



# South Downs School

## Curriculum Policy

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*Our curriculum is fun, functional and for the future.*

## Purpose

All of the policies and practices at South Downs School are developed to help us meet our **Core Aspirations** for our pupils, which are as follows:

- to learn the skills to communicate and form positive relationships.
- to enable pupils to make choices independently.
- to encourage curiosity, creativity and a love of learning.
- to foster the development of pupils' independence and life skills.
- to promote pupils' self-worth and well-being.

In addition, the focus of this Curriculum policy is to ensure that the quality of learning experiences for all of our pupils is consistently high quality.

In order to deliver high quality learning experiences, teaching staff need to have an accurate understanding of their pupils' specific learning needs in order to effectively plan for, and deliver, ambitious learning outcomes so that pupils can continually make progress.

Through this policy we aim to communicate to all staff, parents/carers and visitors the rationale for our curriculum which is to provide pupils with the skills they need to thrive.

## Principles

The core principles of the curriculum at South Downs are:

- Our curriculum is fun, functional and for the future
- Our curriculum is meaningful and contextual and promotes the skills needed for learning and life
- Students learn through interactions, so our curriculum encourages interaction and collaboration
- Subjects are delivered continuously throughout the day - learning is not confined to the lesson and happens in a range of environments, both within and beyond the classroom
- Teaching is led by the pupil's developmental needs and is therefore is personalised for each pupil
- Learning takes place through a broad range of multisensory experiences
- Learning is delivered through cross curricular activities and includes opportunities for LOtC e.g. planning for English may also involve communication in the local community; maths or science may also incorporate food technology

## Practice

The curriculum is delivered through these **3 areas**:

### **Contextual, Life Long Learning:**

English  
Maths  
Science

### **Skills for Learning:**

Communication  
Personal Development  
Physical  
ICT

### **Essential and Enhanced Learning:**

SMSC (statutory)  
RE (statutory)  
SRE (statutory)  
Music  
Humanities  
Art  
Food Technology  
Design Technology  
**Learning Outside of the Classroom**  
UNICEF's Charter on the Rights of the Child

Contextual lifelong learning begins with early, emerging English, Maths and Science concepts and these concepts should be taught in conjunction with the skills for development so that integrated learning takes place throughout the day. For example, we recognise that for pupils to be competent PECS users, they need to be able to visually discriminate pictures (an early reading skill) select one picture (a mathematical skill) and then combine and sequence pictures (reading and maths skills). Sensory exploration, multi-sensory activities and kinaesthetic learning all draw on scientific skills, asking questions and making predictions and connections are also skills associated with science.

Planning for contextual, lifelong learning for life and the skills for development is based on The South Downs' bespoke, developmental curriculum. This curriculum is personalised for each pupil and targets are set six times a year in pupils' individual plans.

A broad range of subjects which provide opportunities for essential and enhanced learning, are also taught throughout the day; the entire curriculum is delivered through a functional, themed, topic based approach.

All areas are taught in conjunction with each other throughout the day and not delivered in isolation and so our curriculum is delivered using an integrated approach.

The curriculum is taught according to broad themes which ensure that the content is relevant and meaningful. Integrated curriculum delivery results in integrated learning. Curriculum delivery is child centred, interactive, creative, engaging and purposeful.

# The South Downs Curriculum:

## Areas for learning

### Contextual, Life Long Learning:

- Early Reading Skills
- Early Writing Skills
- English
  - Reading Comprehension
  - Reading Words
- Writing
  - Composition
  - Handwriting
  - Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar
- Early Maths Skills
  - Number
  - Shape, Space and Measure
  - Using and Applying/Data Handling
  - Time and Money
- Science
  - Physical Processes
  - Life Processes
  - Season Changes and Space



## SKILLS FOR LEARNING

### Communication:

- Expressive language
- Receptive language
- Social Communication-Advocacy



### Personal Development:

- Independence
- Autonomy
- Personal Care
- Thinking Skills
- Play skills
- Personal Health
- Sex and Relationships



### Physical Development:

- Physical Skills



### ICT:

- IT skills
- E-safety

## Essential and Enhanced Learning:

These areas of learning encompasses statutory subjects, subjects that will enable pupils to develop to experience and develop a world view and subjects which are essential for our pupils to learn. They are also intended to add breadth to our curriculum, promote a deeper understanding of social issues provide opportunities for cross-curricular generalisation, LOtC, and to identify areas of interest or expertise for our pupils.

### Essential Learning:

- Religious Education (including Collective Worship)
- SMSC (statutory)
- Sex and Relationship Education

### Enhanced Learning:

- Music
- Humanities
- Art
- Food Technology
- Design Technology
- Learning Outside the Classroom
- UNICEF's Charter on the Rights of the Child





**The characteristics of effective learning, adapted from the EYFS curriculum, are further developed through The South Downs Curriculum**

At South Downs we recognise the importance of the following, which plays a key part across our curriculum areas:

### **Playing & Exploring – engagement**

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to have a go

### **Active Learning – motivation**

- Being involved & concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

### **Creating & thinking critically – thinking**

- Pupils having their own ideas
- Making connections
- Choosing a way to do things



Learning outside the classroom is widely promoted in order to generalise and contextualise all areas of the curriculum and the school has achieved the LOtC Award. This includes use of the school grounds, the local community, local places of interest and residential trips. LOtC also includes visitors and experiences being brought into the school environment.



## PMLD Learners

Whilst the South Downs assessment tool focuses on a small steps skills progression, the curriculum accounts for the fact that many of the skills will need practice, generalisation and adaption. Learning may not always be attributed in a linear fashion, but also laterally as skills are embedded, often described as landscape learning.



The curriculum focus for PMLD pupils therefore is to move from limited responses to a greater range of responses to increased stimuli and from an inability to transfer learning. There is a focus on moving from being context dependent to the ability to demonstrate understanding and learning in a range of environments, both for learning inside and outside of the classroom. There is also a focus for PMLD pupils to use their skills in different ways to allow them the greatest opportunity to be independent to the best of their ability.

## Planning

Termly planning for each pupil is recorded on termly individual plans. Teachers at the South Downs use the following to generate individual plans:

- Objectives from Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Individual Plans (IPs)
- Individual strategies created during pupil progress meetings
- Curriculum documents
- Topic Themes for EYFS, KS1 and KS2
- Subject coverage map



Individual plans are monitored in the following ways:

- termly by SMT
- discussed in EHCP meetings annually
- six times a year in pupil progress meetings
- three times a year in for non-curriculum target setting