

## CURRICULUM - TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

### Legal Status:

- This is a Statutory Policy
- Complies with Part 1, paragraph 2(2)(a) to (j) Quality of Education Provided (curriculum) (teaching) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations

### Applies to:

- The whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), out of school care, the breakfast club, the afterschool clubs, the holiday club and all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- All staff (teaching and support staff), students on placement, the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

### Appendices to the Teaching and Learning - Curriculum Policy

- Differentiation Policy
- Assessment and Reporting for Learning Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Policy for Raising Achievement
- Subject and Aspect Policies including where relevant Schemes of Work (Programmes of study)

### Other Related Documents Include:

- Homework Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (SEND)
- Gifted and Talented Policy
- Educational Visits and Off-site Activities Policy

### Availability

This policy is made available to parents and staff in the following ways: via the School website, in the Parents' portal, on the Staff portal, within the Parents Policies Folder on both sites in the reception area, and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

### Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.
- The Principal along with senior staff is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum, monitors the weekly lesson plans for all teachers, ensures that all classes are taught the requirements of the courses and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives. This includes observing the way their subject is taught throughout the school. They review long-term and medium-term planning, and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used.
- It is intended that the review and development of the curriculum will support enthusiastic and inspirational teaching. The process of review plays a key role in the continuing professional development of the teaching staff at The Gower School.
- The Principal will undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than October 2018, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:



Miss Emma Gowers  
Principal and Proprietor

Date reviewed: October 2017

Date of next review: October 2018

## Policy Statement

Imagine the joy and excitement of learning in a vibrant, well-structured learning environment where each pupil's individual strengths, talents and aptitudes are nurtured and developed. It is the aim of this Montessori school to provide a broadly based academic curriculum which will be delivered within the context of the School Ethos. The curriculum underpins the fundamental aims of the School. The curriculum must be seen as the major component of a pupil's education which, together with the pastoral care and the extra-curricular activities offered, help pupils to develop a wide range of key and transferable skills so that they leave the school equipped to become a valuable member of society. Our planned curriculum activities are organised in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. We aim to provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum which encourages an enthusiasm for learning, intellectual curiosity, creativity, personal growth and development.

We ensure that the teaching at The Gower School:

- enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
- fosters in pupils the application of intellectual, physical or creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
- involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
- shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
- demonstrates appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
- utilises effective classroom resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range;
- demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress and
- utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

The proprietor of The Gower School ensures that the school has a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference either to the school's own aims as provided to parents and also national norms.

Our curriculum is well planned for each age group and key stage and ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to acquire knowledge and understanding, develop and practise new skills, and make progress in a range of areas of learning. Where a pupil has a statement of special educational needs we make provision to meet the requirements set out in the statement.

It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of pupils. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the pupils 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. Above all, we believe in making learning fun, fostering in young people a love of lifelong learning. The Gower School ensures that the curriculum gives all pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education.

*Linguistic* (including English, French, Spanish and Mandarin): This area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. French and Spanish is taught in the nursery, French and Chinese Mandarin at the school.

*Mathematical* This area helps pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics is to be developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion.

*Scientific* (including General Science which covers aspects of biology, chemistry and physics): This area is concerned with increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings.

*Technological* (including Art and Design, ICT and Coding): Technological skills can include information and communication technology (ICT); developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce products which the children are proud of; and evaluating processes and products.

*Human and Social* (including Geography, History, Ethics, and Philosophy and Politics): This area is concerned with people and with their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. In our school, the subjects of history and geography topic make a strong contribution to this area.

*Physical* (which is supported by an extensive extra-curricular programme in this area): This area aims to develop the pupils; physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses, and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. Pupils should also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health.

*Aesthetic and creative* (including Art, Drama and Music): This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. There are aesthetic and creating aspects of all subjects, but some make a particularly strong contribution, including ICT and the study of literature, because they call for personal, imaginative, and often practical, responses. We plan and implement a creative curriculum through a termly theme/topic linked to the Montessori Great Lessons. Opportunities are created and planned to enable staff to teach across the curriculum through the themed approach. Teachers research, plan and organise activities and experiences which enrich the children's learning making it relevant and meaningful to the children. Visits, appropriate to, and linked to the theme, are incorporated into our planning. Opportunities for visits from Drama groups and external agencies are planned as appropriate. Children are encouraged to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways.

In Lower School (KS1: Years 1 and 2) the basis of the curriculum comprises the ten subjects of the revised National Curriculum (September 2014) plus PSHEE and drama.

### **Aims of the Policy**

The aims of the curriculum at The Gower School are to enable pupils to: -

- develop lively, imaginative and enquiring minds with the ability to question, solve problems and argue rationally;
- develop a willingness to apply themselves and an aptitude for learning;
- acquire knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and employment in a world of rapid continuous change including technological change;
- develop sound literacy and numeracy skills and competence in the use of Information Technology;
- develop creativity, critical awareness, empathy and sensitivity;
- recognise their own and other's achievements and aspirations;
- develop self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence;
- develop personal and moral values, respect for shared values and for other cultures, religions and ways of life;
- develop skills and ability to work independently and as a member of a group or team;
- develop personal, moral and spiritual values and tolerance of others, to value each individual and learn to live together in an atmosphere of mutual respect;
- develop an awareness of their place in society as informed, confident and responsible citizens with opportunities for service to each other and the community;
- become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners and
- understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community.

In accordance with best practise and where appropriate regulatory requirements, it is our school policy to ensure that we supply:

- Full time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education;
- Subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those pupils with a EHCP.
- Speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
- Where a pupil has a EHCP, education which fulfils its requirements;
- Personal, social and health education which reflects the school's aims and ethos;
- All pupils with the opportunity to learn and make progress;
- Adequate preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

## **Main Principles**

All pupils, regardless of ability, race, cultural background or gender have a right and entitlement to the highest quality of education we can provide. This means that we strive to ensure that: -

- the curriculum has breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, progression and continuity and coherence;
- the curriculum should promote knowledge and understanding and mastery of intellectual, physical, and interpersonal skills and personal qualities, values and attitudes;
- there is equality of access for all pupils to academic experiences;
- school must provide appropriate tasks and teaching techniques to support high expectations and appropriate challenges;
- all parents are provided with curriculum information relevant to their child and
- the curriculum is subject to planned evaluation and review.

We have a responsibility to adapt our teaching to ensure that all pupils are engaged in their learning, motivated and enabled to succeed. Teachers are expected to ensure that children who are experiencing difficulty or becoming demotivated are identified early and given necessary support, encouragement, guidance and, if necessary, different teaching styles and differentiated tasks.

## **Values**

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear in our school. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating pupils in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives. The curriculum seeks to promote the reputation of The Gower School as a school with excellent standards of study, which prepares pupils for senior school and life-long involvement in learning. Its curriculum prepares pupils to contribute confidently to an ethnically pluralistic society.

- We value the way in which all pupils are unique, and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual pupil, 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 pupil in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all the pupils 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.

Entry to all programmes of study is based on academic suitability and appropriateness, regardless of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief. In accordance with statutory requirements the School aims to make the curriculum accessible to all pupils as far as is reasonably practicable. The School has a policy for Special Educational Needs, and an Accessibility Plan which are available to parents on request.

In order to achieve these values, the curriculum will seek to reinforce the following features of The Gower School:

- the confidence, talent and high aspirations of its pupils;
- the enquiring atmosphere and enjoyment of discourse which are a prominent feature of The Gower School;
- the support given to pupils in and outside the classroom by well-qualified, enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff.

The children are encouraged to:

- have confidence in who they are as individuals, identifying courage as a worthy attribute;
- stand up for the positive values that engender meaningful loyalties and strong communities. These include: humility, dignity, compassion and integrity;
- promote supportive relationships, and a respect for diversity and difference;
- be self-disciplined, self-directed, and demonstrate self-control and
- participate in the transformation of their society through reflection, sensitivity and action

## **Standards of attainment**

We carry out data analysis each year and use the data provided to find out how well pupils in our school are achieving, compared with pupils in similar schools. We analyse the statistics to help answer the following questions:

- Do pupils perform better in some subjects than others?
- Are there significant differences between boys' and girls' performances?
- How well are the more able pupils doing, and do enough pupils achieve the higher levels?
- Can we identify any groups of pupils who may be underperforming?
- Can we identify any groups of pupils who are gifted and talented?
- Comparing expectations and estimates with final results.

This statistical analysis is carried out by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

## **The Learning Environment**

We believe that a purposeful and structured learning environment is essential in promoting high standards. A positive caring environment and culture will promote positive self-esteem and confidence. Organised resources, displays of children's work, stimulating materials and bright, colourful language enriched and interactive displays all help to provide the Optimal Learning Environment. We ensure that all tasks and activities that the pupils perform are safe. When we plan to take pupils out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. Parents/guardians are informed, and their permission obtained before the visit takes place. Learning assistants and other adult helpers are deployed as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual pupils and sometimes they work with small groups.

Our school has an attractive learning environment.

We ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the pupils. All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

## **Effective learning**

In our school the most important role of teaching is to promote learning in order to raise pupils' achievement. For us, teaching includes lesson planning, the implementation of plans, as well as marking, assessment and feedback. It also includes support and intervention strategies.

In assessing the quality of the teaching in our school we take account of the evidence of pupils' learning, achievements and progress over time. When evaluating the quality of teaching in our school, we consider how successful the teaching is in promoting the learning, progress and personal development for every pupil by:

- extending the previous knowledge, skills and understanding of all pupils in a range of lessons and activities over time
- enabling pupils to develop skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics
- enthusing, engaging and motivating pupils to learn
- using assessment and feedback to support learning and to help pupils know how to improve their work
- differentiating teaching, by setting suitably challenging activities and providing support for pupils of different abilities, including the most able and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, so that they can all learn well and make progress
- enabling pupils to apply intellectual, physical or creative efforts and develop the skills to learn for themselves and setting high expectations
- setting appropriate homework
- using well-judged and effective teaching methods, deploying appropriate resources, managing class time and drawing on good subject knowledge and expertise to encourage pupils to make good progress
- managing instances of poor or disruptive behaviour.

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and feel they belong, in which they enjoy being challenged, but in which they enjoy learning, and know that they will

succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level). All teaching is structured to maximise learning opportunities, and lessons are planned in accordance with the following principles:

- The teaching should build on previous learning.
- It should give pupils the 'big picture' of the lesson.
- The teacher should explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important.
- The lesson should be presented in a range of styles.
- It should allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities.
- It should allow opportunities for the pupils to review what has been learnt.
- It should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the pupils, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies.
- The teaching should indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

We offer opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- the use of guest speakers and parents talking about current events, cultural or religious celebrations and their careers or interests
- watching television, film and responding to musical or tape-recorded material;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;

We encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Assessment and marking are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. As outlined in the Assessment and Marking Policy, informal formative assessment (Assessment for Learning or AFL) takes place continuously in the classroom and comprises of:

- effective teacher questioning;
- observations of learning;
- analysing and interpreting evidence of learning to inform future planning;
- sensitive and positive feedback to pupils;
- individual target setting: SMART (specific, measureable, assessable, realistic and given in time);
- pupils understanding how well they are doing and how they can improve.

### **Effective Ethos, Classrooms and Learning Environment**

Each of our teachers make a special effort to establish good working relationships with all pupils in the class. We treat the pupils with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with pupils the class code of conduct. We expect all pupils to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise pupils for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards the school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When pupils misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school behaviour policy. We aim to provide a learning environment which:

- is challenging and stimulating;
- is peaceful and calm;
- is happy and caring;
- is organised and well-resourced;
- makes learning accessible;
- is encouraging and appreciative;
- is welcoming;
- provides equal access and inclusion;

- provides a professional working atmosphere.

### **Enrichment opportunities**

All pupils have the opportunity to develop existing interests and nurture new ones through a variety of clubs and enrichment activities, which operate after school. These reflect the talents and interests of the staff and pupils. The extra-curricular clubs range from drama and chess, to yoga, karate, theatre club, cricket, origami, cooking and jewellery making.

### **The Quality of Teaching**

The Head of Teaching and Learning carries out lesson observations as well as book and planning appraisals. All teachers are observed working with classes each term. The criteria that we use have been agreed by all teachers, and are part of our teaching and learning policy. Teachers negotiate the observation date and the focus of the observation reflects an agreed whole-school focus. The teacher and the observer follow the observation with a discussion. The observer notes the strengths and areas for development, and gives a copy of this information to the teacher. Head of Teaching and Learning uses the information gained from this monitoring process to help identify common development points which can be addressed in the school's training programme for continuing professional development.

### **Assessment (See our Assessment and Reporting Policy)**

At The Gower School we have an effective framework in place to assess pupils' work both regularly and thoroughly. We use the information gathered through our range of assessment methods (both summative and formative). We also have a framework for evaluative pupil performance through the use of the summative assessments.

### **Organisation and planning**

We plan our curriculum in three phases across a two-year cycle. We agree a long-term plan for each key stage. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. We review our long-term plan on an annual basis. With our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that we use when teaching each topic. Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson. In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 we adopt an inter-disciplinary topic approach to curriculum planning. We plan the curriculum carefully, so that there is coherence and full coverage of all aspects of the Montessori Curriculum, National Curriculum and early learning goals, and there is planned progression in all curriculum areas. At Key Stage 2 the curriculum at our school places a greater emphasis on the core and foundation subjects than it does at Key Stage 1, and we teach these subjects separately. This means that, for example, a child may concentrate in one term on a history topic, then switch to a greater emphasis on geography in the next term.

Over the three terms of the academic year, each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects. In our curriculum planning we highlight these areas, so that the children's progress can be identified and monitored. All subject areas contribute to a child's progress in these skills. Our school believes that all children need to make good progress in these skill areas in order to develop to their true potential.

### **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

The curriculum that we teach in the reception class meets the requirements set out in the revised National Curriculum at Foundation Stage. Our curriculum planning focuses on the Early Learning Goals and on developing children's skills and experiences, as set out in this document. Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play, and by engaging in well-planned structured activities. Teaching in the reception class builds on the experiences of the children in their pre-school learning. We do all we can to build positive partnerships with the variety of nurseries and other pre-school providers in the area. The Nursery and Reception classes work within the seven areas of learning from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Physical Development
- Expressive Arts and Design

During the children's first term in the reception class, their teacher makes a baseline assessment to record the skills of each child on entry to the school. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child. We are well aware that all children need the support of parents and teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents of each child by keeping them informed about the way in which the children are being taught and how well each child is progressing.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)**

In our school we plan and provide effectively in order to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Pupils of all faiths and belief systems are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and a spirit of open and shared enquiry, whilst developing their individual potential and qualities of character so they can make a positive contribution to the world. Whilst SMSC is integral to all aspects of our curriculum, PSHEE makes a strong contribution. Pupils are led towards distinguishing right from wrong, to respect the law and towards acting consistently with their beliefs and with a view to the consequences of their own and others' actions. In addition our school:

- Leads pupils towards becoming confident and positive contributors to their community and effective users of its services and facilities according to their maturity;
- Enables pupils to gain insights into the origins and practices of their own cultures and into those of the wider community;
- Takes steps to ensure that the pupils appreciate racial and cultural diversity and avoid and resist racism, and
- ensure that pupils are able to understand and respond to risk, for example risks associated with extremism, new technology, substance misuse, knives and gangs, personal relationships and personal safety.
- enables pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- encourages pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life;
- provides pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England; and
- assists pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions.
- encourages pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school;

We also take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that political issues are brought to attention of pupils-

- while they are in attendance at the school;
- while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school; or
- in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere;
- they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

### **Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship**

The Gower School is committed to providing a comprehensive programme of PSHEE for all its pupils, which is appropriate to their age and needs. Responsibility for developing and implementing this programme rests with the Principal. Each child's PSHEE and Citizenship education informs all aspects of the school day. The form this takes ranges from the way we treat each other to planning food menus based on individual's cultural heritage. We have a cross-curricular approach to PSHEE, and its associated objectives may be addressed in Circle Time, Drama, Assemblies or other curriculum areas. Our structured play sessions are specifically tailored to the needs of the group, from working with a child coping with parallel play to facilitating turn taking and initiation. We 'help pupils achieve more' by ensuring that all pupils are given the opportunity to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.

We provide positive experiences through planned and coherent opportunities in the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and through interactions with teachers and other adults for our pupils. Our range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities is available to pupils through the curricular and extra-curricular programme, and their participation in these opportunities. We plan our, personal, social and health and economic education and citizenship through, assemblies and 'circle time' to help our pupils acquire values and skills to enable them to develop independence and choose their path in life. The Gower School seeks to:

- develop an ethos and environment which encourages a healthy lifestyle for pupils;
- use the full capacity and flexibility of the curriculum to help pupils to achieve safe and healthy lifestyles;



- ensure that food and drink available across the school day, reinforces the healthy lifestyle message;
- provide high quality Physical Education and sport to promote physical activity;
- promote an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon a lifelong health and well-being.

We aim for our pupils to understand and appreciate the range of different cultures and faiths in modern democratic Britain. We use our schemes of work and other plans which enable pupils to develop an understanding of public services and institutions and to take their place in modern democratic British society. We provide a range of quality opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility in school and make a positive contribution to the school, local and wider communities.

### **The Role of Head of Teaching and Learning**

The Head of Teaching and Learning determines, supports, monitors and reviews the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular:

- monitors how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment through assessments;
- monitors the teaching and learning through lesson observations;
- ensures that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- develops and monitors long and medium term planning;
- monitors the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes, which include reports from Curriculum Coordinators and a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff;
- in liaison with the Principal, promotes and develops the process of school development planning.

### **The Role of the Subject Committee**

The Gower School wishes to involve all staff in planning and developing all areas of the curriculum. Each member of staff is allocated to up to two curriculum committees, and these meet termly to plan. They are informally led by a senior teacher.

This is to:

- provide a lead and direction;
- support and offer advice to colleagues;
- provide efficient resource management;
- resourcing: ensure resources are appropriate/suitable stored/labelled etc;
- identify shortfalls in resources: gaps in provision, ensuring resources in school are used;
- informal monitoring during year – displays, use of resources, photographs, feedback
- review and update Scheme of Work
- suggest school based training, if needed;
- attendance at conferences and courses, if appropriate;
- dissemination from courses/action research/newsletters, where appropriate;
- provide articles for the school newsletter and staff meetings;
- commit to personal professional development in the area of responsibility;

### **Pastoral Support**

The Principal, The Head of Teaching and Learning and Class teachers, at The Gower School provide support to children and their parents to ensure consistent pastoral support as they move through the school.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

Our curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children in the Preparatory School. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so only after parents have been consulted. If a child has a special need, our school complies with all legislative and best practice requirements to meet these individual needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, the teacher makes an assessment of this need and in most instances is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meets the child's needs within the teaching group. If a child's need is more severe, consideration is given to involving appropriate external agencies. We always provide additional resources and support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This includes providing an individual learning programme which is reviewed on a regular basis. The provision in this respect is coordinated by the SENCO.

The school provides a Short Term Plan (STP) for each of the children who are on the special needs register. This sets out the nature of the special need, and outlines how the schools will aim to address the need. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals. Where a pupil has a EHCP, the SENCO liaises with the child's teachers to ensure that the education the pupil receives fulfils the requirements of the EHCP along with enabling the pupil to participate fully in the annual review by the Local Authority. Should a pupil be in receipt of a EHCP of special educational needs, we will endeavour to give them an education which meets their needs as specified by their EHCP. It is likely that some pupils in possession of a EHCP cannot be accommodated at The Gower School due to their needs being beyond the resources available, requiring greater readjustment than is possible. Where possible, this will form part of discussions during the admissions process.

### **English as an Additional Language**

Where this is required an appropriate programme will be implemented.

### **Auditing**

We ask ourselves the following questions when auditing our current performance:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we compare with similar schools?
- What more should we aim to achieve?
- What must we do to make it happen?

When evaluating the quality of the curriculum, we consider:

- We design our curriculum to ensure that it is broad, well balanced and covers all the required areas of learning. We modify our curriculum and teaching to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils including our gifted and talented and disabled pupils or those with a special educational need.
- the impact of the curriculum on pupils' academic and personal development and in preparing them for the opportunities, choices, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- the contribution of the curriculum to the school's particular ethos and aims and the impact on pupils' academic and personal development and well-being;
- how well curriculum planning is supported by appropriate schemes of work, builds systematically upon pupils' prior experience and plans for progression;
- the extent to which the curriculum is enriched by extra-curricular opportunities and through collaboration with other schools and organisations, including, for example, to provide appropriate careers guidance for our senior pupils and
- the views of our pupils, parents and staff.

### **Expectations of Staff**

Staff are expected to actively promote the curriculum aims by: -

- having high expectation of pupils.
- employing a variety of learning and teaching methods.
- ensuring that pupils are enabled to access the curriculum and given opportunities to be successful.
- delivering lessons which build upon previous experience, providing continuity and progression.
- providing learning opportunities which offer depth and challenge and motivate and inspire children.
- involving children in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular formative feedback through discussion, assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging children to evaluate their personal achievements.
- developing pupil's skills to become independent learners.
- encouraging, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment.
- working in partnership with children, staff and parents to achieve shared goals.
- keeping parents/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their children through reports and parents evenings.

### **Disapplication**

In accordance with the law the School has the right to respond to individual needs by modifying the curriculum programmes. It will allow a pupil to participate in extended work-related learning allow a pupil with individual strengths to emphasise a particular curriculum area allow a pupil making significantly less progress than other pupils of his/her age to consolidate his/her learning and progress across the curriculum. Decisions will only be made after discussion with the parents.

### **Religious education**

Religious Education is incorporated into the Culture lessons available to all pupils.

### **Cultural education and appreciation of diversity**

The School includes aspects of cultural education in many specific and cross-curricular ways. All pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of equality of opportunity

### **Sex and Relationships Education**

The School provides Sex and Relationships education in the basic curriculum in which pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. The syllabus for the School's Sex and Relationships Education is available to parents. It forms a key part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHEE) course and has regard for the government's guidance in *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (0116/2000)*. Parents are told the lessons cover puberty only, but parents may withdraw their children from any sex education provided without giving reasons.

### **Political education**

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School is forbidden by law. Political issues are introduced through current affairs and PSHEE lessons, and are presented in a balanced manner.

### **PE and games**

All pupils are expected to take part in the school's Physical Education and Games programme. Pupils can only be excused from PE and Games lessons for medical reasons, for which a note from a parent will suffice, or other reasons agreed with the school.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

The School has an extensive programme of activities that take place outside the formal curriculum.

### **Homework**

Homework is given to children at different stages of their development. In EYFS, one task is set per week. This is a voluntary exercise and should be seen as fun. Daily reading with a parent is recommended in EYFS. As well as daily reading, learning vocabulary or spelling tests, children in KS1 will receive one additional homework task each week in relevant to classroom learning, as well as a Book Review. Occasionally, there may be other subjects or project based tasks set. We offer a 30-minute homework club daily with teachers, to enable children to make a start or get extra help.

### **Transition**

We ensure all pupils are prepared for their transition from EYFS into Key Stage 1, the next academic year and Key Stage 2. We have transition days, two days at the end of year, where pupils spend the mornings with their new teachers and friends.

Pupils at The Gower School are supported in their preparation for formal examinations at various stages of their education. They receive specific lessons in Study Skills, which include guidance on revision techniques, making notes, examination techniques and management of stress. Pupils are encouraged to learn about their own academic strengths and weaknesses, and the type of learning method that best suits them as an individual. While we do not specifically instigate careers advice, we provide opportunities for pupils to understand the world of work, and the promotion of their economic wellbeing. There are talks from professionals in various fields, as well as visits to places of employment and manufacture. Through visiting speakers pupils receive motivational and inspirational guidance that will help them in their current and future endeavours. Pupils receive interview training prior to attending pre-testing and selection assessments at senior schools. These are all ways in which they are prepared for the future beyond The Gower School.

### **Concerns**

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the Head of Teaching and Learning. If the issue is not resolved parents should contact the Principal.

## **Upper School Bond and CGP Guidelines**

To support the preparation for Senior School exams (11+), students in Upper School use Bond Books and CGP Books to develop their skills in answering questions, problem solving and exam techniques. The guidelines for this are as follows:

### **Year Three**

Students will be learning the skills of answering exam-style questions. Year Three is the first year that Bond Books are used within the school timetable. All students start the school year working on:

- Maths 7-8
- English 7-8
- Verbal Reasoning 7-8
- Non Verbal Reasoning 7-8

### **Year Four**

Students continue to consolidate their test-paper skills. They will continue working on any books that they did not complete by the end of Year Three. Any new Bond Books that need ordering for the beginning of the school year will need to be recorded by Year Three classroom teachers before they hand out completed Bond Books and collect in incomplete Bond Books to pass on to the Year Four teacher. Because the students would have been working at their own pace throughout Year Three, they may come in to Year Four on varying levels of Bond Books. Maths, English, Verbal and Non Verbal Bond Books are still used throughout the school year, with the next book given to students as they progress through them.

### **Year Five**

Students continue working on English and Maths Bond Books to complete the one they are on. Once these ones are finished, students move on to CGP for English and Maths. For Maths, they use a “Targeted Question Book – Year Five” and for English they have a Punctuation book, Grammar book and start on Book 1 of the Reading book (there are three in the series).

Because the CGP Punctuation, Grammar and Maths books work a bit differently and are structured so that there is one focus per page (eg: p3 is Metaphors), the teacher may set a specific page that aligns with the classroom learning that week, rather than have the students work through the book from start to finish. The Reading books are structured as a Bond is, with a reading text that has questions to go with it. These can be worked through at a student’s own pace.

Students continue with Bond Books for Verbal and Non Verbal Reasoning, working on whatever level they are up to.

### **Year Six**

Students continue working on the CGP books for English and Maths. For Maths, they use a “Targeted Question Book – Year Six” and for English they have a Punctuation book, Grammar book and continue on whatever Reading book they were up to at the end of Year Five.

Because the CGP Punctuation, Grammar and Maths books work a bit differently and are structured so that there is one focus per page (eg: p3 is Metaphors), the teacher may set a specific page that aligns with the classroom learning that week, rather than have the students work through the book from start to finish at their own pace. The Reading books are structured as a Bond is, with a reading text that has questions to go with it. These can be worked through at a student’s own pace.

Students continue with Bond Books for Verbal and Non Verbal Reasoning, working on whatever level they are up to (should be the 10-11 / 11+ book by this point).

## **Communication with Parents and Guardians**

We believe that parents and guardians have a fundamental role to play in helping pupils to learn. We do all we can to inform parents and guardians about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding parents’ evenings workshops to explain our school strategies;
- welcome meetings
- handbooks
- weekly newsletters from the Principal
- Engage
- MMC
- Facebook, Twitter, MMC (social media)
- sending information to parents and guardians at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the pupils will be studying during that term at school;

- sending regular reports to parents and guardians in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- inviting parents to work with their child every Friday morning
- offering parent teacher consultation meetings every Tuesday afternoon
- explaining to parents and guardians how they can support their pupils with homework. We suggest support for older pupils with their projects and investigative work;
- running workshops for parents to help them support their child in key curriculum areas as well as our Empowered Parenting course
- posting information on the parent and public pages of the school website;
- being available - we have an open door policy.

We believe that parents and guardians have the responsibility to support their pupils and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents and guardians to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance and punctuality record possible;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school, staff and learning in general;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the homework agreement.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- The Principal is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented. This includes reviews of each subject area in its cycle of review and development.