



Curriculum Policy

Early Years and Lower School (Pre-School to Year 6)

Academic Year 2023 – 2024

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Policy Information

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Review Date: October 2024

Coordinator (s): Mrs Gibson

Governor: Mr Langdon Griffiths

Introduction

We use both the flexibility within and without the National Curriculum to meet the needs and talents of the pupils in this school. We are aware that by drawing upon the National Curriculum in many areas as well as augmenting this with our own study programmes, we are satisfying the requirements of a broad and balanced curriculum.

We believe that we enable our pupils to achieve the highest academic and personal standards of which they are capable by providing them with challenges and the life skills that they need in order to take their place in society. We want all our children to RISE to the challenge and reach their full potential.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development while preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences in adult life in democratic Britain.

We see the development of English, Mathematics, Science and I.C.T. as central to our curriculum work, balanced with the humanities and arts. Also, the experiences of the children will be enriched by a range of planned extra-curricular activities. Every child is taught the values of developing resilience, demonstrating integrity, scholarly pursuits, and enriching experiences.

We strive to provide a curriculum that all pupils will find relevant and fulfilling. The curriculum has been designed with pupil wellbeing at its foundation. This can only be achieved by using the experience, enthusiasm and specialism of individual teachers who provide interesting, relevant, purposeful, and differentiated lessons based on real-life experiences, wherever possible, in a structured well-ordered classroom environment.

Curriculum Aims

Aims

Our curriculum aims to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that's coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment.
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations.
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.
- Support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health and enable them to be active.
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning.

- Ensure equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support.
- Have a high academic/vocational/technical ambition for all pupils.
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.
- Develop pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment.

These curriculum aims are underpinned by our values:

Resilience

Resilience is the mental reservoir of strength that pupils are able to call on in times of need to carry them through challenging times. Psychologists believe that resilient individuals are better able to handle adversity and rebuild their lives after a struggle. This does not mean that they experience less distress, grief, or anxiety than other people do. It means that they use healthy coping skills to handle such difficulties in ways that foster strength and growth.

Integrity

Happiness is a way of life at Tower College, and we actively encourage all pupils to reflect on the happiness they bring to others in their community. We aim to provide our pupils with the opportunities and support to achieve not only excellent academic progress, but to also gain fundamental life skills such as finding their own strong voice, being outward-looking as a kind and considerate responsible citizen.

Scholarship

A life-long love of learning is a gift to all that receive this mindset. Tower College pupils are encouraged to develop a growth mindset from an early age, and through a culture of encouragement, opportunity and challenge, our pupils develop the independence and confidence to achieve their true academic potential.

Enrichment

Enriching experiences are the cornerstone of a life well-lived, and this begins in childhood at Tower College. Pupils of all ages take part in actively shaping their school experience. Tower College aims to give each pupil a well-rounded education – teaching our pupils for life, not just to pass exams. It encourages an inclination to branch out, keeping all possibilities open for a future full of potential.

Areas of Experience

Tower College ensures the curriculum is designed and delivered with a focus on the following areas of experience so that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress:

- Linguistic
- Mathematical
- Scientific
- Technological
- Human and Social
- Physical
- Aesthetic and Creative
- Speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for independent schools as per The Independent School Standards.

It also reflects the requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governance

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the principal to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets.
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN).
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements.
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum.

Principal & Assistant Principal (Head of Teaching and Learning)

The Principal and Assistant Principal (Head of Teaching and Learning) is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met.
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate.
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate.
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements.
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions.
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN.

Teaching Staff

Teaching staff are required to plan and deliver their subject and year group curriculum and ensure it is implemented in accordance with this policy. Teaching staff are required to develop their own schemes of work relevant to the subject they teach. Their subject curriculum must meet the requirements outlined in this policy.

Other Staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

Organisation and Planning

Curriculum Approach

The curriculum is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that equips pupils with the knowledge, skills, and understanding required for their future lives. The curriculum is designed to inspire a love for learning, foster intellectual curiosity, and promote personal, social, and moral development. It aims to challenge pupils academically while also enriching their understanding of the wider world, culture, and society.

The curriculum reflects a carefully sequenced and structured approach, enabling pupils to build upon prior knowledge and understanding. There is a clear vision for the curriculum, which is shared by all staff, ensuring consistency and high-quality teaching and learning experiences across subjects.

The curriculum is tailored to meet the needs and aspirations of all pupils, offering a wide range of subjects and pathways. It is inclusive and provides opportunities for pupils to pursue their interests and talents, regardless of their background or ability. The school provides a supportive and nurturing environment that enables pupils to thrive, fostering positive attitudes towards learning and fostering the development of skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and resilience.

The curriculum is designed and delivered by well-qualified and passionate teachers who have expert subject knowledge and a deep understanding of how students learn. Class teachers are given the freedom and responsibility to design their own curriculum, supported by designated subject co-ordinators and in liaison with the Early Years or Lower School teaching team to ensure that subject curriculums are progressive, building on prior learning and skills. This is discussed and approved with the Senior Management Team. Lessons are engaging, well-planned, and appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of individual pupils. There is a strong emphasis on active learning, with opportunities for pupils to take ownership of their learning, collaborate with peers, and apply their knowledge to real-life situations.

The school provides a wealth of extracurricular activities and enrichment opportunities that complement the curriculum. This includes trips, visits, workshops, and clubs that broaden pupils' experience and deepen their understanding of subjects. These activities also promote the development of social skills, teamwork, and leadership qualities.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years curriculum is developed from the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework which outlines the areas of learning, Early Learning Goals and ethos of Early Years teaching and learning. Using the framework as a guide, teachers develop their own curriculums which build upon the individual needs and interests of their pupils, providing opportunities for children to explore and investigate concepts and ideas in more detail through a range of child-initiated and adult-led learning activities.

National Curriculum

Independent schools are not required by law to follow the National Curriculum.

Subject coordinators and class teachers may use the National Curriculum to support with the design and planning of the curriculum but will often augment this with their own schemes of work to ensure the curriculum is relevant and inspiring for our pupils.

Subjects

Year Group	Key Stage	Curriculum
Pre-School and Reception	Early Years Foundation Stage	Communication and language Physical development Personal, social and emotional development Literacy Mathematics Understanding the world Expressive arts and design Spanish Music
Year 1 and 2	KS1	English Phonics Maths Science Topic - History and Geography Art RE PSHE Computing PE Music Spanish
Year 3 - 6	KS2	English Maths Science History Geography Art RE PSHE Computing PE Music Spanish

Homework

While it is acknowledged that homework can be an important learning tool at Secondary level, allowing pupils to further embed knowledge and skills that are taught in the classroom as well as provide them with the opportunity to extend their learning by completing more challenging and creative tasks, research has shown that the benefits at Key Stage 1 and 2 are less significant. As a result, homework in Lower School is optional as it is designed to support learning and therefore should not create any unnecessary pressure for our pupils who often also participate in a number of after-school activities. We advise that a maximum time limit of 20- 30 minutes per day is spent on homework with priority being given to reading, spelling and the practice of key

maths facts. Our aim is to ensure that homework is purposeful and effective at improving the progress each pupil makes while ensuring that they are not overwhelmed and have a balanced school and home life.

Formal homework activities are discouraged in Early Years and we recommend that time is instead spent engaged in family activities which will support the development of key physical, social and communication skills such as playing turn taking games, exploring the local environment, cooking, art and craft activities etc.

In Reception, where appropriate, children are provided with phonics activities or reading books to support their independent reading. In the Spring term they also receive some simple spelling words to practice.

All pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 receive homework each Monday with activities to cover the week which is returned the following Monday when teachers will check the work and give any feedback or follow up tasks in class where necessary.

Homework consists of a range of tasks linked to:

- Spelling
- Handwriting
- Grammar
- Reading
- Maths

Spellings follow the school's chosen phonic/grammar-based spelling scheme and are assessed during weekly spelling tests with Years 3-6 also completing a second spelling test linked to key topic vocabulary or High Frequency Words.

Weekly Maths and English worksheets are used for recap and consolidation of work completed in class the previous week or to reinforce an earlier concept that requires further practice.

There is also an expectation that pupils will read at least three times a week and will also complete some Maths number facts practice using sites such as Numbots and TTRockstars which are tracked by teachers.

Alongside the weekly homework activities there will be 1 creative project set per term with projects being used in an exhibition at the end of each term.

There will be some slight variation in the homework activities set between year groups as we provide a reasonable and appropriate amount of homework for the age of our pupils.

Year Group	Spelling	Handwriting	Reading	Grammar	Maths	Maths Facts
Reception	Spelling practice worksheet from January		Phonics activities or school reading books			
Year 1	Spelling practice worksheet	Spelling handwriting worksheet	1 x school reading book 1 x reading for pleasure book	Phonics games given on alternate weeks	Maths games given on alternate weeks	Numbots
Year 2	Spelling practice worksheet	Spelling handwriting worksheet	1 x school reading book 1 x reading for pleasure book	English worksheet	Maths worksheet	Numbots TTRockstars from January
Year 3 – Year 6	Spelling practice worksheets	Spelling handwriting worksheet	1 x school reading book 1 x reading for pleasure book	English worksheet	Maths worksheet	TTRockstars

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, enabling teachers to gauge each pupil's progress in their subject. This allows for the reporting to parents and supports pupils in addressing any misconceptions, while enhancing their knowledge, understanding, and application of key skills. Furthermore, assessment offers teachers an opportunity to review their teaching practice and curriculum, enabling them to make relevant changes that best meet the emerging needs of pupils.

Tower College employs two types of assessments:

- **Formative Assessments:** These assessments are conducted in the classroom during allocated curriculum time. They serve as a means for teachers to monitor pupil progress. Examples include low-stakes quizzes and end-of-unit assessments. Formative assessments are suitably marked, and feedback is provided to pupils.
- **Summative Assessments:** Throughout the academic year, Tower College administers formal end of term assessments from Year 1 – Year 6 using three Rising Stars standardised assessments:
 - Progress in Understanding Maths (PUMA)
 - Progress in Reading Assessment (PiRA)
 - Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation (GaPS)

Teachers mark these assessments and input the data to the Rising Stars 'Mark' programme which provides results and data analysis of individual pupil and whole class attainment and progress which is then reported to parents.

In the Early Years, assessment is carried out through teacher observations of pupils during lessons and continuous provision activities with pupil progress being measured against curriculum outcomes, Development Matters statements and the Early Learning Goals. Evidence of attainment and progress is collated through the Tapestry Programme in which each pupil develops their own unique Early Years Profile.

Relationships and Sex Education

Please refer to the Tower College RSE Policy for more detailed and specific information.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Tower College wishes to assist young people in their holistic development as an individual. The curriculum supports and helps strengthen the general ethos of the school.

Pupils will be able to:

- be aware of art and design in the environment both past and present. To be able to use various art forms as a means of creative expression using different types of media.
- develop physical, social and mental well-being through physical activity. To develop confidence in agility, balance, coordination, power, reaction time, speed, endurance, strength and flexibility. Have the ability to express feeling through movement, drama and dance. To be able to swim and have experience of activities in the outdoors environment. To develop an understanding of the body and its systems in relation to activity as well of the requirements of good health and nutrition.
- appreciate music through listening, performing and composing through practical means, leading to an understanding of the structure and sound of music and to learn proficiency with one or more musical instruments. To be aware of and value great music of the past and present and develop a critical sense with regard to music.

- understand the value of achieving happiness for him or herself and other people through contributing to society and the wider community.
- understand the responsibility of co-operating with those around. Where behaviour is incompatible with this, accept the Principal has a duty to discipline, suspend and ultimately exclude them from the School to protect the interests of remaining pupils in the School.
- understand what is meant by the term 'safeguarding', to help themselves adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to bullying and radicalisation, with particular attention to the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet.

British Values

Each subject will embed the teaching of fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs into their curriculum.

Careers

Please refer to the Tower College Careers Policy for more detailed and specific information.

Educational Visits and Visitors

The school actively encourages educational visits to link in with and enhance the experiences of pupils.

Please refer to the Tower College Educational Visits Policy for more detailed and specific information.

Planning Expectations

All class teachers are expected to have appropriate schemes of work for each subject area which are collated and overseen by designated subject coordinators to ensure that each pupil is provided with an engaging curriculum consisting of a progressive sequence of learning from Year 1 to Year 6.

Inclusion

More Able Pupils

The more able have many successes on which to build and the curriculum has been designed to provide for the needs of these children.

Please refer to the Tower College More Able and Talented Policy for more detailed and specific information.

Pupils with SEN

We recognise that some pupils who attend the school have additional educational needs.

As far as possible, provision is made within the school for all pupils with special needs, working closely with the parents and other relevant professionals, to ensure the pupils achieve their full potential. Appropriate additional support is provided where necessary.

Please refer to the Tower College Special Educational Needs Policy for more detailed and specific information.

Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

As far as possible, provision is made within the school to support pupils who are EAL.

Please refer to the Tower College Special Educational Needs Policy for more detailed and specific information.

Equal Opportunities

Tower College aims to promote an awareness of and respect for a diversity of cultures, values, beliefs and abilities.

Monitoring Arrangements

Curriculum Monitoring

The Senior Management Team monitor the design, planning and delivery of the curriculum. This will be done through regular meetings with subject teachers, reviewing schemes of work and associated documentation, learning walks, work scrutinies and appraisals.

Review

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the Assistant Principal – Head of Teaching and Learning, the Principal or the nominated governor.