

Curriculum Policy



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1. Methodology

ISP School, Battle Intended Curriculum is based on the National Curriculum and has been designed to acknowledge the unique profiles of the children placed at our school. Our curriculum is centred on the concepts of **Intent, Implementation and Impact**. We aim to achieve this through our shared values '**RELATE**' as relationships are the cornerstone of everything we do at ISP School, Battle with this reflected in our values: **Relationships** – we learn to develop effective relationships by building trust and respect and developing self-esteem and self-confidence

Education – we are learning to learn in all that we do

Lifelong – we make relationships which will support and inspire us to be our best. We recognise the importance of well-being and positive self-image

Aspirations – we are looking to the future and working on positive and life-affirming targets towards where we want to be

Teamwork – we work together to achieve excellence

Equality – we embrace the opportunities we are presented with and show respect to us all

Many of our children have experienced disrupted early learning experiences, interrupted schooling, disengagement from formal settings, distrust of adult and professional input, continuous high levels of anxiety and emotional arousal due to trauma and as a result cognitive, sensory and social impairment.

2. Aims

We aim to foster an environment where children feel safe and develop a secure sense of belonging. The majority of our children have experienced disruption in their schooling and complex needs that have a significant impact on their cognitive development and their social, emotional and communication development. We aim to support children in a family led, community, school environment where we will passionately support children to achieve the best they can in order to maximise their life chances and to ensure that they can be as independent as possible, participating in society and being as healthy as possible in adult life.

We also aim to ensure that all adults understand the concepts of Intent, Implementation and Impact

- To identify what we are trying to achieve through our national curriculum (Intent/Intended Curriculum)
- To recognise the different ways we deliver our curriculum (Implementation/Implementation Plans)
- To gain an understanding of how we know our curriculum is having an effect across all children (Impact)

3. Context

The context for the development of this policy derives from:

Ofsted's new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) which came into effect in September 2019.

The new 'quality of education' judgement looking at the curriculum, which includes teaching, assessment and standards.

Ofsted's definition of 'curriculum' which centres around the concepts of 'intent', 'implementation' and 'impact'

4. Ethos

The core intent of ISP School, Battle and our curriculum is to help all children reach their potential and believe that they can achieve, be kind, make positive relationships, communicate well, and grow as individuals. As a school that adopts a therapeutic approach, our mission is to provide each child with a diverse education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes positive self-regard and engagement, inspires learning and encourages aspiration and achievement.

ISP School, Battle seeks to adopt a fresh and dynamic curriculum implementation to address the needs of vulnerable children, irrespective of the difficulties presented, in order to maximise their future life chances. We aim to provide our children with opportunities to engage in a full and enriching curriculum whilst taking into account their emotional and academic developmental needs so that children have the same opportunity for experiences as others their age.

5. Trauma and our Curriculum

Trauma is toxic to the brain, and the neurocognitive development of children who have experienced chronic trauma may be impacted on a structural level, a biological level and a functional level. Children may show early lags in receptive and expressive language as well as difficulty with sustained attention and concentration. In addition children may have delays and impairments with executive functioning, including planning, problem solving, organisation, and delaying responses. Altered states of consciousness and structured impacts may affect children's memory, resulting in impairment in the consolidation of experience (i.e. transfer from short-term to long-term storage) and difficulty retrieving relevant information in current problem solving. Behaviourally children may experience increased frustration in the face of challenging task performance, noncompliance with directions, and negative emotional response¹. Combined with the legacy of disrupted placements and gaps in learning it is no surprise that making good progress is a challenge for our children. Our response to this is to create a therapeutic environment based on the following five principles²:

¹ Blaustein, M & Kinniburgh, K. (2010) *Treating Traumatic Stress in Children and Adolescents*. New York. The Guildford Press.

² Haigh, R. (2013) "The quintessence of a therapeutic environment", *Therapeutic Communities: The International Journal of Therapeutic Communities*, Vol. 34 Iss: 1, pp.6 – 15

1. Attachment: Children attending ISP School, Battle need to feel a healthy sense of belonging. They are encouraged to become full members of a group that values them and gives them something to value. This is a fundamental first step in the feeling of self-worth necessary for learning to begin. In school this means that social and emotional targets will often be the first addressed.

2. Containment: Safety is paramount for our children. All children have a need to experience an appropriate degree of consistency, predictability, and regularity in their daily lives, and it is this that promotes a child's sense of being 'safe' and is a prerequisite for children developing the ability to retain new facts and skills (i.e. 'learning'). Our children have often had limited experience of this. A safe and

containing learning environment such as ISP School, Battle needs to also offer opportunities for nurture and for play that our children missed in their early years. In school this means that “age-appropriate” signifies different things for each child at different times.

3. Communication: Children at ISP School, Battle need to see that openness is important in moving forward and that the adults can work honestly and respectfully with everything they need to communicate. In school this means teaching socially appropriate communication is more successful when adults show they can understand and manage less positive communication.

4. Involvement: The children attending ISP School, Battle learn about “growing-up” by experiencing the interdependency of participation in individual and group learning. In school this means a number of different activities are planned each week to give new experiences at the right level for each child; these can be very small step achievements with great cumulative impact.

5. Agency: Agency can be defined as the acquiring of skills, actions, medium, or means by which to accomplish things. As children move through the school they grow closer to taking control of their lives and learning post - 16 and need to experience both success and failure to do so. This also means that as children progress through the school they are actively encouraged to take up roles and positions of increasing responsibility and authority. In school this means that adults actively encourage children to make and evaluate decisions about what and how they can learn and achieve.

6. Cultural Curriculum

ISP School, Battle has a knowledge engaged, broad, balanced curriculum which is created around each individual child, taking account of their starting point to ensure that their academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are addressed in a way that captures and motivates them to learn. Building trust, self-confidence, resilience and belonging are key to our approach. Our end point is clear. We promote preparation for, and appreciation of, life in modern Britain, equipping children with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. We believe all children should be provided with an education where they can thrive, no matter what their background or the challenges presented.

Community meetings are a vital part of this, for they are normally where the day's structure is brought together in everybody's mind. Their frequency, length, timing, structure and need for specific agenda items can all be arranged with this objective. In this way, all that happens within the day is part of the therapy — whether it is spoken or not, interpreted or not, analysed or not. Sometimes it just needs to be acknowledged and held. Our community meetings play an important role in establishing a culture of open communication, in which individuals can check things out, paranoia is minimised and expression of feeling is encouraged. At ISP School, Battle, for example, accounts of psychotherapy groups, activity groups, work groups, staff meetings, assessments, as well as the ongoing lives of community members (adults and children), including incidents of self-harm or other forms of ‘rule-breaking’, are all brought into the community meeting for discussion. In addition, crisis meetings can be held at any time of the day if the mood of the school states we need one. In our school, our community

meetings offer a forum for the expression of difficult feelings and conflicts between children and adults, children and children, and even on occasions between adults. It also includes upholding the ethos of the organisation when it is being undermined consciously or unconsciously by the wider community including ISP, adults or children, and encouraging reflective thinking instead of acting out. The pressure to talk and therefore to think about feelings rather than act on them eventually leads to a less brittle superego and more effective impulse control.

7. Curriculum Planning and Assessment

ISP School, Battle has high expectations of what can be achieved by our children and we strive to bridge the gaps between children's current attainment, their cognitive levels, and their long-term potential.

Obtaining accurate baselines can be challenging for children who have had disrupted education and early life experiences. We seek to engage children so that this baseline can be found. The way this is done is often via diverse methods such as mentoring and engagement outside of the typical class environment. We believe that it is important to understand the child in order that the curriculum is well matched, planned and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before, including pre-existing knowledge, and we can then build towards the curriculum defined end points. We believe that one of the contributing factors to disadvantaged children's underachievement is that the curriculum and methodology is often seen as a process that the child needs to adapt to. We take a different stance and we take the child and adapt the curriculum and methodology around them rather than expecting the child to simply adapt.

Our curriculum is supported by rigorous planning and it is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards, and what children will need to know and be able to do at those end points. We work to securing each child's EHCP target. These targets are set within a multi-agency forum and detail the objectives required to have been achieved by the end of the key stage they are working in. We work to this end point. We continually build, develop and adapt children's implementation plans to outline how we will achieve the targets. Assessments are ongoing however we formally report on progress to parents/carers **three times per year.**

The curriculum captures all the essential elements of the National Curriculum as well as ensuring children's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) targets are met. We are compliant with the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the schedule of the Education (ISS) Regulations 2014 and an evaluation of judgements as detailed in the Independent School Inspection handbook which was updated in September 2019.

Class groups and curriculum content are not categorised simply by year group. Groups are categorised by learning styles, sensory needs and class grouping is completed considering the advice of the SEN Team and if necessary, consultation from other key professionals working with the pupil. Although children may not always be placed in chronological year groupings, teaching implementation aims to expose children to curriculum content that children their age experience but at a level appropriate to their understanding.

Developing valuable life skills and skills to develop independence can be very difficult for children and young people who have attachment and/or educational learning difficulties. Specific time is dedicated for children to develop these skills in a safe and nurturing environment.

8. Curriculum and Literacy

We have an emphasis on the basics of reading, English, 'spelling, punctuation, and grammar' (SPAG), and teaching functional literacy. A strategy on many EHCP plans is one of children requiring 'over learning.' We embed this into the curriculum. Barriers to learning are identified in order to implement tailor made programmes with appropriate coverage, content, structure, and sequencing, to unlock the potential of all our children.

Reading is an integral part of the school community and children are encouraged to explore their own curiosities in relation to texts through access to our school library developed in conjunction with East Sussex library service, books in classrooms, tutor reader, and texts online. Children's progress is tracked from each individual's starting point and the emphasis is placed on recognising steps of progress and not expected reading ages, although through implementation our aim is to enable children to close the gaps through a supportive and embedded approach to literacy. Children are encouraged to adopt a problem-solving mind set and in doing so, build resilience and independence. Alongside this our curriculum includes additional reading + phonics teaching as well as Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) times.

We particularly use Oxford Reading Tree as our reading scheme. Additionally, we have a range of other texts that enable children to be flexible in their approach - reading a variety of genre across different publishers. It also provides us with an accurate tracking system and assessment tool for measuring impact. It enables the evaluation of children's knowledge and skills against those expectations for each colour band and National Curriculum standards. The texts we use provide opportunities for speaking, listening, and writing and connect closely to children's phonics knowledge. Our systems, methods and resources facilitate reciprocal links between reading and writing and ensure all children have every opportunity to gain the phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read for meaning and the skills to communicate, giving them the foundations for future learning and better outcomes in life.

9. Nurture Curriculum

We encourage children in our Nurture based classes to become independent thinkers allowing them freedom to explore, create and think critically and actively learn. Where possible they will be encouraged to challenge themselves to build their confidence and resilience, given the opportunity to develop the capacity to surprise themselves and others and to become confident and self-assured. We use questioning, praise and encouragement to develop a positive attitude to learning and high self-esteem. They are taught to be observant, investigative, curious, determined, imaginative, adventurous, co-operative, and to use reasoning.

We have realistic, yet challenging expectations and plan opportunities to extend their knowledge, experiences, and interests, motivating and supporting every child to reach their individual potential. All planning is based on each individual child to ensure their goals are realistic and achievable. Adult led and child-initiated activities are equally important; adults interact sensitively, encouraging perseverance and practice, reinforcing that we all learn at a different pace and can all learn when things go wrong. Our environment and delivery of our curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning;

1. Playing and exploring – children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.
2. Active learning – children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties to allow them the opportunity to enjoy their achievements.
3. Creating and thinking critically – we encourage and support pupils to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

10. Curriculum and Outcomes

The curriculum is built around the child and consequently we will adapt the curriculum around children so that they have the option to complete various qualifications in subjects which engage and assist them in the next stages of their education. We offer a variety of qualifications and awards as it is an important pathway for our children to receive accreditation for their achievements. We offer a wide range of units which are differentiated, making accreditation accessible to all children regardless of their starting positions.

11. Intent

What we are trying to achieve with our curriculum?

The overarching intent of our curriculum is to provide access to a varied national curriculum that enables all children to reach their full potential from their individual starting points.

Curriculum intent is the extent to which our school’s intended curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that children will gain at each stage.

INTENT				
Our Beliefs	Our curriculum is exciting and draws from the best of what has been. It is knowledge-engaged, broad and balanced. We	Our curriculum is ambitious for all our children including the most disadvantaged. We have a key role in addressing social disadvantage and ensuring our children have the very best chance	Our curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced to allow all children to achieve the best possible outcomes in line with their starting points	Our curriculum is designed to be ambitious for our children whilst ensuring it is adapted to develop knowledge, skills and ability with increasing fluency and independence

	understand the importance of ensuring our children are offered a varied and rich curriculum	of future success and happiness			
Adapting the curriculum	<u>National Curriculum</u> We ensure that our children are taught the National Curriculum at a pace that suits their needs. We believe that learning has occurred when a child has experienced a change in their long-term memory.	<u>Vocabulary</u> We recognise that many of our children do not have a broad base of key vocabulary. This is addressed in our curriculum through a range of strategies so that children have the understanding to access learning	<u>Health & Wellbeing</u> We recognise that the county in which the school sits has higher than average rates of health and wellbeing concerns. Children are encouraged to become active through a range of experiences	<u>Community</u> We ensure that our children experience the best that East Sussex has to offer so that they can celebrate the world around them	<u>Multicultural Links</u> We embrace a rich, diverse, British Culture and actively seek out opportunities for our children to experience multiculturalism. Beyond Britain, we ensure our children, develop an understanding of, and curiosity about, the wider world, preparing them for their role as a global citizen
Phases	<u>Nurture KS2</u> Children learn both through child-initiated play and carefully planned adult-led activities. In a safe stimulating environment, children are encouraged to apply all the skills	<u>KS3</u> Children focus on acquiring the skills which are needed to be successful in the next phase of their education. We teach these skills through engagement in exciting topics which broaden their understanding of the world around them. Building on strong fundamentals of reading, writing, maths and		<u>KS4 – Preparation for KS5</u> Children are supported to obtain skills, knowledge and understanding and qualifications to enable them to move on to KS5 as independently as possible and to be well prepared for their next steps.	

	<p>they have learnt in exciting and interesting ways. This promotes a firm foundation and allows children to demonstrate skills through action.</p> <p><u>Nurture KS2-3</u> Children learn through a combination of curriculum led study and nurture based explorative play. We recognise that sometimes children are not ready to access the KS3 curriculum in a traditional manner and allow children time that they need to be emotionally and academically ready to do so.</p>	<p>communication, children develop their skills, applying them in challenging and stimulating situations. Our children are offered the opportunity to attain Entry Level qualifications in English and Maths, allowing children to experience success in preparation for KS4.</p>	<p>Options and qualifications are bespoke to individual children's needs. A broad range of subjects and qualifications are achievable across this key stage.</p>
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12. Implementation

How do we deliver our intended curriculum?

Curriculum implementation is how we deliver our intended curriculum through our implementation plans, including teaching, assessment and feedback

Implementation is how we put our aims into practice.

Our curriculum is comprised of academic learning in all subjects, as well as priority learning areas (including communication, behaviour, social skills, community participation, independent/daily living skills).

As an independent school we ensure that all Independent School Standards are met.

How our curriculum is implemented?

Individualised programs as required that are child centred and built on the targets set at the annual reviews of children's Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP).

Small Group Learning based on our intended curriculum to provide breadth and balance of coverage.

Whole School events and experiences including enrichment activities, whole school events and community visits.

At each key stage, our curriculum is set out incrementally so that each target area can be clearly seen in small, achievable steps.

Our implementation of our curriculum is accessible to all children, regardless of their level of ability or learning style.

The balance between some 1:1 sessions, small group work and community outings may vary according to individual need.

IMPLEMENTATION				
Learning Behaviour	<u>Vision</u> Our school values are embedded into our learning: ISP School, Battle strives to help all children reach their potential and believe that they can achieve, be kind, make positive relationships, communicate well and grow as individuals	<u>Ready to Learn</u> As a school that adopts a therapeutic approach, our mission is to provide each child with a diverse education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes self-control and engagement, inspires learning and encourages aspiration and achievement	<u>Learning to Learn</u> We recognise that metacognitive strategies are important in deepening the learning process. Our key strategies include: building resilience, practical application, managing cognitive load, supporting working memory, elaborated word teaching and celebrating success	<u>Engaged in Learning</u> Our children deserve to be captivated in the experience and possibilities of learning. Through amazing openings, exciting endings, opportunities to access real life learning and lessons designed with individualism in mind – our children learn with passion and enthusiasm
<u>Curriculum depth and breadth</u>	As a team we work collaboratively to ensure that learning is connected. Cross curricular opportunities are capitalised upon and children are rewarded for achievements both within the formal curriculum and emotional literacy.		STEM: Maths, Science and Computing English and Humanities: English, History, Geography, RE and MFL – drop down days The Arts: Art and Design, Drama, DT, Music Healthy Me: PE, Outdoor Learning, Cooking and Nutrition, RE, PSHE, RHSE, Citizenship, Careers	

<p><u>Planning</u></p>	<p><u>Long Term Planning</u> Our long term planning ensures that progression in skills and knowledge is mapped backwards from EHCP targets. Children receive a broad and balanced curriculum</p>	<p><u>Implementation Plans</u> Sequenced progression is matched against EHCP targets. We support children to get the most from their learning by focussing on specific skills and carefully chosen aspects of knowledge which will drive their understanding forwards, whilst making links with what they already know and laying the foundations of future learning</p>	<p><u>Short Term Planning</u> Our adults ensure that regular formative assessment leads to children's work being matched to their next steps in their learning</p>	
<p><u>Key Drivers</u></p>	<p><u>High Expectations</u> We ensure that work is demanding and matches the aims of our Intended Curriculum</p>	<p><u>Subject Knowledge</u> We understand that the importance of teachers having excellent subject knowledge for the skills and knowledge they are teaching. This is developed through a collaborative approach and CPD</p>	<p><u>Pedagogy</u> We understand the importance of working back from end goals. Strategies include differentiation and scaffolding, improving knowledge retention through planned and regular recap, managing cognitive load to aid working memory, questioning strategies to deepen understanding</p>	<p><u>Assessment</u> We use a variety of assessment methods to capture accurate data on each of our children. We use the information gathered efficiently and effectively to promote progress. <u>Real Experiences</u> We ensure that children have access to high quality experiences outside of the classroom. This includes educational visits, guest</p>

			, making links so that facts are not isolated	speakers/visitors, charity and community events
<u>Reading</u>	We recognise that reading is key to assuring the future prosperity of our children	<u>Phonics</u> We ensure that our children have the best start using a systematic synthetic phonics approach. We accurately assess existing knowledge and skills.	<u>Cohesion</u> From the initial assessment we focus on progress in children's reading, with books being matched to ability <u>Vocabulary</u> We understand the importance of children building a wide and varied vocabulary and don't leave this to chance. Our children read a range of rich challenging texts.	<u>Reading Skills</u> We recognise the importance of word recognition going hand in hand with language comprehension. We ensure the children have the skills they need to be readers. <u>Celebration Success</u> Children are given every opportunity to see how they are progressing with their reading skills and gain success and self belief in their skills as they develop
<u>Teacher Workload</u>	We value our adults and understand the importance of managing workload. This is particularly evident in our assessment and feedback policy. In addition, we have monthly group process, daily debriefs, and leadership have an open door policy for all adults.			

13. Impact

What difference is our curriculum making to our children?

The outcomes that children achieve as a result of the education they've received. Children should be able to demonstrate progress.

What evidence do we use at ISP School, Battle to capture progress?

ISP School, Battle uses a range of evidence to capture the full picture of children's progress. The range of measures and assessments used includes:

Formative Assessment

Summative Assessment

Child friendly questionnaires and surveys

Boxall Profiles

IDL literacy assessment

WRAT 5 assessment

Emotional Literacy assessments

Work Scrutiny

Lesson Observations

Joint moderation opportunities with our sister school: Teynham, Kent.

IMPACT			
Assessment and Attainment	<u>How we assess academic and social standards</u>	<u>How we assess that children are ready for the next stage of their learning</u>	<u>How we assess childrens' personal development</u>
	National Tests, WRAT 5, IDL reading and spelling, Lexia, Boxall Profiles, Emotional Literacy assessments, Community Meetings. Analysis undertaken by class teachers, SLT, quality assurance visits through external reviews, local authority quality assurance. Review by governors	Analysis of key skills: Reading, Writing, Maths and Science Analysis of wider curriculum: knowledge and skills Community Meetings	Analysis of attendance Analysis of behaviour Child safety surveys and questionnaires Child meetings Community meetings Reward system to celebrate engagement
Evaluation	<u>Governance</u>	<u>Middle Leaders (when in place)</u>	<u>Adults</u>
	Full governors meetings Governors are involved in the school community and attend celebration assemblies as well as evaluative visits. <u>SLT</u> Weekly leadership meetings Termly reviews of data Termly reviews of curriculum	Regular review of data – child progress meetings Work Scrutiny CPD support for all adults <u>Parents and Community</u> Questionnaires OFSTED parent view Safeguarding forums and updates Daily communication via home/school books, emails,	Questionnaires Staff wellbeing led Collaborative approach Daily debriefs Fortnightly group process Supervision <u>Children</u> Child surveys Democracy sessions Child meetings Community meetings Open door policy – Head Teacher

	Work scrutiny ensuring links to Intended Curriculum, Implementation Plans and Impact Community Meetings	telephone, teacher2parent app and Class Dojo	
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14. Curriculum enrichment

We offer independent careers guidance in accordance with the Department for Education (DfE) careers guidance and access for education and training providers. This is delivered through our online platform which offers consistency in a changing climate. We ensure that all children are supported to choose the next steps that is right for them. We ensure that a programme of advice and guidance is delivered in a stable and structured way by individuals with the right skills and experience. Children are supported with progress into further education in the next stage of their lives and are supported with independent careers advice and transition.

PE is taught on and off site, and children can work towards unit awards.

Our 'Prevent' work promotes and ensures that all children are aware of the fundamental British values of democracy and mutual respect for, and tolerance of, those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith. We use the resources provided by CEOP and our local Prevent Officer who works for the Safety East Sussex Team and our children are encouraged to demonstrate positive peer interactions in line with our school reward system.

We comply with the Department for Education (DfE) (2019) statutory guidance on relationships education, relationships, and sex education (RSE) and health education. Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal, and social lives in a positive way.

Our guiding principles to delivering relationship and sex education is that the content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of children and parents while always with the aim of providing children with the knowledge they need of the law. We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and we seek to build on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. We seek to deliver outstanding provision to support the personal development and pastoral needs of our children. We work flexibly to shape the curriculum content and delivery according to the needs of the children. Community meetings are the anchor of this work with our children alongside Votes for Schools, PSHE, and RHSE lessons.

We enrich the school-based curriculum by broadening children's experiences within the local community and beyond through visits, trips and inviting outside speakers into the school. We create a culture of respect for difference.