



1. INTRODUCTION

Eagle House School (Mitcham) is an independent special school which provides a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils aged from 4 to 12 who hold a statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health & Care Plan for autism, Asperger Syndrome and associated social, communication and learning difficulties. Pupils at the school represent the full autism spectrum with a wide range of needs and abilities. The nature of pupils with autism creates an uneven academic profile both within the individual young person and within the year groups. Additionally, heightened anxiety and school refusal are frequent traits within our pupil group many of whom have experienced periods out of school and / or had a history of multiple placements. This presents particular demands to ensure that each pupil has the opportunity to achieve their full potential in all areas of the curriculum. Accordingly we offer a differentiated curriculum that meets the range of different needs, is permeated with a specialised autism-specific curriculum and delivered within an ethos of empathy, understanding, and structure.

2. AIMS

At Eagle House School (Mitcham) we provide all pupils with an appropriate broad, balanced and relevant curriculum to help prepare them for their future lives. The school has a holistic approach to a social and academic education that develops skills within 5 key areas of competence relating to the autism specific needs of each pupil. In providing such a curriculum we aim to:

- Maximise each pupil's potential to be as independent as possible in their future lives
- Ensure all pupils are able to engage, progress and achieve within their learning
- Enable all pupils to encounter and experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human & social, physical, and aesthetic & creative learning opportunities
- Promote the intellectual, personal, spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development of all pupils at the school, together with their sense of citizenship and their place within the school and community
- Begin to prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

3. OBJECTIVES

The main objectives for the curriculum at Eagle House School are to:

- Help each pupil to overcome or better cope with the challenges posed by having an autism spectrum condition
- Support each pupil in the self-management of any atypical behaviour they may exhibit
- Provide each pupil with an Personal Development Plan (PDP) that addresses their specific needs in relation to their current environment
- Build on the strengths and address the needs of each pupil

- Provide a fully inclusive environment which offers all pupils access to the cultural and educational experiences on offer throughout the school and wider community
- Assist each pupil to develop the thinking skills that will enable them to self-organise, learn independently and be an active participant in their own learning experiences
- Enable each pupil to develop a positive self-concept

4. OUTCOMES

The curriculum at Eagle House School is designed to ensure that all pupils will, with due respect and reference to their autism spectrum condition, make good progress towards:

- developing attention skills and engaging in learning activities
- learning to be adaptable, how to solve problems in a variety of situations, how to work independently and as members of a team
- learning to function effectively in a variety of social situations
- being happy, balanced, confident and having positive self-esteem
- improving their social and communication skills
- developing functional numeracy and literacy skills that can be applied to their everyday lives
- being able to communicate their needs and feelings effectively to others
- developing the ability to make reasoned judgements and choices, based on interpretation and evaluation of relevant information from a variety of sources
- being enthusiastic and eager to put their best into all activities
- knowing about and acquiring the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith
- acquiring a set of moral values: honesty, sincerity, personal responsibility, on which to base their own behaviour
- behaving in an acceptable way and learning to become responsible for their actions
- caring for and taking pride in their school
- developing tolerance, respect and appreciation of the feelings and capabilities of others
- knowing how to think and solve problems mathematically in a variety of situations using concepts of number, measurement, shape and space, and handling data
- being able to listen and read for a variety of purposes and being able to convey their meaning accurately and appropriately for a variety of purposes
- developing an enquiring mind and a scientific approach to problems

- developing basic ICT skills, use them in cross-curricular situations and know how to stay safe when on line
- being capable of communicating their knowledge and feelings through various art forms including art/design, music, drama and acquiring appropriate techniques which will enable them to develop their inventiveness and creativity
- knowing about geographical, historical and social aspects of the local environment and national heritage, and being aware of other times and places
- developing an awareness of cultures other than their own
- learning about their own personal history, that of others and past civilizations
- having knowledge and awareness of the major world religions
- developing body awareness, agility, physical co-ordination, and confidence through movement
- knowing how to manage their personal care as independently as possible and apply the basic principles of health, hygiene and safety
- developing a sense of themselves as part of a community within school and the wider community

The school will achieve these outcomes by:

- Considering each pupil as an individual learner
- Delivering differentiated, motivating and stimulating learning opportunities and experiences which cater for each pupil's individual needs
- Ensuring each pupil has a detailed Personal Development Plan (PDP) with SMART targets which address their communication, behaviour, social interaction, independence and thinking & learning skills
- Developing a needs led, Individual Behaviour Support Profile (BSP) for each pupil
- Providing routines and predictability within a calm, consistent, organised and structured environment
- Creating and maintaining an exciting and stimulating 'ready to learn' atmosphere
- Setting clearly defined boundaries, rules and expectations for pupils
- Using the local and wider community to enhance pupil learning
- Encouraging pupils to make choices and to become as independent as possible
- Ensuring that each pupil's education has relevance, continuity and progression
- Providing a range of activities in which pupils can experience success

- Implementing the curriculum through a pupil centered collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach incorporating the specialist knowledge and skills of teachers, psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, music therapists and other specialists
- Consistently implementing effective, research based, autism-appropriate strategies and approaches including: The Ziggurat Model, the little group approach, TEACCH, The ALERT program, PODD and Social Stories
- Recognising the crucial role which parents play in their children’s education and making every effort to encourage parental involvement in the educational process by providing guidelines, open means of communication, training and support.

5. THE CURRICULUM

All of the pupils at Eagle House School follow the framework of the National Curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs and level of cognitive functioning (EYFS, P’Levels or National Curriculum). However, we also recognise that in order to meet **all** the educational needs of our pupils the curriculum we offer needs to consist of a great deal more than the National Curriculum. Therefore the curriculum at Eagle House School is much broader than the National Curriculum and offers a wide range of organised experiences and activities which have been planned to meet the educational **and personal** needs of each pupil.

The school acknowledges that many of the pupils who attend Eagle House School first need to be equipped with the tools to engage with the learning opportunities on offer and to effectively manage their autism in order to successfully access the curriculum. As such the focus of the curriculum is determined by the priorities for each individual pupil and is based on 2 main elements:

- **The Eagle House Approach** – Autism specific strategies, approaches and therapies, delivered at three different levels according to the individual and statemented/EHCP needs of each pupil
- **Academic Learning** - Based on the National Curriculum providing general educational and academic learning opportunities across a broad range of subjects

The precise balance between these 2 main elements of the curriculum will vary for each pupil in response to the need to provide meaningful learning experiences in which the pupil can actively participate and from which they can learn. Flexibility within the curriculum is therefore essential in order to ensure it remains relevant for individual pupils throughout the different stages of their school careers. The school recognises that not all pupils will necessarily experience all elements of the curriculum all of the time.

6. CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

The structure of the curriculum is best illustrated by the diagram at Appendix A. It takes each individual pupil as the starting point, places them at the centre of all we do and builds outwards to create a personalised, pupil focussed curriculum.

The initial focus for every pupil is tier one of the ‘Eagle House Approach’ element of the curriculum (**Blue** on the diagram). This is an eclectic approach which forms the main core of the curriculum and is delivered through the use of specific and specialised approaches, including: TEACCH, ‘the

little group' Approach, the Ziggurat model, PODD, Social Stories, positive reward systems and visual support. It is taught throughout the school day and across all subjects. For pupils with more complex needs, additional autism specific input may be necessary and this is accessed through tiers two or three of the 'Eagle House Approach' (**Green** on the diagram), in line with the stated /EHCP needs of each pupil.

An intrinsic part of this element of the curriculum is the school's Curriculum Assess Team (CA Team) which includes Speech and Language Therapists who plan with the teachers to ensure the communication needs of the pupils are being met, Occupational Therapists who play a crucial role in addressing pupils' sensory needs and in developing their 'readiness to learn' and the Assistant Psychologist who support, give advice and work in collaboration with staff in all areas, particularly on behavioural and emotional issues which may prevent or hinder learning. By implementing this element of the curriculum the five key competencies identified by staff as being crucial skills for pupils to develop are addressed. (**Yellow** on the diagram) These being:

- **Communication Skills** (receptive language,, expressive language, non-verbal language)
- **Behaviour** (boundaries, rules, consequences, emotional self-regulation & sensory self-regulation)
- **Independence** (daily living skills, self-care skills, leisure skills, confidence, perseverance)
- **Social Skills** (interactions, co-operation, relationships & social understanding)
- **Thinking and Learning Skills** (academic skills, problem solving, creativity)

By focusing on developing the pupils' skills within these five key areas we enable them to better cope with having an autism spectrum condition as well as addressing the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL), these being; self-awareness, managing feelings, motivation, empathy and social skills. Experience has shown us that focusing on these areas as priority, enables pupils to begin to access a wider academic curriculum at an appropriate level. This element of the curriculum is planned, recorded and assessed at least termly via the pupils' Personal Development Plans (PDPs) and where appropriate 'therapeutic' assessment tools used by members of the CA Team. (**Red** on the diagram) These feed directly in to the annual review process for pupils where long term targets are set on a yearly basis.

The school recognises that, for some pupils, progress will be most evident within this element of the curriculum for the whole of their school career.

The 'Academic Learning' element of the curriculum (**Orange** on the diagram) aims to give pupils mathematical, linguistic, scientific, human and social, technological, physical and aesthetic & creative learning experiences and opportunities. It is based on the National Curriculum framework but focuses on the pupils' levels of attainment rather than on their chronological age or Key Stage. It is taught through a weekly timetable with each subject being allocated an appropriate time. Timetables are revised as necessary to reflect the needs of the current pupils in the class.

The majority of pupils at Eagle House School are attaining at levels significantly lower than national expectations for someone their age. Generally, pupils are working within attainment levels P2 to Lower KS2 national expectations. Differentiated planning, along with individualised success criteria in the form of 'I can' statements within each curriculum subject reflects the varying levels of attainment within school, ranging from those pupils who need to re-visit fresh interpretations of the 'P' level material taught in an appropriate way throughout their school

careers through to those who need access to material taken from various stages of the National Curriculum from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to Key Stage 2. The material found within the higher Key Stages is liable to remain inaccessible or irrelevant for the majority of pupils and is therefore only incorporated into individualised planning as and when appropriate. It does not form part of the main curriculum structure.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship is a key component of our curriculum at every level. PSHE & Citizenship includes a range of vital life skills. With parental consent, pupils at the appropriate stage of development receive Sex and Relationship Education in a form that they would understand as part of our PSHE curriculum; this is essential preparation for growing up and adult life.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is addressed through all school activities, including lessons, assemblies, breaks and individual discussions (which may take the form of a social story). Pupils are encouraged to develop self-confidence and self-regulation, tolerance and respect for their own and other cultures. Pupils are also given opportunities to participate in national events and commemorations e.g. Black History Month, Children in Need, Book week, World Autism Awareness month etc. These can provide valuable opportunities to work with, and as, members of the local community. The school's positive behaviour approach enables pupils to distinguish right from wrong and encourage them to accept responsibility for their own behaviour.

R.E is taught within a balanced and broadly based curriculum and in line with national guidance which states that special schools should provide RE "so far as is practicable" taking into account the needs of their pupils, and selecting aspects that connect with their lives and experiences'. Many pupils find R.E difficult to access because of their autism. Commonly RE involves understanding abstract concepts, symbolism and metaphor which are difficult for children with autism who require concrete concepts and think literally, it requires a high cognitive level which many pupils do not have and incorporates ideas that might be frightening and confusing for children who experience high levels of anxiety. As such R.E is taught through an annual cycle of planned, themed assemblies which focus on key religious and celebratory occasions across the school year. It is also taught as in integral, rather than a discrete part of the schools topic based curriculum using relevant, naturally arising opportunities throughout each school day to encourage pupils to develop and understand feelings of awe and wonder, curiosity, empathy, gratitude, kindness, tolerance and self-respect.

Modern Language does not form part of the curriculum but is accessed on an individualised basis when appropriate. In its place, pupils access further opportunities to develop and improve their social communication skills.

Educational visits are accessed on a weekly basis. These are planned and designed to enable pupils to generalise skills learnt in school to a wider context, provide first hand learning experiences which support, complement and enrich the curriculum, provide motivational experiences and opportunities to use a wider skills base than that used in the classroom. In addition such visits also offer a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and extend their leisure and social experiences.

This 'Academic Learning' element of the curriculum is planned, delivered and recorded around a three year cycle of half termly topics (Appendix B) which ensures breadth and balance of coverage for all pupils. Curriculum planning is then carried out at four levels for each topic:

- **Programmes of study** - The programmes of study provide a broad outline of what will be covered within each subject under each topic. They are differentiated across 3 levels of ability within the range from lower P levels Lower KS 2 national expectations, depending on the academic levels of the pupil population in any given academic year.
- **Schemes of Work** - The schemes of work are jointly planned by the teachers and show the week by week learning activities and progress that pupils will access within each subject across each half term within each of the three differentiated levels, which are, in turn, differentiated for low, medium and high ability pupils within the given level.
- **Weekly Planning** - Weekly plans are drawn up by individual teachers for English and Maths which show the focus for each daily lesson and detail the success criteria for pupils in each lesson in the form of 'I can' statements

Daily planning and recording - Each teacher uses the detailed schemes of work and weekly planning as their daily planning tool, selecting the appropriate week from each scheme for each subject they will cover on the day. The progress that each pupil makes is then recorded against their 'I can' statement for each lesson. . All activities within a school day are regarded as learning opportunities, this includes: snack times, meal times, play times and activities relating to personal care, as such, success criteria may also be set for pupils within these areas. In addition each pupil has a PDP recording sheet. Their progress towards their PDP targets and their 'I can' statements in each lesson or activity is assessed, evaluated and recorded by This information in then used to inform future planning and learning and to update the schools key assessment tool, BSquared (**Red** on the diagram) in order to show pupils progress over time.

All learning opportunities are planned to ensure they provide continuity, progression and age appropriate / stage appropriate learning contexts for all pupils across the school which enable them to achieve their PDP targets and their specified success criteria for each lesson or activity.

The school acknowledges that for some of our most complex pupils, their learning priorities lie within the 'Eagle House Approach' element of the curriculum. We understand that by focussing on developing their skills within these 5 key competencies, we will increase their ability to access other learning opportunities and to develop their independence. Therefore, for these pupils the 'Academic Learning' element of the curriculum will provide an experiential learning context within which they can practice the skills and achieve the targets set down in their PDP whilst experiencing aspects of the specific academic subjects.

7. POLICY REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher supported by the other members of the school's Senior Leadership Team to monitor this policy. It should be reviewed annually or when new legislation is published. The Executive Headteacher reports on Eagle House School (Mitcham) matters to the CEO/Directors.

8. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATION

- ❖ Planning, Assessment, Recording & Reporting Policy
- ❖ Teaching & Learning Policy
- ❖ Age Appropriateness Policy

- ❖ Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- ❖ SRE Policy

Appendices:-

- *Appendix A: Curriculum Diagram*
- *Appendix B: Three Year Topic Cycle*

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Appendix A
 Eagle House School (Mitcham)
 Curriculum Diagram



Appendix B
Eagle House School (Mitcham)
Three Year Topic Cycle



	Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Year A	Amazing Animals	Construction	Water	Travel & Transport	I Am Great	Colours
Year B	Food Glorious Food	The Environment	Push & Pull	Countries & Cultures	Keeping Fit & Healthy	Shake, Rattle & Roll
Year C	All About Plants	Now & Then	Staying Safe	Hobbies & Interests	Earth, Sun, Moon & Stars	I do like to be Beside the Seaside