aspects of language development – reading, writing and speaking and listening.

Rationale

Literacy underpins the school curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes, using language to learn and communicate, to think, explore and organise. Helping students to express themselves clearly orally and in writing enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects. All departments and all teachers have a crucial role to play in supporting students' literacy development.

Aims

The aims of this English Statement are to:

- Support students' learning in all subjects by helping teachers to be clear about the ways in which their work with students contributes to the development of students' communication skills
- Develop a shared understanding between all staff of the role of language in students' learning and how work in different subjects can contribute to and benefit from the development of students' ability to communicate effectively
- Recognise that language is central to students' sense of identity, belonging and growth
- Raise students' own expectations of achievement, thus raising standards
- Develop students' confidence and self-expression
- Support students to learn and use strategies independently that help them access text and write text
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the students' standards of achievement and assessment in speaking and listening, writing and reading, and the identification of any areas of strength and weakness

Our aims for our students

Our aims in teaching English are that our students will be confident, independent learners, capable of coping in mainstream classrooms with minimal support and equipped with strategies that will help them cope with any difficulties that persist.

They will:

- Be able to speak and listen with confidence
- Read and write with confidence and understanding
- Apply a taught range of reading clues and proofreading strategies

- Have developed an interest in words and their meaning, a growing vocabulary and the confidence to use technology to access unfamiliar words
- Know and be able to write in a range of genres and understand both narrative techniques such as character, setting and plot and descriptive techniques such as sensory language
- Be able to use, understand, summarise and write a range of non-fiction texts
- Be able to understand and identify different forms of writing such as letters, plays and poetry
- Be able to critically analyse a given text for the author's intentions
- Be able to understand and relate a given text to the set or written context
- Be able to plan, draft and revise their own writing
- Have an interest in books, and as far as possible, read (or listen) with enjoyment and comment on their preferences
- Have at their disposal a range of different methods such as mind-mapping or pictorial representation for recording factual information presented orally and visually

These aims are in accordance with those of the objectives in the Government's English curriculum, modified in recognition of the specific difficulties faced by students with SpLDs.

Implementation

Successful implementation of this policy is dependent upon the extent to which we:

- Take account of the needs of all students, with regard to ethnicity, gender, ability and social and cultural factors
- Value students' language achievements including those in languages other than English and dialects other than standard English
- Structure lessons appropriately in ways that support and stimulate language development and show how learning objectives for students are to be achieved
- Recognise how resources will be organised and used to support this teaching
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of common goals and clear, shared expectations of students' developing ability to talk, read and write effectively and, specifically, establish whether targets have been achieved.

Aims of the Three Language Modes

At the Unicorn School, we recognise that there are three components of English:

- Speaking and Listening
- Reading
- Writing

These are interdependent and of equal importance; dyslexic students struggle more to acquire the reading and writing elements of English so we recognise that good oral work is vital to underpin and enhance their understanding of language and the ways that it can be used to communicate.

Speaking and Listening

Talk is our main means of communication in everyday life and is fundamental to the development of understanding.

We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in speaking and listening so that they are able to:

- Clarify and express their ideas and explain their thinking
- Adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances including paired and group discussions and speaking to a larger audience
- Use varied and specialised vocabulary
- Speak for a range of purposes, e.g. to narrate, to analyse, to explain, to reflect and evaluate
- Listen with understanding and respond sensitively and appropriately.

Reading

We want our students to enjoy reading, to be able to use their reading to help them learn and to develop increasing confidence and competence in reading so that they are able to:

- Read fluently, accurately and with understanding
- Become independent and critical readers and make informed and appropriate choices
- Select information from a wide range of texts and sources including print, media and ICT and to evaluate those sources
- Apply techniques such as skimming, scanning, and text-marking effectively in order to research and appraise texts
- If appropriate, be able to use text to speech software or audiobooks

We provide age appropriate texts and texts (where applicable) that are in line with the expectations of the GCSE English curriculum. We plan appropriate support for students in order that they may successfully access texts such as the use of a reading pen or Claro Read. We take opportunities to demonstrate pleasure in reading in class and during tutor time. We make opportunities both in lessons and in tutorial times for students and teachers to share their reading experiences.

We provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:

- Read and follow written instructions
- Read and engage with narratives of events or activities
- Follow up their interests and read texts of varying lengths
- Question and challenge printed information and views
- Read with understanding descriptions of processes, structures and mechanisms
- Read and explore ideas and theories
- Learn how to sift and select, and take notes from text and read to locate and relocate information
- Learn how to scan for overall meaning and scan for key points, words and phrases
- Use reading to research and investigate from printed words and moving images
ICT texts

Writing

Many lessons include and depend on written communication. We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they are able to:

- Write in a widening variety of forms for different purposes, e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore
- Develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging and technical vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently
- Present their writing clearly using accurate punctuation, and correct spelling
- Apply word processing conventions and understand the principles of authoring multi-media text
- If appropriate, use voice recognition

We draw attention to the purpose and intended readers of each piece of writing; whilst the audience for students' writing is often teacher and peer group, students should be encouraged to write for a range of intended readers. For example, writing to explain a scientific principle to a younger audience, writing guidance for peers on an aspect of the subject, writing to agencies to elicit information or to express a viewpoint. We pay close attention to writing as a learning tool as well as a product of the learning. We help students to appreciate the differences between Standard English and non-standard forms of the language. We help students to recognise the appropriate form for their written responses so that they know when to respond in note form and when more formal constructions are required. We limit the use of pre-structured writing, e.g. copying, sentence completion and sentence rearrangement.

We provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:

- Make notes from a variety of sources – printed word, moving images and ICT texts
- Use writing to plan organise and record
- Plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing
- Learn the conventions of different forms of writing in different subject areas, e.g. by using writing frames and providing clear models for writing
- Write at appropriate length, sometimes briefly
- Write collaboratively with other students
- Present some writing for display or publication

We will:

- Expect high standard of presentation in most of students' finished writing
- Provide good models of particular kinds of writing
- Provide dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary and encourage students to use them, this can involve looking for synonyms on Word
- Help students to use a range of strategies to learn spellings
- Making connections between words with the same visual spelling pattern, exploring families of words

Principles for the teaching of English

Differentiation

English is the subject many of our students find most challenging; we understand the nature of these difficulties and aim to teach in a way that best facilitates our students' learning. There will be flexibility in the level and year group of the work offered, to take account of the relative severity of dyslexia/ SpLDs within the class. Classes are organised in accordance with two factors:

1. Chronological age
2. Severity of difficulties

A single class may operate over two different year groups.

From Year 3 to Year 8 our students have individual, one-to-one tuition with a qualified specialist teacher (one-to-one teacher) for half an hour daily to address their specific areas of need in all four areas of the National Curriculum for English. The teaching follows a highly structured, multi-sensory programme and the daily one-to-one lesson allows further differentiation on an individual level. One-to-one teachers and class teachers liaise closely to ensure what the student learns in bespoke sessions is

transferred to their independent learning and work in the classroom. All one-to-one and class teachers are trained in how to teach students with literacy difficulties.

From Year 9, students receive specialist English teaching from two subject specialists, taught using a highly differentiated approach suited to the needs of our students and including challenge tasks or 'stretch yourself' tasks to challenge the students (including Gifted and Talented). Children with specific strengths in English may be accommodated in set classes suited to their ability by arrangement with the class teacher; they may also be set within a mixed ability class with two specialist English teachers. We also provide three pathways for the students, creating differentiation via the curriculum specification: IGCSE English Language and GCSE Literature, Functional Skills and Entry Level, or Functional Skills and IGCSE Language, with a separate English Literature class as an additional GCSE option. Students are also offered one to one coursework support at Homework Clubs, every Tuesday and Thursday.

Literacy skills are supported by a specialist SpLD Study Skills programme, one hour a day, three days a week. As the need arises, students may at times be offered additional learning support sessions with the KS4 specialist teachers, either one-to-one or in small groups. Throughout KS4, the English specialist teachers and specialist SpLD teachers work closely together in order to be able to support the student's revision of the English GCSE skills.

Strategies for teaching English

Classes have a maximum of 12 students, with an average of ten so that the classroom curriculum can be appropriately differentiated for individual students.

Speaking and listening skills are taught and highly valued; students are taught to listen carefully to others and are encouraged to question them.

Opportunities to improve confidence in speaking skills are offered through:

- Presenting short class talks on a familiar or researched subject
- Group talk on experiment and design or work being undertaken
- Participation in circle time type activities in assembly, with a chance to talk about their feelings and successes
- Presentation of their own work during class time or assembly
- Role play during drama lessons and performance in front of an audience
- Participation in story telling

Students who have difficulty sequencing their ideas are helped to verbalise and/or visualise them before attempting to record them.

Many students have difficulty with auditory short-term memory, so listening skills are emphasised in all lessons; a Speech and Language therapist may offer listening skills to each class group as well as working with individuals.

Students are taught to:

- Listen carefully to others and be able to question them or develop their contribution
- Recall in picture form a factual or fictional account
- Follow a set of spoken instructions
- Listen to various speakers and attend class trips where information is given that they are required to respond to
- Comment on poetry or prose and offer responses to information given
- Listen carefully to each other in drama lessons and know when it is their cue to speak
- Listen to rhythm and rhyme so that they can predict and analyse syllables and sounds within words

Speaking and Listening

In our teaching we provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to engage in purposeful talk, both formally and informally.

In planning for talk we consider pace and timing so that purposeful talk is maintained.

Whilst teacher exposition is essential, we take account of demands on concentration to ensure that students are required to listen for realistic lengths of time.

We give students regular opportunities to speak and listen in the following contexts:

- In pairs with a working partner
- In small groups with opportunities to take on the roles of chair or scribe
- With the teacher or another adult
- In whole class discussions
- Presentations to a wider audience

In these contexts, some of the following activities take place:

- Exploring and describing events, activities and problems, exploring and developing ideas with others
- Reporting back to a wider audience in order to consolidate ideas and understanding
- Asking questions as well as answering them
- Speculating, hypothesising and imagining

- Planning, organising and reviewing activities
- Investigating and solving problems collaboratively
- Evaluating experiences and reflecting on learning
- Talking at length and adopting the 'expert' role.

Reading

In addition to the differentiated Framework for Literacy approach, each student up until Year 8, has an individualised, structured reading programme developed by their one-to-one teacher using resources at an appropriate level; reading is continued at home as homework set by one-to-one teachers.

- Children are surrounded by high-quality, attractive books in school and encouraged to develop their love of books
- Particular attention is paid to the size, format and clarity of print and the complexity of sentence structure and vocabulary in books provided for our students; we offer a wide range of reading schemes available which are used according to the individual child
- Books are regularly read to children throughout the school; older classes have a class reading book, so that the value of listening whilst being read to is reinforced
- One-to-one teachers deliver phonics in a structured cumulative way using multi-sensory resources; they deliver lessons at the appropriate pace and students are given plenty of opportunity to overlearn
- One-to-one teachers also focus on improving the children's fluent reading of high frequency words using a variety of games and link this to their spelling
- Audio versions of the texts are used to support the whole class reading of the core texts.
- Assistive technology is used to support children with reading difficulties
- In Key Stage 4, students are encouraged to use reading pens and Claro Read for independently reading extracts, particularly when reading exam questions

Writing

In addition to the demands of the English Framework we adopt the following approach to writing:

- Students are encouraged to be creative in their free writing but at the same time, staying within the task's perimeters
- Children are encouraged to draft and edit their free writing, whether on a word processor or writing by hand

- When note-taking is taught, students are also taught to record in a way which may be more suited to their learning style, such as mind mapping or in pictures, or by using a laptop/Chrome Book to word process their notes
- Engage student interest in writing through the Young Writers national writing competitions

Spelling

Spelling is taught using an individualised, structured and multisensory programme set by the one-to-one teachers, depending on the needs of each individual student.

Where appropriate our students are taught to spell using a structured, synthetic phonics programme tied into their phonic reading programme; in addition, we recognise the importance of high frequency words and teach these in one-to-one lessons – these are particularly difficult for our dyslexic students and need to be taught often in as many different ways as possible to suit the learning style of the child. If appropriate spelling rules are taught and there is a focus on morphology and the etymology of words.

Students are taught to use spell checkers, dictionaries and word books where appropriate. Students create a class glossary in the backs of their books. Students are encouraged to use computer games that specifically target spelling, including *Wordshark* and *Nessy*.

Proof reading and editing is encouraged throughout the school and is increasingly a focus for older students

Handwriting

A cursive or semi-cursive script is used, (the *WriteWell* approach to handwriting), which assists with spelling and enhances speed of recording; however, if children come to school with a fully cursive and legible writing style, we will not seek to change it.

Students are taught:

- To write in a left to right direction
- The correct formation of each letter
- The orientation of letters
- The height differentials of each letter
- Spacing of letters
- How to join letters when it is felt that they are ready to do so
- That any slant must remain uniform.

Many of our children are dyspraxic; we recognise therefore, that handwriting and presentation are a particular struggle for them, so very minor improvements are noted

and praised. Particular attention is paid to sitting position and paper position, pencil grip and pressure and the table positioning to left and right-handed children. Multi-sensory resources are used to help children overlearn writing patterns for example writing in shaving foam or sand; this is sometime linked to the students reading or spelling focus.

Promotion of Reading within the School

The Unicorn School, under the leadership of its Head teacher, is strongly committed to improving reading and the integration of activities that draw together all opportunities for promoting reading in other areas of the curriculum and outside school; these strategies include working closely with parents and carers to engage their support in promoting reading and identifying those struggling with reading earlier on.

The approach taken is systematic, multi-layered and diverse. The school's view is that all teachers and departments should be involved in the programme; for example, an initial step to raise the profile of reading involved members of staff and students displaying book reviews on displays around the school and illustrating a diversity of books being accessed. Equally, students read at least once a week during registration. This is to promote reading across the school; students are able to read a text of their choice, including graphic novels.

The staff have worked hard to make our Upper school library areas a welcoming environment; currently, there is a non-fiction and younger readers' library on both floors used for Key Stage 4, with class teachers all having their own book area in the classrooms or in the shared resource areas outside the classrooms.

Assessing Literacy across the Curriculum

When assessing students' work across the curriculum we value their oral contributions and listening skills alongside their reading and writing; we take into account students' performance in speaking and listening, reading and writing when assessing and reporting on students' progress in subject areas. When setting writing tasks, we make explicit to the students the key features of language which will be considered.

When responding to students' work, we:

- Make comments which are positive and supportive
- Target specific areas for improvement (a selective and focused identification of errors)
- Give guidance on how to achieve the short-term targets set. For example, whilst "improve your spelling" is unhelpful and vague, the identification of a particular spelling error, e.g. doubling of letters before adding *-ing* is specific and presents the student with a target which can be addressed

- Give priority to content, ideas, organisation and meaning above secretarial features
- Create opportunities for students to reflect on the quality of their own work and for peer assessment, using a proof-reading checklist
- Use the Marking and Feedback Policy as guidance

Resources

We aim to provide:

- Displays of reading material relevant to the topic or national curriculum subject and of relevant vocabulary
- Relevant material at appropriate levels of interest and difficulty and from a range of text types
- Reading material of high quality, which is up to date, relevant, and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender
- Some texts in the first languages of students acquiring English as an additional language
- Access to school and public libraries and to ICT sources of information; this includes voice recognition, text to speech and reading pens.
- Access to appropriate audio-visual equipment
- A classroom environment which is conducive to good literacy practice

Strategies for Recording and Reporting

Teachers complete the *B Squared Assessment Criteria* and checklists to be able to review the progress of individual students and whole classes.

Progress is reviewed termly with parents, class/subject teachers and one-to-one teachers; IEP targets form part of the discussion. If referral to another specialist is required, this will be agreed with parents at these meetings.

One-to-one teachers administer individual standardised diagnostic tests for reading accuracy, comprehension and spelling in November; the results will help inform the next IEP targets.

MATHS

Introduction

At the Unicorn School, we believe that Mathematics is a tool for everyday life. It is a whole network of concepts and relationships which provide a way of viewing and making sense of the world. It is used to analyse and communicate information and ideas and to tackle a range of practical tasks and real-life problems. It also provides the materials and means for creating new, imaginative worlds to explore.

Philosophy

Mathematics contributes to the whole school curriculum by developing learners' abilities to calculate, to reason numerically, algebraically and geometrically; to problem solve and to work with data and draw conclusions. Mathematics is also important in other areas of the curriculum particularly Science, ICT, Art and Music. Mathematics is taught as an academic subject but also as a subject important in the real world. We recognise the importance of understanding Maths in everyday living in many forms of employment and decision making.

Mathematics enables learners to build a secure framework of mathematical reasoning, which they can use and apply with confidence. The power of mathematical reasoning lies in the use of precise and concise forms of language, symbolism and representation to reveal and explore general relationships.

Children are attending the Unicorn School primarily because of language-related learning difficulties; many of these children display underachievement in mathematics. The pattern of difficulties may appear similar because most of these children cannot select and perform the correct algorithms and cannot recall the appropriate facts in operational procedures. There is constant reinforcement in the use of mathematical language and symbols throughout the school.

On the other hand, the mathematics learning difficulty that children exhibit may also indicate different patterns of errors. These errors are often associated with dyscalculia. Their problems may appear different because of the wrong procedures that they have applied in similar situations; and/or the wrong facts that they have given. As a result of the effect of the failures on their learning ability, attitude and capacity for mathematics learning may also be strikingly different. The impact of any failure and therefore the effects of failures in mathematics on self-esteem of different children are also different. Our aim is to help and guide children individually and at their own pace through the following six intermediate stages needed to master each of these essential concepts in building the foundations of Mathematics at Key Stages 2 and 3 up to the end of Year 8.

Intuitive Level Introductory stage for mathematical language, to allow the connections of new information with something the child already knows

Concrete Level The child can give answers only with the aid of materials

Pictorial Level The child can function if practical objects are represented in a pictorial or diagrammatic way

Abstract Level The child is able to use knowledge and apply it to given situations

Communications The child is able to explain his/her thinking – can teach another child

Key Stage 4 begins in Year 9 and students begin studying the GCSE curriculum.

Aim and Objectives

To encourage children to:

- Have a positive attitude towards mathematics
- Develop competence and confidence in mathematical knowledge, concepts and skills
- Develop an ability to solve problems, to think logically, to reason and work systematically and accurately
- Develop an initiative and an ability to work both independently and in cooperation with others
- Develop an ability to communicate mathematics
- Develop an ability to use and apply mathematics across the curriculum and in real life
- Develop a questioning and reflective mind, by providing a range of interesting and enjoyable activities
- To achieve a formal maths qualification at the end of Year 11

Entitlement

We aim to help the children achieve competences in Mathematics at the highest level possible, regardless of other difficulties they may experience in reading and writing.

Our methodology is based on multi-sensory teaching; however, because of the sequential nature of Mathematics many of the children at the Unicorn School find the transition from pictorial to abstract level difficult.

Implementation and the School's Approach

To ensure that there is adequate time for developing numeracy skill, each class teacher will provide at least four hours of Mathematics lessons a week. In Key Stage 4 each class receives four to five hours of Maths each week from a specialist Maths teacher. The small class sizes of 12 are split further to accommodate differences in Maths ability.

As the classes at the Unicorn School are small there may be children from two different year groups in a class; because of the way that one-to-one lessons are arranged it is also possible to split the children into ability groups for Maths lessons. Class teachers will make their arrangements, differentiated for each situation, bearing in mind the need for regular opportunities for oral and mental work and sustained direct teaching, for all children. If a child has considerable difficulties in Maths the class teacher will liaise with the one-to-one teacher who will give specific intervention for Maths using the same language, methods and apparatus as the child uses in class.

Mathematics contributes to many subjects of the primary curriculum, often in practical ways. As it is important to find time in other subjects for students to develop and apply their mathematical skills, regular opportunities will be planned in Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography, Music, and Information Technology. Key Stage 3 students are given the opportunity to use their Maths practically, in the community: shopping for an event, buying ingredients and cooking, catching buses, etc.

Children are taught all aspects of mathematical vocabulary across the school; this is necessary because children will encounter a vast number of ways of expressing a mathematic idea in real life.

Progression

We recognise that our curriculum planning must allow for children to gain a progressively deeper level of knowledge and understanding and skills competency as they move through the school; this is achieved through our scheme of work which has progression built into it. Activities and expectations are adjusted to meet the needs of individuals or groups of children in weekly or daily planning.

Differentiation

Some children at the Unicorn School can function mathematically at an age-appropriate level but difficulties with auditory memory, coding, visual symbolic confusion, and sequencing cause many children to have individual needs.

Dyscalculic children who are especially weak in Mathematics will receive extra help from their one-to-one teacher or within a small group. Where this is necessary, suitable objectives will be identified and incorporated into Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Children with specific strengths in Mathematics may be accommodated in other classes more suited to their ability by arrangement with the class teacher.

Arrangements for more able children

A facility exists for splitting the class for one-to-one lessons to enable more able children to work together.

Resources

As children come to the Unicorn School at all stages of mathematical ability, often with an over-riding sense of compounded failure in Maths, flexibility of approach to the individual's needs is essential.

Key Stage 1 and 2

There is an Abacus Maths scheme for Years 1 to 6, in the school.

<https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/login?c=0>

This provides colourful and stimulating programmes based on practical mathematical experience using everyday objects.

Teachers use a variety of other resources that suit the needs of the children; these include a number of websites for example:

www.hamilton.co.uk

www.planbee.co.uk

www.frameworkmaths.co.uk

www.topmarks.co.uk

www.tesiboardinteractive.co.uk

www.woodlands.co.uk to name a few.

There is a large variety of mathematical counting and other equipment in each classroom. This supports multisensory teaching for dyslexic and dyscalculic students. There is also a supply of mathematical books and equipment for use by the one-to-one teachers. On occasions, one-to-one teachers are asked to help with an aspect of maths that a child may be having problems with, class and one-to-one teachers liaise when this is necessary.

Key Stage 3: Years 7 and 8

The *MyMaths* scheme of work is used as a starting point for Key Stage 3; the curriculum is adapted to suit the students specific learning needs. The scheme of work is designed to allow students to develop a deep understanding of topics and to develop confidence and competence in maths. This help secure learning and allow real progress.

Key Stage 4: Years 9, 10 and 11

The majority of students will follow the AQA GCSE which they will sit at the end of Year 11. Classes are split to allow for the differences in the Foundation and Higher schemes of work. In addition, in some year groups, there may be a few students for whom a GCSE is not appropriate; these students will work towards achieving an Entry Level qualification.

The schemes of work are tailored to fit each year group and a wide range of resources are used in the classroom. Interactive Maths, using chrome books or laptops, is used to support written work. Websites which are used regularly include *Diagnostic Questions*, *Mathspad* and *Mathsbot*.

ICT in Maths

Children are given opportunities to use computers to reinforce concepts that have been taught and to play maths games to increase their own levels in key areas.

There is a separate suite of computers allowing a whole class of children to be taught skills at the same time. There is access to the Internet and an interactive whiteboard in each classroom, for teachers and children to use to forge links with maths and other curriculum areas. Teachers are able to download resources and use interactive sites to complement the New Framework.

Records and Assessment

Assessment of children's development is made through a combination of ongoing teacher assessment, formal tasks and end of unit assessments. These are criterion-referenced tests and as such can be used to measure the rate of progress. A record is kept of children's achievements in Mathematics through tracking documents available to all teachers.

Assessment and tracking at Key Stage 4 is topic based and done as a combination of mini assessments in the classroom and longer exams at the end of each term.

All students who are entitled by access arrangements are given at least 25% extra time; children are assessed to see if they are entitled to a scribe, a reader or both for these tests.

SCIENCE

Philosophy

The Unicorn School's philosophy is that all students are entitled to a broad and balanced Science curriculum in order that they might better understand the nature of the world in which they live. It is important that children should begin to learn about Science from an early age. The intention of teaching Science is to give all students a good grounding in scientific ideas, language and skills. They should be helped to see the relevance of Science to everyday life and gain some understanding of the historical development of scientific knowledge.

There are certain aspects of the subject that cause a range of specific difficulties for some dyslexic students. Teaching methods must take account of these problems.

Aims for Science Education

The aim of The Unicorn School is that students will, when appropriate, be able to return to mainstream schools with sufficient understanding and strategies to enable them to cope, with only a small amount of extra support.

The aims of Science in the school are to educate students to investigate questions, interpret, analyse and evaluate observations and draw conclusions. Much of the work should be practical/experimental leading to understanding or use of concepts. Science is about children developing a sense of inquiry and extending their knowledge and understanding the world around them, how it is constructed and functions. It includes knowledge about living things (Biology), materials (Chemistry) and physical processes such as forces and the place of Earth in the Solar System (Physics). Some of this knowledge must, necessarily, be gained from secondary sources. Throughout the school, children will be developing the scientific skills of observing, predicting, hypothesising, drawing conclusions and recording findings. This will lead to children learning to work as scientists, planning and undertaking investigations.

The aim sets the overall goal for Science education in the Unicorn School. It states in brief the school's philosophy for Science in terms of its benefits for children:

- To enable all students to extend their awareness of the way in which their lives are influenced by science and technology, including an understanding of the major achievements of science and technology as well as a realisation of their limitations
- To encourage students to adopt a questioning attitude to the way changes occur in the material world in both living and non-living systems
- To encourage students to acquire and make use of scientific knowledge in a creative way and make personal judgements based on scientific and technical information.

Objectives for Science Education

Whilst the aim sets the overall goal, the objectives describe the detail. The objectives provide a list of what the Science curriculum should enable children to know, understand and do. They also identify attitudes that the curriculum should promote.

- To develop students' knowledge and understanding of Science and its concepts
- To develop students' independent capability to plan, carry out and evaluate meaningful and fair investigations
- Raise questions and propose hypotheses
- Effectively communicate scientific principles and findings
- Apply scientific knowledge and understanding
- Evaluate scientific and technological applications
- Form personal value judgements about controversial scientific and technological issues
- To develop attitudes of curiosity, cooperation, perseverance, open-mindedness, self-criticism, responsibility
- To develop an appreciation of the uncertainty of scientific knowledge
- To develop independence in thought and action
- To appreciate the impact science and technology has had and is likely to have on everyday lives

Curriculum Organisation

All students are entitled to a broad and balanced science curriculum in accordance with the Unicorn School Policy for Equal Opportunities.

Science is a core subject and will be:

- Included in the taught curriculum for each term
- Taught within topics and linked to other subjects except where it is inappropriate to do so

Teachers will plan to the National Curriculum and the AQA GCSE Science Synergy specification for Science which provides guidance about what Science should be taught each year. This content provides progression in the knowledge, understanding and skills in science. It identifies techniques and skills which are needed to support Experimental and Investigative Science.

Important Features

The key features of the Science curriculum will be:

- Younger children will study their immediate surrounding in school as an introduction to the world of living things, materials, and seasonal change. They

will be encouraged in investigation skills through observing everyday objects and events, using their senses, asking questions, looking for similarities and differences and developing skills of sorting and classifying

- Allowances will be made for unpredictable activity which is stimulated by children's ideas, happenings, local and national events
- Children in each year of KS1, 2 and 3 will be taught the skills needed for Experimental and Investigative Science and given opportunities to practice them
- Children will be taught to research, plan, manage and present their own science activity, particularly investigations, either independently or with help
- Children will be taught to be critical of plans, results, data and information
- Science will take advantage of the school environment, the local environment, visits and visitors
- Children's natural curiosity and excitement for science will be fostered (e.g. through seasonal displays, artefacts and use of the outdoor environment); to promote enjoyment of science and speculation about why things happen
- Children will explore the benefits and consequences of Science for living things and the environment
- Children will experience the uncertainty of Science ideas and results
- Children will develop concern for the normal and ethical use of Science
- Children will gain an understanding for safety

Organisation for Special Needs

It is necessary that a flexible approach be taken to match the level of work presented, to the ability, experience and previous achievement of the child, so that each can make progress, and show what they can achieve.

Teaching will be multi-sensory, including practical work where possible, to optimise children's learning. The content element of the Science curriculum poses particular obstacles for many dyslexic children for whom verbal labelling and recall is a difficulty. The scientific vocabulary, with exact meanings, especially where a word in common parlance is given a different, *specific* meaning, can be very difficult to learn.

Planning, organisation, sequencing, recording and presenting findings, and the reading of text, appropriate to the subject matter and the reading level, all present challenges.

Equal Opportunities

The Science curriculum will provide equal opportunities through:

- Activities that are well matched to the different needs of the students
- Exploring the contribution of science and scientists from different cultures

A variety of approaches, activities and starting points will help to ensure that all students can reach their full potential.

Teaching Approaches

Teaching of Science will normally be in the form group. Teaching will be planned to implement this policy and scheme of work whilst taking advantage of children's interests. A wide range of teaching approaches are appropriate for Science. The approach selected will be well matched to clearly defined learning objectives, the needs of different children and the available resources.

Classes will be organised to provide:

- Individual and collaborative group work. Groups should be established on academic and/or social criteria to best match the learning objectives and differentiated tasks
- Whole class activity for example, the demonstration of a new idea or exploring, sharing and presenting ideas and results

The teaching of Science will include

- A variety of activities
- Questioning to explore children's perceptions of scientific ideas and their understanding of new concepts
- Clearly defined learning objectives
- Activities which are matched to the available resources
- Team teaching where appropriate

Whole school long- and medium-term planning, along with assessment, aims to ensure progression and continuity.

Matching tasks to different children

Children will be taught from the programme of study appropriate for their age. In some circumstance children will be introduced to programmes of study from other Key Stages. In matching tasks to the needs of different children, teaching will recognise individual plans to meet special needs and for all children set appropriate expectations for:

- Knowledge – ranging from simple facts to the use of Science words for explaining actions
- Understanding – ranging from ideas such as *push* is needed to make things move to more complex concepts such as why different organisms are found in different habitats
- Investigation – such as the observation of what is seen to the skills: measurements of values like *temperature*
- Communication such as simple drawings to report observations to the use of skills: of data bases to record and present data in tabular and graphic forms

- Planning – which range from structural fair tests to those which are investigations: independently planned, carried out and reported on by children investigating their own hypothesis

Progression, continuity and differentiation

To ensure that the Science Curriculum is accessible to and demanding of all students, some of the following principles will apply for all, or part of the time

- Work will include feedback to children
- Activities will be well matched to students' level of attainment through specific tasks or opportunities for independent task management and planning
- The language of instructions will be simplified for those who experience reading difficulties and apply appropriate terminology for others
- Straightforward language will be used based in part on students' own in order that the language of scientific concepts may remain accessible to them
- Sufficient repetition will be allowed to consolidate skills and lesson pace should take account of the different work rates of students

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessing children's achievements will be planned into science teaching and used to guide subsequent lessons. Records of children's achievements will be kept

- Teachers should regularly evaluate the success of their teaching
- Assessment opportunities should be built into at least one activity each unit of work
- Assessment including teacher assessment at least once per term
- Individual teachers should keep records of individual children's achievements in Science.
- The school policy for assessment, reporting and recording should be implemented for Science

Some dyslexic children may require more over-teaching and revision material than would usually be necessary. Ongoing informal assessment, by teachers, of understanding and memory, based on observation, discussion and product where appropriate, takes place, the result of these are used to inform future teaching and work plans.

At the end of KS4 the opportunity will be offered to take Entry Level Certificate alongside GCSE at Foundation Tier, Higher Tier or Separate Sciences GCSE according to interest, attainment level and application.

Core Skills: Literacy, Numeracy and IT

Science will make a significant contribution to core skill, in particular children will be:

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- Encouraged to share their observations through a range of writing such as chronological reports, diaries, poetry, through drawing, talking, questioning and listening
- Encouraged to apply mathematical skills in their science, such as number, measuring, calculating, presenting tables of results, graphs and charts
- Encouraged to take advantage of information technology, such as:
 - i. word processing to present their findings
 - ii. databases to obtain information or store and sort observations and measurements
 - iii. graphs and charts to present their results in an attractive and appropriate way

Advantage will be taken of links with other subjects, in particular:

- Maths
- Design and Technology
- Art
- Music
- PE
- Geography
- History

Cross Curricular Themes

The Science curriculum will contribute to and take advantage of cross-curricular themes:

- Health Education, particularly in relation to RSE
- Environmental Education
- Economic and Industrial Understanding and Careers by considering the Science used by people, business and activity in the locality
- Citizenship through exploring some of the decision Science forces us to make

Resources

Practical material resources and equipment are mainly kept in the lab. These are available to each teacher for use in the classroom. As reading levels vary widely in every class a wide range of materials are appropriate at each age group. Reference books according to topic are also dispersed throughout the school.

Computers and assistive technology are used for information handling, data presentation and graphical output. Access to the internet and the use of an interactive whiteboard for teaching purposes is used within the classroom.

Health and Safety

All students and adults are made aware of health and safety when undertaking work in science and trained in safe practice and all science activities will comply with the Unicorn School Health and Safety Policy; suitable protective devices, such as eye shields are used as necessary.

ICT

What is computing?

Computing comprises a variety of systems that handle electronically retrievable information. Computers are the most obvious of these, but computers also include programmable robots, calculators, digital cameras and whiteboards.

Aims

Our aim in ICT is that all children will:

- Reap positive benefits from their ability to present accurate, attractive work
- Enjoy using different forms of computing and will tackle all applications with confidence and a sense of achievement
- Develop practical skills in the use of computing and the ability to apply these skills to the solving of relevant and worthwhile problems
- Understand the capabilities and limitation of computing and the implications and consequences of its use learn about e-Safety and understand the risks when on devices that link to the internet, such as the TV, laptops, computers, games consoles and mobile phones.

According to the National Curriculum 2014 the aims of teaching Computing are to ensure that all students:

- Can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, logic, algorithms and data representation
- Can analyse problems in computational terms, and have repeated practical experience of writing computer programs in order to solve such problems
- Can evaluate and apply information technology, including new or unfamiliar technologies, analytically to solve problems
- Are responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology

Principles for the use of Computing

Computing is important because:

- Its use is a cornerstone of the modern technological world
- It is an important medium for learning and study at all educational levels.

It is particularly relevant for our students in the following ways:

- Most of our children are dyslexic and by using spellcheckers they are able to improve the accuracy of their work

- Many are dyspraxic, and word-processing frees them from the physical difficulty of handwriting and presentation of their work on the page. Several students are gifted spatially and are very able in their use of this technology
- With the introduction of Office 365 across the school all pupils have access to a range of accessibility tools to aid them in their studies

Computing is also a cross-curricular strand in the National Curriculum 2014 and indications for its use are given in most subjects.

Strategies for the use of ICT

ICT is taught as a discrete subject in Key Stage 2 and 3 but is also seen as a tool to be used as appropriate throughout the curriculum to support and enrich children's learning and in order to ensure that valuable areas or experience are covered.

We have several ChromeBooks in school which pupils use for ICT work and in Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils are encouraged to bring in their own devices to work on.

The emphasis with ICT in our teaching is on the use of computers as tools to support learning; thus, all students are made familiar (at as early a stage as possible) with the basic aspects of network access, saving & retrieving work, and the efficient use of keyboards and the mouse.

The role of the ICT co-ordinator is to:

- Take the lead in policy development and the integration of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in pupil's experience of ICT throughout the school
- To complete an E-Safety course through CEOPS in line with the Safeguarding Policy and set up training with colleges
- Support colleagues in their efforts to include ICT in their development of detailed work plans, in their implementation of these schemes of work and in assessment and record keeping activities
- Monitor progress in ICT and advise the Head Teacher on action needed
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for ICT
- Provide technical support to colleagues in their use of ICT in the classroom
- Pass on information to colleagues as appropriate

Feedback to students about their own progress in IT is rarely formalised and is usually done when a task is being carried out through discussion between the child and teacher.

Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of the individual students in their use of IT; it involves identifying each child's progress, determining what each child has learned and what, therefore, should be the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching.

Suitable tasks for IT work include:

- Small group discussions perhaps in the context of a practical task
- Specific IT assignments for individual students
- Individual discussions in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress

Strategies for Recording and Reporting

Reporting to parents is done on a yearly basis through a written report; reporting on IT will focus on each child's ability to use a computer with confidence and competence across a variety of applications.

Health and Safety issues in computing include taking care with:

- Setting up and moving equipment (including the laptops)
- Establishing appropriate working conditions
- General electrical safety

Safe use of the internet, including lessons on the dangers of chat rooms, using e-mail appropriately and not putting personal data on the internet. The computers are access protected by the filter system which is closely monitored by the IT technician and IT co-ordinator to prevent children accidentally accessing inappropriate material.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Aims

The intent of our Food and Nutrition curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is to apply the principles of nutrition and balanced eating, instilling a love of healthy cooking in all students.

Learning how to cook is a crucial life skill for young people now and in later life; throughout their time at school, we aim to encourage independent learning through practical participation. The Food and Nutrition department ensures that our students have a wider understanding of environmental impacts on our choice of foods and why there should be more encouragement to buy in season. Our students learn about multicultural foods and experience how different cultural foods influence our everyday food choices; students also have a clear understanding relating to food choices and the impact on the environment relating to food waste.

The Food and Nutrition department has a strong focus and drive to develop independent learners in cooking and to promote high standards of academic achievement through research, planning, making, presenting and evaluating dishes. We want to enable our students to make informed decisions about food and nutrition and allow them to acquire knowledge in order to be able to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now and in later life.

Key Stage 4

GCSE WJEC FOOD AND NUTRITION

Students in Key Stage 4 study over two years undertaking a GCSE in Food and Nutrition

The WJEC GCSE course in Food and Nutrition equips the students with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy, balanced eating.

By studying food preparation and nutrition, learners will be able to:

- Demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking a variety of food commodities whilst using different cooking techniques and equipment
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical characteristics of food as well as a sound knowledge of the nutritional content of food and drinks
- Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health

- Understand the economic, environmental, ethical and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, diet and health choices
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food
- Understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes

Areas of Content

1. Food commodities
2. Principles of nutrition
3. Diet and good health
4. The science of food
5. Where food comes from
6. Cooking and food preparation

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

<p>Unit 1: Principles of Food and Nutrition Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes 40% of qualification</p> <p>Marks 80</p>
<p>This unit will consist of two sections both containing compulsory questions.</p> <p>Section A: questions based on stimulus materials. Section B: a range of question types to assess all content related to food and nutrition.</p>
<p>Unit 2: Food and Nutrition in Action Non-examination assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated Assessment 1: 10 hours Assessment 2: 15 hours 60% of qualification</p> <p>Marks 120</p>
<p>Assessment 1: The Food Investigation Assessment: 20% of the total marks available will be allocated to a scientific food investigation which will assess the learner's knowledge, skills and understanding in</p>

relation to the scientific principles underlying the preparation and cooking of food.

Assessment 2: The Food Preparation Assessment

40% of the total marks available will be allocated to a task which assesses the learner's knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking and presentation of dishes to form a menu.

FILM STUDIES

The Aims and Nature of Film

Film is an important part of many people's lives; those who choose to study it characteristically bring with them a huge enthusiasm and excitement for film which constantly motivates them in their studies. They experience a powerful medium which inspires a range of responses from the emotional to the reflective as they are drawn into characters, their narratives and the issues films raise. The root of that power is the immersive audio-visual experience film offers – one which can exploit striking cinematography, composition and locations as well as powerful music and sound. It is not surprising that many consider film to be the major art form of the last hundred years and that many feel it important to study a medium which has such a significant influence on the way people think and feel.

KS4 Aims

The academic study of film is now well established and the frameworks for its study are broadly similar whether at GCSE, AS, A level or at higher education institutions.

GCSE Film Studies aims to develop knowledge and understanding of:

- The ways in which meanings and responses are generated through film
- A contrasting, culturally diverse range of films from different national contexts
- Film as an aesthetic medium
- How films reflect the social, cultural and political contexts in which they are made
- The relationship between film and film technology over time. In addition, the specification aims to enable learners to apply their knowledge and understanding of film to filmmaking or screenwriting.

This means they will develop an analytical approach to film texts. They will appreciate the aesthetics in the construction of film texts and develop their own production skills.

Implementation

Film is taught by experienced subject specialists.

Film students at the Unicorn School will be able to analyse and appreciate the craft involved in creating film. They will be able to decode implicit and explicit messages, recognising bias and demonstrate understanding concerning how representations are constructed for a specific purpose and audience.

Evaluation

They will also be encouraged to appreciate the aesthetic artistry involved in the production of film texts so that they can create their own, emulating specific styles and applying, or challenging conventions of a genre, evident in their own decision-making. They will be encouraged to explore film theory.

Curriculum structure Key Stage 4

EXAM BOARD: WJEC EDUQAS

The WJEC Eduqas specification in GCSE Film Studies is designed to draw on learners' enthusiasm for film and introduce them to a wide variety of cinematic experiences through films which have been important in the development of film and film technology. Learners will develop their knowledge of US mainstream film by studying one film from the 1950s and one film from the later 70s and 80s, thus looking at two stages in Hollywood's development. In addition, they will be studying more recent films – a US independent film as well as films from Europe, including the UK, South Africa and Australia. Each exam paper is 35% of the final grade.

Production is an important part of this specification and is integral to learners' study of film. The production piece is 30% of the final grade. Studying a diverse range of films from several different contexts is designed to give learners the opportunity to apply their knowledge and understanding of how films are constructed to their own filmmaking and screenwriting. This is intended to support learners in producing creative films and screenplays as well as enable their production work to provide an informed filmmaker's perspective on their own study of film.

HUMANITIES/TOPIC

At the Unicorn School, History and Geography is taught up until Year 8, in the form of Humanities or Topic; in Year 9, the students study World War Two and the Holocaust, in conjunction with our PSHCE and SMSC programme.

HISTORY

Aims

The aim of History teaching at the Unicorn School is to stimulate the children's interest and understanding about the life of people who lived in the past. We teach children a sense of chronology, and through this they develop a sense of identity and a cultural understanding based on their historical heritage. Thus, they learn to value their own and other people's cultures in modern multicultural Britain and, by considering how people lived in the past, they are better able to make their own life choices today. In our school History makes a significant contribution to citizenship education by teaching how events in the past have influenced our lives today; we also teach them to investigate these past events and, by so doing, to develop the skills on enquiry, analysis, interpretation and problem-solving.

The aims of History in our school are:

- To foster in children an interest in the past and to develop an understanding that enables them to enjoy all that history has to offer
- To enable children to know about significant events in British history and to appreciate how things have changed over time
- To develop a sense of chronology
- To know and understand how the British system of democratic government has developed and, in so doing, to contribute to a child's citizenship education
- To understand how Britain is part of wider European culture and to study some aspects of European history
- To have some knowledge and understanding of historical development in the wider world
- To help children understand society and their place within it, so that they develop a sense of their cultural heritage
- To develop in children, the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, evaluation and presentation

Teaching and learning style

History teaching focuses on enabling children to think as historians. We place an emphasis on examining historical artefacts and primary sources and using role play. In each Key Stage we give children the opportunity to visit sites of historical significance. We encourage visitors to come into the school and talk about their experiences of events in the past. We recognise and value the importance of stories in history and we regard this as an important way of stimulating interest in the past. We focus on helping children understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways and that they should always ask searching questions, such as "how do we know?", about information they are given.

Fieldwork and visits make full use of opportunities, such as nearby Victorian Albert Park to the more distant Black Country Museum, Warwick Castle and Big Pit in Wales. We also have a Local Studies topic on the historical town of Abingdon and visit the Abbey Buildings and other historic sites. Each class has a camera that is used to record historical evidence.

We recognise the fact that in all classes there are children of widely differing abilities in History and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty; not all children complete all tasks
- Providing resources of different complexity depending on the ability of the child

History Curriculum Planning

We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and we build planned progression into the schemes of work so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school.

We carry out curriculum planning in History in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plan maps the History topics studied in each term during each key stage and the children study History topics in conjunction with other subjects. Some topics have a particular historical focus and in Key Stages 2 and 3 we place an increasing emphasis on independent historical study. We teach the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the new National Curriculum.

History in Key Stage 3

During Key Stage 3 students learn about significant individuals and events in the history of Britain from the Middle Ages to the twenty first century. They also learn about key aspects of European and world history. They show their understanding by making

connections between events and changes in the different periods and areas studied, and by comparing the structure of societies and economic, cultural and political developments. They evaluate and use sources of information, using their historical knowledge to analyse the past and explain how it can be represented and interpreted in different ways.

In History, students acquire and apply knowledge, skills and understanding in five main areas:

- Chronological understanding
- Knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past
- Historical interpretation
- Historical enquiry
- Organisation and communication

The contribution of History to other subjects

English

History contributes significantly to the teaching of English in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Some of the texts that we use in our English lessons are historical in nature. Children develop speaking and listening skills through discussing historical questions or presenting their findings to the rest of the class. They develop their writing ability by composing reports and letters and through using writing frames.

Mathematics

History teaching contributes to the teaching of Mathematics in a variety of ways. Children learn to use numbers when developing a sense of chronology through doing activities such as timelines. Children learn to interpret information presented in graphical and diagrammatic form; for example, they study the impact of the plague by analysing population statistics.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We use ICT in History teaching where appropriate and we meet the statutory requirement for children to use ICT as part of their work in History at Key Stage 2. Children use ICT in History to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work, and they research information using the Internet and Encarta. Children have the opportunity to use the digital camera to record and use photographic images.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

History contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social, citizenship and health education. Children develop self-confidence by having opportunities to explain

their views on a number of social questions such as how society should respond to poverty and homelessness. Students discuss the lives of people such as Dr Barnardo, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Emily Pankhurst, etc. They discover how to be active citizens in a democratic society by learning how laws are made and changed, and they learn how to recognize and challenge stereotypes and to appreciate that racism is a harmful aspect of society. They learn how society is made up of people from different cultures and start to develop tolerance and respect for others.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

When teaching History, we contribute to the children's spiritual development where possible. Children learn about the role of the church in Tudor times and they find out how British society has changed over time. The History programme of study enables children to understand that Britain's rich cultural heritage can be further enriched by the multi-cultural British society of today.

Teaching History to Children with Special Educational Needs

At our school we teach History to all children, whatever their ability. History forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our History teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all students to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. There is a particular focus on role play and hands on learning.

The teaching and learning at The Unicorn School is modified to embrace all our children with specific learning difficulties and to provide an environment where all forms of communication, both verbal and non-verbal are used and understood by the whole school community.

We enable students to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning history. We are fortunate to have a wide range of museums and other historical places in close proximity to our school. We use the school minibus to take full advantage of these opportunities.

Assessment and recording

We assess children's work in History by making informal judgements as we observe them during History lessons. As the end of a unit of work, the teacher makes a summary judgement about the work of each pupil if they have yet to obtain, met or exceeded the unit objectives that forms part of the pupil reports.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in History is the responsibility of the History subject leader. The work of the History subject leader

also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of History, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

GEOGRAPHY

What is Geography?

Geography teaches an understanding of places and environments. Through their work in Geography, children learn about their local area and compare their life in this area with that in other regions in the United Kingdom and in the rest of the world. They learn how to draw and interpret maps and they develop the skills of research, investigation, analysis and problem-solving. Through their growing knowledge and understanding of human geography, children gain an appreciation of life in other cultures. Geography teaching also motivates children to find out about the physical world and enables them to recognize the importance of sustainable development for the future of mankind.

The aims of Geography are:

- To enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of places in the world
- To increase children's knowledge of other cultures and, in so doing, teach a respect and understanding of what it means to be a positive citizen in a multi-cultural country
- To allow children to learn graphic skills, including how to use, draw and interpret maps
- To enable children to know and understand environmental problems at a local, regional and global level
- To encourage in children a commitment to sustainable development and an appreciation of what 'global citizenship' means
- To develop a variety of other skills including: enquiry, problem solving, ICT, investigation, and how to present their conclusions in the most appropriate way

Teaching and Learning Style

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our Geography lessons. We believe in whole-class teaching methods and we combine these with enquiry-based research activities. We encourage children to ask as well as answer geographical questions. We offer them the opportunity to use a variety of data, such as maps, statistics, graphs, pictures, and aerial photographs, and we enable them to use IT in geography lessons where this serves to enhance their learning. Children take part in role-play and discussions, and they present reports to the rest of the class. They engage in a wide variety of problem-solving activities. Wherever possible, we involve the children in 'real'

geographical activities, e.g. research of a local environmental problem or use of the Internet to investigate a current issue. Field visits are used to enhance student learning whenever practical.

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different geographical abilities in all classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this by:

- Setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks
- Grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks to each ability group
- Providing resources of different complexity according to the ability of the child

Geography Curriculum Planning

We have adapted the national scheme to the local circumstances of our school, i.e. we make use of the local environment in our fieldwork and we also choose a locality where the human activities and physical features provide a contrast to those in our own immediate area. Annual residential visits include:

- Liddington PGL
- Hindleap Warren
- Wales
- Hill End

We plan the topics in Geography so that they build upon prior learning. Children of all abilities have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit and, through planned progression built into the scheme of work, we offer them an increasing challenge as they move up the school. At other times we arrange for the children to carry out a geographical study independently; However, there is the flexibility to link the curriculum to special events, such as the Olympics. This is done after discussion with the subject co-ordinator.

The contribution of Geography to teaching in other curriculum areas:

English

Geography makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it actively promotes the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We ensure that some of the texts that we use in literacy are geographical in nature. At Key Stage 2 we have debates on environmental issues because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. Reports, letters and recording information will all develop children's writing ability. We also use environmental issues as a way of

developing the children's writing ability by asking them to record information and write reports and letters.

Mathematics

Geography in our school contributes to the teaching of Mathematics in a variety of ways. We teach the children how to represent objects with maps. The children study space, scale and distance and they learn how to use four- and six-figure grid references. They also use measures and graphs to explore, analyse and illustrate a variety of data, such as the River Study in Key Stage 2 when map reading is developed.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

We make provision for the children to use the computer in Geography lessons where appropriate. Children use ICT in Geography to enhance their skills in data handling and in presenting written work. They research information through the Google Earth and other internet sources.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

Geography contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Firstly, the subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study the way people re-cycle material and how environments are changed for better or for worse. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. Geography in our school promotes the concept of positive citizenship.

The Unicorn School is an Eco School Bronze and lessons in PSHCE and Geography and Science, along with assemblies, develop pupil awareness of environmental issues

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

We offer children in our school many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life through the medium of Geography. For example, their work on the changing landscape and environmental issues leads children to ask questions about the evolution of the planet. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of mankind on our world and we introduce the concept of 'stewardship' in relation to sustainable development. Through teaching about contrasting localities, we enable the children to learn about inequality and injustice in the world. We help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society works to resolve difficult issues of economic development. Geography

contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising moral questions during the programmes of study.

Teaching Geography to Children with Special Educational Needs

At the Unicorn we teach Geography to all children, whatever their ability. Geography forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Geography teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all students to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

The teaching and learning at The Unicorn School is modified to embrace all our children with specific learning difficulties and to provide an environment where all forms of communication, both verbal and non-verbal are used and understood by the whole school community.

We enable students to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning geography. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a field trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all students. We use the school minibuses to enable children to have a range of practical experiences outside the classroom.

Assessment and Recording

We assess the children's work in Geography by making informal judgments as we observe the children during lessons. Once the children complete a unit of work, we make a summary judgment of the work for each pupil as to whether they have yet to obtain, obtained or exceeded the expectations of the unit. Reporting to parents is done biannually, by means of a written report. Reporting in Geography will focus on each child's:

- Geographical knowledge and understanding
- Information handling and research skills

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is integral to good Geography teaching and we include as many opportunities as we can to involve children in practical geographical research and enquiry.

All the children carry out an investigation into the local environment and we give them opportunities to observe and record information around the school site. They also do

a variety of studies of the local area and we also offer the opportunity to take part in a residential visit each year.

The role of the Geography co-ordinator is to:

- Take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure the progression and continuity of Geography throughout the school
- Support colleagues in their development of detailed work plans and implementation of the scheme of work and assessment and record keeping activities
- Monitor progress in Geography and advise the Head Teacher on action needed
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for geography
- Keep up to date with the developments in Geography education and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate

ART

The aims and nature of Art

Art is the expression of ideas, thoughts and feelings through images in a variety of two- and three-dimensional media. Art is concerned with the development of visual perception, manual dexterity and visual literacy i.e. the understanding and appreciation of art from a variety of cultures, styles and historical periods. Art is an important means of communication, crossing cultural and lingual barriers though visual language that we can all participate in and enjoy.

Our aim is that children should be able to express themselves with enjoyment and pleasure using a wide variety of materials, techniques and processes whilst developing a visual language.

All our children are dyslexic and many of them are also dyspraxic. They learn in a variety of ways and all teachers aim to find each child's strengths. Kinaesthetic activities, painting, finger painting, photography, drawing and model making are used in one to one teaching and also class Literacy and Maths lessons where appropriate.

Both Art and Craft activities have high priority in humanities projects as the visual input is hugely beneficial as an aid to memory and understanding.

The National Curriculum

All children will be taught the skills and knowledge of art as outlined in the programmes of study in the National Curriculum for Art, appropriately differentiated to take account of any individual strengths and weaknesses associated with dyslexia and dyspraxia. The general requirements are for a balanced program of activities which build on previous work and achievements. There are many opportunities for cross-curriculum in Art and teachers include Art lessons as part of 'topic work' or in combination with other subjects such as Literacy, Geography, Music and History.

KS 1 and 2 Purpose of Study

Art, Craft and Design embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality Art and Design education should engage, inspire and challenge students, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment invent and create their

own works of Art, Craft and Design. As students progress, they should be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of Art and Design. They should also know how Art and Design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.

Aims

The national curriculum for Art and Design aims to ensure that all students:

- produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences
- become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques
- evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design
- know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms

Attainment targets

By the end of each key stage, students are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

KS3 Purpose of Study

Art, Craft and Design embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality Art and Design education should engage, inspire and challenge students, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment invent and create their own works of Art, Craft and Design. As students progress, they should be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of Art and Design. They should also have an understanding of how Art and Design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.

KS3 Aims

The national curriculum for Art and Design aims to ensure that all students:

- produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences
- become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques
- evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design
- know about some great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.

By the end of Key Stage 3 students are expected to know and understand some skills and processes specified in their programme of study along with basic colour theory.

KS4 Aims

At the end of Year 9 students can choose to continue with Art or drop art as a subject in favour of another option. Students continuing with Art do so with the view of entering the Art and Design GCSE, a two-year course starting at the beginning of Year 10.

The students continue to develop their art skills through a variety of processes, techniques and mediums while learning to communicate through a more sophisticated visual language. As the course develops, they are expected to work more independently, realising outcomes that are personal and individual.

Attainment targets

By the end of Year 10 students are working on an individual theme chosen from a past GCSE paper, this runs into the set paper received in the January of Year 11.

Students are expected to be able to conduct artist research and explore ideas using primary and secondary sources. The ability to experiment, make selections and refine work becomes increasingly important as the course continues, building an importance on independence.

Implementation

Art is taught by our Art specialist in the art studio.

The majority of Year 10's study is teacher led; students encounter a wide range of mediums, processes and techniques in both 2D and 3D, developing and building on their skills and knowledge. Two projects are undertaken; these projects cover the four GCSE Assessment Objectives. Students visit a gallery, museum or other appropriate venue as an art trip to support of the projects; Year 11 also usually attend the trip.

The ability to conduct artist research, critique and evaluate work is gradually built up during Year 10 so that they can meet GCSE expectations.

Evaluation

At the end of Year 10 and through Year 11 the students are working on individual themes that they select from a past paper and then, in January, for Year 11, the set paper. Attention to the GCSE Assessment Objectives and individual progress is monitored through weekly lessons, observations and verbal feedback.

Differentiation

Teachers are very conscious of the fact that some dyslexic children are particularly gifted in particular areas of Art, such as visual imaging, three-dimensional imaging, or the ability to draw with very accurate detail. Others, especially those who are also dyspraxic, have great difficulty in drawing or modelling with the intention of creating a

good copy of any particular subject. Accordingly, it is important to take all these strengths and weaknesses into account for each individual child.

Resources

The KS4 students have access to a wide variety of modelling, drawing and painting resources. Extra resources or materials we do not normally stock are bought in as required wherever possible for our GCSE students.

For other year groups in the school the Art studio is kept well equipped with materials for two- and three-dimensional work; extra specific materials are bought in as and when required. There is an additional art supply in school for general use by class teachers.

Extra-Curricular Activities

For GCSE students there is an open studio with our specialist Art teacher after school one evening a week and several lunchtimes during the week if they wish to take advantage of it.

For other years there is an after-school club for those children who particularly enjoy art.

Every year, all the children in the school enter an art competition called *Young Art Oxford* organised by Cancer Research. The winners have their art exhibited in the Ashmolean – a prestigious museum in Oxford. The competition is open to other schools, so it is a wonderful opportunity for our artistic students to realise their talent, being equal to their peers in mainstream education.

Whenever there is a need, there is a qualified art therapist, who visits the school, once a week to work with children with emotional issues who may respond to this form of help.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

What is RE?

RE is concerned not only with learning about religion but also with learning from it. In RE we will be finding out about what people believe, what their practices and lifestyles are and how they express themselves. We will consider language, art, drama, festivals, celebrations, worship, and rites of passage. We do not seek to promote a particular creed or faith; instead we aim to provide students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to develop their own beliefs and values, to make sense of right and wrong, so that at a time appropriate to them, they can make their own decisions.

At the Unicorn School we see RE, along with PSHCE and our Behaviour Policy, as an intrinsic part of our aim to provide a caring environment for children and staff. These policies support the Education Act of 1996 which states that the curriculum satisfies requirements if it:

- Is balanced and broadly based
- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of students at the school
- Prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

Aims

Our aim in teaching RE is to encourage children to explore fundamental questions that arise from their own and others' experiences of life. RE provides opportunities for children to:

- Develop their knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to Christianity and the other principal religions in Britain, including Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and the Hindu faith
- Explore issues within and between faiths to promote understanding and respect for different religious beliefs, values and traditions and to understand the influence of these on individuals, societies, communities and cultures
- Consider questions of meaning and purpose in life
- Develop investigative and research skills to enable them to make reasoned judgements about religious and moral issues

- Develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society

The Legal Position

Our school curriculum for Religious Education meets the requirements of the 1998 Education Reform Act (ERA). The ERA states that Religious Education is compulsory for all children. The ERA allows parents to withdraw their child from the RE classes if they so wish, although this should only be done once the parents have given written notice to the School Governors. The ERA also allows teachers to refuse to teach Religious Education, but only after they have given due notice of their intentions to the School's Governing Body. The ERA states that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, and that it should, at the same time, take account of the teachings and practices of other major religions.

Strategies for teaching RE

Our school RE curriculum is guided by the National Curriculum, with some amendments to make the best use of cross-curricular links. We ensure that the topics studied in Religious Education build upon prior learning. We offer opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each unit, and we ensure that the planned progression built into the schemes of work offers the children an increasing challenge as they move through the school.

RE is taught in individual class lessons, by the class teacher or subject leader.

The curriculum provides RE content in other subject areas. RE contributes to the wider aims of education in English, Maths, IT, PSHCE, Humanities and Science, where there is a clear and strong link to other subject lessons, although for the most part, it is taught in independent units as outlined above.

Equal Opportunities

The teaching and learning at the Unicorn School is modified to embrace all our children with specific learning difficulties and to provide an environment where all forms of communication, both verbal and non-verbal are used and understood by everyone. We at the Unicorn School recognise the fact that all classes have children of widely differing abilities, and so we provide opportunities that allow all children to make progress. We achieve this by:

- Setting tasks that are open ended and can have a variety of responses
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty, recognising that not all children will complete all tasks
- Providing resources of different complexity, adapted to the ability of the child

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Curriculum Policy
Reviewed September 2020

As RE involves both implicit and explicit dimensions, not all aspects of RE can be assessed; however, each unit of work shows how children might demonstrate what they have learnt. The class teacher or subject leader will observe children, ask questions, challenge, note attitudes and skills being developed and encourage self-evaluation within the lessons. In addition, the class teacher or subject leader will mark and review written work and make notes based on their own and other teachers' observations of the children in situations such as visits to religious sites and also in art and craft activities, role play, discussion, oral presentation, music, movement and cooking.

The Year 7 and 8 students are following the Key Stage 3 scheme of work and more mature, age appropriate resources have been bought to meet the needs of their curriculum.

The Year 9, 10 and 11 students follow the Oxfordshire Syllabus together with the GCSE syllabus.

End of unit expectations provide a broad description of achievement within each unit, to enable the class teacher or subject leader to assess the pupil's progress. This will form the basis of the annual written reports to the parents.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

School Philosophy

We recognise that PE needs to build on the children's natural enthusiasm for movement, by expressing and testing themselves in a variety of situations.

Through Physical Education we aim to enable students to develop co-ordination, strength, stamina and skilfulness and to promote spatial awareness, intelligent reactions to situations and appreciation of physical excellence.

We believe that Physical Education should lead to a sense of well-being, a greater understanding of health and fitness, a healthy lifestyle and a feeling of self-confidence. Those who are active in childhood are more likely to reap benefits associated with an active lifestyle in adulthood.

Research has shown that when children receive regular exercise they perform better in all aspects of schooling, due to increased metabolism and alertness.

The development of good gross motor skills and their refinement are important, in order to enhance self-image and raise self-confidence.

Physical Education provides an essential opportunity to develop knowledge, skills and understanding of the body and its movement.

Physical Education promotes children's artistic and aesthetic understanding within and through movement.

Physical Education encourages development of positive attitudes and personal qualities, such as self-esteem, independence, empathy and tolerance.

The Aims of Physical Education at The Unicorn School:

All the children at the Unicorn School are dyslexic and some are also dyspraxic. They may have difficulties with:

- Following instructions
- Hand to eye co-ordination
- Gross motor function
- Manual dexterity

- Remembering a sequence
- Personal organisation – including having the correct kit and putting it away
- Dressing themselves
- Some do not enjoy team games, preferring individual sport

We aim to enable our students to:

- Receive regular exercise
- Make informed decisions about the importance of exercise in their lives
- Develop positive attitudes to participation in physical activity
- Become skilful and intelligent performers
- Acquire and develop skills, performing with increasing physical competence and confidence, in a range of physical activities and contexts
- Understand what it takes to persevere, succeed and acknowledge the success of other children
- To discover their own preferences and aptitudes
- Develop the appreciation of fair play, team play, honest competition and good sportsmanship
- Foster self-esteem through the acquisition of physical competence

Our children have more PE time than mainstream schools as we believe that movement and exercise are particularly valuable for dyslexic and dyspraxic children.

Areas of Activity – General Aims

Gymnastics:	To establish skilful control of body movement (travelling, rotation, balance)
Dance:	To develop an awareness of the body as a medium for communication and expression, and to appreciate the aesthetic qualities of movement.
Games Skills:	To provide the opportunity for children to acquire a variety of games skills and to provide opportunities and practice for children to create their own games, and be introduced to the games that are part of our cultural heritage (Invasion, Striking and Net-Wall)
	To encourage co-operation and strategies for team play and introduce children to games that they might play in later life.

- Athletics:** To encourage children to participate in, and develop their individual skills in running, throwing and jumping. Relay races involve teamwork, which is developed through Inter House Competition on Sports Day, at Tilsley Park athletics stadium.
- Swimming:** To enable children to learn to enjoy being in the water and to be able to swim confidently and have a basic knowledge of personal survival techniques.
- Racquet Sports:** To develop skills in tennis, squash, table tennis and badminton as potential leisure activities in the future.
- Sailing:** To encourage trust and responsibility in a challenging and exciting sport.
- Football:** This is open to Y6 and Y5, who play in the Vale of White Horse Smallest Schools league and 7-a-side tournament. In addition, friendly matches are arranged, where possible to encourage younger children and those less confident to enjoy the chance to represent the Unicorn in matches.
- Walking/Orienteering:** This is linked to map reading in Year 6 and Rivers in Year 8 and involves planning and walking short walks around the Ridgeway.
- To develop children's orienteering and problem-solving skills with an emphasis on building trust and working as a team.

All children have the opportunity to go on an annual residential trip. The older children are away for a school week and the younger children for three days.

Breaktime: There is equipment for both individual and group play. An adventure playground is situated on the front lawn.

Planning and Assessment

Children are taught in Key Stages with KS2 receiving games lessons on a Wednesday afternoon and KS3/4 receiving theirs on a Thursday afternoon. Half termly plans are developed, using the QCA schemes of work as a skill basis with some changes at Key Stage 3 to reflect the new NC requirements. Friday afternoons are also available for sport where children have the opportunity to try out different sports like swimming, sailing, martial arts, orienteering, dance/gym etc.

Unit and lesson plans use a variety of teaching methods, to ensure a balanced programme of work, allowing all students to develop their interest and to succeed. The following factors are taken into consideration:

- Previous knowledge and experience
- Aims of the unit
- Organisational strategies
- Facilities (wet weather contingency plans) and equipment
- Safety precautions

Each lesson should include:

- Relevant warm-up, skills practice, concluding activity and cool down
- Differentiation
- Progression and continuity

All classes have two sessions of PE a week, each lasting one to two hours. Each child goes either swimming or sailing in addition to this. During the Summer term and Autumn term those children in KS3 and 4 who wish to sail and who have passed their swimming test, sail at Farmoor Reservoir once a week. All the other children swim in an indoor pool in the Autumn or Spring terms and go to various locations walking or orienteering in the Summer.

The children swim at Radley College pool on Friday afternoons in the Autumn and Spring terms; we also use Tilsley Park Sports Park for all our games lessons.

Staffing and Resources

Staffing

PE teachers are responsible for the planning, implementation and evaluation of the PE programme. The staff should attend relevant INSET both inside and outside school, in order to maximise their learning and to develop their knowledge base for PE.

Resources

Some PE equipment is kept in the cupboards in the activity room and some in the PE shed which is situated in the play area. Equipment should be collected and returned by a member of staff and be put back in the correct place.

The equipment is checked and maintained regularly. Any faulty equipment should be reported to the PE Co-ordinator.

Out of School Hours Learning

The school provides an after-school club for sports activities on Thursdays. These include hockey, soccer, handball, basketball, cricket, volleyball. Where possible, the sports chosen reflect the choices made by the club members.

Students are given the opportunity to participate in inter-school competition.

Safety

Teachers are ultimately responsible for safety; however, children should be encouraged to recognise potential dangers and to become progressively more responsible to their own safety and that of others.

Working Area

Teachers should check working areas for any potential dangers to ensure they are safe. Teachers should also consider their position in the room/hall/playground/field, throughout the lesson to enable maximum observation.

Equipment

Teachers should ensure that all equipment is safe for children to use. Students should be taught to lift, carry, place and use equipment safely; this includes the benches and mats which are available in the activity room. Two children are needed to carry each piece of equipment.

Clothing

Children (and teachers) should wear appropriate clothing. The Unicorn's PE kit comprises a navy t-shirt, navy shorts or tracksuit trousers, plain navy sweatshirt, and trainers for outside PE.

When using the activity room, children must have clean plimsolls or trainers which are not worn outside. For gymnastics and dance, all children should have bare feet.

Children should have a complete change of clothes for PE, and not wear the same t-shirt or trousers as worn during the day.

Class teachers are responsible for the children while changing.

Other Safety Considerations

Jewellery should not be worn during PE lessons. However, if stud earrings are worn, they must be taped over. Shoulder length and long hair should be tied back.

Accident Procedure

If an accident occurs, the pupil should be sent to the school office to a qualified first-aider or the first-aider called to the incident. The incident should be recorded on an accident form, as per school guidelines.

Extra-Curricular Accident Procedure

During extra-curricular activities, at least two members of staff or a member of staff and another responsible adult should always accompany the children in event of an accident. Therefore, one adult will be available to deal with the incident without leaving the other children unattended. A first aid kit and mobile phone should always be taken to off-site events and a list of children given to the office.

Participation

Any child not participating in the PE lesson should bring a note explaining the reason, but, if possible, should still be involved in the lesson in some way, through observation, coaching or officiating.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

A well-balanced and planned PE programme should meet the physical and social needs of all students in an ethnically diverse society, allowing all children across the ability spectrum to succeed. By setting suitable learning challenges, responding to students' diverse learning needs and overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment, teachers will create a positive and achievement orientated learning environment.

With dyslexic children and those for whom English is their second language, care needs to be taken over the way in which tasks are presented and explanations given. Children should be encouraged to broaden their vocabulary, enabling them to use appropriate terms and language to describe their own and others' performances.

The teaching and learning at The Unicorn School is modified to embrace all our children with specific learning difficulties and to provide an environment where all forms of communication, both verbal and non-verbal are used and understood by the whole school community.

Children with specific physical needs are encouraged to join in as much as they are physically able.

The sports achievement awards are linked to attitude and achievement in PE.

MUSIC

The study of music involves careful listening to musical sounds, with appropriate analysis and description. (A bank of words is sometimes given beforehand for children to choose the appropriate word to describe the mood or to analyse which instruments or genre). In addition, it includes creation and organisation of new combinations of sounds, and performance. Many dyslexic children are talented performers or highly creative. However, they can have difficulties with listening as well as with musical symbolism and organisation.

Aims

We aim to encourage the creative and performing strengths of the children, offering performing experience for all in groups. For individuals who are creative, singing, instrumental or sound effect skills are particularly strong; there are opportunities to perform as soloists. Enjoyment and promotion of self-confidence are always important than musical detail. Musical activities are also designed to strengthen areas of weakness; these principally include listening skills, sound analysis, organisational skills, comprehension of symbolism and capacity to concentrate in a group activity.

Dyspraxic children are helped to play instruments and sing with appropriate control. Knowledge of historical and cultural background to music is taught along with functional aspects such as expression of particular emotions; children will build upon their natural responses to music.

National Curriculum

All children will be taught musical skills and knowledge as outlined in the National Curriculum appropriately modified to take account of individual strengths and weaknesses associated with dyslexia and related conditions.

Assessment

Teacher assessment is ongoing observation. The children are also encouraged to evaluate their own work and comment positively on each other's work.

What is music?

Music is concerned with the creative, aesthetic and emotional response to rhythmic combination of sounds. Music education has two strands: creation and evaluation. The creative elements involve children using a variety of instruments for composing, improvising and performing. The evaluation element enables students to develop skills in listening to and appraising their own work and that of other musicians and composers and to understand the value and significance of Music in society.

Our aims for teaching music are for children to:

- Find enjoyment in creating music and to see themselves as musicians
- Feel able to express their ideas and feelings through musical creation
- Learn to listen analytically – listening skills are of particular importance in this concept and to express themselves using subject specific vocabulary
- Develop appropriate vocabulary to help them discuss and understand their own work and that of others- a word wall is used to support challenging specialised words
- Understand the relationship between sound and symbol.
- Develop working knowledge of systems of notation for use in composing and performing
- Appreciate and evaluate the work of a range of composers and musicians from their own and other cultures

The curriculum provides music in content in other subject areas in the following ways:

- Music and literacy: tone and speed is experimented with to create different styles when reading haiku poems, raps and stories
- Music and drama: children experience making music and singing songs for school plays
- Music and geography: children discover other cultures by discovering other styles of music. (Year 7 experience researching a musician from West Africa)
- Music and art: works of art are used to inspire students to create musical compositions; symbols are used to represent sounds and notes
- Music and maths: children learn about different metres and the value of notes in music; the concept of fractions is reinforced
- Music and science: children explore the ways sound can be changed

Strategies for Teaching Music

Music is taught as a separate subject and all children have one, 45-minute lesson every week throughout the school year.

The predominant mode of working in music is cooperative group work although individual work and class teaching are used where appropriate, within this structure:

- Groups are mixed ability
- Relevant discussion is encouraged
- Teacher develops children's interrelated skills in performing, composing and appraising in all activities
- Teacher develops children's listening skills, knowledge and understanding of music
- Children experience playing tuned and un-tuned instruments as well as body percussion and singing
- Various books, CD resources

Students with special needs are often able to find areas of strength in Music and include:

- Extra opportunities for musical development and performance
- Individual instrumental tuition

The emphasis in our teaching of music is on learning through doing and we aim to help each child achieve competence and control in:

- Movement and balance
- Using body percussion
- Making and classifying sounds
- Distinguishing pitch, timbre, tempo, duration, structure, texture, dynamics
- Playing instruments
- Listening and responding

Excellence in music is celebrated:

- By large scale performances at Christmas and at the end of the summer term
- Smaller scale performances of groups or individuals in class and assemblies

Planning in Music

Schemes of work are personalised and include requirements that are outlined in the NC. Resources such as *Music Express* are also used as a basis for some schemes of work.

The role of the co-ordinator is to:

- Take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in Music throughout the school
- Monitor progress in Music
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for music
- Keep up to date with developments in music education

Feedback about their progress in Music:

- Aims to help children learn by being positive and constructive
- Is always done while a task is being carried out through discussion between the child and the teacher
- Children are encouraged to comment on each others' performance

Formative assessment is used to guide progress of individual students in music. It involves identifying each child's progress in each aspect of the subject, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching. Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- Small group discussions in the context of a practical task
- Specific assignments for individual students
- Individual discussions in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress

Strategies for Recording and Reporting

Reporting to parents is done on a yearly basis through written reports. Reporting music will focus on each child's:

- Speed in learning new concepts
- Confidence in performing solo or in a group
- Listening and appraising skills

Central resources in music are the responsibility of the music co-ordinator who has a small budget available. They include:

- Various music books such as *The Music Express* series, and the *Listening to Music Elements 7+* as well as resources collected from attending music courses
- Pitched, (recorders, xylophones, two keyboards and boom-whackers) and un-pitched percussion instruments

Information Technology is a resource which is used in music for:

- Recording
- Composition and performance
- Improvisation
- Research using the internet

Health & Safety in Music

- Use of instruments in accordance with health and safety requirements
- Appropriate storage of instruments

Teaching Music to Key Stage 3 Students

Students will have opportunities to develop and demonstrate their musical knowledge, skills and understanding that they have achieved (in Years 5 and 6) to date, as well as learning more specific musical skills and knowledge outlined in the NC; this will be appropriately modified to take account of the individual strengths and weaknesses associated with dyslexia and related conditions. Different topics will be taught using the *Music Express* series. Outside musicians will also be invited to the school to provide workshops for students to develop their skills and understanding.

Assessment

Teacher assessment is done by recording and observing the development of musical compositions by students. Students also fill in informal, self-assessment sheets so that they can monitor their progress. They are encouraged to evaluate their own work and each other's, to develop an awareness and critical sense. This is done sensitively and positively allowing students to further develop their work and to recognise the level they are working at.

Aims

We aim to encourage the creative and performing strengths of the children, offering performing experience for all in groups. For individuals who are creative, singing, instrumental or sound effect skills are particularly strong. There are opportunities to perform as soloists. Enjoyment and promotion of self-confidence are always important than musical detail. Musical activities are also designed to strengthen areas of weakness. These principally include listening skills, sound analysis, organisational skills, comprehension of symbolism and capacity to concentrate in a group activity. Dyspraxic children are helped to play instruments and sing with appropriate control. Knowledge of historical and cultural background to music is taught along with functional aspects such as expression of particular emotions. Children will build upon their natural responses to music.

National Curriculum

All children will be taught musical skills and knowledge as outlined in the National Curriculum appropriately modified to take account of individual strengths and weaknesses associated with dyslexia and related conditions.

Assessment

Teacher assessment is ongoing observation. The children are also encouraged to evaluate their own work and comment positively on each other's work.

What is Music?

Music is concerned with the creative, aesthetic and emotional response to rhythmic combination of sounds. Music education has two strands: creation and evaluation. The creative elements involve children using a variety of instruments for composing, improvising and performing. The evaluation element enables students to develop skills in listening to and appraising their own work and that of other musicians and composers and to understand the value and significance of Music in society.

Our aims for teaching music are for children to:

- Find enjoyment in creating music and to see themselves as musicians
- Feel able to express their ideas and feelings through musical creation
- Learn to listen analytically – listening skills are of particular importance in this concept and to express themselves using subject specific vocabulary
- Develop appropriate vocabulary to help them discuss and understand their own work and that of others- a word wall is used to support challenging specialised words
- Understand the relationship between sound and symbol. Develop working knowledge of systems of notation for use in composing and performing
- Appreciate and evaluate the work of a range of composers and musicians from their own and other cultures

The curriculum provides music in content in other subject areas in the following ways:

- Music and Literacy: tone and speed are experimented with to create different styles when reading haiku poems, raps and stories
- Music and Drama: Children experience making music and singing songs for school plays
- Music and Geography: Children discover other cultures by discovering other styles of music
- Music and Art: Works of art are used to inspire students to create musical compositions. Symbols are used to represent sounds and notes

- Music and Maths: Children learn about different metres and the value of notes in music. The concept of fractions is reinforced
- Music and Science: children explore the ways sound can be changed

Strategies for Teaching Music

Music is taught as a separate subject and all KS2&3 children have one 60-minute lesson every week throughout the school year.

The predominant mode of working in music is whole class, within this structure:

- Groups are mixed ability
- Relevant discussion is encouraged
- Teacher develops children's interrelated skills in performing, composing and appraising in all activities
- Teacher develops children's listening skills, knowledge and understanding of music
- Children experience playing tuned and un-tuned instruments as well as body percussion and singing
- Various books, online resources including *Youtube*

Students with special needs are often able to find areas of strength in music and include:

- Extra opportunities for musical development and performance
- Individual instrumental tuition

The emphasis in our teaching of music is on learning through doing and we aim to help each child achieve competence and control in:

- Movement and balance
- Using body percussion
- Making and classifying sounds
- Distinguishing pitch, timbre, tempo, duration, structure, texture, dynamics
- Playing instruments
- Listening and responding
- Singing

Excellence in music is celebrated:

- By large scale performances at Christmas and at the end of the summer term
- Smaller scale performances of groups or individuals in class and assemblies
- Attending Young Voices in Birmingham

Planning in music

Schemes of work are personalised and include requirements that are outlined in the National Curriculum. The elements of music such as rhythm and dynamics, are woven throughout the planning to give a rich and varied curriculum. Music is linked to class topics where appropriate. Inspiration is drawn from resources such as *Musical Connections*, *Charanga*, *Singing Sherlock*, *YouTube* tutorials and graphic scores are also used as a basis for schemes of work.

The role of the co-ordinator is to:

- Take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in Music throughout the school
- Monitor progress in music
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for music
- Keep up to date with developments in music education
- Feedback about their progress in music
- Aims to help children learn by being positive and constructive
- Is always done while a task is being carried out through discussion between the child and the teacher
- Children are encouraged to comment on each other's performance

Formative assessment is used to guide progress of individual students in music. It involves identifying each child's progress in each aspect of the subject, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching. Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- Small group discussions in the context of a practical task
- Specific assignments for individual students
- Individual discussions in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress

Strategies for recording and reporting

Reporting to parents is done on a yearly basis through written reports. Reporting music will focus on each child's:

- Speed in learning new concepts
- Confidence in performing solo or in a group
- Listening and appraising skills

Central resources in music are the responsibility of the music co-ordinator who has a small budget available. They include:

- Various music books such as *The Music Express* series, and the *Listening to Music Elements 7+* as well as resources collected from attending music courses.
- Pitched, (ukuleles, glockenspiels, hand chimes, two keyboards and boom-whackers) and un-pitched percussion instruments

Information Technology is a resource which is used in music for:

- Recording
- Composition and performance
- Improvisation
- Research using the internet

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.

PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) and **RSE** (Relationships and Sex Education)

Please see **PSHCE** and **RSE** policies

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