

Marshlands Curriculum

At Marshlands, we offer all pupils a relevant and engaging curriculum. We aim for them to gain knowledge and understanding about the world in which we live, underpinned by skills in communication, independence and social interaction combined with the development of self-esteem and confidence essential for living within the world.

The curriculum is based on the revised National Curriculum and comprises subjects - English, Maths, PSHE, Science, Physical Education, along with Computing, History, Geography, Art, Design Technology, Languages, Music. Religious Education lessons are included for all pupils. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects are embedded within curriculum subjects.

Our curriculum is differentiated to suit the needs of pupils with a range of learning difficulties and to suit their individual learning styles, aptitudes and interests, with a strong emphasis on a multi-sensory and kinaesthetic approach. It is assessed using 'P levels' to recognise each small step of progress made by our pupils.

The curriculum is supported by special 'theme' days, educational visits into the local community and beyond, and by visitors into school.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

Our youngest pupils follow a curriculum adapted from the national Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, which includes the three Prime Areas of Learning:- Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional development and Physical Development: and the four Specific Areas of Learning :-Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design.

We recognise that young children are active learners and that they learn using all their senses, through exploration, investigation, experimentation, listening and watching as well as through play. We ensure that they have opportunities to interpret their environment, make choices for themselves and that they grow in confidence, understanding their value within the school community.

Complex Needs

The curriculum for pupils in our Complex Needs classes is based on a 'small steps' of the full range of National Curriculum subjects delivered at a level appropriate to pupils' learning ability and special educational needs,

with an emphasis on the following:

- Communication
- Personal, independence, Citizenship and Social development
- Physical skills and Sensory development

The curriculum is supported by communication sessions - PECS; Intensive Interaction; Sensory Sessions; therapies such as Music Therapy, Hydrotherapy and Horse Riding.

Children may also integrate with other classes for activities such as Communication groups, or other subject areas to suit their needs.

KS1/2 CURRICULUM

English

Marshland's English curriculum follows the National Curriculum requirements differentiated to the needs of our pupils and includes Communication (Speaking, Listening), Reading and Writing. Communication skills are key and pervade our curriculum through non-verbal methods (intensive interaction, objects of reference, photographs, pictures, symbols, signing) in addition to verbal speaking and listening skills. Visual clues support pupils' understanding. Individual and small group sessions are planned to suit individual pupils.

Reading is taught using Jolly Phonics and progressive Phonic reading books suited to pupils' interest level. A whole word approach is used to teach 'tricky words' which are not phonetically plausible or where a phonic approach is not best suited to an individual pupil.

We use a 'Book Banded' reading scheme, which allows pupils to read books using skills with phonics, pictures, patterned language, whole words and their own experiences. Book banding uses a variety of books, includes fiction, non-fiction and poetry, all banded together by reading ability level. This ensures access to a wide variety of texts and styles and is key in developing reading and comprehension skills. A large library and volunteer readers support the development of reading for pleasure.

Early writing skills focus on attributing meaning to writing and mark making. Progressive skills including composition, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and handwriting are again based on National Curriculum requirements and are used purposefully in response to first hand experiences, texts or learning content from other curriculum areas. Pupils are encouraged to use their own creativity and imagination.

Maths

Our evolving Maths curriculum is based on the National Curriculum requirements, set out in skills ladders and adapted to suit the individual needs of our pupils. Maths learning is through practical experiences using multi-sensory resources, including interactive games and activities from the Abacus scheme. ICT materials further engage and support pupils. Opportunities to use and apply Maths are planned through relevant practical activities such as helping with snack time, buying from the local shop or other visits within the community. Cross curricular links with Maths are made wherever possible but especially with Science and Creative Curriculum topics.

PHSE

Personal, Social and Health Education permeates the whole ethos of the school. Our curriculum is designed to encourage pupils to become as independent as possible to prepare them for a role as active participants in society. The PHSE curriculum is based on the following topics: Keeping Safe, Staying Healthy, Keeping Active, Taking Care of the Environment, Sex and Relationships, Difference and Diversity. All work is progressive and is at a level to suit the individual child and their needs.

Physical Education

Our PE curriculum provides our children with the opportunity to experience a wide range of activities and the time to acquire and develop 'physical literacy'. PE units cover gymnastics, games, dance, athletics, and for Y6, outdoor adventure activities. Swimming lessons (and /or Hydrotherapy dependent on need) are provided for all children at the local pool, with an additional 'booster class' in the Summer term for KS2 pupils who require additional support.

External coaches are also used to deliver additional sessions of activities such as football, cricket, and cycling.

Wherever possible, we try to provide opportunities to participate in competitive sporting events, such as the termly South Staffordshire Special Schools Sports Festivals and local Change4Life festivals.

Lunchtime clubs are also provided to further enrich our children's day and hopefully instil in them a lifelong love of partaking in physical activity.

Creative Curriculum

Following National Curriculum guidance, we focus on either a geographical or historical theme each term and incorporate other subjects as far as possible. Our aim is to help pupils gain an understanding of the world, our society and their place within it, to recognise aspects of our culture and to respect that of others.

Historical topics aim to foster a sense of curiosity and interest in the past, developing an understanding of the past and its impact on life today. Concepts such as the passing of time, the present, the future and a sense of chronology are approached through practical experiences.

Geographical topics focus on developing a sense of enquiry through observations, exploration, discovery, investigations and first hand experiences of their immediate environment and their school, before moving on to the local community and the wider world.

Pupils are encouraged to have a responsible attitude towards the environment and to be aware that some people in the world live very differently.

RE

Marshlands RE curriculum draws on the 'Equals' RE Scheme which has been carefully matched to the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus and follows 'Guidance for Special Schools' (Staffordshire County Council) to suit the needs of individual pupils.

Half termly units begin from pupils' own life experiences, progressing to learning about religion and its meaning for believers, and then supporting pupils to make a response or express their own views at a level appropriate to them.

Examples of units are Celebrations - how and why are they important? How are babies welcomed into the world?, What is it like inside a religious building?