

DOWSON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Curriculum Statement

At Dowson Primary School we believe in a 'holistic' approach to children's development and design our curriculum to reflect this.

The National Curriculum content is statutory and therefore, coverage of this is ensured throughout school in Years 1 - 6 (see whole school curriculum map). In addition, to the statutory curriculum, Dowson designs all learning opportunities around its 4 'Key Drivers' which were developed by Staff and Governors. The Key Drivers outline the 4 broad elements that we feel develop the 'whole child' and will equip children with the skills, traits and attributes needed for life in modern Britain and ultimately improve their future life chances.

The 4 Key Drivers are summarised as:

Learners for Life

A life-long love of learning is the key to learning and achievement success for children in education and indeed life! Through this driver, we develop positive attitudes to learning, the motivation and desire to learn, aspirations for the future, an understanding of HOW to learn and, importantly, the traits and attributes needed to be a successful learner such as independence, critical thinking skills, risk taking, self-challenge, perseverance, determination, no fear of failure, resilience and adaptability. We grow children's understanding that struggle is good, mistakes help us to learn and that if they believe they can do something, they are more likely to succeed than if they believe they can't. Children with all these skills are well-prepared for future autonomy and will be well placed to follow their dreams!

Basic Skills for Life

A good standard and competence in the basic skills of Reading, Writing and Mathematics is the number one ingredient for improved life chances and a successful future in adulthood for the children we teach. Therefore, the linked learning aspect of our curriculum affords children regular chances to practice, rehearse and apply their basic skills across a wide range of subjects and therefore develop the understanding of how important and useful these skills are in so many different contexts – including 'real-life'. This driver works to ensure children develop:

- *Reading, Writing and Maths competence to at least the National Standard.*
- *Use and understanding of money to ensure future economic well-being, ability to manage finance, banking and hold debt awareness.*
- *Communication skills (both speaking and listening), ability to give and receive opinions, present an argument / express their views.*
- *ICT literacy*
- *Problem solving / decision making skills*

Working Together

DOWSON PRIMARY SCHOOL

- *Other curricular skills such as: scientific working, understanding variables; historical skills - using sources of information, understanding bias; geographical skills – use of maps, aerial pictures etc.*
- *Presentation of work and ourselves: take pride in their work and its presentation, developing a cursive, legible style of handwriting, taking care of books, equipment etc; present themselves smartly in correct uniform and adhere to rules; be punctual and ready to learn.*

Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC)

Children’s social skills, moral and ethical code, spiritual understanding of themselves and a clear sense of belonging to their cultural heritage and the society and community in which they live make up the essence of themselves as human beings. Their presence, behaviour and conduct in society will depend on and be influenced by these skills, inner beliefs and understanding. This driver is essentially concerned with educating children to have all the skills and attributes to be a good citizen. It focuses on developing morals and empathy, accepting diversities and being tolerant and having an awareness of other cultures and religions as well as a strong sense of fundamental British values. Children are taught to work collaboratively and independently, co-operate and adapt to different social situations, resolve conflict and respect, support and care for each other. On a personal level they are taught to ensure their own happiness, safety and how to be healthy in body and mind as well as knowing how to get help when needed. They learn to be creative and express themselves in different ways, have an appreciation of art and music forms and find awe and wonder in the world around them.

My Place and Part in the World

Alongside SMSC education, children’s sense of self and purpose can be strengthened through learning and knowledge about the wider world around them, where they are in the world and what different places might be like in comparison to what they are used to / know. It is important that on a basic level children know where they come from, their personal information and about any heritage they have that may stretch beyond the local community. They must begin to understand global issues and their impact on the Earth and the people living worldwide. By exposure to world news and actions and developing their understanding of implications of their own actions on the current state and future state of the planet, they become effective global citizens and can make informed choices regarding their actions and lifestyles as they mature. Within this driver we include the importance of children understanding where things such as clothes and food come from, what is happening/are the issues in their own community as well as globally and an understanding of democracy and how our country is governed/run.

Working Together

DOWSON PRIMARY SCHOOL

During planning for a theme or topic teachers consider how the 4 Key Drivers can be addressed and developed particularly the application of English and Maths basic skills which are known as 'linked learning'.

Core Subjects

The core subjects of English and Mathematics are taught daily in each of the year groups. In Lower School, children are taught English (reading and writing) through the synthetic phonics programme Read Write Inc. until they complete the programme and return to accessing English lessons. We aim for the majority of children to complete the programme by the end of the autumn term in year 2 at the latest. However, children who still need this method of teaching for their reading and writing remain on the programme for as long as necessary. All children in school are taught reading through a daily 30 minute guided reading session in addition to their English teaching. Each fortnight, children complete an independent piece of extended writing in their writing portfolio to demonstrate their application of learned skills.

Dowson does not follow a prescribed scheme for mathematics. We have progression documents for each of the four rules of number which reflect the new National Curriculum and guide teachers in their planning for the stage of development children are at in terms of the calculation methods they use for each of the rules. Coverage of the curriculum is ensured through planning support documents produced by school Maths Leaders.

Foundation Subjects

The rest of the National Curriculum (2014) subjects are all taught as discreet subjects but often linked by a topic or theme which ties them together in a cross curricular approach. However, the subjects are always specified so that the children understand which subjects their basic skill development is linked to as well as their subject knowledge and skill development in that subject. Objectives are introduced in a way which makes this clear to children; for example: *As Historians we are learning to...*

The foreign language chosen for Dowson Curriculum is French and this is taught using a scheme of work by a subject specialist teacher. Children in Key Stage 1 are also taught basic French during the course of the year in addition to the statutory coverage in Key Stage 2.

We follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

Dowson also provides subject specialist teaching of some subject areas through: employment of a full time sports coach; buying into the Tameside Music Service for instrument instruction (ukulele); Music Technology with a music company – Audioface and Art and Design Technology with an artist in residence - Pink Aardvark Company. Food Technology is delivered from Years 1-6 as part of the Design Technology curriculum and as well as linking to themes and topics, develops children's understanding of healthy eating

Working Together

DOWSON PRIMARY SCHOOL

choices and where food comes from. Jamie Oliver's 'From Kitchen to Garden' scheme is followed as part of this work.

Also part of the curriculum provision for Dowson children is the regular opportunity for circle time with our Learning Mentors to strengthen their SMSC development and address any issues which may be causing barriers to learning. They also develop collaborative and social skills through Forest School provision and have opportunities to take part in gardening activities.

School's work in the development of the wider and broad and balanced curriculum is recognised through such awards as:

- Arts Mark Gold Award
- Eco Green Flag Award
- An RHS partner school
- Green Tree School – Gold Award
- Sports Mark Bronze
- Healthy Schools Award

In addition to the National Curriculum and the 4 Key Drivers, we have 'The Dowson Promise' – a document which outlines the additional experiences and opportunities that we feel should be afforded to children during the course of the primary school years. These are such things as: visit a theatre production; take part in some community or charity work; grow their own vegetables; take part in some kind of enterprise and communicate with a child somewhere else in the world, someone famous or someone who has overcome a difficulty to become successful (see 'The Dowson Promise' for the full list). We feel strongly that exposure to and participation in these practices contribute to 'the well-rounded whole child' approach we take to education. These opportunities and experiences complement the rest of the curriculum we provide and are a strong part of our provision.

N.B. This statement should be considered alongside the detailed information which can be found in other documentation: Curriculum and Subject policies, Teaching and Learning policy, Read Write Inc. statement, Mathematics Progression documents, the Key Driver Progressions and The Dowson Promise.