



DOROTHY BARLEY JUNIOR ACADEMY CURRICULUM POLICY

Other related policies:

- **Teaching and Learning**
- **Inclusion**
- **Marking, Feedback & Assessment**
- **Homework**

This policy was devised and adopted in January 2017

Last reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 School Values and Aims

Dorothy Junior Barley Academy serves a richly diverse community therefore we believe that our children learn by talking, listening and doing. Our aim is to provide a rich, structured and caring environment which offers a varied and balanced curriculum, often based on first-hand opportunities to learn. Our pupils are encouraged to acquire skills and attitudes that will enable them to realise their full social and educational potential and become confident, independent, valuable and caring members of society.

2. Aims of the policy

Our curriculum is based on the National Curriculum. Our pupils are offered a wide range of experiences to extend their understanding of themselves and the world in which they live. Skills, attitudes and values are developed to prepare the children for the next stage of learning (secondary school ready), and enable them to be successful in the community.

We believe that effective learning takes place when there is considerable emphasis on active involvement, opportunities to talk both imaginatively, expressively and to explain and clarify thinking. We make meaningful connections across subjects. The school expects everyone to develop and show a sense of responsibility and self-discipline whether alone, together, at work or at play, and to support policies on equal opportunities. We actively promote British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs to prepare our pupils for life in modern day Britain. We also provide opportunities for our pupils to learn about the contribution of Britons to innovation, excellence and changes in the world.

This policy makes reference to The New National Curriculum 2014. It is linked to our Equality, More Able, Homework, Teaching and Learning and SEND Policies. It also links with our SMS, British Values and Diversity Statements.

Our core aims are that:

- All pupils are provided with outstanding learning experiences that lead to consistently outstanding levels of pupil achievement.
- From the start, children are taught in differentiated and flexible groups to allow further consolidation for some, and for greater speed and breadth of delivery at the upper end of attainment.
- All teachers and other professionals possess expert levels of knowledge in the subjects they teach.
- All teachers and other professionals are “lifelong learners”, committed to an ongoing development of their own knowledge and skills to optimise the pupils’ learning experiences.

- A positive, caring attitude, where achievements at all levels are acknowledged and valued, is prevalent throughout the school.
- All pupils from the earliest opportunity and are encouraged to develop independence, self-discipline, responsibility and the ability to build resilience.

3. Our Curriculum - Core Subjects

3.1 Literacy

Our English lessons develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary. Literacy is taught using Talk4Writing in a cross-curricular way where possible linking up with other areas of the curriculum. Some elements of Literacy may also be taught discretely. We teach our pupils to speak clearly, to convey their ideas fluently and confidently and to ask questions. Their vocabulary is developed systematically. Our pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and to read widely.

We use the *Destination Reader* reading scheme and Little Wandle Rapid Catch programme. Phonic awareness helps the development of reading by segmenting and blending sounds. The children will be heard reading individually and in groups. The guided reading sessions cover both fiction and non-fiction books. Guided reading also develops the children's comprehension skills. Parents are given clear expectations about reading at home. Children can access Bug Club at home to enhance their learning.

We develop writing skills so that our pupils have the stamina and ability to write at length. To support children in moving towards independent writing we provide a wide range of activities including use of film and imagery, modelled, shared and guided writing, peer editing and discussion. We use talk to encourage pupils to express their ideas, exchange ideas and to develop more sophisticated vocabulary. We provide opportunities for writing for purpose and we encourage pupils to see themselves as authors. We promote the status of written work by providing opportunities for children's writing to be published and read by real audiences.

Handwriting sessions are incorporated into the English lessons. A range of extra activities are used to promote literacy within the school.

3.2 Mathematics

Our teachers ensure that mathematical skills are taught every day following the White Rose scheme. They also use every relevant subject to develop pupils' mathematical fluency. Our pupils understand the importance of mathematics, are encouraged to be confident in numeracy and to apply the skills that they learn to simple problem solving. The activities cover a wide range of mathematical knowledge, many with an emphasis on practical work. In each lesson there is a short and simple mental maths session. We build on skills and understanding in a step-by-step way and continue to develop place value, the four number operations and the understanding of fractional parts. There are extra activities throughout the year to promote mathematical skills and thinking including participation in NSPCC Number Day and MYBNK.

3.3 Science

Science is taught as a separate lesson but will be linked to our wider curriculum where appropriate. We encourage our pupils to be curious about natural phenomenon and to be excited by the process of understanding the world around them. Key scientific terminology will be introduced each lesson. Pupils will carry out simple tests and experiments using equipment and to gather and record data. Our lessons include learning about plants, animals and the seasons. We follow the REACh2 scheme and have sustainability embedded in our Science learning.

4. Our Curriculum - Foundation Subjects

4.1 Art and Design & Technology

Art has a very important place in our curriculum and follows the Reach2 scheme. We see Art as a vehicle for creativity and individual expression and it provides opportunities for collaborative work. It is an important form of cultural expression and, therefore, has significance and meaning for all our children. Our teaching provides an understanding of all the diverse art forms so that the children experience drawing, painting, collage, textiles, 3D designs, printmaking and digital media.

Our Design and Technology follows the Reach2 scheme where lessons encourage the designing and making of products to solve real and relevant problems. Our pupils learn to select from and use a wide range of materials and components, including construction materials, textiles and ingredients, according to their characteristics. Our cooking lessons teach the principles of nutrition and our pupils learn how to prepare and make a wide variety of simple recipes. They understand where our food comes from and how it is grown. We believe that by instilling a love of cooking we will open a door to one of the greatest expressions of human creativity. Individual sketchbooks are used to capture the learning.

4.2 Drama

Drama is used as a key tool in developing oracy skills, vocabulary development, building confidence and self-esteem, and as an essential tool in developing imaginative, expressive, and persuasive spoken and written language. 'Hot seating', and 'response in role' drama techniques are used in literacy lessons aid the development of speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Imaginative role play is fundamental to developing the whole child, but also as they children develop, and our curriculum provides opportunities to perform to wider audiences through assemblies and events around key festivals. There are increasing opportunities for our pupils to perform as they progress through the school.

4.3 Computing

We follow the Teach Computing scheme of work from the Department for Education and have a discreet timetable time for the development of Computing skills but our approach is to integrate Computing into all lessons: the use of iPads, laptops and other hardware such as cameras and data loggers is as much part of our learning tools as pencils and pens. Subject specific software is used from one-off programmes to learning platforms, support teaching and learning across all years. They draw pictures, write and use the internet to carry out research. They then progress to more complex skills such as data analysis and coding using BeeBots and online software. Pupils will use technology safely and identify where to go for help and support when they have concerns.

4.4 Modern Foreign Language

From Year 3 to Year 6 we teach French to all children. Our approach is to make learning a new language fun! Young pupils are very receptive to learning a new language; they like to mimic pronunciation and they can easily pick up and duplicate new sounds. They feel a real sense of accomplishment when they learn to say something new. We deliver French once a week in a phase assembly which is followed up by the class teacher later in the week. Purple Mash and Twinkl are used to support the teaching of French. French Scrapbooks are used to capture the learning.

4.5 Music

In their music lessons pupils use their voices expressively and creatively by singing songs and speaking chants and rhymes. Assemblies will also provide an opportunity to practise singing. Pupils will also be taught to play a variety of instruments musically and encouraged to play together in ensemble groups. We encourage listening to a wide range of music with concentration and understanding. Music is used in a variety of lessons and activities to create, mood, atmosphere and to help thinking. Music will be heard every day in our classrooms. Children in Year 5 and Year 6 are offered the opportunity to learn to play the guitar through the Community Music Service from LBBD. Charanga is used to support the teaching of Music.

4.6 PHCE

PHCE, or personal health and citizenship education, is a planned programme of learning through which children and young people acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives. As part of a whole school approach, PHCE develops the qualities and attributes pupils need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society. It prepares them to manage many of the most critical opportunities, challenges and responsibilities they will face growing up in such rapidly changing and challenging times. It also helps them to connect and apply the knowledge and understanding they learn in all subjects to practical, real-life situations while helping them to feel safe and secure enough to fulfil their academic potential. In our programmes we actively promote British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs to prepare our pupils for life in modern day Britain. Our citizenship lessons enable our pupils to understand the British democratic process and how to effect peaceful changes in society.

All our year groups have timetabled PHCE time but we encourage a cross-curricular approach to the development of these skills and understanding. Circle time is used to listen to others and to be heard. Pupils learn about similarities and differences between people and cultures. All pupils are taught anti bullying strategies and we have Friendship Week every year. PHCE Scrapbooks are used to capture the learning.

4.7 Physical Education (PE)

PE follows the scheme 'Get Set 4 PE'. Pupils are encouraged to participate in team games and to develop simple tactics for being an effective team member. The activities are rotated on a termly basis. Indoor PE is held in one of our large hall spaces and includes music and movement, dance, apparatus work and gymnastics. Swimming is an entitlement for our children. We ensure wider participation in the community by involvement in interschool sports and swimming tournaments, local authority and London based competitions.

4.8 P4C

Thinking skills are the mental processes that we apply when we seek to make sense of experiences. They enable us to integrate each new experience into the schema that we are constructing of how things are. Better thinking will help us to learn more from our experience and to make better use of our intelligence. In the past children were largely considered to be 'clever' if they demonstrated the ability to commit to memory huge amounts of data and to recall that data on the appropriate occasion. In our evolving world, the ability to think is fast becoming more desirable than any fixed set of skills or knowledge. We need problem solvers, decision makers and innovators. Our P4C sessions enable our children to become thinkers who can not only receive information but can manipulate and judge information. As their confidence grows and skills develop they become less passive thinkers and more pro-active thinkers who are able to make sense of information and tackle more complex problem solving situations. In our P4C lessons we encourage empathy and different viewpoints, talk/debate based activities to help language acquisition as a tool for analysis, questioning techniques to encourage expression of opinion, mind mapping to make sense of the issue plus lateral thinking games. Our P4C lessons encourage our children to think for themselves and at the same time to encourage them to think with others. Our teachers will provide the stimulus for discussion and facilitate the enquiry. As skills develop the children not only state their own ideas but support them with reasons. They become aware of the differences and similarities between their own ideas and those of their classmates. Respect for one's own views and respect for the views of others is an important part of these lessons.

4.9 Religious Education (RE)

We have redeveloped the RE curriculum as a school to ensure children are learning about the different major world religions and having real opportunities to discuss and understand different faiths. We achieve a positive and caring ethos throughout. We believe that the exploration of religious beliefs and practices enable our pupils to mature in relation to their own patterns of belief and behaviour. It is also our aim to encourage our pupils to think clearly and reflect thoughtfully and honestly about religious and moral issues and about their own attitudes towards themselves and others. We are proud to have the support of local faith groups and are encouraging them to positive contributions to the school and RE wherever possible. We are sensitive to the background of each child and work to ensure that all pupils within our care feel and are included in our RE programme. We welcome and celebrate this diversity.

4.10 History and Geography

We use Geography and History to deliver humanities subject skills and understanding. Our Geography and History programmes are carefully balanced and planned to be age appropriate across the years. Curriculum maps are produced to show how each is taught, the knowledge and skills covered and links to other parts of the curriculum. Our topics have a history and geography base so that we teach location and place knowledge, weather and climate skills and knowledge and about significant historical events, people and places in our own locality. Topic time also provides further opportunities to learn about people and cultures. A timetable of trips to support pupils' learning and to enhance the curriculum is published at the beginning of the school year. We encourage parental involvement through half termly family homework projects. The school uses the Reach2 schemes to plan and resource robust and exciting lessons. We follow the REAch2 scheme and have sustainability embedded in our Geography learning.

5. Curriculum Enrichment

5.1 Trips and Visits

We plan a series of trips each half term for each year group and these are communicated to parents at the start of the academic year. The trips are directly linked to our topic work for example a space topic may include a trip to the Royal Observatory. Our location gives us access to a wealth of historic and educational institutions in London but we also ensure that local facilities and sites are selected for visits and supported by the school, for example, *Valance House*. We have formed relationships with small organisations around Barking and Dagenham and incorporate activities with them into our curriculum e.g. workshops from the Local Authority and working with local secondary schools. We also plan residential trips for our Year 6 pupils.

5.2 Workshops and specialists

Each year group will take part in a variety of workshops throughout the academic year. These will link to their topic work or to a whole school theme e.g. Spirit of the Wild workshops for the Year 3 Topic 'Extreme Survival'.

6.0 Extra – Curricular Activities

A wide range of age-appropriate clubs are offered after school for Year 3 to 6 pupils. These cover a range of areas and are changed termly taking on board the interests of the children.

7.0 Celebration

Subject Leaders across all areas promote their subjects through themed days, themed weeks and through whole school 'showcasing' assemblies. Curriculum work is displayed throughout the school.

8.0 Assessment

There are a range of assessments to support planning, target setting and provision across the curriculum. In Literacy these include assessed writing samples, sample papers, PIXL assessments Bug Club and Phonics assessments. In Maths these include sample papers and PIXL Assessments. Across all other subject's children are assessed termly or half termly against the key skills in the National Curriculum and are tracked using O Track.

8.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

SLT will continuously monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum. Action points will be agreed and discussed with staff. The Headteacher will include curriculum developments in their Heads report to the board of governors.