



## Birtenshaw School Merseyside Curriculum Policy

### **Rationale:**

The Curriculum at Birtenshaw School Merseyside supports the mission statement: *brightening lives, building futures* by giving pupils the opportunity to learn and develop in a supportive and creative environment in which there is a focus on recognising achievement and supporting progression and in which pupils feel safe and are happy. The curriculum is individualised, creative, innovative and flexible allowing for the needs of each pupil to be met. It aims to promote the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the pupils as well as their intellectual and physical development.

The school is committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum, based on the National Curriculum for those pupils of compulsory school age and the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is blended with opportunities for pupils to prepare for adulthood by developing functional skills, independence skills and skills for working life as appropriate. Some subjects are taught discretely while others are covered via a thematic creative curriculum approach.

The timetable and Curriculum are reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current legislation and guidance and taking into account best practice within special needs education.

We endeavour to provide opportunities for pupils who are identified as having a gift or talent to develop their skills and abilities in that area.

The curriculum is planned to provide continuity and progression. It enables pupils to make connections and transfer skills and to think creatively and solve problems. It also develops pupils' capacity to work independently and collaboratively. Birtenshaw School Merseyside actively promotes British values both as part of our ethos and embedded within the school curriculum.

Pupils are grouped by stage rather than age. In addition to the overarching curriculum plan each pupil will follow an individualised timetable providing opportunities for pupils to withdraw from some sessions or parts of sessions to participate in therapy sessions with Occupational Therapist (OT) and Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) staff.

We know that pupils with autistic spectrum conditions are happiest and achieve most when their routine is clear and when their learning opportunities build on their particular skills and talents. To this end, we tailor the curriculum to help pupils make progress in a way that best suits them.

At Birtenshaw School Merseyside we recognise the importance of preparing our pupils for life in modern Britain, therefore our policies reflect this ethos and incorporate fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

### **Aims:**

- That pupils make outstanding progress against personal targets
- That pupils acknowledge their achievements and have a sense of pride
- That pupils have opportunities to participate in a range of enrichment activities within and beyond the curriculum via working with professionals within the community for example: sports coaches, musicians, gardeners and so on and by visiting places of interest.
- That pupils develop communication skills including use of symbols, signing and objects of reference
- That pupils develop reading skills through phonics based reading scheme
- That pupils develop skills for independence
- That pupils use of ICT is encouraged
- That pupils develop a greater awareness of their local community and make a positive contribution
- That pupils learn a range of skills for life beyond school

### **Literacy and Numeracy:**

Literacy and Numeracy are taught discretely and consciously reinforced throughout all aspects of the curriculum.

Literacy and Numeracy are taught each morning and form part of the pupils' daily routine.

Pupils' reading skills are developed by the use of the phonics reading schemes "Dockside" and "Jolly Phonics" which provide a structured age appropriate and engaging scheme to support reading and comprehension skills.

### **Creative Curriculum:**

The Creative Curriculum approach provides pupils with the opportunities to cover a range of learning outcomes and develop Personal Learning and Thinking Skills within a topic based framework. Each topic covers aspects of the Humanities and Science and reinforces Literacy and Numeracy skills.

As far as is possible we aim that pupils will develop their skills as:

- Independent Enquirers
- Team Workers
- Effective Participants
- Self Managers
- Creative Thinkers
- Reflective Learners

Each topic covers aspects of the Humanities and Science and reinforces Literacy and Numeracy skills.

### **Preparing for Adulthood**

We see the development of independence skills and Skills for Working Life as vital to our pupils. To that end, there is a community inclusion focus in the timetable which gives pupils the opportunity to be supported in the community to learn skills such as shopping and how to travel on public transport. In addition, skills such as basic cooking are taught and where appropriate work experience.

### **PSHE and SMSC**

PSHE is a timetabled session every day with each day having a difference focus.

An annual plan of significant dates in the religious and cultural calendar ensures that there is a focus, through assemblies and PSHE lessons on important cultural and religious festivals and commemorative days.

The development of social and communication skills is also a key part of the PSHE/SMSC curriculum.

### **Religious Education and Collective Worship**

Religious Education themes and topics are covered via Creative Curriculum Lessons as well as through assemblies and PSHE.

Children of any faith and those of no faith are encouraged to value everyone and their beliefs equally. Shared assembly times focus on celebration and the worth-ship of all of those within the school community and aim

- To show interest in and concern for members of the school community
- To celebrate special occasions together
- To show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community and wider world

- To share appreciation of worthwhile activities undertaken by groups within the school
- To reflect upon dimensions of human life, the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, ugly, sorrowful, solemn...

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education and/or Collective Worship.

## **Sex and Relationships Education**

Sex and Relationships Education is taught in PSHE lessons at a level appropriate to the level of understanding of the young people.

We liaise closely with partner organisations and the Learning Disability Nursing Team for specialist individual input and support.

Parents may request that their child is excused from Sex Education.

## **Enrichment:**

The curriculum is enriched by educational trips and visits, local community links and opportunities within the timetable to engage with new experiences for example: music workshops, gardening, educational visits.

## **Accreditations:**

Learning outcomes are accredited via AQA unit awards and where appropriate entry level qualifications - Functional Skills and BTEC, GCSEs, ASDAN Awards, Arts Award

## **Responsibilities:**

Class teachers are responsible for:

- medium and short term planning
- differentiation to meet the individual needs of pupils
- summative and formative assessment
- using a range of teaching and learning strategies, techniques and resources
- directing the work of Learning Support Assistants
- attending and contributing to training and meetings are requested

## **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The Head of School will co-ordinate the monitoring cycle. This will include:

- auditing planning
- moderating assessment data
- analysing progress data
- observing lessons
- learning walks
- work scrutinies
- curriculum development and planning
- initiating training/workshop opportunities with specific focus.

### **Resources:**

Resources are allocated in line with the priorities indicated in the School Development Plan.

### **CPD:**

All staff are provided with opportunities for professional development and training in line with the School Development plan and the organisational training needs analysis and strategy. Training needs will be linked to the school's performance management process.

### **Equal Opportunities:**

The school supports the rights of all pupils to equal access and opportunities regardless of age, culture, religion, gender, ability, disability or sexuality. The school promotes an ethos of respect for everyone.