

Dulwich Hamlet Junior School

Curriculum Policy



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Our Curriculum vision: aims and ethos

Aims

- That all pupils are provided with outstanding learning experiences that lead to consistently outstanding levels of pupil achievement
- That all teachers and other professionals possess expert levels of knowledge in the subjects they teach
- That all teachers and other professionals are “lifelong learners”, committed to an on-going development of their own knowledge and skills to optimise pupils’ learning experiences
- That a positive, caring attitude, where achievements at all levels are acknowledged and valued, is prevalent throughout the school
- That all pupils from the earliest opportunity, are encouraged to develop independence, self-discipline, responsibility and the ability to build resilience
- That a shared sense of purpose amongst pupils, staff and parents is fostered from the very start.

Ethos

We promote a positive, energetic, caring atmosphere where children always feel safe and secure and wish to come to school. The school promotes equality of opportunity where all children and adults are respected, regardless of race, ethnicity, class or ability.

Children are offered a very 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 (‘Key Stage 2 ready’ and ‘Secondary ready’), and enable them to be successful in the community. 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. The school does not tolerate poor behaviour and adopts positive behaviour management strategies to ensure that children are responding to positive, not negative models of social interactions.

The Curriculum at Dulwich Hamlet School

The National Curriculum in England is currently in a process of full transition. At Dulwich Hamlet School we are currently following the timetable for transition, between the National Curriculum (2000) and the National Curriculum (2014), as set out by the Department of Education.

From September 2014 children in Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 will follow and be taught programmes of study from the 2014 National Curriculum. Children in Year 6 will still follow and be taught programmes of study in English, Mathematics and Science from National Curriculum (2000) until the end of the academic year 2014-2015. From September 2015 all Year groups will follow and be taught programmes of study from the National Curriculum 2014.

The New National Curriculum 2014

National Curriculum in England KS1 and KS2 Framework including all subjects

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum>

English Glossary

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/244216/English_Glossary.pdf

English Appendix 1: Spelling

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239784/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf

English Appendix 2: vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335190/English_Appendix_2_-_Vocabulary_grammar_and_punctuation.pdf

Mathematics Programme of Study

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335158/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_Mathematics_220714.pdf

Mathematics Appendix 1

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/238967/Mathematics_Appendix_1.pdf

The Dulwich Hamlet Curriculum Content

The most effective learning takes place when there is considerable emphasis on active involvement, opportunities to talk both imaginatively, expressively and to explain and clarify thinking. Connections across subjects are integral to curriculum design.

Literacy

The school benefits from the outstanding policy and practice that has been established at the school over many years in regard to literacy attainment and achievement.

All children are provided with access to inspiring, quality texts to promote a love of reading and build children's confidence as readers. Children become experienced in exploring a rich variety of text types, including visual texts. We support children to develop their skills in decoding words where necessary and in understanding texts at a literal level, interpreting implied meaning, understanding how texts are organised, discussing authors' use of language, identifying the effect on the reader and making links between texts and real life, including historical context.

Teachers and support staff work together to provide opportunities for children to work on all aspects of reading, including whole class discussions and debates, paired and group work, written responses to texts (e.g. writing in role as a character), cross-curricular work, and use of film and imagery. Children are encouraged to think critically about texts and become discerning and analytical readers.

In addition, Personalised Learning Space (PLS) sessions allow children who need additional support, to work with members of staff in smaller or one to one sessions to develop their reading skills. We use a wide range of strategies tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils. We employ specialist reading therapists trained specifically in *phono-graphix* programmes to support children who require very specific catch-up. This approach has delivered consistently high catch-up rates following our early identification assessments. These are essential components to deliver targeted interventions.

Guided reading - which supports readers at all levels and stages of reading development - is a key component of the teaching day. This allows high-ability readers to engage in texts that make increasing demands on comprehension, inference and links to other texts and authors. It also supports early/emergent readers at lower levels to engage in differentiated materials at age-appropriate levels and allows for active teaching of reading objectives.

ICT is integrated into literacy teaching both as a highly engaging teaching tool (using key resources such as The Literacy Shed) and as an expected outcome – published writing for a range of audiences in school and other platforms.

We seek to turn pupils into writers who are clear communicators as well as creative, imaginative and inspired. To support children in moving towards independent writing, we provide a wide range of activities including: immersion in text types, use of film and imagery, modelled, shared and guided writing, peer editing and discussion. We use literacy scaffolds and supports for less able pupils, and make full use of success criteria that reflect high expectations of written and spoken outcomes. Explicit punctuation and grammar learning objectives are integrated into schemes of work recommended by leading literacy advisers such as *The Literacy Tree* and the *Centre for Literacy in Primary Education*.

We encourage pupils to take pride in their work and 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. We implement a hugely successful Year 2 / Year 6 collaborative story project where the oldest children are commissioned to write a story for and by an infant child. The finished work is presented to the infant in a story reading afternoon and is one of the most powerful demonstrations of 'writing for a purpose'.

Drama

We use drama as a standalone subject, as well as a key tool in developing oral communication, vocabulary development, building confidence and self-esteem. This is an essential tool in developing imaginative, expressive and persuasive spoken and written language.

Imaginative role-play is fundamental to developing children, not just in Early Years and KS1 education, but as they develop. Our curriculum provides opportunities to perform to wider audiences through assemblies and events around key festivals. Using the key tools such as 'hot seating' and 'response in role' in literacy lessons to aid the development of reading, writing and speaking and listening skills; children get increasing opportunities to perform as they progress through the school.

External partners such as The Unicorn Theatre, The Globe Theatre, Creative Partners and The Young Vic - as well as community practitioners - are engaged with at regular intervals. The children are taken to theatrical performances and are expected to stage their own! Currently the Year 6 children at The Hamlet perform their end of Key Stage production at The Michael Croft Theatre, part of Allyn's School. Children are introduced to at least one play by Shakespeare and have lessons on understanding the language of filmed drama.

Pupils also have the option of taking external examinations from LAMDA, an accredited organisation offering exams in 'The Speaking of Verse and Prose' and 'Acting'. The Hamlet offers LAMDA to over 100 children across the school each academic year.

English Programmes of Study

[National curriculum in England: English programmes of study - key stages 1 and 2](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-programmes-of-study-for-key-stage-1-and-2-until-july-2015>

Mathematics

The importance of building mathematical understanding and skills cannot be over emphasised. From the start children have a systematic programme of step-by-step mathematics, using practical and applied resources to ensure that place value, the four number operations and the understanding of fractional parts are fully understood. There is a strong focus on the value of numbers (the one-ness of one) in addition to hands-on practical investigations into the number system and patterns within the number system.

Activities like the ones recommended by *N-rich* - a key resource used widely by The Hamlet for its ability to develop deeper thinking - are incorporated to develop the initial building blocks for mathematical thinking, reasoning and problem solving. We aim to develop a wide mathematical vocabulary and a range of mental models and images that are built upon to develop concrete strategies of calculations.

The approach taken to teaching mathematics at Dulwich Hamlet is tailored to the diverse pupil body at the school. Children are taught in differentiated groups and sets to allow further consolidation for some and for greater speed and breadth of delivery at the upper end of attainment. Dulwich Hamlet is proud of its mathematical attainment with over 61% achieving a level 5 in 2013 Sats (22% at level 6).

Mathematics Programmes of Study

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-mathematics-programmes-of-study>

Resources

<https://www.ncetm.org.uk/resources/40851>

<http://www.nationalstemcentre.org.uk/news/primary-maths-page-launched-with-resource-packages-for-the-new-curriculum>

Science

The curriculum is designed to develop a scientific from the earliest start. Emphasis is placed on enquiry, developing hypotheses, investigating variables and using mathematical and scientific vocabulary. Exploration and collection of data through effective integration of appropriate ICT is fundamental to instilling scientific approaches to learning. There is a strong emphasis on the practical to engage and enthuse pupils. The considerable benefits to being located in London are maximised by using our museums and hospitals to provide expert and contextualised understanding.

The model of 'Science Weeks' that run at the Hamlet allow for specific science focuses. During these weeks the whole school focuses on science, culminating in exhibitions and presentations on the learning that has taken place. The 2013 Science Week focused on medical matters with over twenty different practitioners - including doctors, brain surgeons, psychiatrists, and biologists - working in the school. They delivered engaging workshops and assemblies to teach the children new aspects of the curriculum. The 2014 week focused on science and health and explored the impact of exercise on the biology of the body.

Science Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-science-programmes-of-study>

Resources

<http://www.nationalstemcentre.org.uk/primaryscience>

[Mapping progression across KS1 to KS3](#)

ICT and Digital Technology

Dulwich Hamlet develops the use of ICT in line with current educational best practice. In such a fast changing environment there are two essentials: to ensure that the teachers are confident using iPads, IWBs, Macs and PCs to facilitate high-level educational learning experiences and outcomes, and to ensure strong, informed curriculum leadership in order to remain on top of how ICT raises standards in the classroom. The requirement of the New National Curriculum to teach Computer Coding is delivered through expert practitioners such as those from Coding Club, and by using Lego Robotic hardware which incorporates programmable features such as responses to sound, light and direction.

ICT is integrated into all core lessons: laptops and other hardware such as cameras and film cameras are used as learning tools just like pencils and pens. The Hamlet makes considerable use of publishing programmes such as Comic Life, and uses film and desk-top publishing, to allow children access to the widest range of communication outlets. Dulwich Hamlet even has its own Youtube channel.

Computing Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-computing-programmes-of-study>

Resources

<http://primarycomputing.co.uk/>

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

<http://www.computingatschool.org.uk/index.php?id=primary>

Music

Dulwich Hamlet is renowned for its musical educational provision, and the school was selected as only one of nine schools nationally to be referenced in the Ofsted 2008 -2011 Report 'Music in Schools: Wider Still and Wider' as exemplifying good practice.

About three quarters of the pupils learn at least one musical instrument during the core school day in paired peripatetic lessons. The school has built a large library of musical instruments which are loaned to the pupils as part of the tuition process. This approach has proved highly successful in allowing children to learn without the full financial commitment of buying an instrument.

Evidence from The Journal of Neuroscience suggests that musical education offers clear benefits to brain development even into older adulthood: more musical training leads to faster brain responses to sound and speech, and there are other benefits from musical provision delivered by subject specialists, including improved mathematical attainment and strengthening of memory.

Another aspect of the music curriculum is a commitment to both working with a wide range of external partners in music from organisations such as the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Baroque Encounter, and local secondary schools to community musicians drawn from the East Dulwich, Camberwell and Peckham community, including church and gospel choirs, and modern music makers.

Music Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-music-programmes-of-study>

Resources

http://www.education-show.com/files/successfully_implementing_the_new_primary_music_national_curriculum_james_devaney.pdf

Physical Education

Dulwich Hamlet offers a wide range of sport, dance and physical education. Extensive use is made of specialist teachers and coaches. The Hamlet has for many years employed a specialist Laban-trained choreographer/dance teacher, and in the last three years employed sports coaches working to support the development of pupil and teachers' skills. Dulwich Hamlet also ensures wider participation in the community by involvement in inter-school sports and swimming tournaments, local authority and London-based competitions. Examples of this are participation in Southwark Cross Country, cricket at the Oval, and Sunbury, and tennis as part of the London Youth Games held at Crystal Palace. The PE and Sports Grant has been used to widen still further involvement in "hard to reach" pupils. The school has also come to a financial agreement with the Griffin playing fields to allow regular access for sport.

PE Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-physical-education-programmes-of-study>

Resources

<http://www.afpe.org.uk/advice-on-new-national-curriculum/new-national-curriculum>

Humanities: History, Geography and RE

Dulwich Hamlet believes that the best learning within Humanities takes place when meaningful and integrated links are made between history, geography, RE and broader educational themes encompassing spiritual, cultural, social and moral education.

'Big Themes' and the 'Big Questions' are key components of the Humanities curriculum. They can be examined throughout the children's education, using more complex subject matter and approaches to learning as the children progress. An example of a big question might be "Why do people/ countries invade other countries?" This is examined via The Battle of Hastings and Roman Studies as well as when the continent of South America is explored geographically.

Themes and topics have a history, geography or RE 'driver'. So a topic might focus more on geographical learning whilst being contextualised within a historical period. An example of this might be a main study of the geographical features of South America, which would also include aspects of the 16th century quest for resources and gold.

Equally we know from the recent Ofsted Report into the quality of RE teaching in schools, that best practice makes clear links between world faiths and wider issues of history and settlement. So we link studies of the world faiths to relevant topics wherever appropriate. We also explore people's right to not engage in an organised faith but still adopt a moral and ethical code of living that respects others' right to a belief system.

Humanities Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-geography-programmes-of-study>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study>

Resources

http://www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_news_2105.html

<http://www.geography.org.uk/news/2014nationalcurriculum/>

Philosophy for Children

We adopt P4C teaching approaches led by SAPARE (Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education) and ensure that all staff have attended training to allow them to use the excellent methodologies as part of their teaching practice, especially in links to the Humanities.

P4C develops children's thinking skills, their ability to form an argument or adopt a different viewpoint. It also encourages expression of complex issues with an expectation that opinions need to be justified and supported, and emphasises critical reflection. Dulwich Hamlet considers this approach to be a vital teaching tool across the curriculum.

Art and Design Technology

We value Art and Design Technology in the busy curriculum, both for their own unique subject benefits, but also because they help children understand the world in which they live, both past and present. The visual arts provide a window into other times and cultures and allow children to explore their own emotions and identity.

Design Technology as practised at the Hamlet in our dedicated Design Technology Suite, allows children to work from an initial brief that involves solving a problem and requires them to exercise collaborative working practices and overcome difficulties, thus building resilience.

Like the approach to other curriculum subjects, we immerse ourselves in both the local and wider community of artistic provision. Active use is made of London, both as a stimulus in itself and through its art galleries. The Hamlet also uses Dulwich Picture Gallery extensively (they provide an excellent free educational service).

Art and Design Technology Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-art-and-design-programmes-of-study>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-art-and-design-programmes-of-study>

Resources

<https://www.data.org.uk/for-education/curriculum/>

Modern Foreign Languages: French

We focus on French, building on the knowledge and understanding of the children as they progress through the school, culminating in a trip to France in Year 6.

We ensure that teaching is fun and engaging with an emphasis on spoken language skills, music, movement and role play. The children are provided with a “language passport” which accompanies them through the school, charting their progress and development. We use a variety of rich resources including Linguascope and other online curriculum schemes.

MFL Syllabus Programmes of Study:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-languages-programmes-of-study>

Resources

<http://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com/curriculum-and-learning/primary/curriculum-primary/requirements-for-primary-modern-foreign-languages/print>

Enrichment, Personalised Learning Space, Extra Curricular Activities and Breakfast and After School Care

Dulwich Hamlet is committed to the broadest educational offering, and that means looking beyond the National Curriculum, something which has been actively embraced by The Hamlet for many years.

A wide range of age appropriate **clubs** are offered both before and after school, ranging from sport to cookery in a dedicated cookery room. Other clubs include subjects such as sewing and graphics, computer coding and film making, gardening and even magic!

A very successful **Enrichment Programme** that draws upon a wide range of adult skills are offered during the Summer Term during a four week 'Enrichment Friday' programme. Rather like the clubs, children are offered a menu of activities in which to participate and are allowed to experience activities outside the core curriculum. This includes everything from yoga to car maintenance and is dependent on building successful links with the community who then deliver these specialist afternoon activities.

Personalised Learning Space is a way of delivering Intervention programmes of support to those children who have been identified as benefitting from some extra input during a whole-school dedicated time-slot, separate from the main body of lessons.

During PLS children are encouraged to work collaboratively pursuing areas of personal and group interest. PLS is designed to promote new ideas, independent thinking, problem solving and works towards a range of outcomes.

The Hamlet provides an 'extended day' for working parents and carers from 7.45am until 5.45pm, and aims to keep costs to the minimum. Breakfast Care allows parents to drop children off early. The pupils are given a healthy and nourishing breakfast. After school children are cared for in an environment that allows them to socialise, engage in playing with appropriate games and toys, as well as read and relax. They are also fed a light tea.

Use of Homework to support the school curriculum

Aims

- To provide homework that is relevant meaningful and purposeful – which is not “for the sake of it”:
- To foster a love of reading and wider learning
- To provide homework when necessary that consolidates or encourages practice of new skills
- To develop a sense of responsibility and ownership towards work completion
- To encourage the development of independent thought and the application of research tools
- To increase our home school partnership through shared understanding of work covered in school
- To prepare our eldest children for secondary school through the setting of more frequent and regular homework tasks.

Reading Homework

In every Year Group we expect children to “read” on a daily basis.

We know that the key contributor to children’s progress and achievement both academically and personally, is reading. Reading introduces children to new ideas, and experiences, and develops their ability to understand themselves, as well as the world in which they live. In addition, reading exposes them to vocabulary, variety of sentence construction, alternative written styles and importantly the ‘look’ of words. A potential significant contributory factor to good spelling retention is frequent sustained reading.

We expect children to complete a Reading Journal either within school time or at home, dependent on the Key Stage and organisation of the year group. These journals provide an opportunity for children and parents to engage actively with the reading book and produce a written response. This might be an imaginative task, such as writing a letter to a character in the book; it might be a task which requires deeper thinking such as imagining another scene or location that would link to the book; it might be a selection of new vocabulary from the book, a book review or a commentary on a writer’s style.

At the beginning of each academic year, every child is provided with a Reading Journal. Children record written activities in these books and different year groups might adopt a particular focus such as vocabulary acquisition, or extended written tasks. In Year 6 children are expected to engage with the ‘Year 6 Reading Project’ which assigns children a book during a term time holiday to which they respond with a variety of written tasks.

The Reading Journals form a valuable record throughout the year of the range of books read.

Spelling Homework

Dependent upon the age and stage of the child, we teach common letter patterns, spelling rules and, as the children progress, focus increasingly on the derivation of words including common prefixes and suffixes. The school complies with the requirements of The New National Curriculum Spelling lists and also uses Support for Spelling Second edition 2009 Ref: 01109-2009PDF-EN-01 published by DCSF.

Parents and carers are kept informed regarding the spelling or word focus during a particular half term. We assess learning and application of these spelling patterns and rules through on-going assessment and children's written work. We do not have weekly spelling "tests" of set spellings, but assess spellings, including spelling patterns, on an ad hoc basis.

Handwriting

Children are expected to write in a fluent cursive style, which aids speed and helps retain spelling patterns. From time to time we ask children to practise handwriting activities at home to support class work. We use the Dyslexia Friendly Wendy Goldup Handwriting Scheme which supports retention of common spelling patterns, as well encouraging fluency.

Written Homework

Teachers will, when appropriate, set age-appropriate written tasks for completion at home, related to text types covered in class e.g. persuasive writing, descriptive writing.

Research, Mini –Topics and Independent Projects

It is hugely important for children to plan, research and critically evaluate and to take responsibility for their own learning as part of their development as independent thinkers and learners.

In each year group there are homework tasks related to developing and fostering these skills such as researching an area related to a topic covered in class, or producing a piece of independently produced research. Dependent on the year group, there will be particular direction regarding the structure of the research project.

Mathematics Homework

At the earliest stages, we encourage children and parents to practise number knowledge and apply learning to home such as shopping, cooking, telling the time, measurement, and other domestic situations.

We would expect every child to learn tables 2-12 progressively. We expect the majority of children to have complete recall of all the related number facts of 2 5 and 10 and 3 and 6 by end of Year 3. We would expect knowledge of 3, 4, 6, and 7, 8, 9 11 and 12 by end of Year 4. We test tables on a "when ready" basis, and children's mastery of each set of tables is acknowledged through House Points and Achievement Certificates.

We set maths homework on a weekly basis that supports the application of knowledge learnt in class. We will ensure that parents and carers are informed about topics covered in order to support the children at home if necessary through topic webs, modelled examples of homework and “How To” guides developed in-house and promoted on our school website.