

MERTON COURT SCHOOL



CURRICULUM POLICY

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Signed by the Headmaster/Proprietor:	
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Merton Court is committed to child protection and safeguarding children and young people and expects all staff, visitors and volunteers to share this commitment.

This policy applies to the whole school including EYFS.

Related Policies & Documents

- EYFS Policy
- More Able Policy
- SEND Policy - Additional Learning support
- Subject Policies
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Refer to School Events, Website and newsletters
- Education Act (2002) Section 80A

Curriculum Aims

Merton Court School aims to:

- Provide the concepts, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills that we wish our children to develop;
- Promote an environment that fosters resilience, creativity and confidence;
- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and mental development of children;
- Be broad, balanced, differentiated and relevant

- Considers the assessment of children's progress, equal opportunities and special educational needs;
- Provide the delivery of first-class teaching that inspires, challenges and celebrates each child for who they are and what they do;
- Be designed to consider the ages, aptitudes and needs of all children, including SEND children, children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and more able children;
- The SMSC Education reflects the school's aim and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act;
- Provide range of experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, spiritual and moral, physical and aesthetic and creative education.

We intend that our curriculum should instil in our children:

- A passion for lifelong learning;
- A capacity for independent and critical thinking;
- Self-awareness, self-regulation and resilience;
- Self-confidence without arrogance;
- Genuine interests that extend beyond the confines of the classroom.

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.

"Head, hand, heart" is central to the ethos of Merton Court School. We believe this incorporates a holistic approach to the development of the whole child. Our broad-based curriculum is built upon a programme of intellectual and physical stimulation alongside emotional and spiritual well-being. Social and personal developments are crucial, and therefore individuality as well as achievement, is celebrated. The SMSC (RE/PSE/RHE) programme supports the meeting of the School's aims and ethos and encourages respect for others leading to each pupil fulfilling their potential. Our community is warm and caring in a stimulating atmosphere. Above all, our staff and children know each other very well.

The curriculum at every stage is designed to offer quality and balanced coverage of, and extension of the national curriculum. All sections of the school curriculum are reviewed as appropriate to ensure that the breadth and depth of study is up to date and in line with national trends.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Our specialist Early Years and Reception forms offer a safe, structured environment for pre-main school children aged 3-5 years, where they enjoy social interaction, intellectual stimulation and personal development under the caring guidance of our highly trained specialist staff.

The EYFS Curriculum consists of the following seven educational programmes:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The EYFS Curriculum emphasises exploration, investigation, discovery and problem solving. Activities are planned which closely follow children's individual interests. The School considers each child's preferred learning styles, children's play is carefully observed and then stimulating and enjoyable activities are planned to provide opportunities for further learning. Learning is often cross-curriculum.

Each educational programme is covered through a combination of adult-initiated and child-led activities. Adult-led activities in mathematics and literacy vary in length depending on the children's age and stage of development. Activities become more formal as the children's development progresses. Personalised Learning Groups are used in both EY and J1 (Reception).

Thought-provoking questions posed by staff at the appropriate time foster deeper thinking skills, embed learning and begin to develop and challenge an enquiring mind at a very early age.

Junior School

The Junior School at Merton Court consists of Key Stage 1 – J2 (Yr1) and J3 (Yr2). There are two forms in each year group.

The Year 1 and 2 Curriculum covers all requirements of the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum but is in no way constrained by its provisions. The department provides a successful and seamless transition between Early Years, Foundation Stage and the Senior School (Key Stage 2).

There is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. Children build and fine tune the skills attained in previous years. Cursive writing skills, first introduced in Reception, are continually improved and honed. English work starts becoming more formalised with a more defined Grammar, Comprehension and Creative Writing focus. Children are encouraged to develop a sound understanding of the structure of words and word formation processes. Diverse practical and numerical Mathematical concepts are introduced, re-visited and expanded on. Support is there for those who need it as well as more challenging work, for those who are more able.

Teaching is regularly reviewed in light of changes in educational thinking and practice to ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is maintained, which gives children the opportunity to grow.

The curriculum for Years 1 and 2 is based on the following areas of learning:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Art and Design Technology
- Computing & ICT
- Dance and Drama
- Humanities (Geography and History)
- SMSC including Religious Education, Personal, Social & Economic Education, Relationships & Health Education and British values
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Music
- Physical Education (including Games and Swimming) – taught by specialist PE teachers

Children in Years 1 and 2 take part in a variety of educational visits to local places to enrich their learning. This includes visits to a nature reserve. Children have the option of taking part in extra-curricular activities including art, sports clubs and individual music lessons

Regular Homework is set from J2 along with weekly spelling tests. Number bonds are worked on, and times tables are introduced in the Summer Term of J2. More formal tests are given from J2 Summer Term onwards and these results begin the assessment tracking record we keep on each child. Taster days and parents' Information Evenings are offered throughout to allow a smooth transition for children as well as termly Coffee Mornings, in which parents are invited to come along and watch their child's form assembly and have the opportunity to talk to form teachers, the Headmaster and other members of our Leadership Team.

The Senior School

S1-S4 (Years 3 – 6)

The Senior school Curriculum covers all requirements of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum but is in no way constrained by its provisions. A great emphasis is placed on the need to provide a breadth of study and ensure our teaching is broad and balanced to allow children to develop each and every talent and interest.

Subject	Approximate Time Allocation per Week
English including spelling	6 hours 45 minutes
Mathematics (including mental arithmetic)	6 hours 45 minutes
Science	1 hour 20 minutes
Humanities (History or Geography)	1 hour 20 minutes
Art including (Design and Technology)	35 minutes
Computing	1 hour 10 minutes

SMSC (including Religious Studies, PSE & RHE)	1 hour 20 minutes
MFL	40 minutes in Year 4 and in Year 5 1 hour and 10 minutes in Year 6
Music	35 minutes
Dance	40 minutes
Swimming	35 minutes
Games	1 hour 15 minutes
PE	40 minutes

Personalised Learning Groupwork

This takes place in J2, J3, S1, S2, S3 and S4. Yeargroups are split into 3 or 4 smaller groups according to ability. The sessions are English or Maths based, and the programme of study goes on for 6-8 weeks. Time allocation is between 1 to 1½ hours - 2/3 times a week. The sessions are evaluated by all teachers involved at the end of the programme.

There is a wide range of educational visits to local educational sites and events in order to enrich the curriculum as well as residential trips from S2-S4 to Hill Top Activity Centre, Norfolk, France and Spain. The senior curriculum offers diverse extra-curricular provision. These include sporting, musical, artistic/creative and interest activities. Throughout Year 6, opportunities are given for the children to attend taster sessions and activities to allow them to have a smooth transition into Secondary Schools. Visitors are invited into school to enhance learning such as MoneySense Workshops and DT Workshops, as well as inviting parents in to enhance the RE Curriculum.

Taken together, the taught curriculum will ensure that by the time they have completed their time with us, all children will be able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to move onto the next stage of their education at the highest level possible for each individual child.

Curriculum Ambassadors

In line with the Able Policy, children were chosen to share their desire for learning throughout the school. These children meet with class teachers to discuss current topics. They then share their books, PowerPoint presentations/props during an assembly. These ambassadors also lead assemblies during our English/Maths/Science weeks.

SEND

Our curriculum is inclusive. For those children with special educational needs or specific learning difficulties, the school has a strong learning support team led by the SEND Co-ordinator.

EAL Children

Children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL), receive support. We ensure that all EAL learners participate in and gain access to our curriculum

provision and support EAL learners in their acquisition of English language skills across the curriculum.

We ensure that activities are planned to match EAL learners' individual needs. Form teachers provide termly evaluations and School test results monitor progress and attainment of EAL learners. We also develop resources to support EAL learners.

SMSC

The school 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.

British values are actively promoted in assemblies, lessons and reflected during celebrations, such as Harvest Festival and celebrations at Christmas and Easter. Children are taught about respecting others of different faiths and beliefs and about the important celebrations of other cultures. Children are taught about democracy, respect for the rule of law and its role in a democratic society, respect for English institutions such as the police and the armed forces and they are taught about the importance of individual freedom of expression and the negative aspects of discrimination.

S4 Prefects School Committee carry out duties and responsibilities around school.

For Pupil Voice, we have Prefect Council and School Council. Prefect Council is all Year 6 and takes place termly. School Council takes place twice termly.

Two children per yeargroup from Year 1 (J2) to Year 6 (S4) represent their yeargroup and school are annually voted in by their peers. Children are encouraged to put forward ideas for discussion as a way to contribute to the democratic process.

Children are encouraged to get involved in the local community by participating in community events, such as the Sidcup Remembrance Service and the Sidcup B.I.D Christmas Event, as well as considering fundraising for local and national charities. Carol singing in our local High Street offers opportunities for the children to interact with all members of our community. The School holds an annual Christmas carol service at St. John's Church, Sidcup, and supports local food banks and those, organised by St John's church community, at our annual Harvest Festival celebrations.

The school ensures the children have a fully developed value system which will enable them to play a confident, informed role in society and be able to interact with other people in a positive way.

Forest School

Forest School sessions are child led to accommodate individual learning styles and schemes. Children are encouraged to make choices and follow their own learning. The adults' role is facilitative and enables observation and assessment of the children by the qualified Forest School leaders who are assisted by

teachers and assistants.

Teachers, practitioners and parents involved with children who have participated in Forest School in other settings, report significant improvements in independence, self-esteem, social skills, concentration levels and the ability to work co-operatively with peers and adults. We have a superb, on-site, self-contained area which acts as an outdoor classroom. We have found that by giving children the combination of freedom and responsibility in a safe environment they have become more confident, inquisitive and able to manage risks for themselves. EYFS, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 have weekly Forest School sessions and Senior children have the opportunity to participate in Forest School activities during Enrichment Weeks and an extra-curricular club in the Summer term.

Summary

The general aims of the curriculum are to develop in our children at Merton Court:

- To inspire a passion for learning through excellent teaching and outstanding personal achievement;
- The ability to think logically and laterally;
- The capacity to express themselves coherently both verbally and in writing, good study habits and the willingness to take responsibility for their own learning and academic performance.

We have high academic expectations of all our children, and the pace of work is sustained and challenging. We expect our children to work hard and to take their progress seriously. We aim to help and support to those who are more able, who may need stretching and extension activities and to those who find some areas of the curriculum more challenging.

