

Newington Green and Rotherfield Primary Schools



Curriculum Policy

1. Introduction

This policy document outlines the rationale for our curriculum, from Early Years to Year 6, how we implement it and the intended impact.

In our schools, we follow the statutory National Curriculum, but have designed our own curriculum to go beyond national expectations and meet the specific needs of our children and the wider community. We understand that children and families at Newington Green and Rotherfield share many similarities, but that each of our schools has a unique identity and some school specific pupil needs. Therefore, both schools share the same curriculum, but may take different pedagogical approaches, depending on pupil needs (see Section 3. Implementation).

1.2. Our Partnership Aims

We believe by working together we can achieve more than working as stand-alone schools. These are our core aims of both schools:

1. A rich and well-balanced curriculum offer, with enriching experiences
2. High outcomes for all pupils
3. Ensuring that all children, regardless of circumstance, achieve well
4. Meeting children's individual needs through a nurturing ethos

1.3. Our Curriculum Aims

- To promote the highest level of achievement for all pupils, across all subjects, through strong pathways for progression in knowledge and skills as pupils journey through the school.
- To provide systematic exposure to and immersion in high quality literature, both from classic and modern authors, with the aim of pupils demonstrating key skills in debate, critical thinking, articulating a clear point of view and being able to effectively negotiate and converse.
- To provide opportunities for vocabulary development across the curriculum, enabling pupils to access learning opportunities in the world around them through word rich learning environments and explicit vocabulary teaching.
- To promote meaningful learning experiences, which will be fun and memorable, based on knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the wider world.

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which gives pupils social and cultural agency, so that they are advantaged in the wider world.
- To celebrate the diversity of our community, and the communities within the UK and encourage the building of community and social capital. This will include an understanding of issues relating to a range of underrepresented and protected groups (gender, sexual orientation, religion/belief, disability, age, race).
- To promote mannerly and appropriate social conduct, so that pupils are advantaged in the wider world.
- To provide a range of out of classroom experiences for pupils which build their cultural capital and understanding of the rich artistic, cultural, spiritual and social heritage of the UK, and its various communities.
- To empower pupils by providing the opportunities and skills to make positive life choices, through the development of personal character, emotional and social resilience, confidence and a growth mindset.
- To provide a context for living as active citizens, learning and working within a global city, with access to the many cultural institutions and opportunities on our doorstep. This will include balancing life in a heavily built-up borough with regular opportunities for outdoor learning.
- To regularly review our curriculum provision, in order to ensure that the curriculum, alongside current educational research, promotes excellence in the practice of teaching (pedagogy).

2. Intent

The above partnership and curriculum aims lie at the heart of our curriculum design. Our broad and balanced, topic-based curriculum is designed to provide all pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive and succeed in the wider world, through rich and engaging learning experiences. We believe that living and growing up in a global city provides a wealth of challenges and opportunities for children and we are passionate about providing our pupils with the tools to enable them to flourish, both academically and socially, by the time they leave us in Year 6.

The content of our curriculum is outlined in our whole school curriculum map and medium-term plans for English and Maths. Details of specific

subject areas can be found in individual progression maps for every subject, which clearly outline the progression of key knowledge and skills from Early Years to Year 6. Each progression map also includes key, subject specific vocabulary to be explicitly taught in each year group, as vocabulary development is a key priority for our pupils and embedded within our curriculum design.

In addition to providing the National Curriculum statutory entitlement, we have also created a progression map for knowledge and skills linked to personal development, including needs that are more specific to our school community. For example, our curriculum provides every child with regular opportunities to develop social and cultural capital, including outdoor and cultural learning opportunities, developing articulacy, developing the ability to question and debate, building confidence and resilience, understanding mental health and wellbeing and understanding diversity. We believe that every child, no matter what their circumstance, should leave us for secondary school with social and life skills which will benefit them in their life moving forwards. This is why these skills are explicitly taught in our schools.

Our curriculum has been collaboratively designed across the partnership of schools, encompassing the views of all stakeholders. We know, above all, that our pupils love learning when it is fun and linked to real life contexts and this ethos lies at the heart of our curriculum design. We understand the importance of our children leaving us for secondary school with high levels of competence in the core subjects of English and maths but believe that this should not be at the expense of a broad and rich curriculum. Our topic-based approach ensures that teaching and learning is creative, with regular, cross-curricular learning opportunities and pupils' progress and-development in all subject areas is highly valued.

3. Implementation

3.1 A Research-based Approach

Our approach to delivering our curriculum is research based and further details of our approach to curriculum implementation, including research links, can be found in our Teaching and Learning Policies.

Our curriculum design has been based on the principles of Evidence Based Teaching, as outlined in Mike Bell's 'Classroom Teaching That Works' and resources created by the Evidence Based Teachers Network.

3.2 Spaced Practice and Progression

Spaced practice involves returning to key knowledge and skills over time and revisiting content, in order to build on prior learning, rather than blocking content in chunks. This approach helps pupils to embed learning

into their long-term memory, rather than resulting in surface learning, which is not retained over time.

Repetition of content does not mean simply repeating the same lessons, but returning to prior learning and building on it in new and engaging contexts to ensure it is embedded and mastered. Further information on our mastery approaches to learning can be found below under 3.4.

In our lessons, we return to prior learning at the start of each lesson and use advance organisers to help children to make learning connections and see the big picture. We use plenaries to recap on the learning in different contexts to aid the transfer to long term memory.

Another way in which we ensure repetition of learning and spaced practice is through the design of our progression maps. These are divided into strands, which focus on key, subject specific skills and map their progress across the course of a pupils' school career. This ensures that key skills are returned to regularly, but new knowledge and skills builds on prior learning.

3.3 Early Years Foundation Stage

Our Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is directly linked to the progression of skills throughout key Stages One and Two and our subject progression maps demonstrate how statements from Development Matters directly link to knowledge and skills further up the school.

We believe in a balance between outstanding, continuous provision with regular opportunities for child-initiated learning, planning based on children's interests and a more formal approach to prepare our pupils for Key Stage 1. Further details can be found in our transition policies.

3.3 Half Termly Topics

Our curriculum is delivered via overarching, half termly topics. Each half term, every year group starts a new topic and all of the subject areas link to this topic where possible, including the core texts in English.

By taking a topic-based approach, the children are fully immersed in a topic and able to learn about it in depth, whilst making cross-curricular links and neurological connections in their learning. In addition, by returning to the same topic regularly, opportunities for spaced practice are increased.

In Early Years, we have a separate curriculum map with half termly topics. These topics are deliberately broad to enable opportunities for planning around children's own interests within the topic.

3.4 A Broad and Balanced Curriculum

Our curriculum map, progression maps and medium-term plans clearly outline the learning objectives taught in each subject area throughout each year, in line with the overarching, half-termly topics and following the National Curriculum programmes of study. Through outlining the curriculum in this level of detail, we can ensure that all curriculum areas are given sufficient weighting and our topic approach, with a focus on returning to key skills over time, allows children to make neural connections between different areas of learning. Information on curriculum implementation in individual subject areas can be found in the table below. Further details of how we teach can be found in our Teaching and Learning policies.

English	Across both schools, we follow the National Curriculum programmes of study for English, linking our core texts and written outcomes to the children's overarching, half termly topics. This helps children to make connections between their different areas of learning and provides regular opportunities for English skills to be embedded throughout the curriculum. Our progression map for English demonstrates how knowledge and skills are developed from Early Years up to Year 6. The curriculum content in both schools is the same, but differences in demographic and pupil need result in different pedagogical approaches.
	Writing
	At Newington Green, writing is taught using a mastery curriculum approach to meet the specific needs of the children within the school. This approach provides opportunities for over learning, leading to mastery; provides context and purpose for the children's writing and ensures a clear progression of skills taught across the school. At Rotherfield, writing lessons are taught using Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing format. As this approach has been developed, it has enabled the children in the school community to develop their understanding of story structure and vocabulary and had a positive impact on their writing

	outcomes. Further details of the writing cycles in both schools can be seen in the medium-term plans for English. Vocabulary development is a key feature of our curriculum and explicit in our curriculum aims. In both schools, we recognise the importance of closing the vocabulary gap between disadvantaged and advantaged children. For each subject area, we have mapped out key vocabulary to be explicitly taught and embedded in each year group within our progression maps
	Handwriting
	Each school uses a different approach when teaching handwriting. However, both schools teach with the aim of Year 6 pupils leaving primary education with confident, cursive handwriting. Newington Green uses the Nelson handwriting scheme from Early Years to Year 6. The programme is designed to help all children develop their own legible and cursive handwriting style, meeting the National Curriculum expectations. Rotherfield teaches a continuous cursive style of handwriting which supports children's neural development and fine motor skills. Each teacher plans and delivers handwriting lessons informed by the individual needs of their class.
	Spelling
	Across both schools, we firmly believe that spelling is an essential skill in order for our children to become independent, confident and accurate writers. Through the development of a consistent approach to the teaching of spelling patterns, conventions and rules, we provide our children with a range of strategies to equip them with confidence and independence to tackle more challenging and ambitious vocabulary, enabling them to develop a rich vocabulary and become effective communicators. The active promotion of the learning of spellings in context, including statutory words, high frequency words and personal spellings, is integral to our teaching.
	Reading
	In Early Years and Year 1 at Newington Green, children are taught to read in small, teacher lead groups with a phonetically decodable book, matched to the GPCs they have learnt. The teaching utilises their phonics knowledge to teach decoding and early retrieval. From Year 2 onwards,

	reading is taught daily using a whole class guided reading approach. For any children who are not yet fluent readers, they receive bespoke, small group teaching using quality, low level, high interest texts. In Reception and Key Stage 1 at Rotherfield, children are taught to read in small, teacher lead groups with a phonetically decodable book. The teaching utilises their phonics knowledge to teach decoding and early retrieval. From Y3 onwards, reading is taught daily using a whole class guided reading approach. For any children who are not yet fluent readers, they receive bespoke, small group teaching using quality, low level, high interest texts. Phonics Newington Green uses the DfE validated Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) SSP, which was developed by the Knowledge Schools Trust and is based on our previous phonics scheme: Letters and Sounds. The programme is designed to ensure that all children learn to read well and make speedy progress. It provides a simple routine and consistent approach to phonics teaching, which helps to reduce pupils' cognitive load and maximises their chances of success. We have made this decision based on extensive research and careful consideration of the needs of all our readers. Rotherfield uses the DfE validated Little Wandle Letters & Sounds Revised SSP which gives our readers a solid base upon which to build as they progress through school, as well as developing the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information. Little Wandle is based on our previous phonics scheme: Letters and Sounds, but extensively revised to prepare our children to go above and beyond the expectations of the Y1 Phonics Screening Check. We have made this decision based on extensive research and careful consideration of the needs of all our readers.
Maths	Maths is taught following the National Curriculum Programme of Study across both schools. We follow a mastery approach to teaching Maths, to ensure that key concepts are fully embedded before moving on to new learning. Emphasis is placed on developing quick recall of addition and multiplication facts and pupils are given frequent opportunities to apply their learning to reason and problem solve. In order to maintain a spaced practice approach alongside maths mastery, we use daily Maths Meetings to return to key concepts throughout the year. Our progression map for Maths also demonstrates how knowledge and skills are returned to and developed from Early Years up to Year 6. More details of our Maths curriculum can be viewed in our medium-term plans for both schools.

Science	Science lessons are delivered weekly by class teachers. The science curriculum is designed to include opportunities for incorporating spaced practice, returning to and building on prior knowledge, key skills and concepts in different year groups, as well as lesson to lesson. Lessons are linked to the overarching topic for the half-term. Opportunities to study a range of scientists from diverse backgrounds are built into the science curriculum.
History	Children are taught either history or geography each half term in weekly lessons by their class teacher. These lessons link to the overarching topic for each half term. The
Geography	progression maps for history and geography clearly show

	how key historical and geographical skills are returned to, embedded and built upon lesson on lesson and year on year.
Art and Design	Children are taught either Art and Design or Design Technology each half term in weekly lessons by their class teacher, which link to the overarching topic for the half term. As with other subject areas, progression of key skills is mapped out in the progression map for each subject. Both schools have designated spaces for 'messy' artwork and creative projects.
Design Technology	
R.E.	R.E. is delivered by class teachers in weekly lessons, following Islington's scheme of work for R.E. Although it is not always possible to link R.E. teaching to overarching topics, key themes are returned to regularly, following the spaced practice approach, to embed pupil knowledge and understanding over time. Educational visits to places of worship are included in our curriculum map.
P.S.H.E.	We follow Islington's scheme of work, 'You, Me, PSHE' which encompasses all aspects of PSHE, including statutory lessons on relationships education. In addition to PSHE lessons, teaching and learning about relationships is embedded in our curriculum from Early Years up to Year 6 through our behaviour policy, ongoing personal development and play. Sex Education is taught in Years 2, 4 and 6 in the Summer term. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the Sex Education elements of PSHE lessons. We inform parents about the content of lessons before they take place and provide alternative provision if parents do not want their children taking part. In addition to the borough scheme of work, our curriculum map includes regular opportunities for children to have class debates, which we believe helps them to develop vital life skills. The development of articulation and debating skills can be seen in our Personal Development Progression Map.
P.E.	P.E. is taught weekly in both schools by subject specialists, which enables us to ensure teaching is of a high standard. We have developed the spaced practice approach across our P.E. curriculum, regularly returning to key skills over time. In addition to weekly P.E. lessons, physical activity is encouraged via whole school initiatives such as Race for Health in both schools and The Daily Mile at Newington Green, as well as break and lunchtime activities and extra-curricular clubs.
Computing	Computing is taught weekly by our shared computing specialist on alternate half terms with music. The use of digital technology is embedded across the curriculum. Our

	curriculum map includes digital technology links for class teachers. The computing specialist monitors the use of digital technology in other subject areas.
Music	Music is taught weekly by our shared Music specialist on alternate half terms with computing. As with other subject areas, children return to key skills regularly to deepen their learning over time.
Spanish	Spanish is taught weekly to all children from Reception to Year 6 across both schools, by our Spanish specialist. Our progression map for Spanish demonstrates how key language skills and vocabulary develop as children progress throughout the school.

3.5 Outdoor Learning

We know that our children benefit from outdoor learning opportunities and have planned in a range of educational visits throughout the year as part of our curriculum entitlement. These visits are also used as starting points for other learning, to encourage children to build on their prior knowledge and understanding and make further learning connections. By the end of Year 6, children in our schools have experienced a range of outdoor learning opportunities, including visits to the opera, the ballet, sporting events and places of worship. In addition, we have included opportunities in each year group for children to gain experience of the wider world of employment, through the 100 Hours: World of Work programme.

3.6 Home Learning

Details of Home Learning can be found in our home learning policies. These policies are research based and focus around the importance of impactful home learning tasks, developing talk, outdoor learning experiences and regular reading and mental maths practice at home.

3.7 Mindset

We teach our pupils the importance of a growth mindset and neuroplasticity from Early Years upwards, in order to develop their resilience and ability to learn from their mistakes. This is an important strand in our Personal Development Progression Map. Pupils are taught that our brains can be exercised like other muscles and grow over time with regular practice. This links to our principles around spaced practice and the importance of regularly returning to and building on prior learning.

Our staff build cultures of challenge in their classrooms via the language they use with children, use of display and their everyday practice. Mistakes are valued as learning opportunities.

Further details of the research that has informed our work on growth mindsets can be found in our Teaching and Learning Policies.

3.8 Mental Health and Self-Regulation

In both of our schools, many of our children come to us finding it difficult to self-regulate their behaviour and emotions. Our Personal Development progression map shows how we have designed age-appropriate opportunities to discuss mental health and develop pupils' self-regulation skills, to support them as they progress through their lives. These skills are regularly visited in PSHE lessons, class circle times and assemblies, where pupils have regular opportunities for reflection.

3.9 Digital Technology to Enhance Learning

Alongside high-quality specialist computing provision, the use of digital technology to enhance learning is embedded as part of our daily practice across the curriculum. Suggested digital technology links are included in our curriculum map and further details can be found in our Teaching and Learning Policy

3.10 Making the Curriculum Accessible to All Pupils

Research shows that ability grouping or setting can have negative effects on pupil wellbeing and progress over time. Our work on Growth Mindsets above links with the belief that intelligence is not fixed and can be grown over time. We have high expectations for all of our pupils in terms of the level of progress they make during their time with us and do not ability group within classes as a form of differentiation. The only subject areas where setting sometimes occurs, in some year groups, are phonics and guided reading, where discrete skills need to be taught in specific phases. All children, including those with special educational needs are able to access our curriculum and are carefully planned for, to ensure they make progress.

3.11 Extra-Curricular Clubs

We offer a wide range of extra-curricular clubs across both schools after school. The clubs on offer change over time, based on the children's requests and interests.

3.12 Assemblies

In both schools, our assemblies take place on a weekly cycle, including whole school opportunities to celebrate children's learning, collective singing assemblies, phase assemblies and class performance assemblies. Our assemblies are part of our curriculum and are carefully timetabled to provide an opportunity for children to learn about key cultural and religious festivals, as well as other areas of personal development, such as building resilience and growth mindsets, understanding diversity and developing articulation skills.

4. Impact

We believe that our curriculum should be continually evolving, based on our ongoing evaluation of its impact. We measure the impact of our curriculum in several ways.

We regularly gather qualitative data from our children, teachers and parents in order to refine the content of our curriculum, reviewing which topics pupils enjoyed and whether any amendments can be made to further improve learning outcomes. Subject leaders review their curriculum areas termly, updating and amending where appropriate.

In addition to qualitative data, we monitor pupil progress and attainment across the school each term. This takes place across the curriculum, including subject specialisms. This termly data is used to inform future planning and teaching and learning approaches for individual pupils.

Each year, our pupils' outcomes on national tests also provide us with an overview of the impact of our curriculum and our data feeds into our self-evaluation document and school improvement planning cycle for the following year. We are constantly tweaking and improving our curriculum to meet the needs of our children.

Ultimately, our aim is for children to leave our schools, emotionally, socially and academically ready for the next stage of their education at secondary school. We foster positive relationships with our feeder secondary schools in order to support transition and use any data shared in this process as a further tool for self-evaluation, ensuring that our curriculum enables children to be secondary ready.