

## CURRICULUM POLICY

### DATE PALM STATEMENT of INTENT

At Date Palm our vision is for the School to ensure our pupils grow like a Date Palm tree – with **strong foundations, lofty branches and produce fresh fruit:**

- ✓ To build **Strong Foundations for Character Development** that:  
Instil values; inspire each pupil; display best manners.
- ✓ To have **Lofty Branches of Educational Excellence** that will:  
Provide a broad and varied range of experiences and learning opportunities;  
help each pupil progress and develop in all aspects; support their skills and talents.
- ✓ To produce **Fresh Fruit that provides services to their Communities** in order to:  
Become responsible and confident citizens; make a positive difference;  
commit to charitable endeavours; become effective contributors towards Britain's future.

Reviewed by	Position	Signature
Saira Karim	Assistant Head	<i>S.Karim</i>
Luthfa Begum	SENCO	<i>L.Begum</i>
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<b>Reviewed:</b> Feb 2023
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<b>Next review date:</b> Feb 2026
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# Curriculum Policy

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## Introduction

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. 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 the 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 pupils how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

Our curriculum is based on the September 2014 National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 & 2 and the Early Years 2021 framework in Nursery & Reception.

## Our Curriculum Intent

Our Curriculum has been designed to ensure each and every pupil can 'live life in all its fullness' by offering stimulating and inspiring learning experience with Islamic values at its heart. It is personalised to the needs of the pupils at Date Palm Primary School, not only by focussing on appropriate subject specific knowledge, skills and understanding as set out in the National Curriculum, but by modelling the virtues given to us by Allah and Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and by developing individual and collaborative learning experiences, a positive growth mindset, a sense of responsibility and challenges that take them beyond the classroom.

We are a small independent school in inner London with a constantly evolving curriculum which responds to the needs of learners and their interests by enhancing learning experiences and raising awareness from the local area to national and global arenas. Thus, we will develop outward-looking pupils who are able to engage in learning about themselves and have an understanding of the wider world and its complex cultures.

Our vision is for Date Palm Primary School to ensure our pupils grow like a Date Palm tree – with **strong foundations, lofty branches and produce fresh fruit.**

#### **Intention 1: Strong foundations – character development**

- We aim to instil the values of honesty, compassion and mutual respect into all our pupils.
- We aim to inspire each pupil to become the best person they can be.
- We aim to display the best manners at all times, implementing the Quraan and Sunnah, and being a leading role model to others.

#### **Intention 2: Lofty branches – educational excellence**

- We aim to provide learning experiences which are challenging and motivating.
- We aim to deliver a broad, balanced range of experiences in a variety of different learning contexts, both in the classroom and in the wider outdoor environment.
- We aim to help all pupils to progress in their skills development and build on their prior knowledge and understanding.
- We aim to provide learning opportunities which allow all pupils to develop to their full potential for different types of thinking and learning.
- We aim to support each pupil's skills and talents by providing opportunities for personalisation and choice in learning.
- We aim to help our pupils develop the transferrable skills they will need to take their place in tomorrow's world.

#### **Intention 3: Fresh fruit – services to communities**

- Above all, we aim to value our pupils and to develop them as the successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens of Britain's future.
- We aim to commit to charitable endeavours and to make a positive difference to our world.



Building foundations for life

## Our Curriculum Implementation

### Maths

Our mathematics curriculum, which consists of daily one-hour lessons, covers everything from the basic building blocks of maths such as number and place value all the way through to the formal written methods and algebra. New mathematical concepts are introduced with cold-tasks and manipulatives which gives our pupils an opportunity to use hands-on learning. Pupils regularly peer and self-assess their work, and have clear models, images and visual representations to help their understanding. They are constantly challenged with mathematical tasks increasing in difficulty and additional reasoning and problem-solving activities are also provided.

To develop mastery in maths we conduct weekly low-floor-high-ceiling tasks which aid pupils's conceptual understanding enabling them to apply their skills to different problems. Pupils practice their times tables using rhymes and explicitly teach strategies for calculation with a focus on mental methods, jottings and formal written methods. Pupils also have regular Number Talks sessions in which they employ mental methods which help them develop their number sense and verbalising strategies skills.

### Reading

Reading is the key to independent learning and a vital tool for life; therefore at Date Palm the teaching of reading is given a high priority by all staff. We have lots of opportunities for reading exciting books and materials. We understand that it is important that pupils experience reading a whole novel, therefore all pupils have an hour of English lessons in the morning and study a variety of narrative text types and genres that captures pupils' emotions and promote critical thinking through writing and discussions. Shared reading is used to specifically teach the strategies and skills involved in being a good reader, through immersing in a novel and reading for pleasure. Furthermore, pupil's are taught specific comprehension strategies through reciprocal reading, to enhance these skills and provide a repertoire of reading strategies. Each week, parents and volunteers listen to pupils read in school and we ensure reading books are carefully matched to ability. We use Read Write Inc phonics daily across EYFS and KS1 that is delivered through a cumulative and systematic approach. Book corners are a staple of every classroom at Date Palm Primary which provides a comfortable space for pupils' to sit and read, promoting reading for pleasure. We are very proud of our high standard of reading throughout the school and seeing reading as an everyday part of the pupil's lives, something that they choose to do. Our school library is

a warm and welcoming place where pupils can enjoy a wide range of books and a place to grow and learn.

## Writing

Writing is an essential part of our curriculum offer and very important at Date Palm Primary School. However, we understand that writing is an activity that is highly demanding of cognitive resources, therefore transcription processes, such as handwriting and spelling are developed to ensure automaticity. In EYFS pupils learn how to hold a pencil properly and begin to form letters, words and sentences. In KS1 and onwards pupils' are explicitly taught cursive handwriting using a structured PenPal lesson plan that incorporates, letter formation, four main joins, speed and fluency. Pen licence is awarded to pupils who can prove they can write across a range of subjects and genres. We teach writing using Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing approach, employing the three stages of imitation, innovation and invention to range of non-fiction and fiction genres. We link our writing context to our curriculum topics, finding real life reasons for pupils's writing to enthuse them with purpose; recent examples include school council speech, reports for our newsletter and performance poetry. As part of the English lessons, each day pupils are taught grammar, punctuation and word work related to specific writing genre and spelling. At Date Palm we have lots of wonderful opportunities to inspire pupils and make them feel like real 'authors' by having their writings published in 'Young Writers' and Scholastics, which provides pupils with a sense of purpose, confidence and concrete evidence of their achievements.

## Science

In our rapidly evolving world, science is a vital part of our curriculum intention with weekly lessons. Science stimulates and excites pupils' curiosity about phenomena and events in the world around them. It also satisfies their curiosity with practical investigations wherein pupils use their observations and ideas to suggest answers to questions.

At Key Stage 1, pupils observe, explore and ask questions about living things, materials and physical phenomena. They begin to work together to collect evidence to help them answer questions, understanding that there may be different ways to answer these. They begin to evaluate evidence and consider whether tests or comparisons are fair. They share ideas and communicate them using scientific language, drawings, charts and tables with the help of ICT if it is appropriate. To foster pupils's love of science, we hold a whole-school Science Day in which pupils rotate between various scientific investigations to satisfy their curiosity.

At Key Stage 2 pupils learn about a wider range of living things, materials and physical phenomena. They make links between ideas and explain things using simple models and theories. They think about the effects of scientific and technological developments on the environment and in other contexts. They carry out more systematic investigations taking accurate measurements using a range of scientific equipment and utilising test results to make predictions to set up further comparative and fair tests. They talk about their work and its significance, using a wide range of scientific language, conventional diagrams, charts and graphs with the help of ICT if it is appropriate.

### Foundation subjects

The school recognises that foundation subjects are important and exciting so are taught as discrete subjects.

Art is taught in the first half of the academic year with weekly lessons in which pupils are given opportunities to draw, paint, print, make collages, use fabrics and clay. They are taught the skills and techniques and then given the opportunity to practise them to produce individual and group pieces of work. Pupils learn about notable artists and designers throughout history, taking inspiration from their work and creating original pieces. Pupils take pride in their artwork which is displayed in the school's 'Art Gallery' display for all parents and visitors to see. Performing and visual arts also play a significant part within our curriculum with a whole-school summer production every year, often drawing upon our rich and varied culture and staff expertise.

Design and Technology is taught in the second half of the academic year with weekly lessons that last between one hour and one-hour fifteen minutes. It is a subject in which our pupils are involved in designing and making things from torches to quesadillas. Pupils are taught to use tools correctly and safely, with a heavy focus on practical skill techniques. Pupils closely follow the process of designing, making and evaluating products using prototypes where appropriate.

In History pupils have weekly lessons in which pupils investigate and interpret past civilisations by analysing a range of evidence to justify claims about the past. By the end of KS2, pupils are able to provide a broad overview of life in Britain from medieval until the Tudors and Stuarts times.

Geography is taught in the second half of the academic year with one-hour weekly lessons. In Geography pupils explore and investigate various places identifying both the physical and human features of locations. They are taught to name and locate some of the countries and cities of the world. Pupils also learn map skills and through the use of field trips are given opportunities to map out their local area.

Computers and other technological devices can help pupils make accelerated progress. Weekly Computing lessons that last between one hour and one hour fifteen minutes are delivered to the pupils in the school's ICT suite. In early years pupils are provided with a broad, play-based experience of Computing in a range of contexts. Pupils gain confidence, control and language skills through opportunities to explore using computers/tablets and also non-computer-based resources such as microwaves. In primary years, we support pupils to develop their skills such as researching, typing, editing and digital art skills. Pupils learn how to stay safe online throughout the key stages and how to seek help if they become uncomfortable online. Our focus on coding ensures that pupils are given opportunities to create and implement algorithms with efficiency in mind. They are taught to debug their codes in the upper years to facilitate independence whilst coding. A variety of software is used such as ScratchJr, Scratch and Crumble to achieve the coding strand of Computing. Many technological devices such as PCs, laptops, tablets and iPads are used to deliver this subject.

Modern Foreign Languages are enjoyed throughout the school. Our Quran teachers teach pupils how to recognise the Arabic letters in their various forms in their daily sessions. They then move onto teaching the pupils how to read words and eventually sentences in Arabic which are taken directly from the Quranic verses. With a focus on tajweed, a set of rules governing the way in which the words of the Quran are pronounced, pupils become fluent with reading by KS2. Pupils are also given the opportunity to memorise chapters of the Quran and learn the context behind which some chapters were revealed. We take pride in pupils' memorisation and application of tajweed rules by holding regular in-school Quran competitions. Pupils of all ages work hard to take part and winners are awarded with trophies.

Our Arabic language teachers deliver two weekly sessions that last approximately forty minutes to one hour each. These lessons focus on the speaking, listening, reading and writing aspects of Arabic. Unlike Quran lessons, during Arabic sessions pupils learn Arabic vocabulary based on themes such as family and transport. They take part in conversational Arabic, are provided with passages of Arabic texts to translate and write for a purpose.

Religious Education at Date Palm is focused mainly on Islamic Studies. Through these lessons, we aim to instil pupils with many virtuous values such as honesty, compassion and mutual respect for all. Pupils are taught to build a spiritual connection with Allah by following the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). With a focus on Islamic history, pupils learn about prominent figures such as the Prophets and their companions, taking note of their character and mannerisms. Pupils also learn the various daily remembrances (adhkar) and prophetic traditions (hadeeth).

Alongside Islamic Studies, pupils also learn about a range of other religions and their celebrations and practices. Pupils are taught to respect people of all religions and non-religions.

The aim of physical education is to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles. Pupils are taught PE on a weekly basis in sessions lasting between thirty minutes to one hour. In these lessons, pupils observe the conventions of fair play, honest competition and good sporting behaviour as individual participants, team members and spectators. Pupils take part in games, gymnastic movement, swimming, dance and athletic activities using indoor and outdoor environments where appropriate. In KS2, pupils go to Shadwell Basin for outdoor activities such as canoeing, kayaking and rock climbing. Years 5/6 also take part in an annual residential for a few days.

## **Organisation and planning**

We plan our curriculum in three phases.

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 pupils. 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. We use the renewed Frameworks for both Literacy and Numeracy as a basis for teaching these core subjects.

Our short-term plans set out the learning objectives for each session, and identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson. Schemes and programmes of work are revised and amended annually as the need arises.

There are at least three educational trips a year linked to curriculum areas, though a trip every half term is the expected number.

We plan the curriculum carefully, so that there is coherence and full coverage of aspects of the National Curriculum and early learning goals and there is planned progression in all curriculum areas.



In the planning of the activities we have set guidelines for the length of all taught subjects. The following serves only as a guide for lesson duration for the whole school, although the aim is to cover the subject as fully as possible in order to achieve set goals.

The approximate lengths of subjects on a weekly basis are as follows:

- Literacy = 5 hours
- Numeracy = 5.5 hours
- Phonics – Y1- 3.30 hours
- Phonics – Y2 - 2.5 hours
- Islamic studies = 1.5-2 hours
- Science = 50min-1 hour
- PE = 1 hour and 30 minutes
- Geography/History = 50min-1 hour
- Art & DT = 1-1.25 hours
- PSHCE = 30 minutes-1 hour
- Computing = 1-1.25 hours
- Arabic = 1.25-2 hours
- Qur'an = 4.5-5 hours
- Handwriting = 15-30 minutes
- Spellings = 15-30 minutes
- Shared reading = 45minutes-2 hours
- Assembly = 15 – 45 minutes

Year 6 have flexibility in the timetable from the spring term on as pupils prepare for their SATs.

Where possible and appropriate, we make cross-curricular links between different subjects. For example, Art with Literacy or Science with Numeracy.

Where possible we aim to highlight the cross curricular links between Islamic Studies and SMSC in order to promote our ethos and uphold the shared Islamic and British values.

## Curriculum Enrichment

Wherever relevant and possible, our curriculum is enriched with theme weeks, workshops, visiting speakers, special events and educational trips. This list is a sample of the many exciting things within our curriculum):

- Black History month in which pupils learn about prominent figures who stood up for equal rights.
- Cultural Diversity week which includes visitors from various cultures. Pupils celebrate their cultural heritage by coming to school in their national dress.
- Regular fundraising to raise awareness and money for local charities.
- Professional week includes visitors from a wide range of professions to speak to Year 6 pupils about career choices.
- Anti-Bullying week in which we raise awareness of bullying and how to combat it.
- Safer Internet Day in which we raise awareness of safety online.

Extra-Curricular Clubs are popular, and there are a variety of clubs available for KS1 and KS2 pupils. These include coding club, cooking, BSL, arts and crafts etc. Playtimes are an important part of our pupils being happy, healthy and ready to learn. We have a hall, outdoor area specifically for the EYFS pupils and we partake in daily playtimes in our local parks or neighbouring school.

## Breadth & Depth of the Curriculum

We ensure that we deliver a curriculum that has suitable breadth, depth and relevance. A carefully-planned whole school subject-based LTP is developed by the senior management team. Teachers use the LTP to inform their medium term planning for each term. Where topic areas are not deemed broad/deep/relevant to the needs of the class, teachers inform management and appropriate changes to the LTP are made.

## Challenging the high ability

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and appropriate challenge for all pupils who attend the school. Challenging work is set for those who continuously meet their

learning objectives with ease. We ensure that objectives for a pupil's current year group is fully mastered before allowing him/her to move onto the next year group's learning objectives.

## **SEND**

At Date Palm we believe that all pupils are entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum through which we support pupils with additional needs. All pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential and to be included in the social and academic life of the school. We aim to provide educational experiences that take into account the individual needs of pupils, appropriate to their level of ability. At Date Palm we have developed a programme of early intervention in order to identify pupils who have special educational needs. This process is co-ordinated by the SENCo who is supported in her work by outside agencies, such as SALT, ASDAS, EP and the Early Years Inclusion, which provide specialist advice and support.

At Date Palm we encourage confidence and raise self-esteem by providing a caring and well organised environment so pupils with SEN can achieve their best, by actively celebrating diversity, Autism, Dyslexia and Deaf awareness week.

The SENCo works closely with parents/carers, to ensure that parents of SEND pupils are kept fully informed of their pupil's progress and attainment. She oversees the assessment of the needs of pupils with SEND and plans using the four part cycle of assessment, planning, doing and reviewing which is recorded on the pupil's Education Plan and provision map.

In line with the recommendations in the SEN Code of Practice 2014, the SENCO will oversee the day- to-day operation of this policy in the following ways:

- To ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability.
- To ensure the identification of all pupils requiring SEND provision as early as possible in their school career.
- To ensure that SEND pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- To ensure that SEND pupils are involved in decisions affecting their future SEND provision.

- To liaise with parents of pupils with SEN, in conjunction with class teachers, keeping them informed of progress and listening to their views of progress.
- To monitor and oversee the records of all pupils with Special Educational Needs.

## Our Curriculum Impact

We have three intentions when it comes to measuring the impact of our curriculum.

### **Intention 1: strong foundations – character development**

The impact of this intention will be that pupils will have fully rounded characters with a clear understanding of our core values: honesty, compassion and mutual respect. We will see pupils striving to better themselves throughout their time at Date Palm trying to make the best decisions for the right reasons. They will also be resilient to the influence of others. We measure this by looking at pupils' behaviour and interactions with each other around the school on a daily basis. This can also be measured at the end of each term in term of 'Bloomz' points that pupils receive for their exemplary behaviour.

### **Intention 2: lofty branches – educational excellence**

We strive to ensure that our pupils' attainment in core and foundation subjects is in line with or exceeding their age-related expectations taking into consideration their varied starting points. We measure this using a range of methods always considering whether they have made progress from their individual starting point. We intend that the impact is that pupils will be academically and physically prepared for the next phase of their education.

### **Intention 3: fresh fruit – service to communities**

The impact of this intention is that pupils will try to make a positive difference to their local community. They will partake in fundraising and citizenship activities

## Curriculum Communication to Parents

Communication with our parents' about how their pupils are performing and what they are experiencing in school is a high priority to us and we do this in a number of ways.



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- Formal reporting to parents two times a year either in the form of a written report and a parent consultation evening where parents' make an appointment to meet with their pupils' teachers and discuss their progress.
- Our social media accounts (Instagram and Twitter) inform parents specifically about pupils within school or on trips on the day-to-day lessons and learning. Pupils' achievements are celebrated on these feeds.
- The school's Bloomz feed informs parents instantly of whole school or enhanced activities which are taking place.
- Teachers are of course also available at the end of each day for any necessary communications. Teachers regularly use Bloomz to communicate with parents and the school office is another port of call.

## Key skills

The following skills have been deemed 'key skills' in the revised National Curriculum:

- Communication;
- Application of number;
- Information communication technology;
- Working with others;
- Improving own learning and performance;
- Problem solving.

In our curriculum planning we consider these skills, so that pupils progress in all of these areas can be identified and monitored. All subject areas contribute to a pupil's progress in these skills. Our school believes that all pupils need to make good progress in these skill areas in order to develop to their true potential.

## The role of the subject co-ordinator

The role of the subject co-ordinator is to:



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- Provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject;
- Support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject;
- Monitor pupil progress in that subject area;
- Provide efficient resource management for the subject;
- Organise subject related events, e.g.: competitions and themed weeks

The school gives subject co-ordinators non-contact time, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role. It is the role of each subject coordinator to keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level. They review the way the subject is taught in the school and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each subject co-ordinator reviews the curriculum plans for their subject, ensures that there is coverage of the National Curriculum and that progression is planned into schemes of work.

## **Monitoring and review**

Our governing body is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented.

Subject co-ordinators monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school. They examine long-term and medium-term planning, and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Subject co-ordinators also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which, resources are stored and managed.