



Ark Blacklands Primary Academy  
CURRICULUM POLICY



## POLICY INFORMATION

### Named personnel with designated responsibility for (insert)

Academic year	Designated Senior person	Deputy Designated Senior person	Nominated Governor	Chair of Governors
2014/2015	Lorraine Clarke			Elaine Parrish
2015/2016	Lorraine Clarke	Natalie Rankin	N Tewkesbry	Elaine Parrish
2016/2017	Natalie Rankin	Mary Quinn	J O'Donoghue	Micky Sandall

### Policy review dates (frequency of review: bi annual)

Review Date	Changes made	By whom
May 2015	Policy edited	Natalie Rankin
October 2015	Policy edited	Natalie Rankin
January 2017	Policy Edited	Mary Quinn

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## 1 AIMS

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All aspects of our curricula provision have been devised with the National Curriculum 2014 in mind. We have ensured that all the statutory requirements are fully adhered to and that all pupils are fully prepared to meet the requirements of the Early Learning Goals in the Early Years and Foundation Stage, the National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics at years 2 and 6 and Phonics Screen in year 1.

A strong command of English and mathematics is a vital foundation for the whole curriculum. We prioritise depth before breadth so that all pupils secure firm foundations in these core subjects as early as possible.

The curriculum at our academy:

- is focused upon high standards in mathematics, reading and writing as well as being broad and balanced, providing plenty of opportunities for enrichment
- excites our pupils' imaginations
- is progressive, ensuring continuity from Reception to Year 6
- provides a firm foundation for later learning and subject choice
- is relevant to our pupils and their surroundings
- is underpinned by outstanding teaching.

## 2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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- 2.1 To commit extra time to English and mathematics so that students can attain proficiency and address the curriculum with confidence.
- 2.2 To focus on depth before breadth.
- 2.3 Opportunities for cross-curricular links are identified during medium term planning, especially in English, ICT and the foundation subjects.
- 2.4 Involve our children in decision-making about their learning, allowing children choice and independence which supports:
  - a Tell me and I forget.
  - b Show me and I remember.
  - c Involve me and I understand.
- 2.5 Closely monitor and assess progression in attainment and application of skills.
- 2.6 Help our children to transfer skills between different areas of the curriculum in order to encourage flexibility and resourcefulness and to enable them to use their strengths in one area to overcome challenges in another – to overcome ‘I can’t’ and ‘I don’t get it’.
- 2.7 Ensure our children are active, motivated and enthusiastic learners.
- 2.8 Ensure our children know what they are learning and WHY.
- 2.9 Allow time to engage, reflect and review – including peer and self-evaluation.
- 2.10 Use a wealth of relevant resources – in classrooms, outdoors, in the local community and the wider area, including visits and visitors.
- 2.11 Allow our children to demonstrate their learning in different ways – not always pages in an exercise book but photographs, posters, products, presentations, performances...
- 2.12 ‘An effective curriculum would enable all pupils to feel that they are gifted and talented and that they have

some flexibility to choose their own learning pathways' (Ros Wilson).

### 3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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3.1 The **Head of School** will ensure that:

- a All statutory elements of the curriculum are met.
- b The amount of time provided for teaching the curriculum is adequate and reviewed regularly by the policy and curriculum committee.
- c The governing body is fully involved in the decision making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- d The governing body is advised on statutory targets in order to make informed decisions.
- e The curriculum meets the mission statement and our values and ethos.

3.2 **Teaching and Support staff** will ensure that the curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

3.3 The **governing** body will ensure that:

- a It considers the advice of the Principal on curriculum issues and when setting statutory and non-statutory targets.
- b Progress towards annual statutory targets is monitored.
- c National Curriculum tests and teacher assessment results are published in the academy prospectus and in the academy profile and progress towards meeting agreed targets are described.
- d It participates in the decision making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum.

3.4 The curriculum is regularly reviewed and updated.

## 4 INCLUSION

We have high expectations for every pupil. We plan challenging work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard. We have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Parents are welcome to come and discuss the targets set for their child at any time throughout the year.

Responding to pupils' needs and overcoming potential barriers for individuals and groups of pupils

We assess the needs of pupils and continuously monitor the impact of our approach to ensure they are making accelerated progress. Throughout the day are times for small group and individual interventions to take place to address specific gaps or educational needs.

Subject area	Interventions Activity/programme
<b>Phonics</b>	1:1 phonics (RWInc)
<b>English</b>	Nuffield / Drive for literacy Catch-up reading/high frequency words/1:1 volunteer reading/clicker /
<b>Maths</b>	1:1 tutoring / small group interventions/Rapid Maths
<b>Speaking and listening</b>	Speech and language therapy/EAL intervention groups/TalkBoost
<b>Social skill</b>	P4C/Place2Be/Kids Co/SEAL

*Table 2 – Interventions*

A wide range of pupils have special educational needs, some of whom also have disabilities. Lessons are planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. A minority of pupils will need access to specialist equipment and different approaches. We follow guidance from the new SEN Code of Practice which outlines what needs to be done to best support these pupils.

With the right teaching, that recognises their individual needs, many disabled pupils may have little need for additional resources beyond the aids which they use as part of their daily life. Our teachers plan lessons so that these pupils can study every national curriculum subject.

Teachers take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

## 5 SUBJECT GUIDELINES

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### 5.1 The Early Years Curriculum

The EYFS Framework covers the development and learning of children from birth to the end of their reception year in school. For us that means that children will arrive into our school having already experienced and developed through many aspects of the Framework. Therefore we aim to build on our children's previous experiences as they enter our school to ensure a happy and fulfilling reception year resulting in our children being ready for key stage 1 and beyond. Our nursery and reception curriculum based on ARK's principles has been devised to specifically meet the needs of young children, the statutory requirements.

At ARK Blacklands our mathematics curriculum has been tailored to adhere to the EYFS statutory framework and is based upon the Maths Mastery Programme. For phonics and reading we follow the Read, Write, Inc. programme. Reading is further developed through a wide range of reading books.

The Curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning; three of which are prime: Personal, social and emotional development; Communication and Language and Physical Development. These prime areas of learning are integrally connected and are respected as transcending cultural differences, reflect the beginnings of child development, are critical for influencing later success in learning and emerge as an outcome of early experience.

The specific areas of learning are Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

The early year's approach to curriculum delivery is through planning teaching, activities and experiences in a way, which facilitates progress in learning.

- We aspire to ensure a breadth of balance in the curriculum through carefully planned adult input and sensitive interaction using the EYFS framework whilst also having regard for the skills, knowledge and attitudes the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum will demand. We prioritise enabling all pupils to meet and exceed expected national levels of progress in English and mathematics as the foundation for academic success.
- Appropriate intervention can help children to become more involved in the learning process and provide opportunities for new learning and development, so that they can make progress. Early intervention is a feature of our teaching and learning practice.

At the beginning of their time in reception children will undertake a baseline assessment in line with national expectations to ascertain the level of attainment on entry to school.

At the end of the reception year the statutory assessment against the seventeen early learning goals and the three characteristics of effective learners is collated for each child.



**Taking the curriculum outside:**

It is important to develop learning opportunities outside because outdoor learning provides the opportunities for:

- the acquisition of gross motor skills
- taking risks
- fostering a love of nature and the environment
- gardening
- large play which is not possible indoors
- learning experiences suited to the outdoor environment
- physical fitness

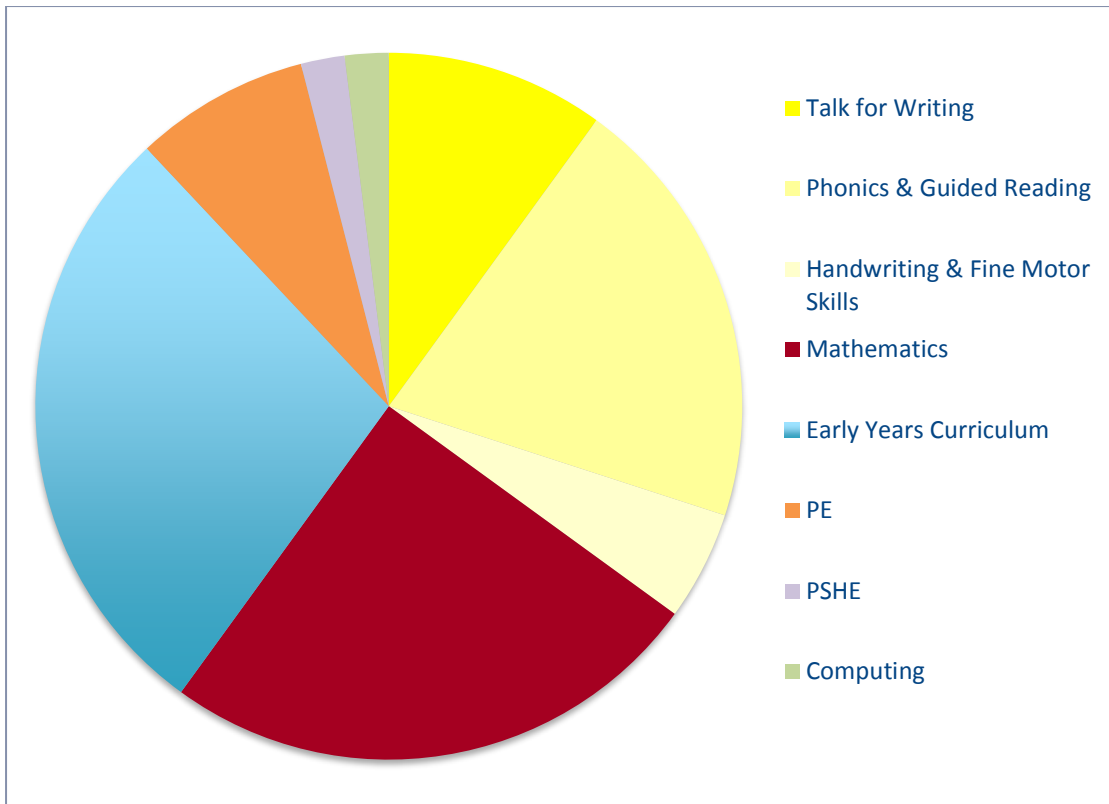
It is also important to take into consideration the social world we live in which can confine the opportunities which children have to play outside either from a safety point of view or lack of space.

Some crucial aspects of learning can only take place outside e.g. play with large construction equipment, gardening, care of animals, some sand and water activities. It is possible for the child to be more actively involved outside without the restrictions of noise and space.

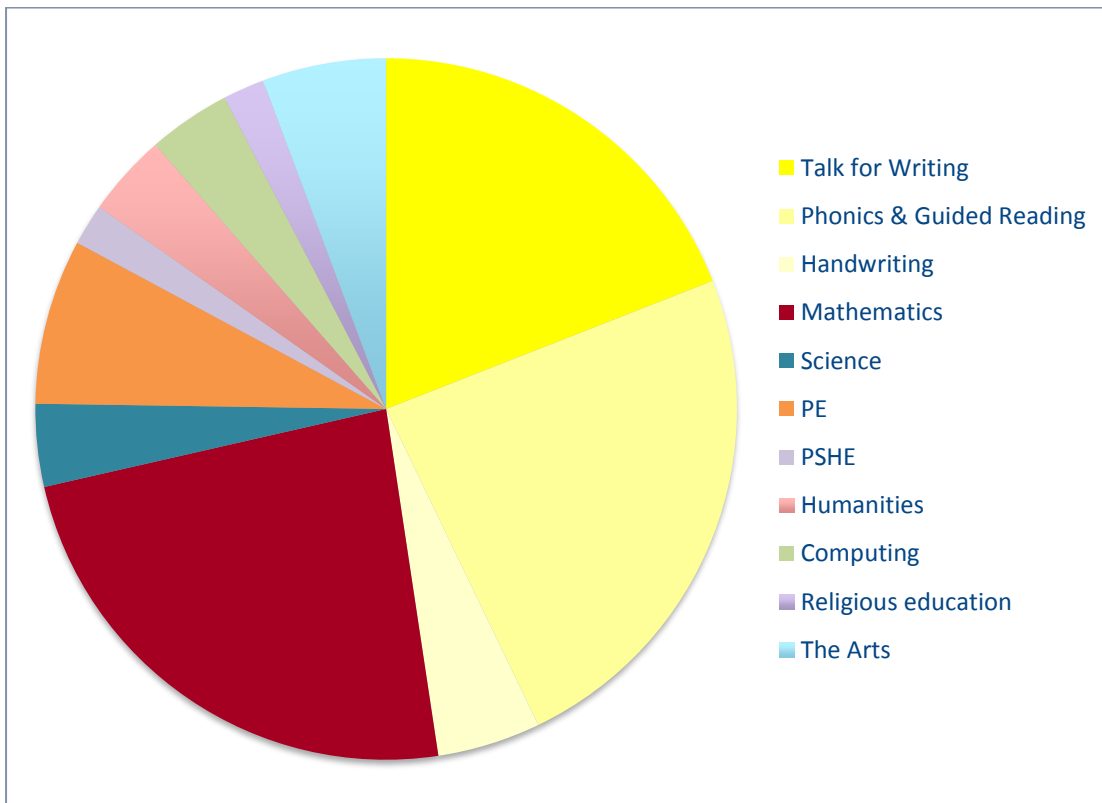
We aim to provide an outdoor curriculum, which is complimentary and is an extension of the indoor curriculum. It is ever changing as it reflects the children's interests and needs.

5.2 Weekly curriculum weighting as a minimum

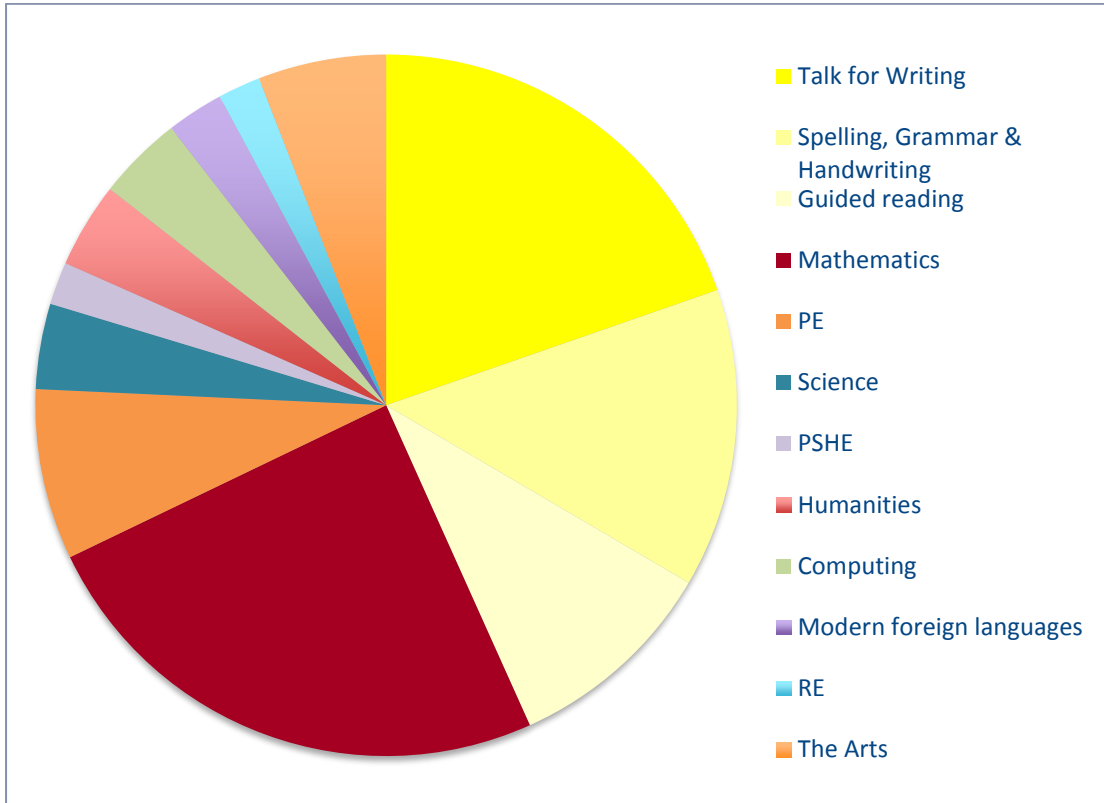
Reception



Key Stage 1



**Key Stage 2**



*Table 1 - Weekly curriculum weighting*

## 6 ENGLISH

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### Learning to Read

We teach pupils to read through [Read Write Inc. Phonics](#). Pupils will be part of the phonics programme until they are confident readers; reading around 140 words per minute and have a reading age of seven.

Read Write Inc. Phonics is for four to seven-year-old children learning to read and write, and for seven and eight-year-olds who need to catch up. It is proven to develop:

- fluent, enthusiastic readers
- deep comprehension of texts
- confident speakers
- keen writers.

Young readers develop at different rates and the ability of readers in a class can vary therefore we set our pupils by ability for these sessions only. Regular assessment allows us to track our pupils' attainment and therefore our phonics groups are regularly reviewed and changed.

We aim to ensure 100% of pupils pass the year one phonics screening check.

Once pupils are confident readers they will progress from Read, Write Inc to become Free Readers and will be taught the skills of through daily Read to Succeed sessions.

### Reading at Home

Pupils need to read a wide variety of texts often. We therefore send reading books home every night and ensure that these are checked and changed weekly. Our reading records allow parents to share comments and thoughts with the class teacher.

### Learning to Write

Pupils start mark making from an early age and our Early Years develop the gross and fine motor skills needed for pen control. We have a number of exercises and activities that pupils take part in to develop their ability to write.

In Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils learn letter formation alongside letter sounds through the Read, Write Inc programme and start forming words and short sentences by the age of five. In Key stage two pupils are expected to produce an extended piece of writing for each unit of work taught.

Writing is taught throughout ARK Blacklands Academy using the Talk for Writing programme. Talk for Writing enables children to imitate the key language they need for a particular topic orally before they try reading and analysing it. Through fun activities that help them rehearse the tune of the language they need, followed by shared writing to show them how to craft their writing, children are helped to write in the same style.

The basic principle of Talk for Writing builds on 3 key stages:

- Imitation
- Innovation

- Independent application

### Handwriting

All pupils receive handwriting practice everyday. Our expectation is for pupils to have fluent, legible and neat handwriting before they enter Key Stage 1. We then work on developing style and fluency. In Year 4, children can earn their pen license once they can demonstrate accuracy in letter formation.

### Speaking and listening

At ARK Blacklands 'speaking and listening', 'reading' and 'writing' are integrated. In English, during key stage 1 pupils learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

During key stage 1 pupils learn to speak clearly, thinking about the needs of their listeners. They work with partners, in small groups and as a class, joining in discussions and making relevant points. They also learn how to listen carefully to what other people are saying, so that they can remember the main points. They learn to use language in imaginative ways and express their ideas and feelings when working in role and in drama activities.

In key stage 2 pupils learn how to speak in a range of contexts, adapting what they say and how they say it to the purpose and the audience. Taking varied roles in groups gives them opportunities to contribute to situations with different demands. They also learn to respond appropriately to others, thinking about what has been said and the language used.

## 7 MATHEMATICS

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### Mathematics Mastery: A New Approach...

Despite a number of high profile national initiatives in recent years, standards in mathematics have plateaued and pupil attainment has failed to meet the high target set.

ARK School decided that a new approach to teaching mathematics was needed to meet our high aspirations for every pupil. Following a great deal of research into teaching strategies and styles we have implemented an approach based on one of the persistent highest performing nations over the past 30 years, the Singapore approach.

### World Class Standards in Mathematics

Prior to educational reform 30 years ago, Singapore was an average performing nation in the core subjects Maths, English and Science. Having combined and adapted best practise from around the World, the Singapore government produced an approach to Mathematics that has seen them amongst the top performers in the World since the early 1980s.

### Key Principals of the Singapore Approach:

The Singapore Approach to mathematics differs from the current UK national curriculum in a number of ways:

- An emphasis on pupils mastering the basic knowledge and skills in mathematics. By studying fewer areas of learning pupils develop a greater understanding of whole number, fractions, geometry and statistics.

- Visual modeling helps pupils make the links between a concrete understanding and abstract application of mathematical concepts.
- Excellent teaching; Fewer areas of learning mean that teachers can focus on quality delivery supported by a rigorous scheme of work.

This approach is currently used from Reception to Year 2 and supported by the Maths Mastery programme. Teachers in KS2 have adapted their practice to follow the principles of Mathematics Mastery. An emphasis on following the CPS (concrete, pictorial, abstract) approach has been adopted so that children gain a deeper understanding of the mathematics covered through the National Curriculum and supported by the Abacus Scheme of Work.

#### Measuring the Success of ARK Mathematics:

At the end of each Key Stage pupils sit national test, the same as any other school. We also track pupil attainment and progression on a termly basis to ensure we know exactly what our pupils can do and identify their next steps in learning. We also closely monitor children's acquisition of arithmetic skills. To enable this children will sit termly ARK Arithmetic tests from Year 2 to Year 6. Results from these will be recorded and shared with ARK for further analysis. Evidence from these tests, as well as from daily teaching, will be used to track pupil's progress using the ARK Arithmetic Tracker.

## 8 SCIENCE

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A high-quality science education provides the foundations for understanding the world through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics. Science has changed our lives and is vital to the world's future prosperity, and all pupils should be taught essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science. We base our science teaching on the Science Bug Programme which provides a hands-on approach to spark children's natural curiosity and imagination about the world. Through building up a body of key foundational knowledge and concepts, pupils should be encouraged to recognise the power of rational explanation and develop a sense of excitement and curiosity about natural phenomena. They should be encouraged to understand how science can be used to explain what is occurring, predict how things will behave, and analyse causes.

Our curriculum for science aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics
- develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them
- are equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future.

## 9 ART AND DESIGN

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Art, craft and design embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality art and design education engages, inspires and challenges pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As pupils progress, they will be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design. They will also learn how art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation.

Our curriculum for art and design aims to ensure that all pupils:

- produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences
- become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques
- evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design
- know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.

## 10 COMPUTING

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At Ark Blacklands we aim to prepare our pupils for life beyond their school years. In this age of technology it is an essential skill that pupils are literate and confident in using technology to find things out, present their thoughts and explore topics at a greater depth. Our aim is to ensure pupils are confident in using a wide range of different platforms and can choose between a numbers of different devices to perform different tasks.

A high-quality computing education equips pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computing has deep links with mathematics, science, and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work, and how to put this knowledge to use through programming.

Building on this knowledge and understanding, pupils are equipped to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of content. Computing also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

At Ark Blacklands, we are using an online environment called Db primary to help support our provision for computing.

## 11 DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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Design and technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. Using creativity and imagination, pupils design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. They acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art. Pupils learn how to take risks,

becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and capable citizens. Through the evaluation of past and present design and technology, they develop a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world. High-quality design and technology education makes an essential contribution to the creativity, culture, wealth and well-being of the nation.

## 12 GEOGRAPHY

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A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

## 13 HISTORY

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A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It inspires pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching equips pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement.

History helps pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

## 14 LANGUAGES

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Learning a foreign language is liberation from insularity and provides an opening to other cultures. A high-quality languages education should foster pupils' curiosity and deepen their understanding of the world. The teaching should enable pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing. It should also provide opportunities for them to communicate for practical purposes, learn new ways of thinking and read great literature in the original language. Language teaching should provide the foundation for learning further languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries.

Weekly MFL lessons in French will be taught from Year 3 at ARK Blacklands.

## 15 MUSIC

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At Ark Blacklands children systematically develop key musicianship skills throughout their career.

Music is a universal language that embodies one of the highest forms of creativity. A high-quality music education should engage and inspire pupils to develop a love of music and their talent as musicians, and so increase their self-confidence, creativity and sense of achievement. As pupils progress, they should develop a critical engagement with music, allowing them to compose, and to listen with discrimination to the best in the musical canon.



We use the Charanga programme of study across the academy and also provide opportunities for pupils to learn specific musical instruments. Year 3 learn to play the recorders and all children have access to musical instruction in guitar and keyboards, if they choose.

Pupils join together in Key Stages to sing and learn new songs. There are opportunities to perform these within the school and also in the local and wider community, for example at the local church and care home, in London at the Barbican centre.

The teaching of music develops children's ability to listen and appreciate a wide variety of music and to make judgements about musical quality. They are encouraged to take an active role in composing and performing music. As an academy we greatly value the contribution music makes to everyday life and strive to involve as many children as possible in musical activities.

The Ark Music – Vocal Programme was launched at Blacklands in 2016 and will continue to develop and improve our music offer.

## 16 PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

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A high-quality physical education curriculum inspires all pupils to succeed and excel in competitive sport and other physically-demanding activities. It should provide opportunities for pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness. Opportunities to compete in sport and other activities build character and help to embed values such as fairness and respect.

Our curriculum for PE aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities
- are physically active for sustained periods of time
- engage in competitive sports and activities
- lead healthy, active lives.

Competition and individual performance also form part of our commitment to high expectations. We strive to provide a learning experience that will enable all students to achieve beyond their potential and ultimately develop a lifelong passion for sporting participation and physical well-being.

## 17 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE) AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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Religious Education at ARK Blacklands supports the promotion of community cohesion. It plays a major role in helping pupils understand diversity and develop respect for the beliefs and cultures of others.

At ARK Blacklands we ensure that RE promotes pupils' spiritual development by allowing children to reflect on the implications of religion and belief for their own lives. Learning about religion and belief helps children to explore the nature of religion. Whilst learning from religion and belief allows them to reflect on and respond to their own experiences.

The RE curriculum covers a wide range of religious beliefs including: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Sikhism. Each term the children's learning is focused on a theme such as belonging, relationships or celebration; and children's understanding of different religions will be fitted into this context.

The lessons are practical and involve lots of opportunities for engaging discussion. Visits to religious place may be used to enhance learning.

RE is taught in accordance with the East Sussex Local Authority Agreed Syllabus for RE and scheme of work. Alongside Christianity children study other major religions including Islam and Judaism.

Parents/carers are able to withdraw their child from RE or collective worship but should discuss this with the Principal.

## 18 PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE&C)

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PSHE&C helps to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. SEAL is an integral part of the PSHE&C teaching when children are able to express their views and opinions on concerns they may have. Drugs Education and Sex and Relationship Education are part of PSHE&C teaching.

## 19 EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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Throughout the year we aim to offer a range of extra-curricular including football, multisport, rugby, karate, kick-boxing choir, , recorders, cookery, art and Lego Club.

## 20 ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING

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Arrangements for monitoring the curriculum are set out in the annual 'monitoring timetable' followed by all members of staff and in the Target Setting, Assessment and Reporting Policy. In addition to this the governing body will receive an annual report from the Principal on:

- a The standards achieved in subjects at the end of each key stage compared to national averages, gender, special needs, ethnicity and other similar academies.
- b The number of pupils for whom the curriculum was disapplied.
- c The evidence of the impact on standards of national strategies and strategies introduced by the academy.
- d The nature of any parental complaints.

## 21 EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT

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We will do all we can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. We shall do this through regular monitoring and evaluation of our policies. On review we shall assess and consult relevant stakeholders on the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of all aspects of equality, as laid down in the Equality Act (2010). This will include, but not necessarily be limited to: race; gender; sexual orientation; disability; ethnicity; religion; cultural beliefs and pregnancy/maternity. We will use an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment to monitor the impact of all our policies and the policy may be amended as a result of this assessment.