

Oliver House School Curriculum Policy

(see also SEN & EAL)

1 Introduction

- 1.1** Oliver House recognises parents as the first educators of their children and the curriculum (or education) provided at the school is a consequence of this view. We believe that true education is directed to the development of the human person, in view of their final end and the good of society to which they belong and in the duties of which as adults they will have a share. As a school, we are fully committed to the principles outlined in 'Declaration on Christian Education' from Vatican II : *"Hence parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it. For it devolves on parents to create a family atmosphere so animated with love and reverence for God and others that a well-rounded personal and social development will be fostered among the children. Hence, the family is the first school of those social virtues which every society needs"*.
- 1.2** An essential feature of our curriculum (which can be divided into academic, non-academic and extra-curricular) is that parents are able to work in close liaison with the school so that the two major learning environments work in harmony. It is the parents' right to be the dominant influence in the education of their own children. Oliver House seeks to uphold this right by providing an educational environment which reflects the parents' own values. Teacher example and peer values are key areas where parent ideals must be reflected.
- 1.3** At Oliver House, great stress is placed on developing human virtues, or strength of character, because these virtues enable a person to be self-directing in life – to be truly free. Freedom is not seen as mere freedom from constraints but as a capacity to carry noble convictions into action. The family, where an overriding motivation is the welfare of the other members, is the environment "par excellence" for fostering virtue.
- 1.4** Our school's curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the various extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the children's experience. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum' – what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We want children to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and cooperate with others while at the same time developing their knowledge and skills, in order to achieve their true potential.
- 1.5** We endorse the aspirations concerning curriculum that are set out in the Department for Children, Schools & Families ("DCSF") document *Excellence and Enjoyment* 2003 and we seek the highest standards of attainment for all our children. We also value the breadth of the curriculum that we provide. We aim to foster creativity in our children and to help them become independent learners. Above all we believe in making learning fun.
- 1.6** We will seek to include the recommendations of the Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum as written by Sir Jim Rose, whose final report was published in April 2009.

2 Curriculum Values

2.1 Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear at our school. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives.

2.2 Our school is in full agreement with the values statement included in the introduction to the National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers in England. These are the main values of our school, upon which we have based our curriculum, however we have included others:

- we seek to provide each pupil with all the appropriate opportunities for learning;
- we value children's uniqueness, we listen to the views of individual children, and we promote respect for diverse cultures;
- we value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth;
- we value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each child in our school for who they are and we treat them with fairness and honesty;
- we will strive to meet the needs of all our children and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements regarding inclusion;
- we will strive to ensure that education is integral. That is, all the key learning areas (ie. linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative), must be catered for with due balance and unity of approach;
- we will strive to make education received by the children personalised, treating each pupil as an individual who has specific strengths, weaknesses and needs;
- we will help pupils to acquire all the human virtues as desired and fostered by their parents;
- we believe that pupils should be given the preparation they will need to contribute effectively and generously to the improvement of society;

3 Curriculum aims

3.1 The curriculum at Oliver House has a twofold purpose:

- i) to impart wisdom – education of intellect
- ii) to teach to do good – education of will

3.2 The aims of our school curriculum are:

- to enable all children to learn, and make progress by developing their skills, to the best of their ability;
- to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- to teach children the basic skills of literacy (including speaking & listening), numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT);
- to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking;
- to teach children about the developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time;
- to help children understand Britain's cultural heritage;
- to appreciate and value the contribution made by the ethnic groups in our multi-cultural society;
- to enable children to be positive citizens;
- to teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development and to distinguish right from wrong;
- to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;

- to enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem and to live and work co-operatively with others.

4 A balanced curriculum

- 4.1** A consequence of the fundamental conviction in the need for integral development is the concept of balance in the school curriculum. An appropriate mix of subjects offered leads to the well rounded development of each and every pupil. We are educating the whole child – in all of its human, intellectual, cultural, spiritual and social potential.
- 4.2** Two fundamental characteristics which the Oliver House curriculum seeks to develop in each pupil are a critical mind and a universal outlook. A critical mind is developed through a philosophically sound curriculum, teaching which helps the pupil form their own reasoned opinions on issues and formation in the virtues of sincerity and intellectual integrity. A universal outlook is largely a consequence of broad cultural exposure and the capacity to see the same human nature at work in all forms of genuine cultural expression.
- 4.3** Oliver House does not offer formal sex education or drug/substance abuse awareness. We feel that at primary level, this education should be provided by the parents. However, we would be happy to offer advice if specifically requested.

5 Organisation and planning

- 5.1** Curriculum planning is carried out in three phases. We agree a long-term plan (ie. scheme of work) for each subject taught. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term and to which groups of children. We review this long-term plan on an annual basis.
- 5.2** Through our medium-term or termly plans we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies for each topic. We use Qualifications & Curriculum Development Authority (“QCDA”) approved materials (for example LCP) or widely used schemes of work like Heinemann for devising our medium term plans.
- 5.3** Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis in the Teacher’s Planner. We use these to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson. We annotate these plans regularly, reflecting on how assessment can aid planning.
- 5.4** In the Early Years, we adopt an inter-disciplinary topic approach to curriculum planning. We plan the curriculum carefully, so that there is coherent and full coverage of all aspects of the early learning goals and there is planned progression in all curriculum areas.
- 5.5** In Key Stage 1 and 2 we teach the foundation subjects separately. This means that, for example, a child may concentrate in one term on a history topic, then switch to a greater emphasis on geography in the next term. Thus, in due course, each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects.

6 The curriculum and inclusion

- 6.1** The curriculum in our school is designed to be accessed by all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to modify some children’s access to the curriculum, in order to meet their needs, then we do this only after their parents have been consulted.

- 6.2** If children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or special needs, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, then their teacher makes an assessment of this need. In most instances the teacher is able to provide the resources and educational opportunities that meet the child's needs, within normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe, we consider the child for a statement of special needs and we involve the appropriate external agencies in making an assessment. We provide additional resources and support for children with special needs and, if necessary, parents may be asked to fund some of that support.
- 6.3** The school has a special needs register with three stages of action: School Action, School Action Plus and IEP (Individual Educational Plan). The IEP sets out the nature of the special need and sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals.
- 6.4** Some children in our school may have disabilities. Once these children are offered a place, we are as committed to meeting their needs as we are to meeting the needs of all groups of children within our school. The school complies fully with the requirements of the amended Disability Discrimination Act that came into effect in September 2002. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled children. Teaching and learning is appropriately modified for children with disabilities. For example, they may be given additional time to complete certain activities, or the teaching materials may be adapted.

7 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- 7.1** The curriculum that we teach in the Nursery and Reception classes meet the requirements set out in the new EYFS Framework introduced in 2008. Our curriculum planning focuses on the Early Learning Goals, as set out in these documents and on developing children's skills and experiences. The six areas of learning (ie. Communication, Language & Literacy; Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy; Personal, Social & Emotional Development; Knowledge & Understanding of the World, Physical Development and Creative Development) are covered extensively in all curriculum planning.
- 7.2** Oliver House fully supports the principle that young children learn through play and by engaging in well-planned and structured activities. Teaching in the reception class builds on the experiences of the children in their pre-school learning.
- 7.3** Observations are made on each child in the Nursery and Reception classes. These are filed under the six areas of learning in individual profiles set up to monitor their progress. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child, as it provides essential evidence that children have reached the Early Learning Goals through the Stepping Stones.
- 7.4** We are well aware that all children need the support of both the parents and the teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents of each child, by keeping them informed about how the children are being taught and how well each child is progressing.

8 Curriculum Subject Policies

- 8.1** The curriculum policies which ensure that curriculum aims are met are outlined below under the following headings:
- **Linguistic:** this area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and

writing. At Oliver House, the Spalding method of literacy is used. Policies exist for English and Foreign Languages.

- **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 should be developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion. A Mathematics policy exists to raise standards in this area;
- **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. A Science policy is in place to cover the above requirements;
- **Technological:** this area includes the use of information and communication technology (ICT); developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products; and evaluating processes and products. ICT and DT policies ensure that pupils' technological knowledge and skills are developed;
- **Human and social:** this area is concerned with people and with their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. Policies exist for History and Geography;
- **Physical:** 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. We have a PE policy which covers this area throughout the school;
- **Aesthetic and creative:** 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 art, music, drama and the study of literature, because they call for personal, imaginative and often practical responses. We have policies for Art & Design and Music.
- **Spiritual and moral:** although not designated as a Key Learning Area, we have an RE policy to cover all aspects of spiritual and moral development. The Character Development programme and assemblies also help in this area;
- **Cultural and Social:** although not designated as a Key Learning Area, PSHE (Personal, social and health education), extra-curricular activities, clubs, residential trips and multiculturalism fall within this category.

9 Curriculum aspect policies

These are policies which focus on broader educational issues. They include:

- Marking & Feedback (including markbook guidelines)
- Assessment
- Target-Setting
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Early Years
- Key Skills
- Teaching & Learning
- Homework

10 Key skills

10.1 The following skills have been deemed 'key skills' in the revised National Curriculum:

- communication;
- application of number;
- information technology;
- working with others;
- improving one's own learning and performance;
- problem-solving.

10.2 The curriculum planning emphasises these skills, so that the children's progress in all of these areas can be identified and monitored. Teachers in all subject areas seek to contribute to a pupil's progress in these skills, because we believe that all children need to make good progress in these areas if they are to develop their true potential.

11 The role of the Head of Department

11.1 Each Head of Department has been provided with a full job description containing a detailed breakdown of their responsibilities. In summary, their main role is to:

- provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject or subject grouped under their area of responsibility;
- support and advise colleagues on issues related to the subject;
- monitor pupils' progress in that subject area;
- provide efficient resource management for the subject.

11.2 The school gives Heads of Department non-contact time each week, so that they can carry out their duties. It is the role of each Head of Department to keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level. They review the way the subject is taught in the school, and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each Head of Department reviews the curriculum plans for the subject, ensures that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum and sees that progression is planned into schemes of work.

12 Monitoring and review

12.1 The SMT is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented. They meet with each Head of Department periodically for a review of the subject area.

12.3 The Head and Deputy Head are responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the curriculum. The Deputy Head monitors the Teacher's Planners, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the agreed scheme of work.

12.4 Heads of Department monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school. They examine long-term and medium-term planning and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Heads of Department are also responsible for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

12.5 This policy is monitored by the PACT governing body and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

Signed: **C Candia**

Date: **2 September 2009**

Curriculum Time Allocations

This is the curriculum time allocation by minutes and by periods (excluding Mass). The infants have fewer minutes because 6 of their periods are shorter.

Subject	Rec	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6 Aut	Yr 6 S/S
English/ Verbal Reasoning	400	400	400	360	360	320	360	320
Mathematics	315	315	315	360	360	320	360	280
Science	-	105	105	120	120	120	120	120
History/Geography	-	70	70	80	80	80	-	120
Religion	70	70	70	80	80	80	80	80
Music/Singing	70	70	70	80	80	80	80	80
Art	70	105	105	120	120	120	120	120
Spanish	70	70	70	80	80	80	80	80
PE/Games	140	140	140	160	160	160	160	160
Latin	-	-	-	-	-	40	40	40
Character Development	35	35	35	40	40	40	40	40
ICT/DT	70	70	70	80	80	80	80	80
Topic	175	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	1415	1415	1415	1560	1560	1560	1560	1560

This is the curriculum time allocation by number of lessons per week.

Subject	Rec	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6 Aut	Yr 6 S/S
English/ Verbal Reasoning	10	10	10	9	9	8	9/10	8
Mathematics	9	9	9	8	8	8	10/9	7
Science	-	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
History/Geography	-	2	2	2	2	2	-	3
Religion	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Music/Singing	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Art	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
Spanish	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
PE/Games	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5
Latin	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Character Development	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ICT/DT	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
Topic	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reading/Problem Solving	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Holy Mass	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

Note: Year 6 have different allocations for the Michaelmas & Hilary/Trinity terms.