



Curriculum, Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy

Statutory Policy: No	Reviewed by the Curriculum Committee:	07.03.25
Source: LZW	Ratified by headteacher	21.03.25
Policy to go on website: Yes	Review Cycle/ Date:	Bi Annually/ Spring 2027

Amended by	Date	Amendment & Comments
Veronica Short & Leadership team	07.02.25	Multiple changes in blue font throughout the policy. Addition of new descriptors, values, phonics approaches (we have new support package since policy last reviewed). Addition of CATHS & Insights and creative partnerships

Intent

Our vision at Lady Zia Wernher School is to be a special place of learning to enable pupil voice, curiosity, independence and happiness for today and tomorrow.

Our values are happiness, independence, curiosity, respect, passion and creativity.

The National Curriculum states:

1.1 Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which: promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

1.2 The school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that each school plans for its pupils. The national curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum.

Every pupil is entitled to access the National Curriculum, which promotes achievement for all pupils. Our curriculum offers breadth, balance and functional activities that are relevant to our pupils. Teaching and learning focuses on the development of communication and interaction, cognition and learning, personal and social emotional wellbeing, physical and sensory development and life skills. Communication is at the heart of the school to enable pupil voice, independence, understanding, and to overcome barriers.

The curriculum is ambitious, highly creative and differentiated through the provision of a text driven multisensory topic themed approach, to ensure the content and delivery is relevant, motivating and engaging. This ensures all pupils are able to access learning opportunities, develop independence, and are active in their learning, supported by staff who have the relevant training and are motivated to promote positive outcomes.

The curriculum is designed to enable sequential learning to take place. Subject leaders reflect on their design to provide sequenced learning opportunities for the children to make the best progress as they move through the school.

A strong foundation is laid in the early years, with flexible curriculum pathways for our Buds (PMLD/ pre formal curricula), Blossoms (learning on the move, informal curricula) and Blooms (SLD/ informal and semi-formal curricula) pupil cohorts (see appendix). Our 3-year rolling programme ensures what children learn in

EYFS is built upon in Lower School and developed further in Upper School; equipping and enabling pupils by giving them the skills and the knowledge in the right order from Nursery to Year 6 within each subject, providing further opportunities to make linear progression, add breadth of experience, application and understanding, leading to more generalised skills across different contexts.

The curriculum is facilitated throughout the school day. Learning opportunities are sought through daily routines, including transition times, snack and lunch times and play and leisure time. The use of outside play areas and visits within the local community, help bring learning to life as the children encounter a variety of environments and use their skills in the real world.

Core elements of the curriculum:

- Enable pupils to grow in knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, therefore preparing pupils for their next stages of learning.
- Support pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural, *mental and physical* development taking into account British values, through the provision of elements of the Luton Agreed Syllabus incorporating religions, beliefs and cultures from around the world.
- *Support pupils personal development including life skills, building resilience and providing opportunities to engage with society, preparing pupils for later life.*
- Ensure equal access to learning, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge incorporating a range of learning strategies.
- Work with parents, and other professionals in a collaborative way to consider the whole child.
- *Enable pupils to engage with creative practitioners e.g. dance specialists*
- *Embody the school values*
- *Support pupil well-being and happiness*
- *Communication At The Heart of the School (CATHS) A shared approach between Education and Speech and Language Therapy; showing how to embed communication and interaction within education; creating communication friendly environments.*

Reading & Phonics

Reading may be defined as the ability to interpret the written word for information and pleasure. In our setting the teaching of reading is very broad. Early cognitive reading skills include the use of Objects of Reference, signing and symbols, a wide range of story and non-fiction books, drama, poetry, action rhymes, songs, shared home school reading, visits to libraries, theatres and museums.

In our setting, we use Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) as our Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme. We heavily adapt and scaffold this programme to meet the diverse needs of our learners, sequencing the learning to build on children's existing Phonics knowledge and their interests.

A large group of our learners are working at Phonics Phase 1, Playing with Sounds level, responding to and generating instrumental, environmental and body percussion sounds. These learners are at a pre-Phonics level. We have adapted ELS sessions to meet the needs of our learners working at phase 2 and beyond. We are embedding the ELS programme in our school over a 5-year period which will be concluded in July 2028.

Collaborative work with Luton and other regional special schools and training for all staff is in place to ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of reading and phonics and opportunities to share best practice.

Implementation

Organisation and planning

The curriculum is highly differentiated with the needs and learning styles of the pupils being a key element of the planning and delivery of the lessons. School is divided into three departments – Early Years Foundation Stage, Lower and Upper schools. Within each department the children are grouped carefully in order to provide for their individual needs and learning styles. Classes generally have children of mixed ages, departments follow a 3-year rolling programme of themes, giving a wide range of texts, contexts and activities through which learning outcomes and EHCP targets are delivered.

Lower & Upper school teaching incorporates National Curriculum subjects of Literacy, Numeracy, PSHE (refer to the Sex and Relationships Education policy), Computing, Art, Music, Design Technology, Science, PE, Geography and History. Early Years Foundation Stage department (EYFS) follow the Statutory

Framework to ensure that the four principles of: 1. Unique child, 2. Positive relationships, 3. Enabling environment, 4. Development and Learning, are embedded.

The themes are developed through a collaborative approach within each department, identifying any focused areas to be addressed through the topic. Core Subject Leaders ensure a breadth of learning opportunities are embedded within the learning which may be delivered as standalone lessons or as part of a thematic approach.

Barriers to learning are considered and access needs. Many pupils are dependent upon support to self-regulate and develop social and emotional well-being and require a multi-sensory curriculum.

Subject leaders ensure the core purpose for their areas of learning are regularly promoted. They are responsible for auditing curriculum content and design and cascading their knowledge. They encourage professional curiosity and reflection and empower other teachers to deliver best practice.

Teachers have responsibility for daily/weekly planning using and extending the ideas within the medium-term planning, highly differentiating the lessons to ensure the aims are relevant to each pupil including targets from their EHCP. Teachers identify next steps in learning for pupils, scaffolding learning appropriately and reflect on their practice applying the 'what worked well' and 'even better if' methodology.

Multi-Agency Collaboration

Other professionals including Speech and Language Therapists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Music Therapists, Play Therapists and a dance practitioner work in partnership with the school, liaising with teachers and providing information and specific targets for the pupils, enhancing their learning opportunities and supporting access to the curriculum.

In addition, teachers will take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their functional use of English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects. Communication is supported by the use of wide variety of augmentative communication systems, including Makaton signing, simple voice output communication aids (VOCAs), such as a Big Mack switch and Objects of Reference and core boards.

R.E. & Collective worship:

All schools have a duty to provide both RE and collective worship. RE is part of the school curriculum. Collective worship represents a powerful way to develop and establish a school's ethos and values. Collective worship is an important feature of our school's culture and takes place through circle time and assemblies. Our acts of collective worship promote and encourage British values, cultural capital and incorporate religions and beliefs from around the world. The children explore festivals and celebrations from a variety of cultures throughout the year with further enrichment opportunities provided, such as visits from the Bamboozle theatre company, M & M theatrical productions, Ark Farm, riding and swimming lessons and projects with the Royal Ballet and Opera House. All maintained schools must provide religious education and daily collective worship for all registered pupils and promote their spiritual, moral and cultural development. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from both RE and collective worship.

Impact (enabling for today and tomorrow) Assessment, Outcomes and Achievement

Evidence of pupil progress is captured using the school's assessment tool, Evidence for Learning. Teachers annotate, take photos and record short videos demonstrating progress towards specific targets.

Reports are generated using Evidence for Learning. This tool also provides the opportunity to assess progress within the Wilson Stuart P Steps and Routes for Learning; children within the Early Years are assessed against the SEN Development Profile.

Pupils working within early stages of cognitive development are supported in their engagement using The Engagement Model. Teachers use this as assessment tool for pupils working below the standard of National Curriculum tests and evidence is gathered against 5 areas of learning: Persistence, Realisation, Anticipation, Initiation and Exploration.

School uses a variety of strategies to evidence progress. All children have targets within their Education, Health and Care Plans which are reviewed every term and shared with parents regularly, with opportunities to celebrate achievements at Annual Review meetings and Parents' Consultations. Targets are set for areas that are central for preparation for "tomorrow" i.e. the next stage of education. Annual Review reports are generated using the school's Assessment tool – Evidence for Learning (EfL).

Assessment recognises children's progress in non-subject based learning, engagement and core purpose skills. Progress can be linear (neuro-typical steps of development) and lateral (generalisation, fluency, levels of prompting and maintenance of skill). A number of pupils have degenerative conditions with skills being maintained where possible; however it is acknowledged that targets may revert to earlier stages. Individual progress is tracked, moderated and monitored through a variety of methods to ensure teaching is effective and challenging.

School internally monitors progress through teacher evaluation, staff discussions, learning walks, pupil progress meetings, parent meetings (Annual Review, parent consultations and additional support meetings as and when appropriate). Pupil progress data can be further scrutinised for trends and anomalies in cohorts and classes using the Insights program using EFL. School externally moderates assessment judgements with several other special schools (SSMAG – Special Schools Moderation & Assessment Group) across 8 local authorities, as well as sharing best practice with the other special schools in Luton, sharing INSET, learning walks and joint observation sessions.

Pupils leave the school achieving their best possible outcomes; demonstrating functional skills to support their independent thoughts and actions as they transition into secondary education.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- EYFS Statutory Framework and Curriculum Guidance
- SEND local offer
- Equality information and objectives
- Pupil Premium
- Sex and Relationship Education
- Remote learning policy
- Behaviour in school

Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the Rochford Review final report (October 2016) for pupils with special educational needs.

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](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

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](#).

Criteria used in lesson observation and learning walks

7 Key Features of Outstanding Lessons
1. High expectations

2. Progress & outcomes
3. Curriculum knowledge including SEND
4. Well-structured lessons
5. Adapting to pupil strengths & needs
6. Accurate & productive assessment
7. Manage behaviour effectively

Support Descriptors

- Universal Support meets the needs of the majority of pupils in our specialist school setting. Differentiated learning approaches, physicality & access, communication and emotional regulation strategies implemented. Needs & support noted in EHCP & pupil profile.
- Targeted Support addresses evidence of elevated needs including communication, access, emotional dysregulation (teacher observations, EfL, CPOMS, CBM, EHCP). Team has specific approaches & known resources/ timetable, an SEMH support plan may be required on short term basis.
- Specialised Support additional support plan is essential. LZW Aspect/ Specialised (Comms, SEMH, PMLD, Access, M&H, Nursing team/meds team) support involved for specific intervention. Including modelling practice, additional staff training, higher staffing ratio, limited timetable, increased SENAT funding and other professionals involved.

