

TEACHING AND LEARNING: CURRICULUM POLICY

Legal Status:

- This is a Statutory Policy
- Regulatory Requirements, Part 1, paragraph 2(2)(a) to (j) Quality of Education Provided (curriculum) (teaching) of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations.

Applies to:

- the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), after school clubs and all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor, pupils on placement and volunteers working in the school.

Other Related Documents Include:

- Differentiation Policy
- Marking Policy
- Planning Policy
- Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Subject Policies including, where relevant, Schemes of Work (Programmes of study)
- EYFS - Curriculum Policy Appendix
- Homework Policy
- Able, Gifted and Talented Policy
- Educational Visits and Off-site Activities Policy

Availability:

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the School website www.eastcourtschool.org.uk, and on request, a copy may be obtained from the Office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Eastcourt Independent School staff.
- Staff are responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum, monitor the weekly lesson plans, ensure that all classes are taught the requirements of the courses and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives.
- SLT observe the way subjects are taught throughout the school. They together with staff review long-term and medium-term planning, and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used.
- It is intended that the review and development of the curriculum will support enthusiastic and inspirational teaching. The process of review plays a key role in the continuing professional development of the teaching staff at Eastcourt Independent School.
- The Headteacher undertakes a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed: *C.Redgrave*

Date: August 2020

Mrs C. Redgrave
Headteacher and Proprietor

Policy Statement

Imagine the joy and excitement of learning in a vibrant, well-structured learning environment where each pupil's individual strengths, talents and aptitudes are nurtured and developed. It is the aim of Eastcourt Independent School to provide a broadly based academic curriculum which will be delivered within the context of the School Ethos. The curriculum underpins the fundamental aims of the School. The curriculum must be seen as the major component of a pupil's education which, together with the pastoral care and the extra-curricular activities offered, help pupils to develop a wide range of key and transferable skills so that they leave the school equipped to become a valuable member of society. Our planned curriculum activities are organised in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. We aim to provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum which encourages an enthusiasm for learning, intellectual curiosity, creativity, personal growth and development. The School provides an academically challenging environment which is vibrant, happy, creative and stimulating. Our teachers have high expectations but equally foster a nurturing environment in order to promote pupils' academic growth and to provide the support they need in order to make excellent progress in their studies.

The educational journey at the School is organised into:

- the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS);
- KS1 and KS2 which is formed of Year 1 to Year 6

The school encourages its pupils to develop intellectual independence and an enduring love of learning for its own sake, equipping them for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. The programmes of study at Eastcourt Independent School extend beyond the National Curriculum. They include not only the full range of academic subjects but also a wide variety of physical and creative experiences. Pupils benefit from opportunities to exercise initiative, develop team-working skills, and participate in visits beyond the classroom. The curriculum not only supports pupils' academic progress but also fosters in them awareness and understanding of a range of spiritual, moral, cultural and social issues. In this way, it promotes their development into compassionate, empathetic and confident individuals. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of pupils. It includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the pupils learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach pupils how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential. Above all, we believe in making learning fun and engendering in young people a love of lifelong learning. Eastcourt Independent School ensures that the curriculum gives all pupils linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative experiences.

Linguistic (including English and French): This area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading (including a phonic screening check in year one) and writing. French is taught from Year 3 onwards by a specialist teacher.

Mathematical This area helps pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics is to be developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion.

Scientific: This area is concerned with increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings.

Technological (including Art, Design and ICT): Technological skills can include information and communication technology (ICT); developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce products which the pupils are proud of; and evaluating processes and products.

Human and Social (including Geography, History, PSHEE and Religious Studies at a level appropriate to the child's development): This area is concerned with people and their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions.

Physical (including PE, Games and an extra-curricular programme): This area aims to develop the pupils' physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses, and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. Pupils should also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health.

Aesthetic and creative (including Art, Drama and Music): This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. There are aesthetic and creative aspects of all subjects, but some make a particularly strong contribution, including ICT and the study of literature, because they call for personal, imaginative, and often practical, responses. We have specialist IT, Music and Drama teachers who teach from Reception to Year 6. Opportunities for visits from Drama groups and external agencies are planned as appropriate. Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. We have termly musical/ drama events such as Links gatherings, Christmas and Easter productions, celebrations of friendship, Mother's Day and an annual concert and prizegiving (in a local theatre).

In addition to the National Curriculum, both Key Stages teach Religious Education, French and Drama.

Aims of the Policy

The aims of the curriculum at Eastcourt Independent School are to enable pupils to:-

- develop lively, imaginative and enquiring minds with the ability to question, solve problems and argue rationally;
- develop a willingness to apply themselves and an aptitude for learning;
- acquire knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and employment in a world of rapid continuous change including technological change;
- develop sound English and Maths skills and competence in the use of Information Technology;
- develop creativity, critical awareness, empathy and sensitivity;
- recognise their own and other's achievements and aspirations;
- develop self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence;
- develop personal and moral values, respect for shared values and for other cultures, religions and ways of life;
- develop skills and ability to work independently and as a member of a group or team;
- develop personal, moral and spiritual values and tolerance of others, to value each individual and learn to live together in an atmosphere of mutual respect;
- develop an awareness of their place in society as informed, confident and responsible citizens with opportunities for service to each other and the community;
- become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community.

In accordance with best practice and where appropriate regulatory requirements, it is our school policy to ensure that we supply:

- Full time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education;
- Subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils.
- Speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
- Where a pupil has an EHC Plan, education which fulfils its requirements;
- Personal, social and health education which reflects the school's aims and ethos;
- The opportunity to learn and make progress;
- Adequate preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of secondary school life.

Main Principles

All pupils, regardless of ability, race, cultural background or gender have a right to the highest quality of education we can provide. This means that we strive to ensure that:-

- the curriculum has breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, progression, continuity and coherence;
- the curriculum should promote knowledge, understanding and mastery of intellectual, physical, and interpersonal skills and personal qualities, values and attitudes;

- there is equality of access for all pupils to academic experiences;
- school must provide appropriate tasks and teaching techniques to support high expectations and appropriate challenges;
- all parents are provided with curriculum information relevant to their child and
- the curriculum is subject to planned evaluation and review.

We have a responsibility to adapt our teaching to ensure that all pupils are engaged in their learning, motivated and enabled to succeed. Teachers are expected to ensure that pupils who are experiencing difficulty or becoming demotivated are identified early and given necessary support, encouragement, guidance and, if necessary, different teaching styles and differentiated tasks.

Values

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating pupils in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives. The curriculum seeks to promote the reputation of Eastcourt Independent School as a school with excellent standards of study, which prepares pupils for senior school and life-long involvement in learning. Its curriculum prepares pupils to contribute confidently to an ethnically pluralistic society.

- We value the way in which all pupils are unique, and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual pupil, as well as for people of all cultures. We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.
- We value the importance of each person in our community. We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community.
- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each pupil in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all the pupils in our school.
- We value our environment, and we aim, through our curriculum, to teach respect for our world, and how we should care for it for future generations, as well as our own.

Entry to all programmes of study is based on academic suitability and appropriateness, regardless of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief. 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 a policy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and an Accessibility Plan which are available to parents on request. In order to achieve these values, the curriculum will seek to reinforce the following features of Eastcourt Independent School:

- the confidence, talent and high aspirations of its pupils;
- the enquiring atmosphere and enjoyment of discourse which are a prominent feature of Eastcourt Independent School;
- the support given to pupils in and outside the classroom by well-qualified, enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff.

The pupils are encouraged to:

- have confidence in who they are as individuals, identifying courage as a worthy attribute;
- stand up for the positive values that engender meaningful loyalties and strong communities. These include: humility, dignity, compassion and integrity;
- promote supportive relationships, and a respect for diversity and difference;
- be self-disciplined, self-directed, and demonstrate self-control;
- participate in the transformation of their society through reflection, sensitivity and action.

Standards of attainment

From the end of the academic year we will carry out data analysis and use the data provided to find out how well pupils in our school are achieving, compared with pupils in similar schools. We will analyse the statistics to help answer the following questions:

- Do pupils perform better in some subjects than others?
- Are there significant differences between boys' and girls' performances?

- How well are the more able pupils doing, and do enough pupils achieve the higher levels?
- Can we identify any groups of pupils who may be underperforming?
- Can we identify any groups of pupils who are gifted and talented?
- Comparing expectations and estimates with final results.

The Learning Environment

We believe that a purposeful and structured learning environment is essential in promoting high standards. A positive caring environment and culture will promote positive self-esteem and confidence. Organised resources, displays of pupil's work, stimulating materials and bright, colourful language enriched and interactive displays all help to provide the Optimal Learning Environment. We ensure that all tasks and activities that the pupils perform are safe. When we plan to take pupils out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: where applicable the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. Parents/guardians are informed, and their permission obtained before the visit takes place.

Teaching assistants and other adult helpers are deployed as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual pupils and sometimes they work with small groups. Our school is an attractive learning environment. We ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the pupils. All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect.

Effective learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and feel they belong, in which they enjoy being challenged, but in which they enjoy learning, and know that they will succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level). All teaching is structured to maximise learning opportunities and lessons are planned in accordance with the following principles:

- The teaching should build on previous learning.
- It should give pupils the 'big picture' of the lesson.
- The teacher should explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important.
- The lesson should be presented in a range of styles.
- It should allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities.
- It should allow opportunities for the pupils to review what has been learnt.
- It should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the pupils, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies.
- The teaching should indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

We offer opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- the use of guest speakers and parents talking about current events, cultural or religious celebrations and their careers or interests
- watching television, film and responding to musical or tape-recorded material;

- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;

We encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Assessment and marking are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. As outlined in the Assessment and Marking Policy, informal formative assessment (Assessment for Learning or AfL) takes place continuously in the classroom and comprises of:

- effective teacher questioning;
- observations of learning;
- analysing and interpreting evidence of learning to inform future planning;
- sensitive and positive feedback to pupils;
- individual target setting: SMART (specific, measurable, assessable, realistic and given in time);
- pupils understanding how well they are doing and how they can improve.

Effective Ethos and Classroom Environment

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all pupils in the class. We treat the pupils with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with pupils the class code of conduct. We expect all pupils to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise pupils for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards the school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When pupils misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school behaviour policy. We aim to provide a learning environment which:

- is challenging and stimulating;
- is peaceful and calm;
- is happy and caring;
- is organised and well-resourced;
- makes learning accessible;
- is encouraging and appreciative;
- is welcoming;
- provides equal access and inclusion;
- provides a professional working atmosphere.

Enrichment opportunities

All pupils have the opportunity to develop existing interests and nurture new ones through a variety of clubs and enrichment activities, which operate at lunchtimes and after school. These reflect the talents and interests of the staff and pupils. The extra-curricular clubs include judo, speech and communication, instrumental lessons, Netball, Running, Fitness, Performing Arts and ICT.

The Quality of Teaching

SLT carry out book appraisals, whereby books are checked for consistency of marking and being up to date. Planning appraisals are also carried out to check planning is up to date and evaluated. All teachers are observed working with classes at least once a year, and Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) are observed each half term. The criteria that we use have been agreed by all teachers, and are part of our teaching and learning policy. The teacher and the observer follow the observation with a discussion. The observer notes the strengths and areas for development, and gives a copy of this information to the teacher. SLT use the information gained from this monitoring process to help identify common development points which can be addressed in the school's training programme for continuing professional development. The purpose of the teaching at Eastcourt Independent School:

- enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
- fosters in pupils the application of intellectual, physical or creative effort, interest in their work, and the ability to think and learn for themselves;

- involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
- shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
- demonstrates appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject-matter being taught;
- utilises effectively classroom resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range;
- demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;
- utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

Assessment (see our Assessment Policy)

At Eastcourt Independent School we have an effective framework in place to assess pupils' work both regularly and thoroughly. We use the information gathered through our range of assessment methods (both summative and formative) along with Granada Learning (GL), CAT scores (Year 5) and NFER English and Maths scores (Years 1 -5). We have a framework for evaluative pupil performance through the use of the summative assessments mentioned above. We also ensure that our framework for pupil performance is evaluated.

Organisation and planning

We plan our curriculum in three phases. We plan carefully, so that there is coherence and full coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum and early learning goals, and there is planned progression in all curriculum areas. At Key Stage 1 and 2 the core and foundation subjects are taught separately.

Over the three terms of the academic year, each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects. In our curriculum planning we highlight these areas, so that the pupil's progress can be identified and monitored. All subject areas contribute to a child's progress in these skills. Our school believes that all pupils need to make good progress in these skill areas in order to develop to their true potential.

Long term plans. Our schemes of work give an annual overview of what will be taught.

Medium term planning. These indicate WHEN the material will be delivered and are prepared on a half-termly basis from the Scheme of Work in response to individual group needs. These plans are revised at least once a year. SLT with class teachers are responsible for ensuring that long term and medium term plans are in place and enable pupil's skills, knowledge and understanding to develop progressively. Assessment strategies are built in. All staff follow an agreed marking policy. Teachers plan individual lessons and include the learning intention; WALT and/or success criteria.

Short term planning. Short term plans are on a weekly basis which detail the learning objectives, strategies, activities and identify the resources used in each lesson. These plans are concerned with HOW material is taught and with the details of delivery as well as what is taught. There is a section for "Evaluation". Some year groups may additionally do daily planning.

When there is more than one class in a year group, weekly planning meetings are held to discuss the following week's plans. Teachers have the same medium term plans, and may use the same resources. However, teachers will select activities and approaches which are appropriate to their class.

When teaching we focus on motivating the pupils and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the school curriculum to guide our teaching. Plans are reviewed annually and may be subject to change.

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the pupils' level of attainment. Teachers make ongoing assessments of each pupil's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their pupils. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the pupils. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each pupil's level of ability. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for pupils using AFL regularly. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability.

We strive to meet the needs of all our pupils. We have high expectations of our pupils, and we believe that their work here at Eastcourt Independent School is of the highest possible standard.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Foundation Stage curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Physical Development
- Expressive Arts and Design

We believe learning is holistic and none of the mentioned areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. One experience may provide children with opportunities to develop a range of competencies, skills and concepts across several areas of learning. Each area of learning works towards a number of relevant Early Learning Goals, which most children are expected to achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Time allocation

- The timetable is constantly under review and is subject to changes in staff and in staff responsibility. The aims of our timetabling policy are to ensure that every pupil has access to all areas of the timetable.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)

In our school we plan effectively in order to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Pupils of all faiths and belief systems are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and a spirit of open and shared enquiry, whilst developing their individual potential and qualities of character so they can make a positive contribution to the world. Whilst SMSC is integral to all aspects of our curriculum, PSHEE, citizenship and religious education make a strong contribution. Pupils are led towards distinguishing right from wrong, to respect the law and towards acting consistently with their beliefs and with a view to the consequences of their own and others' actions. In addition our school:

- Leads pupils towards becoming confident and positive contributors to their community and effective users of its services and facilities according to their maturity;
- Enables pupils to gain insights into the origins and practices of their own cultures and into those of the wider community;
- Takes steps to ensure that the pupils appreciate racial and cultural diversity and avoid and resist racism,
- Ensure that pupils are able to understand and respond to risk, for example risks associated with extremism, new technology, substance misuse, knives and gangs, personal relationships and personal safety.
- Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life;
- Provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England;
- assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions.
- Encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- Precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school;

We also take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that political issues are brought to the attention of pupils-

- while they are in attendance at the school;
- while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organized by or on behalf of the school; or
- they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship

Eastcourt Independent School is committed to providing a comprehensive programme of PSHEE for all its pupils, which is appropriate to their age and needs. Responsibility for developing and implementing this programme rests with the Headteacher. Each child's PSHEE and Citizenship education informs all aspects of the school day. The form this takes ranges from the way we treat each other to planning food technology lessons based on individual's cultural heritage. We have a cross-curricular approach to PSHEE, and its associated objectives may be addressed in RE, Circle Time, Drama, Assemblies or other curriculum areas. Our structured play sessions are specifically tailored to the needs of the group, from working with a child coping with parallel play to facilitating turn taking and initiation. We 'help pupils achieve more' by ensuring that all pupils are given the opportunity to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.

We provide positive experiences through planned and coherent opportunities in the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and through interactions with teachers and other adults for our pupils. Our range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities is available to pupils through the curricular and extra-curricular programme, and their participation in these opportunities. We plan our personal, social and health education and citizenship through assemblies and 'circle time' to help our pupils acquire values and skills to enable them to develop independence and choose their path in life. Eastcourt Independent School seeks to:

- develop an ethos and environment which encourages a healthy lifestyle for pupils;
- use the full capacity and flexibility of the curriculum to help pupils to achieve safe and healthy lifestyles;
- ensure that food and drink available across the school day, reinforces the healthy lifestyle message;
- provide high quality Physical Education and sport to promote physical activity;
- promote an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon a lifelong health and well-being.

We aim for our pupils to understand and appreciate the range of different cultures and faiths in modern democratic Britain. We use our schemes of work and other plans which enable pupils to develop an understanding of public services and institutions and to take their place in modern democratic British society. We provide a range of quality opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility in school and make a positive contribution to the school, local and wider communities.

The Role of the SLT

The SLT determines, supports, monitors and reviews the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular:

- monitors how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment through assessments;
- monitors the teaching and learning through lesson observations;
- ensures that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- monitors long, medium and short term planning;
- monitors the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes, which include reports from class teachers, promotes and develops the process of school development planning.

The Role of the class teachers

Eastcourt Independent School wishes to involve all staff in planning and developing all areas of the curriculum. They must help to:

- provide a strategic lead and direction;
- support and offer advice to colleagues;
- monitor child progress;
- provide efficient resource management;
- reviewing planning: meeting NC Programmes of Study where applicable;
- learning scrutiny: consider standards across all abilities and ages (with colleagues);
- resourcing: ensure resources are appropriate/suitable stored/labelled etc;
- identify shortfalls in resources: gaps in provision, ensuring resources in school are used;

- informal monitoring during year – displays, use of resources, photographs, pupils interviews and feedback
- review and update Scheme of Work for the subject, if necessary;
- observe lessons and self evaluate;
- arrange school based training, or team teaching, if needed;
- attendance at local conferences and courses, if appropriate;
- dissemination from courses/action research/newsletters, where appropriate;
- provide articles for the school magazine and website;
- commit to personal professional development;
- annually evaluate their curriculum – identify subject priorities for future development.

Review the curriculum plans ensuring that progression is planned into schemes of work. Keep a portfolio of pupil's work, which is used to show the achievement of pupils at each key stage and to give examples of expectation of attainment.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We are committed to providing pupils with the necessary support and teaching who require English as an additional language. Where this is required an appropriate programme will be implemented.

The Curriculum and Staff

Members of staff ensure that the learning outcomes required to achieve the goals in the foregoing paragraphs are embodied in the teaching that implements the curriculum. Teachers ensure that an appropriate level and standard of homework is regularly set and marked so that learning outcomes may be consolidated and the needs of individual pupils identified and met.

Our curriculum is well planned for each age group and key stage and ensures that pupils of all abilities are able to acquire knowledge and understanding, develop and practise new skills, and make progress in a range of areas of learning. We design our curriculum to ensure that it is broad, well balanced and covers all the required areas of learning. We modify our curriculum and teaching to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils including our gifted and talented pupils.

Auditing our curriculum: teaching and learning

We ask ourselves the following questions when auditing our current performance:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we compare with similar schools?
- What more should we aim to achieve?
- What must we do to make it happen?

When evaluating the quality of the curriculum, we consider:

- the impact of the curriculum on pupils' academic and personal development and in preparing them for the opportunities, choices, responsibilities and experiences of secondary school life;
- the contribution of the curriculum to the school's particular ethos and aims and the impact on pupils' academic and personal development and well-being;
- how well curriculum planning is supported by appropriate schemes of work, builds systematically upon pupils' prior experience and plans for progression;
- the extent to which the curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular opportunities and through collaboration with other schools and organisations, including, for example, to provide appropriate secondary school guidance for our KS2 pupils;
- the views of our pupils, parents and staff.

Expectations of Staff

Staff are expected to actively promote the curriculum aims by:-

- having high expectation of pupils;
- employing a variety of learning and teaching methods;
- having appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
- ensuring that pupils are enabled to access the curriculum and given opportunities to be successful;

- having a good understanding of the aptitude, needs and prior attainments, of the pupils and ensuring that these are taken into account in the planning of these lessons;
- delivering lessons which build upon previous experience, providing continuity and progression;
- providing learning opportunities which offer depth and challenge and motivate and inspire pupils;
- utilising effective classroom resources of a high quality, quantity and range appropriate to the learners needs;
- involving pupils in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular formative feedback through discussion, assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging pupils to evaluate their personal achievements;
- developing pupil's skills to become independent learners;
- encouraging, rewarding and valuing achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment;
- working in partnership with pupils, staff and parents to achieve shared goals;
- keeping parents/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their pupils through reports and parents evenings.

In our school the most important role of teaching is to promote learning in order to raise pupils' achievement. For us, teaching includes lesson planning, the implementation of plans, as well as marking, assessment and feedback. It also includes support and intervention strategies. In assessing the quality of the teaching in our school we take account of the evidence of pupils' learning, achievements and progress over time. We consider how successful the teaching is in promoting the learning, progress and personal development for every pupil by:

- extending the previous knowledge, skills and understanding of all pupils in a range of lessons and activities over time;
- enabling pupils to develop skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics;
- enthusing, engaging and motivating pupils to learn;
- using assessment and feedback to support learning and to help pupils know how to improve their work;
- differentiating teaching, by setting suitably challenging activities and providing support for pupils of different abilities, including the most able so that they can all learn well and make progress;
- enabling pupils to apply intellectual, physical or creative efforts and develop the skills to learn for themselves and setting high expectations;
- setting appropriate homework ;
- using well-judged and effective planning and teaching methods, deploying appropriate resources, managing class time and drawing on good subject knowledge and expertise to encourage pupils to make good progress;
- using effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

We use lesson observations by colleagues and teacher self-evaluation which takes account of:

- how well challenging tasks are matched to pupils' learning needs and successfully engage all pupils in their learning;
- how well pupils understand how to improve their learning as a result of frequent, detailed and accurate feedback from teachers following assessment of their learning ;
- pupils' attitudes to learning, behaviour and relationships in the classroom;
- the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Direct observation **must** be supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable inspectors to evaluate the impact that teaching has had on pupils' learning. Such additional evidence should include:

- observing some lessons jointly with senior staff before discussing them also with the teacher who has been observed;
- discussing with pupils and parents the work they have done and their experience of teaching and learning over longer periods;
- discussing teaching and learning with staff;
- taking account of the views of pupils, parents and carers and staff, where appropriate;
- taking account of the school's own evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning;
- scrutinising the standard of pupils' work, noting how well and frequently marking and assessment are used to help pupils to improve their learning;

- the level of challenge provided.

Subjects offered

In Key Stage 1 and 2 the following subjects are offered:

English, Mathematics, Science, Computing, Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) French, History, Geography, Religious Education (RE), Physical Education (PE), Art, Design and Technology (DT), Music and Drama, PSHEE, Citizenship (Year 6).

Religious education

Religious Education is incorporated into distinct lessons available to all pupils. Moral education also forms part of assemblies and an appreciation of those who have made significant contributions to our world.

Cultural education and appreciation of diversity

Eastcourt Independent School includes aspects of cultural education in many specific and cross-curricular ways. All pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of equality of opportunity.

Relationship education

Eastcourt Independent School provides Relationship education in the basic curriculum in which pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. It has regard for the government's guidance in *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (0116/2000)*.

Political education

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in Eastcourt Independent School is forbidden by law. Political issues are introduced through current affairs, and are presented in a balanced manner.

PE

All pupils are expected to take part in the school's Physical Education programme. Pupils can only be excused from PE lessons for medical reasons, for which a note from a parent will suffice, or other reasons agreed with the school.

Extra-curricular activities

Eastcourt Independent School has a programme of activities that take place outside the formal curriculum.

Learning outside the classroom - educational visits/off-site activities

Integral to our curriculum is a wide range of educational experiences that extend beyond the classroom door. Eastcourt Independent School curriculum offers a series of educational journeys that deepen the pupils' understanding of the world around them. Trips and visitors extend pupils' knowledge of past and present.

Homework

Homework is given to pupils at different stages of their development.

Reception - In Reception, English and Maths homework is given weekly allowing plenty of time to complete it. Each piece of work supports the learning that has been happening in the classroom that week. The homework allows parents to support their child with their learning. Reading homework is given every day and this includes discussing pictures and story lines to develop vocabulary and improve comprehension skills. They are encouraged to read their own books as well and record this in their diary. We always encourage each pupil to progress at their own rate.

Year One - Every night pupils are expected to read in Year 1. Each week the pupils will receive Spellings and mental maths homework. In addition to this they are set one piece of Maths and one English to support the learning that has been going on in the classroom. Year 1 homework is expected to take 20 minutes.

Year Two - In Year 2, pupils have reading each evening, spellings and mental maths homework each week, plus additional work from English, Maths or a foundation subjects throughout the week as necessary. Year 2 homework is expected to take 25 minutes.

Year Three - In Year 3, pupils are expected to read each evening and have spellings and mental maths homework weekly, plus additional work usually English and Maths each evening. Year 3 homework is expected to take 30 minutes.

Year Four - In Year 4, homework is similar to Year 3 and is expected to take 35 minutes.

Year Five - Year 5 homework is again similar but is expected to take 45 minutes. There may be more reasoning tasks.

Year Six - In Year 6, pupils have homework each evening. In the first half of the year, the focus of homework is exam preparation. In the second half, a greater emphasis is given to project based and investigative tasks. Pupils are required to hand in homework at specific times and locations to other members of staff. This is to prepare them for the additional responsibilities towards homework at Secondary School. Year 6 homework is expected to take up to 1 hour.

Inclusion and homework

We recognise the importance and value of homework as an extension and consolidation of classwork. We have a separate Homework Policy and parents receive a written note outlining homework in the home/school diary. Homework assignments can be varied in line with the competency of the pupil. However, scope for this is limited by the nature of the courses in which outcomes are similar for all members of a class.

Transition Support

We ensure all pupils are prepared for their transition from EYFS into Key Stage 1, the next academic year and Key Stage 2. We have a transition afternoon each end of year, where pupils spend the afternoon with their new teacher and parents have the opportunity to meet with them after school.

Senior School guidance

Pupils at Eastcourt Independent School are supported in their preparation for formal examinations at various stages of their education. Pupils are encouraged to learn about their own academic strengths and weaknesses, and the type of learning method that best suits them as an individual. Pupils talk about interviews prior to attending selection assessments at senior schools. These are all ways in which they are prepared for the future beyond Eastcourt Independent School.

Concerns

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the class teacher. If the issue is not resolved parents should contact the Headteacher.

Academic Excellence and Public Examinations

Whilst accepting the need to prepare its pupils for their Senior School education, we also strive to ensure that the pursuit of these goals is consistent with achieving the other goals set out in this policy.

Communication with Parents and Guardians

We believe that parents and guardians have a fundamental role to play in helping pupils to learn. We do all we can to inform parents and guardians about what and how their pupils are learning by:

- holding parents' evenings to explain our school strategies;
- holding an informal parents' evening in the Autumn term and in the Summer term.
- sending information to parents and guardians, through a half termly information sheet, in which we outline the topics that the pupils will be studying.

- sending half termly assessments to parents and guardians to show progress and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents and guardians how they can support their pupils with homework. We suggest support for older pupils with their projects and investigative work;
- being available - we have an open door policy.

We believe that parents and guardians have the responsibility to support their pupils and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents and guardians to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance and punctuality record possible;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform the school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school, staff and learning in general;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the homework agreement.

In Summary

Eastcourt Independent School is characterised by academic excellence, expert pastoral care and inspiring education. We enable pupils at a formative stage in their development to experience the joy and excitement of learning in an environment which celebrates individual strengths and talents and allows pupils to develop the confidence, motivation and ambition that are the hallmarks of our school.