



# Teaching and Learning Policy

## 1. Aims and Objectives

This policy document gives an overview of the curriculum, how it meets the educational requirements of the pupils, and how progress is assessed, reported and monitored. The Teaching and Learning Policy aims to give information on elements of the curriculum that are common to all Subject Policies.

Other documents that support the Teaching and Learning Policy are:

Assessment Policy

Monitoring the Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

SEN Policy

Curriculum Policy

Subject Policies

Commination Policy

Staff Handbook

Single Equality Policy

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Parents as Partners Policy

Danecourt School is a stimulating learning environment where every individual is:

**Valued, Respected, Safe and Successful**, in line with the schools vision and values.

statement. The school operates as a community, where communication and PSHCE citizenship is central, and we promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development of pupils in order to prepare them for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.

### Valued

We believe every individual is unique and special

We foster a sense of self-esteem and self-worth

We believe every child is entitled to outstanding care and education

We support our children in the development of their communication, social and self-help skills

We provide child-centered curriculum which encourages creativity and independence

### Respected

We respect the rights and needs of every child and adult

We believe every child has the right to be heard

We believe that an outstanding learning environment stems from committed and compassionate staff who work as a team to support all children

We aim, through first hand experiences, to develop in our children a love of learning, a pride in their work and respect for their surroundings

We support our children in developing appropriate relationships with others at home and at school

### Safe

We believe every child has the right to feel safe from harm, to be protected, cared for, and loved.

We provide a happy, secure and safe environment for our children where they feel a sense of belonging

We ensure the well-being of every child by securing the best possible social, educational health and care outcomes

We teach and expect high standards of behaviour from all children

We believe happy and contented children will be ready and motivated to learn

### **Successful**

We recognise, praise and reward every achievement however small the step

We believe that children succeed best when teachers have high expectations and inspire learning

We provide a wide range of opportunities in order to maximise social and academic success

We encourage aspiration so that all members of our school community can seek to develop their full potential

We want our children to be happy, confident young people who will contribute to their community

The curriculum is balanced, broad and relevant. We believe in developing the whole child in an atmosphere that is happy, stimulating and supportive. We help children to become more confident and competent by addressing their individual needs. We do this by providing a stimulating, secure and happy learning environment with equal Opportunities for all and:

- develop everyone's intellectual, creative and physical skills to their full potential;
- encourage everyone's social and emotional growth by fostering positive relationships;
- develop pupils individuality and sense of identity.
- develop the independence of pupils within a wider multi ethnic society;
- develop pupils' self-esteem;
- create a welcoming community that offers positive support to all those who are involved with the school.
- adopting learning activities that are planned to enable all pupils to make progress, and for all to experience success;
- assessing, recording and reporting on the progress of each pupil;
- ensuring that the staff have the knowledge, skills, and resources to carry out their duties;
- ensuring that every pupil receives a broad and balanced education
- ensuring that all staff having high expectations of the pupils in all areas of the curriculum - including behaviour, work and attitude;
- showing concern for others and valuing each person's contribution
- working in partnership with parents in the education of their pupils
- offering support, advice, INSET, a resource base and workshop facilities to all involved with the school.

## **2. Teaching and Learning**

We believe that the following are characteristic of good learning experiences for our pupils – what we want pupils to be doing and what we want to witness in each classroom. These statements are fundamental to the learning process and apply across the curriculum. Some of these statements are particularly difficult for some of our pupils but in line with the high expectations we have of our pupils we need to include the learning statements we aspire to.

### **Personal/Interpersonal**

Emphasis is placed upon maximising pupil engagement and where appropriate personalised learning pathways are developed.

Pupils should:

- Enjoy learning – work with enjoyment, humour and pleasure
- Feel secure to make mistakes – understand what they are doing and why
- Feel valued
- Receive praise and affirmation for their achievements, perseverance, success and progress

- Reflect on and appraise their own work, progress and learning
- Understand that home and school work in partnership
- Work co-operatively in groups of different sizes and kinds, and in this way learn from other learners as well as from teachers
- Develop the ability to work effectively on their own
- Take responsibility for their own learning
- Work with individual support
- Discriminate, judge, evaluate and appreciate
- Feel included in setting own targets

### **Communication**

Communication is a vital skill which enables us all to play an active part in all elements of our school. It is the foundation that underpins all we do. Many of our pupils experience communication difficulties and require support and adjustments in order to access learning in the class and the whole school. We seek at all opportunities to provide appropriate supports for communication based on individual needs. We work closely with the Speech and Language Therapy team and to provide these supports such as Ipads, Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) and signing.

We encourage all our pupils to voice their opinions by whatever communication means they are proficient in. We believe that our pupils should:

- Think aloud and sort out their ideas through discussion, debate and argument by whatever communication means appropriate for them.
- Use alternative means of communication as needed – Signalong, PECS
- Explore and communicate ideas and feelings through dance, drama, music and the visual arts
- Write and produce work for a variety of purposes and audiences, using appropriate styles and forms and drafting and re-drafting
- Be able to choose and use a variety of methods to communicate their work/results/feelings carefully, clearly and accurately to a variety of audiences
- Use, and understand, the appropriate vocabulary in a given situation • Listen attentively, sift out the important details and use this information in a given situation
- In a discussion or debate be able to listen to the views expressed

### **Experiences**

We strive to provide a wide range of learning experiences which respond to the varied needs of our pupils. We believe that our pupils should:

- Have first-hand experience of whatever subject is being studied, either real or simulated
- Have opportunities to apply skills to real life situations
- Take part in role play
- Engage in work which involves all the senses – visual, pictorial, sound, touch, movement and feelings
- Enquire, puzzle, wonder, speculate, hypothesise and imagine
- Discover, invent and realise solutions
- Build on existing skills
- Work in the concrete – move to the abstract
- Work through small achievable steps
- Start from where they are
- Work on material that is age appropriate and connected to their interests where appropriate
- Be able to look closely at an object or process/change and make careful observations
- Decide what information is needed to solve a problem and devise strategies for finding it
- Choose concepts to use to solve problems set for them
- Interpret information presented in a variety of forms
- Use a variety of resources to gather information, evaluate its accuracy, relevance and subjectivity
- Practise new skills

- Learn important facts, details, methods, symbols.

### **Wider World**

Our pupils should:

- Receive recognition and respect for their languages, knowledge and experience
- Meet and learn from people in the local and wider community
- Meet recognition and respect for the value and validity of their family and community life

### **Generalisations**

Our pupils should:

- Look for patterns in their work and use their previous learning to make generalisations
- Test out generalisations fairly
- Have, in totality, a coherent and meaningful experience
- Make connections between new knowledge and what they already know
- Draw sensible conclusions from patterns/results/observations
- Apply previous learning to new situations

### **Expectations and Challenge**

Our pupils should:

- Be expected to achieve high standards and to be continually challenged in relation to their ability
- Be made overtly aware of what they are expected to learn through Learning Objectives and targets.

**Characteristics of teaching** – these are the key characteristics of a teacher’s repertoire which we associate with high quality learning experiences. Teachers need to use a wide range of teaching skills and styles, some of which are used in all lessons and some of which are used when they are the best way of achieving the learning objective.

### **Differentiation**

Differentiation is about an understanding that all pupils have different strategies for learning.

Teachers differentiate by:

#### Language used

- Number of information carrying words
- Variety of communication methods
- Positive/negative balance
- Tone, pitch, register, rate of delivery
- Attention, eye contact
- Reinforce language that has been taught – supporting with visual clues, symbols, gestures, signs – Signalong.
- Phrasing of questions according to cognitive level
- Social stories

#### Level of support

- One to one teacher/teaching assistant
- High level of adult supervision
- Support from other agencies – Speech Therapist
- Some level of adult supervision/support
- Different levels of intervention

#### Resources

- Making relevant and appropriate access to resources
- Adapting published materials
- Practical bias
- Using art/music/food technology to support learning across the curriculum

- Variety of sheets
- Enlargement
- Different colour paper
- Use of drawings – picture clues, symbols
- Close procedure
- Fonts, lines
- Extension
- Way worksheet is used – different purpose for different pupils
- Positioning in class
- Appropriate for hearing and visual impairment
- Distraction free area
- Stimulating
- Adequate space
- Subject needs
- Grouping of pupils

#### **Physical aids**

- Sloping desks
- Pencil grips
- Variety of scissors
- IT – switches, touch screens etc.
- Tables and chairs
- Non-slip surfaces

#### **Recording**

- Drawing
- Matching
- Teacher as scribe
- Audio and video taping
- Writing
- Photograph
- ICT
- Cutting and sticking
- Colour

### **3. Curriculum Organisation.**

The Deputy Head is the Curriculum Manager .The curriculum is organised through three curriculum teams: EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Additionally a VB-MAPP curriculum is provided for pupils who are unable to access the Foundation Stage or National Curriculum. A member of the Senior Management Team leads each Key Stage.

There is a leader of learning for each of the National Curriculum Subjects and PHSCE. Subject Leaders have produced a full range of curriculum documents, provide leadership to staff, and monitor the delivery of their subject. The use of subject data to further enhance the curriculum will continue to be developed. In common with many small schools we also have members of staff that take the lead in a subject where they may not have expert knowledge, and therefore provide continued opportunities for training in these subject areas.

All Subject Leaders work closely with the curriculum manager, produce annual Subject Reports and Action Plans, and contribute to the School Development Plan. The subject leaders are supported by the system of whole school or whole Key Stage approach to planning and this encourages mutual support and pooling of knowledge and expertise.

Policy Statements of core subjects are reviewed every two years, with foundation subject

policies being reviewed every three years. Policies are reviewed by the Subject leader, in consultation with the whole staff, before being ratified by the Board of Trustees Governor Curriculum Committee. Subject Leaders also maintain subject leader files containing all relevant information contributing to the School Development Plan and the school's Self Evaluation Framework, including up to date information about Overall effectiveness, Effectiveness of Leadership and Management, Quality of teaching, learning and assessment, Personal Development, behaviour and welfare, Outcomes for children and learners, and Views of pupils, parents, governors, colleagues (as appropriate).

Long Term Planning is carried out by the Subject Leaders, in collaboration with the teachers, Curriculum Manager and the SLT. This planning is carried out with reference to the current National Strategies, Foundation Stage and National Curriculum Documents, B Squared assessment materials, LA advice and the SEN Code of Practice.

**Long term Curriculum plans** form part of the School Development Plan. Working from this plan, Policy Statements and Programmes of Study (PoS) are produced and continue to be developed and adapted to suit the changing needs of the children at Danecourt. These will provide the framework within which it is possible to balance the individual and special needs of pupils, so that they may access the Re-Think/VB-MAPP/ EYFS/National Curriculum at an appropriate level, to include all pupils. It ensures balance, breadth, relevance, appropriateness, progression and challenge.

**Medium Term Planning** is carried out mainly through Key Stage Team Meetings, joint subject leader meetings and allocated curriculum planning time. At these meetings planning will take place on for example units of work for Science, History and Geography with linked work in Art, Music and Design Technology and PE. These subjects are often banded together in a Topic. Care is taken to ensure that there is good coverage of the PoS as laid out in the National Curriculum and that pupils are presented with activities that are creative, stimulating and appropriate. Topic grids are produced to document breath and balance across a two year curriculum cycle

### **Short Term Planning**

The class teachers plan and deliver lessons with reference to the agreed Policy statements, PoS, Topic Plans/Grids and relevant Interim Personal Targets. This level of planning is carefully matched to the needs of individual pupils as outlined in their Statement of Special Educational Needs (SSEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and form continuing assessment for learning.

### **The Learning Environment**

We believe that the following are characteristic of a good learning environment – these are the features of the school environment which produce the best learning experience.

Classroom resources should be:

- Clean
- Tidy
- Clearly labelled
- Up to date
- Sufficient for the class
- Arranged to encourage pupil independence
- Available for ease of access by pupils
- Meaningful for the pupils.
- Support the concepts being taught.

Pupils should be:

- Aware of where resources are stored
- Able to select, use and take care of these resources as independently as possible
- Taught to respect, care for and keep tidy all areas of the school building

- Aware of the responsibility they have for these areas and this should be made explicit to them
- Given easy access to boys and girls toilets

The classroom should:

- Have furniture arranged for maximum ease of use e.g. access between tables, positioning of drawers etc.
- To be decorated to a reasonable standard
- Have furnishings and fittings that are suitable and sufficient
- Provide areas that promote independent or group learning situations
- To show an awareness of the need for a low-arousal environment for many of our pupils.

### **Display**

Classrooms and other areas of the school should be enlivened by good quality displays. However, as a special school where half of our pupils have an Autistic Spectrum Disorder we recognise that too many displays and decoration can be a hindrance and distraction during time in the class room and school as a whole. As previously mentioned, we adhere to the need for a low-arousal environment.

Displays should:

- Be neat, attractive and bright
- Interact with the viewer by mixing the media displayed e.g. writing, pictures, questions, labels, photographs, diagrams, letters, graphs
- Be changed regularly to keep the work current
- Celebrate good quality work from individuals not just the best from the class
- Celebrate work from every pupil in the class

### **Noise Level**

Pupils should be taught to work with a variety of noise levels appropriate to the task they are engaged in.

Noise level should:

- Vary from a daily silent time to a gentle working hubbub
- Enable a silent time for reflection in assembly
- Enable a regular quiet reading time within the classroom

### **Relationships**

We believe that:

- Expectations of the way pupils should address/ behave towards visitors should be made explicit to them
- Pupils' responses should be valued so that they feel secure enough to make mistakes
- Expectations of pupils' general behaviour should be explained to them and used consistently in practice
- The expectation that the classroom is primarily a place of learning should be made clear to the pupils
- Staff should respect the pupils
- Pupils should respect the staff
- Pupils should respect each other
- Pupils should feel that they are valued members of the class, school and society
- Staff should respect each other.

### **Security**

We believe that pupils:

- Should feel secure in their knowledge of daily/weekly class and school routines (including Fire Drills)
- Should know where to obtain help and support when they need it
- Should be provided with a physically safe environment in which to learn

## **Praise, Rewards and Consequences**

Praise is essential to a good learning environment.

We believe that:

- School and class rewards should be made available to all the pupils in relation to their ability and in line with the school PBIS Reward system.
- School and class rewards should be overtly celebrated
- School and class consequences should be made explicit to the pupils
- These consequences should be exercised fairly and consistently

## **Reflecting Society**

In order to reflect society:

- The school, classrooms and the work that goes on inside them should give a balanced view of society
- A variety of multi-cultural, religious, gender and disability images should be used

## **4. Assessment**

Teachers will assess children's work by making informal judgements, while observing them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses it, and uses this assessment to plan for future learning. Verbal feedback is given to the child to help guide his/her progress as appropriate. All pupils are encouraged to be involved in self and peer assessment at the level appropriate to their understanding. More able children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

Assessment is a part of a continuous teaching and learning process throughout the year. Pupils' work and photographs of them working are used as evidence to support assessments. Teachers record the progress made by pupils against the learning objectives for their lessons using the Rethink, Development Matters, or adapted BSquared Assessment Tools. At the end of the year, teachers report a judgement of attainment within the Danecourt Progress Steps. This information forms part of each child's annual report to parents, and is passed on to the next teacher.

In addition, each pupil has a number of Interim Personal Targets (IPTs) which are annual targets based on the overall objectives for **Cognition & Learning, Communication, Motor, Sensory & Physical, Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Independence and Community** as documented in his/her SSEN or EHCP. Each IPT is then broken down into smaller manageable targets – Assessment Points (APs). Teachers make a judgement as to when an AP is mastered. The IPTs and APs are reviewed annually at each child's Person centred Annual Review (PCAR) meeting.

***(Please refer to the Assessment Policy and Assessment Procedural Guide for further information)***

## **5. Health and Safety**

It is the duty of each member of staff to ensure that correct Health and Safety procedures are followed in the classroom and appropriate risk assessments are made. In all curriculum areas pupils should be helped to develop an awareness of good health and safety practices and to begin to carry them out.

(See separate Health and Safety Policy)

## **6. Monitoring, Review and Moderation**

The effectiveness of the curriculum provision will be reviewed every two years by the teaching staff, from evidence gathered during the monitoring schedule, and based on the changing needs of the pupils.

Monitoring Schedule:

Term	<b>Monitoring Activities</b> Core Subjects Maths, English, Science, PSHE	<b>Monitoring Activities</b> All other subjects
Autumn	Learning Walk Planning scrutiny Action Plan tasks Formal Lesson Observations Data Analysis	Learning Walks Planning scrutiny Action Plan tasks
Spring	Work scrutiny Moderation of assessment data Triangulation of evidence Informal Lesson Observations Lesson Visits by Trustees Action plan review Subject policy review (2 yearly) Data Analysis	Work scrutiny Informal Lesson Observations Lesson Visits by Trustees Action plan review Subject policy review (3 yearly)
Summer	Action plan review Subject Leader Report / Action Plan for SLT/Trustees Year-end Data analysis	Action plan review Subject Leader Report / Action Plan for SLT/Trustees Year-end Data analysis

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is monitored and evaluated, in line with the school development priorities, by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), as well as through the Teacher Appraisal/Performance Management cycle.

This policy is monitored by the Board of Trustees. It will be reviewed every two years, or in line with statutory requirements.

Revised Autumn 2016

Next Review: Autumn 2018

***The public sector equality duty of the Equality Act 2010 has been considered in the writing of this policy. A Discrimination Impact Assessment concludes that through this policy Danecourt seeks to:***

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.***
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.***
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.***

***Protected Characteristics: age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.***