



Parkside Primary School

Curriculum Policy

January 2026

The vision for our school is

**We are Proud to Shine –
Growing In Excellence Every Day!
Learning & Achieving
Safe & Happy
Respectful & Caring
Motivated & Inspired**

With our curriculum provision we aim to add sparkle to the children's learning and to their lives.

Our Mission Statement

As a partnership of Children, Parents/Carers, Staff, Governors and the wider Community, we aim to:-

- Promote equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff
- Ensure that everyone will experience an inclusive education where discrimination on the grounds of race, sexual orientation, gender or disability is actively challenged, and tolerance & understanding promoted
 - Meet children's individual and collective needs
 - Provide a stimulating, secure and nurturing environment
 - Promote an ethos that is highly motivating and encourages all to take responsibility for their own learning
 - Provide an environment where we all feel secure, valued, respected and understood
 - Encourage all to have a positive self-image, high self-esteem and increasing confidence
 - Provide an environment which encourages analytical and critical thinking, active learning, investigation, creativity and challenge
 - Value and celebrate the richness and diversity of cultures and beliefs in our community
 - Celebrate achievement, attainment and progress in all areas of development
 - Display high standards of good manners and politeness at all times
 - Encourage all to have a sense of responsibility for themselves, for each other and for their environment.

Introduction

The curriculum is all the planned activities [matched to the learning objectives] that we organise in order to promote learning, personal growth and development; it is the totality of the children's experiences that occur in the educational process. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school provides in order to enrich the experiences of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

Our curriculum is delivered using a variety of approaches and resources depending on the nature of the subject being taught and the needs of the children.

Values

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear at Parkside. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives. The children at Parkside Primary School are 'Proud to Shine'.

Our school is in full agreement with the values statement included in the introduction to The National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers in England and goes beyond that – Parkside style!

These are the main values of our school, upon which we have based our curriculum:

- We value the way in which all children are unique, and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual child, as well as for people of all cultures.
- We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.
- We value the importance of each person in our community. We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community.
- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each child in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty.
- We value the success of each person in Parkside and we provide equal opportunities for all the children in our school.
- We value our environment, and we aim, through our curriculum, to teach respect for our world, and how we should care for it [for future generations, as well as our own].
- We value each curriculum area for itself and for the opportunity it gives for our children to shine in different areas of learning.

Intent [Aims and Objectives]

The intent of our school curriculum is:

- to enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability
- to engender a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning
- to promote critical and analytical thinking across the school
- to provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils that is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively acquiring sufficient knowledge and skills to ensure a productive and successful future.
- to teach children the requisite skills of literacy, numeracy and computing to access their learning successfully
- to inspire children to be creative and to develop their own thinking
- to educate children about their developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time
- to ensure children understand Britain's cultural heritage
- to empower children to be positive citizens in society
- to equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- to fulfil all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education
- to encourage children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to understand right from wrong
- to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all

- to empower children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others
- to support pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health and enable them to be active.
- to recognise the crucial role which parents/carers play in their child's education and make every effort to encourage parental/carer involvement in their educational process
- to deliver a curriculum that encourages respect for the environment and society
- to facilitate children learning to behave in increasingly mature, self-controlled and positive ways.

We want our children to develop a love of learning and a thirst for knowledge that will ensure they learn continuously throughout their lifetime.

At Parkside Primary School it is our intent that the children will be successful, confident and responsible. We want all of our children to be 'Proud to Shine'. Our curriculum will ensure that our pupils are:

Successful – by acquiring the skills to be:

- Creative thinkers
- Analytical thinkers
- Critical thinkers
- Problem solvers
- Good question askers
- Able to learn from their mistakes
- Good collaborative learners
- Secure in their knowledge of the world and how it is shaped
- Motivated to learn
- In charge of their own learning journey.
- Resilient
- Open to [and desirous of] challenge
- Active learners

Confident – by having a secure:

- Sense of identity
- Ability to form positive relationships with all members of their community
- Emotional awareness and emotional intelligence
- Knowledge of right and wrong
- Understanding of organisational skills
- Ability to lead
- Capacity to be contributing members of the school
- Awareness of a healthy lifestyle
- Grasp of risk awareness
- Understanding of how to develop their strengths, talents and ambitions
- Confidence and willingness to try new things.

Responsible – by developing their ability to be:

- Well prepared for life and work
- Enterprising
- Respectful of others and to understand their own and others' cultures and traditions
- Conversant with what it means to be British
- Enthusiastic to embrace and appreciate diversity
- Confident enough to challenge injustice
- Cognisant of how to sustain and improve the environment
- Motivated to try to change things for the better.

Further to all of this, our School Curriculum is designed to:

Teach our pupils to learn well:

Our curriculum enables children to understand what effective learning is, understand themselves as learners and develop their capacity to make the most of learning in school. They are continually exhorted to take control of their own learning journey and is why we insist even our youngest pupils are trained to make a learning comment at the end of every lesson. We believe that reflective learners are efficient and committed learners.

Teach our pupils how to lead happy, healthy, constructive lives, in which they can aspire and experience success:

Wellbeing, in terms of both physical and mental health, is essential for effective engagement with school and wider life. Our pupils need to feel secure in themselves and their environment and relaxed but alert to learn. They need to believe in themselves as successful people and aim high in order to make great progress. We create a nurturing, happy, organised environment in which our pupils can thrive. We teach them about wellbeing and how they can be happy, healthy people.

Ensure broad and balanced knowledge of the world:

The National Curriculum is an entitlement and we ensure all pupils access it fully and meaningfully throughout their time at our school. We provide wide-ranging and coherent knowledge across the curriculum, to equip our pupils for success in secondary school and their adult lives. We aim to ensure a breadth of experience and knowledge that closes gaps in cultural capital between different groups of pupils. We want our pupils to learn about a broad range of possibilities in their lives, so they can aspire with purpose and ambition. Pupils also need opportunities to develop lines of personal interest and expertise. This is where our enhanced curriculum comes in.

We provide a broad, coherent and structured curriculum that aims at sustained mastery for all and a greater depth of understanding, in all subjects, for those who are more efficient learners.

Teach our pupils to live well in a diverse world, as confident, responsible citizens:

Diversity is a defining characteristic of our community. Our children need to learn how to live and work positively in the context of difference. They need to understand how lines of social inequality and marginalisation impact on them, as well as how to challenge these in constructive, purposeful and responsible ways. We aim to be a culturally competent organisation and teach our children to be culturally competent people, with a mature self-identity, as well as understanding and respect for others.

Organisation and planning

We plan our curriculum meticulously, ensuring that we meet the requirements of the Early Years Curriculum and the National Curriculum. We ensure that there is coherence and full progression in its coverage and that new knowledge builds on prior knowledge in a clear and structured way.

As well as establishing and enhancing their specific subject-based skills we want our children to develop their generic skill base and our curriculum is designed to augment their social skills and thinking skills. This will aid the children to become resilient, confident, efficient and independent learners.

Social Skills:

- To respect the opinion and feelings of others.
- To work as a team and be able to share with and support each other.
- To understand different social situations and adapt.

- To help others.
- To always use their manners.
- To provide opportunities for all children to be able to share their work and celebrate their success.

Thinking Skills:

- To encourage and develop independent thinking
- To promote critical and analytical thinking
- To foster creative thinking
- To 'have a go' and not fear failure.
- To develop questioning and answering skills.
- To retain and build on previous knowledge.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinkers have specific traits that allow them to think the way they do. Some people are predisposed to these traits, while others need to develop them actively. Some of these dispositions include:

- Open-mindedness
- Respecting evidence and reasoning
- Being able to consider different perspectives and points of view: in other words, having cognitive flexibility
- Not being stuck in one position
- Skepticism – the confidence to question
- Clarity and precision
- The ability to make solid arguments supported by evidence
- The capacity to infer conclusions: from the facts and arguments presented, you need to use reasoning skills to come to a logical conclusion
- Being able to discern truth from fiction. Not all facts presented to you may have the same level of truth. Certain conditions need to be met for something to be considered believable, and a critical thinker needs to be able to understand that
- The ability to think about your own thinking [metacognition]. Critical thinkers should be able to analyse their thoughts so that they can judge whether or not they've thought everything through. This helps them come up with better hypotheses.

Critical thinking skills are considered [increasingly] to be one of the most desirable skills by employers in the workplace.

Our curriculum is designed to ensure that children develop the skills they need to become confident, self-motivated learners who can engage with and solve challenges innovatively.

For each subject and year group we have:

- a curriculum overview which shows which unit is being taught at any point of the year.
- medium term plans which give more detail about what is taught in each unit of work. lessons plans and resources for each unit of work.
- kwl grids for each unit of work. The grids encourage the children to reflect on any past learning [what they **know**] relating to the unit of work. They also promote a degree of

ownership about **w**hat they would like to find out during each unit of work. At the end of each unit of work it gives children the opportunity to reflect on their learning [what I have **l**earnt].

- knowledge organisers for each unit of work which assists with memory retention and retrieval. They use dual coding which means they provide two different representations of the information [visual and written]. This helps children to memorise and retrieve information more efficiently. They also encourage the children to be efficient, organised learners.
- children's self-assessment sheets which are linked to the learning objectives for each unit of work. This encouraged the children's ownership of their own learning. As they go through the school their comments should become increasingly analytical.
- a construction document for each subject which identifies and explains our rationale for the curriculum design
- an overview of the skills progression for each subject
- a SMSC [Spiritual, Moral Social and Cultural development] document which details how each subject impacts on these issues
- a key vocabulary document
- an 'Essential Characteristics Endpoint' document which delineates what a Parkside learner should 'look like' in each subject as they leave our Early Years provision.
- an 'Essential Characteristics Endpoint' document which delineates what a Parkside learner should 'look like' in each subject as they leave for their secondary career.

Teachers are free to construct their own lesson plans but they must follow the designated learning objectives for each unit of work.

We have commercial schemes of work available for some subjects and also banks of lessons plans, garnered from a variety of sources. Teachers, therefore, have a plethora of supporting material to draw from to ensure lesson approaches are varied and are designed to deliver our curriculum in the most effective, engaging and fun way. We aim to put our 'Parkside style' onto everything.

We review our curriculum provision regularly. We take into account both local and national trends along with the most up-to-date educational thinking. This ensures we provide ambitious and relevant content for our children to learn from.

We evaluate the impact of our curriculum by monitoring attainment and progress termly. We utilise both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data can be counted, measured, and expressed using numbers. Qualitative data is descriptive and conceptual.

We quality assure levels of progression by focusing on one improvement at a time so as not to provoke cognitive overload. Our opportunity to utilize a continuous flow of assessment, enabled by our collaborative learning ethos, ensures our findings are rigorous.

Structure and Timing

Each year we work carefully to construct the timetables for each year group making changes to reflect the outcomes of the previous year's learning. We analyse the children's progress carefully and respond with tweaks to the timetable. We carefully monitor how effective our provision is and make adjustments accordingly.

In Early Years we follow the statutory 'Early Years Foundation Stage Framework' which delineates the structure we build on, through the seven areas of learning.

We also use the non-statutory 'Development Matters' document as a supporting guide.

We put a strong emphasis on the children acquiring a sound knowledge of phonics and their use. We encapsulate all the learning into a rich and ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all

our children. We are also very mindful that our provision ensures the children are ready – in terms of learning, confidence and attitude – for the next stage in their learning journey.

In Key Stage One we again put a strong emphasis on phonics with both year groups having a daily dedicated phonics session.

We provide all the National Curriculum subjects but enhance this provision with augmentations like extra cooking, in addition to that required by the D.T. programme of study, the Daily Mile, Writing Day, Maths Day, learning Spanish songs and vocabulary etc.

In Key Stage Two we provide all the National Curriculum subjects with additions and enhancements as above. We have never narrowed the curriculum [in response to SATs] but pride ourselves on even the Year 6 children being the recipients of the full curriculum.

We aim for a good level of consistency across each year group but we are aware that there will be some slippage due to things like assembly rehearsals and enrichment activities. This may result in different lessons across a year group being missed by each class.

We try to ensure that a sports enrichment activity would result in a missed P.E. lesson for example but this is not always possible.

Year Group Leaders monitor the impact on the breadth and integrity of the curriculum provided and make considered adjustments as necessary.

At Parkside we believe assemblies are an important and valuable part of our curriculum. We have designed them to include regular learning about current affairs, our school values, key religious and cultural festivals and to enhance our curriculum provision. We hold a singing assembly every week that includes our own specially written Parkside songs and a weekly Celebration assembly. Children really enjoy the assemblies [evidence in 'Pupil Voice' book] and they strengthen the Parkside ethos and sense of community. Each class also performs an assembly to parents/carers annually.

Inclusion

We address and respond to the diversity of needs of learners in our school. These include:

- more efficient learners
- pupils with low prior attainment
- pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- pupils with SEND
- pupils with English as an additional language [EAL]

We follow the precepts of the mastery curriculum and high standards for all. Our default position is collaborative [mixed ability] learning and we **do not** set by ability.

Lessons will be planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. In many cases, such planning, alongside efficient teaching and collaborative learning, will mean that these pupils will be able to study the full national curriculum. A minority of pupils may need access to specialist equipment and different approaches.

We practice differentiation by depth and institute carefully constructed, targeted intervention whenever that is deemed appropriate and efficacious. We assess the effectiveness of these interventions rigorously.

Assessment

Our school considers accurate, ongoing and focused assessment as the cornerstone of high quality teaching, as it allows learning to be planned and taught accurately to meet the needs of the children, as learners, ensuring high levels of expectation. Our whole school approach is focused on [minute by minute] assessment for learning and pupil's progress is evaluated by meeting or not meeting key learning objectives against national end of year expectations.

Children are tested termly in Maths and Reading Comprehension. KS1 Children are tested on phonics.

The school uses 'Sonar' to record, monitor and analyse the attainment and progress of pupils.

We use our rigorous assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious and challenging but realistic.

A fundamental component of our ongoing assessment is insisting the children write a learning comment [from KS1 onwards] after each lesson. These give us a valuable insight into the children's understanding and learning from their perspective. This is also training the children to practice metacognition.

Assessment in EYFS

Assessment in Early Years, as in the rest of the school, takes a formative [ongoing] approach. The main EYFS assessment method is through teacher's monitoring of children in different teaching and learning contexts. This includes both adult focused activities and child initiated play. This close scrutiny takes place on a daily basis and teachers are aware of the children's strengths and weaknesses. The children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and a good level of progress. This approach of ongoing assessment is not only used to support but to extend, challenge, widen and deepen the learning of all the children.

The teacher focus lessons for Maths and Literacy are where the children's achievements are assessed against the learning objectives and this identifies those with gaps or those that are exceeding the expected standard.

The children are assessed against the 'Early Learning Goals' near the end of the academic year, Children are also tested on phonics and there are termly Maths assessments. The school uses 'Sonar' to record, monitor and analyse the data.

Learning Environment

The spaces in which children learn have a real influence on their states of mind: on their ability to organise their thinking and bring a positive, focused attitude to learning. We aim for environments that are engaging, with accessible displays and resources that promote learning. We create organised and flexible working environments. We do our best to flood them with natural light.

The environment our children work in should support and inspire their learning. We ensure this happens by the following:

- each classroom has learning support displays
- each classroom is 'text-rich', including a book / reading area
- each classroom has a class writing wall which has a new piece of writing from each child added every half-term and is a visible record of their progress
- each class has a literacy and maths working wall, which is updated with children's work and key learning facts / vocabulary and supports the current learning
- resources which are easily accessible so as to minimise disruption.

We believe that opportunities for inclusive, creative play are a crucial element of our curriculum. Play is the natural way to learn. Its benefits include:

- social and emotional development: play involves learning about collaborating, compromising, communicating, competing well, resolving disputes and caring for friends. It is a key way in which children develop self-regulation.
- well-being: great play is enormously absorbing and fun.
- learning: play is a laboratory of life, in which children practice and explore the wider world. They embed learning, develop understanding and discover personal interests, talents and identities.
- creativity: play is an intrinsically creative activity, which stretches learners' imaginations.
- rights: Play is a right under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have worked hard to improve the quality of play in our school. We aim to ensure that break and lunchtimes involve vibrant and happy learning through play for all our pupils.

With all this in mind we have adopted the 'Opal' approach to play times. This is based on introducing a wealth of 'random' items to the play ground such as suitcases, material, boxes etc. to spark the children's imagination whether for role play or team games or anything their minds can create.

We have also done an enormous amount to improve our outside areas:

- constructed an imaginative yet purposeful outside area for our early years provision
- installed challenging play equipment for the Key Stage 1 and 2 playgrounds
- refurbished a bus as our library provision [which has ignited the children's love of reading to a greater degree]
- signed up for edible playgrounds provision – which enhances well-being, the science curriculum, encourages healthy eating and intensifies our pride in our school, particularly as the children use [and eat] the produce in their cooking lessons
- keep our courtyard looking lovely, re-furbished the pond and installed a greenhouse
- constructed a remembrance corner in the courtyard where children who are bereaved can find solace.

Home Learning

The purpose of the home learning we set is:

to encourage parents/carers to engage in the learning their children are doing at school and equip them to feed back to us about learning needs they see in their children.

to enable children to practise and reinforce learning at school.

to encourage self-discipline and organisation around independent learning, to ensure pupils are ready for secondary school.

We have designed our home learning programme to ensure it is accessible to all our families, offers choice and opportunities to be creative. We have attempted to keep the amount of home learning we set at a reasonable level. We only stipulate the literacy and maths homework is non-negotiable; the rest is optional. We think it very important that children have plenty of time in their lives to play! We also think it is important that parents/carers feel comfortable with the amount of homework that is set.

As a school we are happy to try and accommodate a variety of needs.

The role of the subject leader

The role of the subject leader is to:

- provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject
- promote the subject in a positive, vibrant and exciting way
- support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject
- support colleagues to ensure high quality teaching and learning in their subject area
- monitor pupil progress in that subject area
- write an action plan for their subject area and update the progress termly
- keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level
- review the way the subject is taught in the school and plan for improvement
- scrutinise work in books where applicable and appropriate
- conference children in their subject area where applicable and appropriate
- feed their monitoring and evaluation back to the Senior Leadership Team
- provide efficient resource management for the subject
- provide appropriate and inspiring resources for their subject.
- analyse, collate and act upon the responses to our Pupil Voice programme

The school gives subject leaders non-contact time whenever needed, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role.

Each subject leader reviews the curriculum plans for their subject, ensures that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum and that progression is planned into schemes of work. This development planning links to whole-school objectives.

The subject leader also keeps a portfolio of children's work [where appropriate] or a similar system, which is used to show the achievements of children at each key stage and to give examples of expectations of attainment.

The role of the year group leader

The role of the subject leader is to:

- ensure there is appropriate [and enriched] curriculum coverage across all subjects
- make sure all members of their team are equipped to deliver a challenging curriculum that is broad, balanced, creative and rigorous
- verify there is consistency of provision across their group [reflected, where possible, in books and subject folders]
- confirm targets are met by their team
- make sure supply teachers visiting their year group are fully apprised of what is expected from them and to offer support where needed
- lead and co-ordinate the work of the assigned year group, being responsible for the quality of learning, pupil progress and standards
- monitor teaching and learning, planning, pupils' work, progress and behaviour in order to raise standards
- ensure an effective use of resources
- promote the wellbeing of staff and pupils in the school with particular reference to their year group
- determine all statutory and school assessments are undertaken and to be accountable for standards within the year group
- support and secure the commitment of others to the vision, ethos and policies of the school and promote high levels of achievement in school
- be an excellent practitioner and role-model to their team.

Although we have year group leaders and subject leaders we encourage all staff to think outside of the box and contribute their ideas; ownership is important for all at Parkside.

Initiatives

We strongly believe that any changes we make to the teaching and learning at Parkside should be worthwhile and add to the synergy of existing practice. We do not believe in tick-boxing and adapt and modify any initiatives imposed from outside agencies so that they actually enhance our procedures that are already in place.

Monitoring and review

Our Governing Body's Curriculum Committee is responsible for monitoring the way our curriculum is implemented. They do this by:

- undertaking curriculum area reviews [considering government directives and initiatives, local and national trends, current methodology and examples of best practice]
- perusing updated or rewritten subject policies and [hopefully] approving them
- scrutinising the curriculum component of the School Development Plan
- [on a rolling programme] watching coordinator's presentations of information on their subject
- receiving termly updates of the subject leader's action plans
- appraising the curriculum component of the Head Teacher's report
- considering verbal feedback from the Head Teacher.

The Link Governors directly concerned with the curriculum provision are the SEND, Looked-After Children and PE Link Governors. These governors liaise with the subject leaders of these areas, and monitor the school's provision in these areas.

The Teaching and Learning Coordinator oversees the work of the Subject Leaders and works collaboratively with them to ensure they are supported in managing and developing their subjects. This guarantees there is a level of consistency across all areas of the curriculum and all year groups.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study, which all maintained schools in England must teach.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010. In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage [EYFS] statutory framework.

Furthermore, the statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education states that:

Relationships Education (is) compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and...Health Education (is) compulsory in all schools (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education – Statutory Guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers, 2019)

Links to other policies:

Please read this policy in conjunction with –

The Teaching and Learning policy

The Feedback and Marking policy

The SEND policy

The Assessment policy

The EYFS policy

Individual subject policies

The P.E. policy – which delineates how we focus on the following skills each half term: personal, social, cognitive, creative, health and fitness. It also shows our focus on resilience and teamwork. [also see 'The Parkside Prayer']

The new national curriculum, resulting from the recent Curriculum and Assessment Review, will be implemented for first teaching in September 2028, with the final digital curriculum expected to be published by Spring 2027 to give schools time to prepare. Key changes include making citizenship compulsory in primary schools and strengthening writing assessment in Year 6.

We will be looking at our curriculum and assessment in light of these proposed changes and will revisit our curriculum policy later this year.

Policy reviewed: January 2026