



# Curriculum

Policy Document No. 17

**Eastcourt Independent School**  
**August 2016**  
**Previous review: August 2015**  
**Next review: August 2017**

Independent schools are required by law and statutory guidance to have a curriculum policy, and to make it available to parents.

The National Curriculum is compulsory in maintained schools, and forms the basis of Eastcourt's curriculum. As an independent school, however, we do not undertake to follow the NC in every detail, and reserve the right to adapt, add to or omit some of its requirements. In doing so, we have as our principal motive the specific requirements of Eastcourt pupils, and the reasons for which our parents send their children to be educated at Eastcourt.

Such requirements are held under constant review, and may be adapted from time to time. They include, but are not confined to:

- the various backgrounds and cultures of our pupils
- the aims and ambitions for our pupils held by their parents
- the style and content of entrance examinations to grammar and Public schools

The exception to this is in Stepping Stones at The Oaks and Reception classes at Eastcourt. Here, we are required to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum as laid down by the government, and as applicable to all educational providers.

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## AIMS

Our curriculum is balanced and broadly based, promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

We aim to:

- ensure that pupils develop essential literacy and numeracy skills;
- provide pupils with a full and rounded entitlement to learning;
- foster pupils' creativity;
- inspire pupils to a commitment to learning which will last a lifetime;
- promote a healthy lifestyle;
- promote high standards in all learning and teaching; and
- promote community cohesion.

## **Disabilities**

In accordance with statutory requirements the school aims to make the curriculum accessible to all pupils as far as is reasonably practicable. The school has an Accessibility Plan which is available to parents on the website. [see PD13 Disability]

## **Differentiation**

A variety of differing teaching and learning methods and materials are used in all lessons to suit pupils' different needs.

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## RECEPTION

In accordance with law and statutory guidance, our classes for under-5s<sup>1</sup> follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, known as 'Development Matters'. This has seven 'Areas of Learning and Development', as follows:

### *Prime Areas*

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

### *Specific Areas*

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Informing the delivery of these areas are the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning', namely:

- Playing and exploring (engagement)
- Active learning (motivation)
- Creating and thinking critically (thinking)

Guidance in assessment is offered under these headings:

- A Unique Child (observing what a child is learning)
- Positive Relationships (what adults could do)
- Enabling Environments (what adults could provide)

Children are assessed at the end of the school year in which they reach their fifth birthday, based on the Early Years framework.

<sup>1</sup> Reception classes only at Eastcourt; pre-school classes at The Oaks

## KEY STAGE 1

Years 1 and 2

Traditional subjects are taught<sup>1</sup>, based on the National Curriculum of 2014.

Additional subjects taught in Years 1 and 2 include Drama, Reasoning, and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).

<sup>1</sup>English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, Music, Art and Technology, Computing, Physical Education (PE).

## KEY STAGE 2

Years 3, 4, 5 and 6

The subjects listed above continue. There is an increasing emphasis on verbal and non-verbal reasoning, in line with the requirements of Redbridge and Essex Consortium grammar schools. In addition, the following are introduced from Year 3:

- French.
- Sports staff take each year-group for football, netball, athletics, rounders and Kwik Cricket.

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In accordance with the law, religious education is taught in both Key Stages. It is based on the ethical and moral links between the six major faiths<sup>1</sup>. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from religious education.

An act of collective worship ('assembly') takes place on two days each week for each Key Stage. Consideration in subject matter is given to different faiths, but is not distinctive of particular denominations. Some assemblies are non-religious in character.

Special assemblies marking Harvest, Christmas and Easter are held.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from acts of collective worship. They should inform Mrs Redgrave in writing if they wish to do this.

<sup>1</sup>Taken to be Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism.

## SEX EDUCATION

Sex education does not form part of the Eastcourt curriculum.

## POLITICAL EDUCATION

The promotion of partisan political views by teachers in the teaching of any subject in the school is forbidden by law. Where political issues are introduced in, for example, history, they are presented in a balanced manner.

The expression of extremist views by children, whether political or religious, is viewed as a matter for concern. In the event of any pupil offering (or reported as offering) extremist views, whether deliberately or unintentionally, in class or in the playground, the matter is reported to Mrs Redgrave and dealt with on a personal basis. Parents may be invited to attend a family interview.

## COMMUNITY COHESION

Eastcourt intends that through its curriculum the school will work towards creating a society in which there is:

- a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued
- a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all, and
- a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

## EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT

Assessments in maths and English take place in KS1 and 2 each half-term. They form part of the basis of our advice to parents when transfer between classes, and transfer to secondary school is considered. The marked papers are sent home to parents for their scrutiny, and consultation with the class teacher may follow.

Short assessments in Vocabulary and Visual and Spatial Reasoning take place each half-term. They are designed to highlight individual areas of weakness and are not sent home.

Examinations in the main subjects take place over a period of days each May. The results of these are shown on the annual report and form part of the totals by which class positions are calculated, but the papers are not sent home.

In Year 6, half-termly assessments are usually set aside in favour of formal examination practices in reasoning, maths and English which prepare children for external exams.

Children who miss assessments or exams do not sit the papers at a later time.

## HOMEWORK

Eastcourt places great importance on the home-school relationship in regard to homework. Each child in Key Stages 1 and 2 has a homework diary, in which the tasks for the evening are written, and through which communication with the class teacher is facilitated. Parents should check that the homework has been completed to a satisfactory standard. If for any reason it has not, they should write a brief note of explanation. In any case, the homework diary should be signed by a parent each evening and checked by staff each day.

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30.08.2016