

COGNITA



DOWNSEND
SCHOOL

Inspiring Young Minds

LITTLE DOWNSEND

ASHTED • LEATHERHEAD • EPSOM

Curriculum Policy

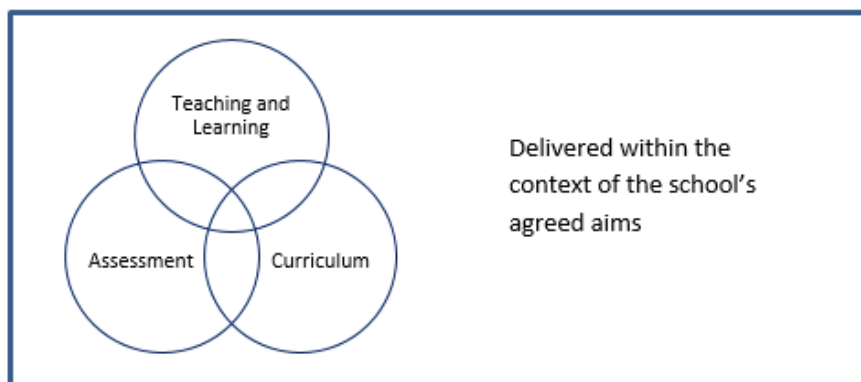
LITTLE DOWNSEND
ENGLAND

2025-2028

EUROPE

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our curriculum supports our school ethos and fulfils our school aims, which are defined as:
- Inspiring Achievement
 - Nurturing Individuality
 - Creating Opportunity
 - Looking Forward
- 1.2 This policy applies to all pupils, including those in the Early Years.
- 1.3 We see the curriculum as, 'The total learning experience for our pupils, which includes not only the taught lessons but also the routines, behaviours, events, activities and other opportunities that our pupils experience on a daily, weekly and yearly basis in order to ensure that all of them make the best progress possible and attain high standards'.
- 1.4 A well-structured and coherent curriculum is a fundamental element of the tripartite of education that underpins all successful schools and includes Teaching, Learning and Assessment as in the following model:



- 1.5 We aim to provide a holistic curriculum which develops every pupil as a confident individual who loves learning. We understand that the curriculum, both within taught lessons and beyond them, and in everything we say and do, should create an environment where academic risk-taking, questioning and debating, challenging thinking and the freedom to learn from mistakes are all encouraged.
- 1.6 Our curriculum offers all pupils the opportunity to experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative aspects of education. We intend that our curriculum should imbue in our pupils:
- A passion for life-long learning;
 - A capacity for independent and critical thinking;
 - Self-awareness, self-regulation and resilience;
 - Self-confidence without arrogance; and
 - Genuine interests that extend beyond the confines of the classroom.
- 1.7 British values, which are; democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, are actively promoted in every aspect of school life.
- 1.8 Our curriculum is compliant with the following regulatory requirements as outlined in the Independent School Standards:

The written policy, plans and schemes of work:–

- (i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and*
- (ii) do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.*

The school is committed to ensuring:

- (a) 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;*
- (b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;*
- (c) where the principal language of instruction is a language other than English, that lessons in written and spoken English, except that this matter does not apply in respect of a school which provides education for pupils who are all temporarily resident in England and which follows the curriculum of another country;*
- (d) personal, social, health and economic education which:*
 - (i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and*
 - (ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act(a);*
- (e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that–*
 - (i) is presented in an impartial manner;*
 - (ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options;*
 - and*
 - (iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential. The school has a separate careers guidance policy.*
- f) where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills*
- g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs;*
- h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress and*
- i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.*

2 Taught Curriculum

- 2.1 Our taught curriculum broadly follows and, at times, goes beyond the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum at KS1 and is formally assessed at the end of the Early Years using the Early Learning Goals. Our pupils also take GL summative assessments at the end of Year 1 and Year 2 in English and Mathematics.
- 2.2 A baseline assessment is carried out by teachers within four weeks of a child's entry into a new year group. This is done using the curriculum guidance and based on teacher judgment as well as any formative testing completed within that time.
- 2.3 Time awarded to each subject in each year group is proportionate to the age and stage of the child. For example, in FS and RR there will be one taught phonics lesson a week encompassing Phase 1 and/or Phase 2 phonics, compared to YrR and Yr1 who will have at least 4 lessons. Early Years classrooms are also used in a way in which subjects can be accessed at all times by pupils i.e. role play corner, book corner, maths station.

- 2.4 Details of how the taught curriculum is translated into half termly units of work can be found in medium term plans which are shared with parents each half term.
- 2.5 Our curriculum includes those compulsory elements of the National Curriculum, such as Sex and Relationships through our PSHE Jigsaw programme and Religious Studies. Children also have opportunities to learn French, Forest School, PE, Music and Dance with peripatetic staff.
- 2.6 Taken together, the taught curriculum will ensure that by the time they have completed their time with us, all pupils are able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to move onto the next stage of their education at the highest level.

3 Special Educational Needs and Disability - SEND

- 3.1 Our curriculum is inclusive. For those pupils with special educational needs or specific learning difficulties, the school has a well-established Learning Support department, led by the SENCO.
- 3.2 Further details of this provision can be found in our Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy.

4 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

- 4.1 Our policy follows the advice given by the DfE in the non-statutory guidance of November 2014 and meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards/BSO Standards. Aspects of SMSC are infused within the day to day operation of our school; incorporated through the curriculum, both in content included in subject schemes of work and through other planned learning opportunities in the school. They are captured in our written aims and expressed in the ethos and behaviours of everyone.
 - a) Actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
 - b) Ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
 - Enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
 - Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
 - Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
 - Enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
 - Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
 - Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and
 - Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.
 - (c) Precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school; and
 - (d) Takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils—
 - (i) while they are in attendance at the school,

(ii) while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school, or

(iii) in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere,

they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

4.2 Discriminatory or extremist opinions or behaviours are challenged as a matter of routine.

4.3 In addition, our approach to SMSC ensures that all pupils will gain an:

- Understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process at an age appropriate level;
- Appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their well-being and safety;
- Understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others, such as the courts, maintain independence (at an age-appropriate level)
- Understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law;
- Acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and
- Understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

5 Religious Education and PSHEE

5.1 Our school chooses to respond to the legal requirement in maintained schools to teach Religious Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and to non-statutory guidelines to cover other aspects of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE). Our programme encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

5.2 In the Early Years the Early Years Foundation Stage, we cover the full Personal, Social and Emotional Development expectations through our day to day curriculum delivery working towards achieving (as a minimum) the Early Learning Goals in Self Regulation, Managing Self, Building Relationships. In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, there are discrete PSHEE lessons taught weekly by our teachers. Elements of the programme may be supported through the bringing in of additional expertise, such as outside speakers, or the use of teachers with a particular interest or knowledge in a specific area. In addition to these discrete sessions, PSHEE is also dealt with across the curriculum (e.g. Social issues through the teaching of English Literature; Health through Biology and PE; Citizenship through History & RE). There are also centrally organised sessions which supplement the delivery in house, dealing with issues such as kindness, awareness of body parts, staying safe, being healthy, awareness of careers and economic education.

6 Co-curricular

6.1 A wide range of enrichment activities supplement the timetabled curriculum. Our pupils are encouraged to take part in an extensive range of art, drama, music, sport and other activities and clubs. Regular themed days and weeks are held. These may include Book Week, Maths Week, Mental Health Week, Kindness Day, Outdoor Learning Days, Road Safety Day.

- 6.2 Pupils are taken to places of interest on a regular basis. Off site visits are organised termly for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 to develop independence, teamwork and responsibility in a different environment to that in school. Visitors are invited into school to work with the children also. Such examples include drama workshops, authors, visits by doctors, dentists, firefighters.

7 Other Opportunities

- 7.1 Our school aims to provide an education for life. Other aspects of our curriculum which enable our pupils to gain the skills, knowledge and experience to be successful adults include:
- Awareness of careers;
 - Leadership opportunities;
 - School Council
 - House system
 - Community links;
 - Fundraising Activities;
 - Various after school clubs and activities
 - Sport
 - Music and Drama performance opportunities

8 Responsibility

- 8.1 The person with responsibility for the overview and yearly evaluation of this policy is Head of Little Downsend. However, all staff are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and acted on.
- 8.2 When evaluating the use and impact of this policy, our school leaders will evaluate the extent to which there is evidence of a curriculum which:
- Fulfills the aims of the school;
 - Embeds aspiration, attributes and the expectation to achieve high standards and high rates of progress; and
 - Provides engagement and excitement for learning.

Ownership and consultation	
Document sponsor (role)	Group Director of Education
Document author (name)	Karen Nicholson, ADE
Consultation – May 2017	Consultation with the following schools: Long Close School, Charterhouse Square School, Quinton House School, El Limonar Murcia, Cumnor Boys' School, Downsend Leatherhead Pre-Prep School, Oakleigh House School and El Limonar Villamartin. Education Team representative: John Coleman, ADE.
Updated – April 2018	James Carroll, ADE
Review – May 2022	Nicola Lambros DE
Review – May 2025	Sarah Reynolds, Regional Director of Education

Audience	
Audience	All school staff

Document application and publication	
England	Yes
Wales	Yes
Spain	Yes
Italy	Yes

Curriculum Policy

Switzerland	Yes
Greece	Yes

Version control	
Implementation date	September 2025
Review date	September 2028

Related documentation	
Related documentation	Curriculum Policy Assessment Policy Teaching and Learning Policy SEND Policy EAL Policy Prevent Duty Early Years Policy, where relevant Independent School Standards