

Chadwell Heath Academy

A Specialist Mathematics, Computing, Science and Media Arts College



SCHOOL CURRICULUM STATEMENT

OUR AIM AS A SCHOOL

To provide the environment and resources that will enable our pupils to develop their potential to the full and be equipped to play their part in the adult world.

AMPLIFICATION OF OUR AIM

- ◆ To help pupils to develop lively, enquiring minds, with the ability to question and argue rationally and apply themselves to tasks and physical skills;
- ◆ To help pupils to acquire knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and employment in a fast changing world;
- ◆ To help pupils to use language and number effectively;
- ◆ To instil respect for, and understanding of religious and moral values and tolerance of other races, religions and ways of life;
- ◆ To help pupils to understand the world in which they live and the interdependence of individual groups and nations;
- ◆ To help pupils to appreciate human achievements and aspirations.

DISCIPLINE AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

We realise that within the School there will be a climate of relationships, attitudes and styles of behaviour that should be consistent with, and supportive of, the formal curriculum.

We wish to motivate our pupils to want to learn (both at school and in later life) by making the learning process an enjoyable activity in a happy atmosphere. The development of self-discipline is encouraged and we wish to see that when sanctions are applied, they are done so in a just manner.

We encourage our pupils to develop qualities of self esteem, responsibility and an understanding of the important relationship between how a person behaves and what he/she believes.

OBJECTIVES

Departments are encouraged to ensure that objectives are specific, understood clearly by Staff and pupils, and capable of short term implementation. Objectives should be thought of in terms

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of concepts and knowledge to be taught and learned, and skills and attitudes to be encouraged and developed. They should also be appraised regularly.

In view of the vital role which parents play in the education process it is important that they should be fully informed of the aims and objectives of the subject. This will then assist them to support and reinforce the work completed in class.

FEATURES OF THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum as a whole and its individual parts (whether defined in terms of conventional single subjects such as mathematics or wider groupings such as science) should have certain characteristics. These should apply both to what is learned and to how that learning takes place.

BREADTH, BALANCE AND COHERENCE

The goals of education apply to all pupils. All pupils should, through their total curriculum, have access to wide areas of learning and experience.

All pupils will follow a broad and balanced curriculum to Key Stage 3 that is:

- > Aesthetic and creative
- > Human and social
- > Linguistic and literary
- > Mathematical
- > Moral
- > Physical
- > Scientific
- > Spiritual
- > Technological

At Key Stage 4 all pupils follow a core curriculum of:

- Citizenship and Personal and Social Education
- English
- ICT
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Science
- A choice of optional subjects

In the Sixth Form the curriculum is tailored as far as possible to the needs of the individual student, allowing them to access higher and further education or the world of work.

THE CLASSROOM APPROACH

The emphasis is on encouraging pupils to accept a high degree of responsibility for their own learning, whether as a result of individual, group or class work. Whilst teacher-centred

approaches may be appropriate on some occasions, non didactic methods are more likely to develop self-reliance in pupils and the ability to work co-operatively.

First hand experience, practical, investigational and problem solving work should feature prominently in the learning experience. Various types of audio-visual material should be used to provide variety and authenticity and to enable concepts to be more easily grasped and understood. Full advantage should be taken of the opportunities provided for computer assisted learning and the development of information technology skills.

The School values and pays particular attention to, the visual environment in which teaching and learning takes place. Departments are therefore requested to ensure that rooms are kept in good condition and displays of pupils' work are regularly on view and updated. The visual environment should be stimulating and convey a sense of purposeful work, organisation, neatness and pride in our School and our pupils achievements.

RELEVANCE

It is important that the curriculum should be relevant to the needs of pupils whatever their level of maturity, ability, sex, ethnic background, hopes and aspirations. What is taught - and how it is taught - should be seen by pupils as worthwhile; they should enjoy their time at school and feel it pertinent to their present as well as their future needs.

Pupils need to be equipped with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and inner resources that will help them to make sense of the complex adult world outside their regular and detailed experience, as, for example, through school/industry links and work experience. The curriculum should deal with the rights, expectations and responsibilities of adult life. In this connection, the Personal and Social Education programmes developed by each Year team is particularly relevant. Within the PSE delivery, health education, an understanding of the national political institutions and how they work, environmental education, Economic understanding, and education for racial equality, have important parts to play. In considering these matters various moral issues and values will be raised and as with sex education, a sympathetic, sensitive and responsible approach is required.

Schemes of work should be regularly up-dated. They must be relevant not only to the present known world but reflect changes as they take place. They should demonstrate awareness of future trends. Thus, for example,

- ◆ schemes of work in the areas of Design and Technology and Business Studies should take into account the importance of microelectronics technology in the industrial and business world;
- ◆ approaches to religious education should take into account the plurality of faiths in contemporary Britain;
- ◆ health education programmes should deal with contemporary issues such as drug misuse solvent abuse and smoking,
- ◆ pupils should be given every opportunity to develop skills in ICT.

In keeping the curriculum up-to-date departments should bear in mind not only what new content and issues should be included but what need no longer be taught and learned. Thus, pruning should be undertaken.

DIFFERENTIATION

As far as practicable, the Departmental curriculum should be designed to meet the needs of every individual child. Everything possible ought to be done to ensure appropriate differentiation.

Particular care should be taken to ensure that forms of organisation achieve, in practice, the purposes for which they were established. For example, it ought not to be assumed,

- ◆ that mixed ability teaching will automatically take place if pupils are organised in mixed ability groups;
- ◆ that the pace and content of lessons will necessarily vary from teaching group to teaching group if pupils are organised in ability sets;
- ◆ that pupils will, in practice, work co-operatively in groups (rather than as individuals or as a whole class) just because they sit together in groups within a classroom
- ◆ that "banding" will achieve appropriate differentiation if the bands are formed in such a way that they do not match the intrinsic characteristics of the normal statistical curve of ability.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Departments should have explicit policies, understood by all their staff, which seek to ensure that pupils with special learning difficulties have their needs recognised as early as possible. Special provision should then be made for these pupils to have access to an appropriate, individualised but balanced curriculum. Where support help is given, it should be supportive of, and associated with, the normal curriculum of the class; over-emphasis on a narrow range of mechanistic skills should be avoided.

The needs of the most able must also be carefully assessed and met and departments must ensure that sufficiently challenging tasks are set to enable these pupils to develop their potential to the full.

CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION

There should be continuity and progression in the curriculum of each pupil from year to year and this should be given full attention in schemes of work. All teachers should be aware of the experiences their pupils have had already and of the ones planned for them in the future.

It is important for there to be close liaison between the different subject teachers of particular age groups in order to establish a coherent approach to the curriculum and so ensure maximum progression. If cross-curricular liaison is not effective some subject teachers may assume,

wrongly, that certain concepts and skills have been taught to their pupils by colleagues in other disciplines and draw up their own curriculum plans from a false premise.

PRIMARY LIAISON

The School will develop programmes that encourage the development of cooperation with the local Primary Schools. When the Year 7 intake for September into the School is known there will be a full programme of induction for the pupils.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Departments should ensure that their curriculum provides equal opportunity for pupils to have access to a broad range of learning opportunities irrespective of whether they are boys or girls. We should do everything we can to reduce sex stereotyping with a view to developing as fully as possible the potential of all pupils.

It is also very important indeed that we should have regard to the fact that we draw our pupils from a multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-faith population. We need to ensure that the content of our curriculum reflects this multi-racial nature of our school society and furthers understanding of the principles and practice of racial equality and justice. Attitudes should be fostered which promote tolerance and understanding and reject prejudice. Positive approaches ought to be adopted which recognise and take account of cultural and ethnic differences and draw upon cultural diversity to promote a better understanding of contemporary society.

Particular care must be taken to ensure that pupils whose home language is not English are not disadvantaged because of this. Special provision is made to enable such children to have access to the normal curriculum. Any linguistic difficulties the pupils have need to be carefully assessed and progress should be monitored systematically so that any special provision made is appropriate to the needs of the children at each stage.

Heads of Year should inform themselves about the home languages of their pupils, their competence in them and whether or not the pupils attend language classes out of school time.

ASSESSMENT

It is important that teachers and parents have a reliable guide to the progress being made by individual pupils. Such assessment might take various forms. It might be qualitative, criterion or norm referenced and numerically or linguistically based. Whatever the forms of assessment used, they should be flexible enough to recognise the particular characteristics of individual pupils and of the different forms of knowledge, skills and experience.

The following four aspects of achievement could provide a useful basis for assessment:

- ◆ the capacity to retain propositional knowledge, select from it and memorise and organise such material;
- ◆ the ability to apply knowledge, to solve problems and use investigational skills;

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- ◆ the acquisition of personal and social skills - the capacity to communicate easily with others, co-operate effectively, use initiative, be self reliant;
- ◆ the development of self motivation, commitment, tolerance of failure, perseverance.

All departments must have clear assessment policies and procedures. These must be clearly understood and consistently applied by the teachers concerned. Records must be maintained carefully and be readily available for professional consultation within the School. They should be kept in such a way that if a teacher leaves a new teacher is not placed at a disadvantage in dealing with the continued education of that pupil.

Special care needs to be taken to ensure that those less familiar with the difficulties associated with educational assessment - such as many parents and some prospective employers - are not misled by oversimplified information.

SCHOOL BASED CURRICULUM APPRAISAL

All teachers within the School should be aware of the nature and purposes of the curriculum as a whole and their role in its delivery. This implies that all departments need to have formal structures for curriculum appraisal and understanding.

All teachers are encouraged to participate in discussions which lead to the formation of curriculum policy at the various levels. Unless this happens the effective implementation of a coherent curriculum policy will be severely constrained. In this connection, the decisions of whole school staff meetings, curriculum working parties or departmental meetings should be recorded in writing and then communicated to all the teachers concerned.