

What makes our curriculum different?

Curriculum - Statement of Intent

We want all pupils to achieve more than they thought was possible; to succeed when they have all been deemed to have failed. To achieve this we work on school being 'more than just an education' and build on the motto 'TEAM' – Together everyone achieves more. We provide a broad and balanced through 'Key stages' curriculum that reflects the individual needs of our pupils giving them the skills to navigate the 'big, wide world' when they leave us. Each cohort is considered when GCSE choices are offered in order to best suit individual needs and local employment opportunities.

As a special school for social, emotional and mental health difficulties we have pupils who possess a range of abilities, aptitudes and interests. We offer a full range of opportunities for pupils to gain nationally recognised accreditations as best suits pupil's specific needs as well as broaden each pupil's life experiences through a range of enrichment opportunities. We want our pupils to build up respect, honesty and empathy through showing determination and resilience, not always the easiest thing to do, but one that we strive for. All subject areas explicitly plan to ensure that academic learning outcomes are met, but also that our key skills are targeted across the whole school to ensure outcomes for 'resilience', 'communication' and 'self-management' are met and continue to show progression as pupils move through the school.

Subjects like SMSC and Religious Studies are delivered through Tutor Time/Topic, Assemblies, Drop Down Days and within the Academy Subject Curriculum areas.

What does our curriculum look like?

Primary

The **Primary Curriculum** is structured in a way that facilitates an 'academic' and 'social' education. Key Skills such as 'resilience', 'communication' and 'self-management' are embedded into the whole curriculum in a variety of ways. Learning is cross-curricular to ensure that it is meaningful and engaging for the pupils.

The aim of the Primary Curriculum is for pupils to:

- be ready to learn and develop a 'love of learning'
- have personal learning needs and interests identified
- work towards meeting age related expectations.

English, Maths and P.E. are taught daily and take place during the morning sessions (Period 1, 2 and 3). Targeted interventions are in place to address specific needs such as fine motor skills, spelling, reading, place value and times tables. Therapeutic intervention is key to achieving the primary curriculum aims with many of the pupils receiving support such as 1:1 Art therapy based sessions, Speech and Language Therapy, Play Therapy and ELSA (emotional, literacy support).

Teachers create Topic Webs each term to capture how specific skills across the curriculum link to a set theme/topic. This topic acts as a vehicle for all the learning to take place.

Some examples of topics are:

- *Shadows and stones - Where did it all begin? How do changes take place?*
- *The living world - Do parts of the body and plants have different functions? Why?*
- *'Now I sea'...where does water come from and why is it so important?*



The social aspect of the primary curriculum is achieved through a number of extracurricular opportunities such as climbing, swimming, drama, horse riding etc. There are also specific sessions for Music, Horticulture and Science which are taught in secondary classes by subject specific teachers. Pupils also achieve Golden Time as a reward throughout the week. These Golden Time activities are structured in a way which allow for further learning opportunities such as fun science experiments, cooking, riding and maintaining bikes/scooters and arts and crafts. In addition to this, the Primary timetable ensures that there are daily PSHE sessions which occur during assemblies as a whole department and class circle time where various themes such as bullying, resilience respect are discussed and addressed.

Year 7

This year is the 'transition' year group which is made up of 2 classes. These classes follow a similar approach to the primary curriculum with cross-curricular learning still being the focus. Maths and English is taught by the Year 7 class teacher for Periods 1 and 2 as well as afternoon 'Topic' sessions for Period 5. This ensures that the Year 7 pupils are provided with the consistency and stability that they would be familiar with in Key Stage 2.

Periods 3 and 4 are used as an opportunity for the Year 7 pupils to be fully immersed into the secondary department. It is during these periods that they will be taught Food Technology, STEM, ICT, Horticulture, Music and PSHE. Year 7 pupils also have daily P.E. sessions as they would in the Primary department to maintain a continuation of their timetable. The build up their resilience to be able to cope with greater changes and movement throughout the school day, both of teachers and classrooms.

The aim of the Year 7 Curriculum is for pupils to:

- maintain a primary based approach to learning.
- transition successfully into secondary education.
- close the gap in their learning to begin to access the secondary curriculum.

Year 8

Year 8 is where pupils begin to establish their 'flight paths'. Flight paths are way of communicating progress and getting pupils reflecting on personal interests. It also involves talking about their learning journey and what direction they would like to go in which may involve further discussion in PSHE and embedding 'Careers' into the curriculum to begin to explore opportunities beyond school.

The specific needs of the pupils will determine the structure of the 2 Year 8 classes with one class working towards conventional accreditations such as GCSEs and the other following a more vocational route. The expectations for key subjects such as Maths and English will still be achieved but may be delivered in different ways.

These vocational opportunities will allow the Year 8 pupils to learn and develop key skills through activities such as bike maintenance, horticulture, cake decorating, photography, lego and construction. This is another example of how 'resilience', 'communication' and 'self-management' can be embedded into the curriculum. It is only through an exposure of a variety of learning opportunities that the pupils will be able to make successful and informed decisions as they approach Key Stage 4.

Secondary year groups have a set tutor who potentially stays with them until the end of Year 11. Year 8 pupils will benefit from having additional tutor time to help build positive relationships and facilitate valuable PSHE and team building opportunities. This will also help to support a smooth transition from Year 7 and Primary where they would have spent considerable time with their class teacher.

The aim of the Year 8 Curriculum is for pupils to:

- meet the expectations of the secondary curriculum.
- be exposed to further learning opportunities and vocations and develop a range of skills.
- begin to establish their 'flight paths'.

Year 9

In Year 9 the core curriculum takes firm shape with Maths, English, ICT and Stem/Science accreditations being undertaken at an Entry Level. This allows all pupils to build up the self-management and resilience needed to complete the linear exams required at the end of year 11. They need to build on their communication skills within all subjects and manage themselves effectively in order to cope with the demands of meeting exam requirements. Foundation subjects such as Art, Food Studies, and Music are designed to engage and motivate pupils to 'think for themselves', develop creativity and take ownership of their education. PSHE/Careers builds up a range of hands on experiences working within our local community to include workshops from visiting speakers, visits to local employers and volunteering opportunities. Our options evening will include visiting representatives from local training providers and colleges.

Year 9 pupils will begin embarking on the Prince's Trust Achieve programme which will be embedded within the curriculum allowing pupils to explore:

- *Personal and social development:* By working in small groups, you'll be able to meet new people and make new friends
- *Life skills:* Through fun and interactive sessions, you'll learn how to manage money, be healthy and stay safe
- *Active citizenship:* You'll work as part of a team to make a difference to your local community
- *Enterprise project:* This is a Dragons' Den style challenge. Ready to put your entrepreneurial skills to the test?
- *Preparation for work:* Create a tip-top CV, practice for future interviews and explore your skills and talents



**YOUTH
CAN
DO IT**

In the final term of year 9 pupils will make their 'option' choices for deeper study and initiate their final qualifications in a range of subjects designed to meet the particular needs and interests of the year group.

2018-19 choices include: GCSE Art and Design, Btec Food Studies, GCSE PE and ELC Science.

The aim of the Year 9 Curriculum is for pupils to:

- begin to develop some of the key skills needed for KS4 examinations
- build up a practical approach to learning in order to unlock potential
- make final choices around specific subjects to be studied within KS4

Year 10

In Year 10 pupils start on their final part of their educational journey. Pupils remain in mixed ability classes and work is differentiated in order to match individual needs and abilities. Ongoing literacy and numeracy assessments maintain the level of support that each pupil requires and forms their 'normal way of working' which in turn informs the level of support a pupils is allocated when completing national examinations. English and Maths are taught in stages in order to allow pupils to undertake both Functional skill exams as well as GCSEs.

In order to support the anxieties around completing examinations staff take the time to practice using past papers and hold Mock exams to give pupils the confidence and the knowledge that they can achieve. Interwoven amidst the academic qualifications required by the government we mix in an enrichment programme designed to build up key interests, vocational skills and challenges. These can include bike maintenance, photography, cake decorating and film making as well as sporting opportunities such as Judo, boxing and canoeing.

Yr 10 pupils get the chance to work with The Dallaglio Rugby Foundation a lesson a week where they, through the medium of rugby, build up a range of skills and experiences that employers in the future will be looking for. They get to attend tournaments as well as visit a range of businesses where they will experience a little of what the 'World of Work' may be like. They also have the opportunity to build up their life-experiences and range of skills through an 'Enrichment Day'. Off-site activities, such as climbing and canoeing, will be timetabled in blocks to broaden the opportunities our pupils have to challenge themselves.

The aim of the Year 10 Curriculum is for pupils to:

- build up a portfolio of accreditations within English and Maths (including early entry)
- begin to take responsibility and ownership of their education
- lay the learning foundations for the range of examination subjects studied.

Year 11

A key area within the Year 11 curriculum is ensuring that all pupils have guidance around transition and their destinations beyond Wandle Valley. Careers / PSHE supports this through arranging visits to local employers and training providers, hosting a 'Careers Week' culminating in 'Careers Open Morning', attended by 30+ local employers/training providers, offering informal interviews and further information, holding mock interviews with external professionals and one to one support at initial visits and Learning Support interviews at prospective colleges, as required. Pupils continue to work with Rugby works where they get the chance to enter tournaments and visits with large global companies developing their skills in order to support their ability to manage themselves effectively at college or in the world of work.

Mock exams are carried out to simulate the scenario pupils face in the summer of Year 11 and to familiarise themselves with the rules and regulations around national examinations. Revision of skills, knowledge and the application of relevant exam technique forms the core of the year 11 curriculum.

Pupils continue to have the opportunity to undertake a range of qualifications and accreditations that best match their proposed journey on from Wandle Valley into college or work at post 16.

The aim of the Year 11 Curriculum is for pupils to:

- support pupils with their post 16 placements
- develop 'exam technique' and revision skills
- build up their 'capital currency' to enable aspirational choices and opportunities post 16

Interventions and support

As a school we offer a range of interventions designed to support each individual pupils to thrive. We aim to close any educational gaps and ensure that everyone has the chance to succeed and have a range of options on hand when they leave Wandle Valley Academy.

- ✓ All pupils have the opportunity to attend school camp which runs every 2 years, funded by school.
- ✓ Targeted 1-1 Literacy and numeracy sessions are utilised in order to raise pupil's literacy skills bringing them nearer to age related expectations.
- ✓ Precision teaching – pupils are timetabled for individual/small group sessions for part or whole lessons to work on specific 'gaps' in their learning to ensure positive progress can be made.
- ✓ Alternative provision, with the emphasis on vocational skills and training, is offered. These range from Sporting activities, gaming/computing and plastering/painting and decorating.
- ✓ ELSA – support for emotional and social difficulties which may be impacting pupil's ability to access their education or to form positive relationships. Trained staff analyse pupil's needs, plan relevant sessions, offer key strategies to help pupils manage themselves effectively and measure the impact this makes in school.
- ✓ Trampolining is offered to the whole school community.
- ✓ Pupil voice develops responsibility and offers leadership opportunities for pupils.
- ✓ Sporting fixtures are held throughout the year and all pupils invited to participate, this builds up team spirit, resilience and respect.
- ✓ SMSC is delivered explicitly through our pastoral opportunities, e.g. Tutor time and assemblies, as well as implicitly within all subjects.
- ✓ Fitness club is run daily to support those pupils who need extra support settling into a structured day.
- ✓ Flexible learning environments where pupils may work outside of a classroom to best suit their needs as a short or long term tool for engagement. There are at least 2 members of staff within lessons to ensure flexibility and support is always on offer.
- ✓ Time-out cards have been created with specific pupils in order to allow moments of 'self-calming' for specific periods of time/safe places/to see key staff.
- ✓ Crystal Palace Mentoring Scheme – to support those pupils who find attending and engaging within school very challenging.
- ✓ Enrichment lessons are offered twice weekly to all year groups to encourage making choices and working with other pupils of different ages and interests.