



Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Policy

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Contents

1. Curriculum aims	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	2
4. Organisation and planning	3
5. Inclusion	4
6. Monitoring arrangements	4
7. Links with other policies	5

1. Curriculum aims

Our curriculum aims/intends to:

- provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children
- strive to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning
- allow every child to achieve as high a standard as possible
- encourage our pupils to develop lively, enquiring minds, to think creatively and to use their own initiative to work with increasing independence.
- Promote the learning and development of our youngest children and ensure they are ready for Foundation Stage

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Northern Ireland National Curriculum](#), which all controlled schools in Northern Ireland must teach.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing body

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply pupils from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals

3.2 Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing body
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing body is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The governing body is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

3.3 Other staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

The Vice Principal, with responsibility for whole school curriculum, will work alongside the Principal and subject leaders to ensure the implementation of this policy.

4. Organisation and planning

At the heart of the Northern Ireland Curriculum lies an explicit emphasis on the development of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.

- Developing thinking skills means designing learning so that learners will think more skilful than they would otherwise do.
- Developing the personal capabilities means creating opportunities for learners to experiment with ideas, take initiative, learn from mistakes, work collaboratively, and become more self-directed in their learning.

Throughout our school we follow the TSPC Framework. Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are infused throughout all areas of the curriculum. We integrate a range of different TSPC into all other areas of the NI Curriculum.

There are 5 strands that teachers focus on to develop TSPC:

- **Managing Information (MI)**
- **Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making (TPDM)**
- **Being Creative (BC)**
- **Working with Others (WO)**
- **Self-Management (SM)**

All staff in school are committed to developing TSPC as we believe that:

- They draw attention to the processes of learning and not just the products.
- They help to engage pupils in active rather than passive learning.
- They enable pupils to go beyond the mere recall of information and to develop deeper understanding of topics.
- They create positive dispositions and habits for learning.

- They provide a new range of criteria against which pupils can evaluate their progress in learning.

Essentially, they enable our pupils to learn how to learn.

In order to integrate the development of TPSC in school, we have successfully implemented a number of steps.

- Learning Intentions/WALT have been replaced with 'Can I...?' Missions across all subject areas. These are recorded in all our subject planners along with being recorded at the beginning of all pieces of work.
- Each Mission has at least one focused TSPC which is noted in brackets at the end. E.g. 'Can I create a diary entry? (BC, MI).
- TSPC Display in each classroom which features TSPC Posters specific to Key Stages including SEN posters.
- Children are encouraged to use their planners when they need help by selecting a red/green card.
- Children self-evaluate their missions each lesson using red/amber/green.

'Mission Mondays' have been introduced whereby each class complete a 'Mission Monday' once a month where the sole focus is on developing their TSPC. These lessons follow a specific structure: launch, activity and debrief. Children complete a specific evaluation form for these missions.

5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also 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 English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

6. Monitoring arrangements

Governors monitor coverage of National Curriculum subjects and compliance with other statutory requirements through:

- Link governor visits
- Lead Teacher reports to Governing Body
- Curriculum Lead report to Governing Body
- Governor Post Boxes (examples of work presented at full board meetings)
- Principal's Report to Governing Body

Lead teachers monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- Carrying out and recording Pupil Voice conversations throughout the year.
- Carrying out and recording Teacher conversations at training sessions and throughout the year.
- Monitoring planning and evaluations of lessons, including 'Mission Mondays.'
- Collate pictures of children carrying out 'Mission Mondays'.
- Collecting in 'Mission Monday Scrapbooks' from each year group at the end of the academic year.
- Liaising with Literacy, Numeracy and WAU Leads when they carry out book monitoring.

Lead teachers also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the lead teacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Assessment policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Homework Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Monitoring and Evaluating Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy