Curriculum Policy

The curriculum at Al-Islamia reflects the broad tapestry of learning opportunities that we offer. The three I's are at the centre of our curriculum design, and these will be used to outline our process for planning, delivery/learning and assessment.

This policy is further supported with all curricular policies including:

- Presentation Standards
- Individual Subject Policies
- SEND Policy
- EAL Policy
- Marking Policy
- Monitoring, Appraisal and Performance Development Policy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy

Intent

As an independent primary school with an Islamic ethos our vision for our curriculum is that it be broad, challenging and reflective of our ethos. We are passionate about our pupils engaging positively with their learning and recognising its relevance to their lives, and we want to extend their knowledge of the world around them by using their education to explore the wider world. We consider this particularly important as we are an inner-city school and many of our children may have few other life experiences beyond Leicester. We want our curriculum to prepare and excite our children for their futures; provide them with the skills and knowledge to act as thoughtful, well-rounded British Muslims and instil a passion for learning, self-improvement and informed and responsible citizenship.

When our children leave Al-Islamia, we want them to be equipped with the understanding and awareness needed to comport themselves confidently within any arena; the skills and resilience to approach a problem head-on; and the self-conviction and self-confidence to remain their own selves while becoming supportive and effective members of the community around them.

When children enter Al-Islamia in Year 1, we ensure that they are introduced to a creative and supportive environment, allowing them to transition smoothly from an EYFS setting to a more structured approach to learning. This means that the Autumn timetable for Year 1 incorporates cross-curricular activities; foundation focus times; and – in response to the guidance published by the DfE in July 2021 – additional time for reading and literacy throughout the day. When Year 1 return in the Spring term, their timetable will be more closely matched to that of the rest of the school, so children have the time to understand and become familiar with the more structured approach under the guidance of their class teacher.

Our academic curriculum is broad and based on the National Curriculum Framework 2014. It is enhanced and complemented by linking to a rich Islamic heritage of beliefs, history and spiritual and moral guidance. An example is Islam's elevation and active encouragement to acquire beneficial education emphasised through our morning prayer taken directly from the Holy Qur'an: 'Oh My Lord, Increase me in knowledge', and prophetic tradition.

Within the discrete subjects, we centralise Islam as well, such as discussing the responses of Prophet Muhammad and his Companions when discussing conflict resolution in Reading or PSHRE; or considering significant individuals from

Islamic History through our History units, and when exploring characters and character profiles in some Writing units. When exploring scientific concepts, we make links with verses of the Holy Qur'an wherever applicable. Geography and History are taught under the umbrella of Qur'anic verses that command Muslims to appreciate the Almighty's bounties around the world via travel and exploration, and verses that instruct us to understand our position and current state by looking to the lives of the people of the past.

In addition to the standard curriculum offer of academics and social interaction, we have created and are constantly improving a Values-based pathway for children to participate in during their tenure at Al-Islamia. The structure and content of the Values Pathway will be based on our mission to promote IKHLAS. The term *Ikhlas* itself means 'sincerity' or 'commitment', a value we commend in itself. The word is also used as an initialism as follows:

Inspiration

Knowledge

Healthy living

Leadership

Aspiration

Spirituality

The pathway will be weaved into the daily and weekly timetables, such as weekly Sunnah and Hadith activities, a weekly session focusing on the values and allocated time for Salaah.

The Rosenshein Principles and Enquiry-Based Learning

Involving children in their learning – or enquiry-based learning - has been identified as an effective driver in finding answers to 'big' questions. As a school with distinct disciplines taught separately, we have adopted this approach within our Foundation topics and Writing Units, by posing a challenge or question at the start of the unit of learning, and then facilitating the exploration of 'smaller' questions that cover concepts and ideas in order to reach a conclusion. Examples are 'What influence did the Abbasids have on British life?' (Year 6 – History) or 'Can I design a healthy picnic?' (Year 2 – Science).

Underpinning this strategy is the Rosenshein Principles of learning – a proven model of teaching that enables pupils to learn more and remember more. Within Barak Rosenshein's paper '*Principles of Instruction*', he used research into cognitive science, master teachers and cognitive support to outline 10 non-negotiables that should form teaching practice. These are:

1. A short review of previous learning (Rapid Recall)
2. Presenting new material in small steps, with students practicing and mastering each small step before moving on
3. Asking a large number of questions of ALL pupils
4. Providing high-quality models
5. Guiding student practice
6. Ensuring that all children meet the expected learning objective
7. Checking for understanding
8. Providing scaffolds when and where needed

9. Encouraging and monitoring independent practice
10. Including children in regular review of learning (plenary)

In embodying the principles regularly and with a consistent monitoring and reviewing of the application of said models, children will be supported in mastering the rigour and content within subject areas to a high degree of success.

This is true for learners of all types and is therefore inclusive of all children in every classroom – where children have learning or other needs, these are expected to be facilitated and supported with suitable scaffolding (see Principle 8), which may include pre-teaching; visual support; one-to-one support; inclusion of additional resources; etc.

Teachers will be provided with regular training and workshops to ensure that the approach is understood and embodied by all members of staff.

Schemes of Work

We have drawn on Schemes of Work to create and sequence a whole-school curriculum. The schemes of work have been considered carefully to ensure that they work within the enquiry-based approach that we are implementing across our curriculum offer.

We feel that all teachers will benefit from high-quality resources that show progression and provide the basis for individual CPD.

The schemes of work are as follows:

Phonics – Little Wandle Letters and Sounds

Maths – White Rose Maths 2024, with support from NCETM professional spines

Writing – Thematic approach to book selection to drive unit coverage, underpinned with strategies from The Write Stuff and Talk4Write schema

Spelling – No Nonsense Spelling Scheme

Reading – Genre-specific exploration of high-quality texts using the VIPERS approach. KS1 draw on planning from Literacy Shed (KS1) while KS2 systematically explore fiction, non-fiction, picture books and poetic literature using collaborative discussion and domain specific questioning to develop comprehension skills

Science – Hamilton Trust and STEM.org.uk

Geography – Hamilton Trust

History – History Association and Key Stage History

Physical, Social, Health and Relationship Education (PSHRE) – A bespoke Scheme of Work designed by our senior leaders

> *NB: Protected Characteristics will be taught as part of our PSHRE delivery over the course of the academic school life. This is further explained in the PSHRE Policy*

Oracy – bespoke scheme of work underpinned by Chris Quigley's Oracy Framework

Art - Oak Academy Scheme of Work

D.T. - Oak Academy Scheme of Work

Religious Education (RE) – bespoke scheme of work designed by subject lead and senior leaders

Computing – Teach Computing

Physical Education (PE) – delivered by an external specialist – SuperStar Sports

Aspects of learning are enriched in other areas wherever possible, particularly in Key Stage 1. Across both key stages, reading is a key window into other subject areas, while Writing allows children to consolidate learning from other topics within their composition.

Vocabulary development has also been considered. Children are expected to understand and apply topic-specific vocabulary, which becomes more complex as they move through the academic year and key stages. They are also expected to understand and accurately use Tricky Words (Year 1), HFW (Year 2) or the statutory spellings (KS2) within all topics, as appropriate. Vocabulary Progression documents are being developed for each subject area for teacher reference.

Generally, the academic curriculum and Values Pathway are further enriched with planned assemblies delivered by the Headteacher that reflect the British and Islamic calendar of events, and where possible, activities are incorporated into the school timetable to further engage pupils, such as Coding and Science Weeks, World Book Day and Theme Days.

Trips, visits and workshops are planned regularly so learners become increasingly familiar with the services and opportunities provided within the local community and appreciate and take part in opportunities that enrich and add to their life experiences. These include visits to the local library and museums and planned trips to places of national and local interest such as the National Space Centre or Conkers.

Implementation

14 academic subjects are planned for and taught at the primary phase at Al-Islamia: Writing, Reading (including Phonics), Spelling, Maths, Science, Geography, History, PSHRE, P.E., Orcy, Art/D.T., RE and Computing. Every subject has its own policy.

When scheduling units across the year, teacher reflection and understanding of relevance and unit requirements is considered. The evaluation of the units is also taken into consideration when these units are planned. The long- and medium-term plans are then crafted by the Curriculum Leader.

Long-Term Plans; Medium-Term Plans and Progression Maps

A long-term plan (Curriculum Map) outlines the expected delivery of knowledge and skill concepts over the three terms – autumn, spring and summer. Each class has a curriculum map.

These are then linked to Medium-Term Plans which provide details relating to National Curriculum objectives that are expected to be covered throughout the length of the unit. Medium-term planning includes explicit links made to the schemes of work/unit plan and to relevant resources to support activity planning and delivery. Teachers then plan and deliver lessons that are intended to be consistently engaging and inclusive.

All learning is progressive, with teaching activities based on prior knowledge and/or skill. Whole-school Progression Maps aligned to National Curriculum coverage and separated by strand are used by teachers to review prior knowledge and build on this with effective delivery of new learning in small steps.

To ensure that children 'learn more and remember more', every lesson is started with review questions (Flashback 4 in maths; Rapid Recall in all other subjects), consisting of four or five questions relating to prior learning within the subject.

Short-Term Planning

Planning is expected to be completed by the Friday prior to the week of delivery, and placed in a weekly planning file or onto the SharePoint. This ensures that teachers have quality personal time on weekends and, in the event of a teacher absence, cover staff can continue with teaching and the pace of learning is maintained as much as possible. We do not expect planning to be in any specific format – teachers are free to record their planning in an appropriate manner, as long as it legible and includes:

- Subject
- Unit
- Date
- LQ
- Rapid Recall questions
- Small steps
- Learning/Practice activities
- Review activity
- Oracy task (3 times per week after Oracy Lesson 1; once per day after Oracy Lesson 2)

Some MTPs, such as the unit plans for Writing, are more detailed than others. Regardless, teachers, with their understanding of their class needs and individual pupils, will be expected to use the MTPs critically to ensure that learning is effective. This means that where necessary, lessons should be inserted to provide time to address gaps in learning, or adapted if, for example, concepts are already familiar, and the level of challenge or content needs to be raised.

Planning should be completed for all lessons, including spelling and handwriting. Individual Reading and DSR are the only taught subjects that do not need a specific plan each week. Reading Records should be filled with information relating to fluency, targets and concerns for individual reading; the DSR instructions should be followed for delivering reading sessions and the Book Band Fluency Objectives document should be populated with dates as appropriate.

Evidence of Learning:

While each subject area has a specific exercise book, teachers are encouraged to design and deliver activities and tasks that are best suited to learning content and children's needs.

However, we also recognise that evidence needs to be available for accurate formative assessment and tracking. Examples of evidence of learning can include, but are not limited to:

- KWL grids
- Enquiry questions
- Photos of children's learning outcomes, with descriptions/explanations
- Reasoning and problem-solving tasks
- Worksheets
- Pictures of group work, pasted into children's books
- Planned visits/workshops
- Interactive Learning Walls reflecting children's work, ideas and efforts

Quality of Work:

Work should be of a high standard. Activities and short-term planning should be

- matched to learning needs and abilities,
- engage and challenge all children
- Align to NC objectives
- Follow the Schemes of Work, LTP and MTP

Presentation Skills:

Children should take pride in their work. Their presentation should be in par with the Presentation Standards and writing/composition should be clear, neat and progressively working towards handwriting expectations for their year group.

Teachers should model presentation expectations for setting out calculations, labelling diagrams, etc., and should be reminding children about presentation expectations before children begin their tasks.

Feedback

All learning is marked and/or assessed. We find that, in line with research-based evidence, the most effective feedback is given live, whether this is in verbal or written format. Teachers are also encouraged to model how children can self- and/or peer-mark to develop self-efficacy and self-reflection skills; all children have a green pen/pencil for editing. Writing will be marked as per the Marking Policy.

Where children have received significant support/scaffolding, this should be highlighted and noted as such.

Assessment:

Assessment is completed in both formative and summative form. This means that children's data is collected on both a qualitative and quantitative basis and is used to inform future teaching and learning activities. Further information can be found in our Assessment and Recording and Reporting Policy.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

CPD is offered regularly and from the beginning of the year. The school's School Improvement Plan and individual development routes determine the training that is offered. CPD is offered by way of subject association, such as History Association or Teach Computing, such as expert-led workshops or qualification pathways.

Effective CPD impacts quality of teaching and learning, and a more conscious approach on the teachers' part in planning and delivering learning that is engaging and effective. We continue to prioritise developing children's knowledgeable vocabulary implementation in all curricular areas and improving the Reading for Pleasure culture in school.

Our curriculum is exciting and challenging. We have a variety of topics and units that can be interlinked and enriched to create experiences for our children that are engaging and outward-facing. The strongest aspect of our curriculum is its breadth and the efforts made by staff to ensure that delivery of Core learning, namely Maths, English and Science, is of a good standard. Of an equally good calibre is the interactive and engaging learning activities that make up the learning for History, Geography and PSHRE. This is evident from the recent Ofsted report, internal Learning Walks, pupils' opinions about their learning and observing pupil engagement during lesson time.

Working with Parents

Knowledge Organisers

Some Knowledge Organisers will be available on the school website. This will be a summary of key vocabulary and concepts aligned to the year-specific expectations for Maths, Reading and Writing.

Learning Conversations

In addition to the Knowledge Organisers, we will be setting Learning Conversations. Learning Conversations will be set tasks – organised by the class teacher or Pastoral Lead – focusing on a learning concept. The aim is to set tasks that encourage conversation and allow for responses to be engaging, creative and applicable to the real-world.

Most weeks, tasks will be set aligned to the academic curriculum, with a question/task for Maths, English and a Foundation Subject.

During some weeks, the Pastoral Lead will set a task linked to the Values Pathway.

Parents are encouraged to support their child/ren in successfully responding to every task by encouraging them to discuss the concept, explain how they approach it, and suggest ways in which the task could be completed.

All Learning Conversations will be recorded in a dedicated Learning Conversation book.

Learning Conversations will be discussed with parents during a Parent Workshop.

Showcases

We will be hosting showcases of specific areas of the curriculum during the summer term to demonstrate and celebrate children's progress, attainment and creativity. Parents will be invited to peruse the evidence of learning during a Showcase Session, and to give positive feedback that teachers and senior leaders can share with the children. Where possible and appropriate, pupils will co-host the showcase events with their teachers and talk to visitors about the motivation behind their learning.

Impact

We expect our children to become engaged and enthusiastic learners. They will leave each day, week, term and year, having made meaningful progress on their learning journey. Through Pupil Voice and Learning Walks, pupils will become confident and proficient in discussing their learning with other staff members. Pupils will also be expected to share what they have learned and understood with their class teachers and parents. Learning Walls will showcase children's learning, as celebrations of their efforts, and to enable children to remember more.

Recording and Reporting

Attainment is recorded on Insight. Teachers are expected to update the software tracker every half term, recording the objectives that children have been taught, their attainment, and their targets.

Attainment in all subjects will be recorded, including Reading Fluency.

Parents will be informed of pupil progress, attainment and targets at least 4 times per year – in November, January, April and July.

Progress Tracker

Attainment and progress is tracked on Insight. All pupils, and intervention groups, are organised into their year groups and/or intervention groups.

Individual needs are highlighted as soon as possible, and intervention provided as necessary, such as for children with EAL or SEND. We will have a timetable of observation and recording to ensure that teachers can raise concerns; gather evidence and meet with the SENCo/SEND Lead to implement initiatives such as interventions, IEPs (if necessary) and other support via a QFT approach. We also work closely with parents and guardians to ensure that learners receive the support they need to engage and enjoy their individual learning journeys.

In order to ensure that our curriculum is fit for purpose, teachers use formative and summative assessments constantly. These are not necessarily in 'exam' or 'test' style: rapid recall of basic knowledge; independent application of skills and knowledge to complete projects or tasks; or discussion and collaboration are all tools that teachers are encouraged to use to assess learners' understanding of the skills and knowledge they are expected to have learned over the course of a topic or unit of work.

Central to our curriculum is pupil ownership of their learning. To encourage children to view their learning as an individual choice, each child has a 'WOW Work' book, given to them in Year 1, or when they enrol. Within the pages of this book will be a selection of 7 pieces of work from each academic year – one for every half term and a bonus piece – chosen by the children, from the plethora of work they produce, and reflective of the pieces they take the most pride in. This 'book' will follow the children through their journey at Al-Islamia, from their first day in Year 1 (or when they enrol) to their last day at our school. We want them to take pride in their achievements, and begin to realise that their investment in their learning is measurable by standards beyond academic testing. This book will be theirs to keep and refer to and, we hope, a source of lifelong pride and self-recognition of their resilience and effort.

As always, feedback from these assessments and reviews will be used to further improve and enhance the learning opportunities and curriculum design at Al-Islamia.

Date of Policy Review: September