



## Easterside Academy Basic Skills Policy

### Document History

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## **Rationale**

At Easterside Academy all staff believe that Maths and English are both essential and fundamental to a child's development. To become numerate and literate are key life skills which are essential for children to flourish in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. These skills enable children to take advantage of the wider curriculum we offer; they raise self-esteem and, ultimately, provide increased opportunities for employment. We endeavor to ensure all children in our care have every opportunity to gain these skills and fulfil their potential.

Learning Basic Skills is an integral part of every pupil's entitlement to the national Curriculum and is essential for academic achievement and personal development.

### **The Basic Skills Agency defines Basic Skills as:**

*"The ability to read, write and speak in English and use mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress at work and in society in general."*

## **Purpose**

At Easterside Academy we shall teach Basic Skills:

- To enable pupils to access all areas of the curriculum.
- To enable pupils to communicate effectively.
- To ensure pupils make good progress in their learning.
- To foster the enjoyment of English and Maths.
- To prepare pupils to meet the challenges of everyday life and to participate in society; and
- To provide a foundation for lifelong learning.

At Easterside Academy we seek to promote:

- ✓ The importance of being good at reading, writing and maths;
- ✓ The importance of parents helping their children acquire these crucial skills;
- ✓ A 'can-do' culture throughout the school to raise standards in English and Maths;
- ✓ The sharing of good practice and ideas to enhance staff development and the quality of teaching in English and Maths;
- ✓ Utilisation of 'On Entry' and 'Baseline' scores and performance data to provide an early indicator of children who will require additional support to achieve their full potential in English and Maths.

## **Specific Aims**

- To use a range of methods including diagnostic ones to establish which pupils need to be targeted for additional support. We consider early identification to be vitally important.

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- To challenge our identified support groups to achieve at least expected standard at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2.
- To improve children's English and Maths skills across the curriculum.
- To plan English and Maths across the curriculum based on active experiential learning, taking account of a variety of learning styles.
- To provide for all types of learner, using a variety of teaching styles and methods of differentiation to ensure pupils reach their full potential.

At Easterside Academy we aim to ensure consistency and credibility by working close with colleagues locally and further afield e.g. Local authority / Discovery Alliance / Enquire Schools; sharing our work with others and commitment to ongoing staff training.

### **Guidelines**

At Easterside Academy we carefully analyse all available data, and our school improvement plan determines the strategies required for maintaining the elements of the Basic Skills Quality Standard reflecting our commitment to raising standards in English and Maths:

- Analyse of the assessment of basic skills to establish the scale of learner needs;
- Strategy and development plan for improving English and Maths standards, with targets for the whole organization;
- Use of qualified support staff, effective teaching programmes, strategies and resources to improve basic skills;
- Effective procedures for planning, monitoring and reviewing the progress of learners with basic skills needs;
- Effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the organization's strategy for improving Basic Skills.

### **Responsibility of Teaching Staff**

It is the responsibility of all staff to support the development of the children's basic skills, through careful planning, related to detailed observational assessment and analysis of data.

Teachers plan engaging, challenging lessons following the objectives in the National Strategies, differentiated to meet the needs of every child.

Teachers should plan to teach key skills through all curriculum subjects. Progression in key skills is at the heart of our curriculum planning. For example, we give the children many opportunities to develop the application of number in their geographical studies.

Support staff are utilized effectively in school to support learners with specific basic skills needs.

The progress of individuals and groups / cohorts is tracked half termly. The data showing attainment and progress in basic skills shall be gathered each half term

as part of the whole school pupil progress tracking system and procedures. Pupil progress meetings are held half termly with both teachers and teaching assistants taking part and continuing to the discussion.

The findings enable teachers to plan effective teaching, agree challenging targets with pupils and to identify those children who are at risk of underachieving.

When a pupil is underachieving in any of the basic skills, support and intervention programmes shall be identified, implemented and monitored for impact by class teachers, teaching assistants, teams, including the senior leadership team. First quality teaching shall also reflect the basic skills needs.

### **Organisation and Method of Teaching Basic Skills**

The teaching of the basic skills is planned for in three ways (Waves).

Firstly, through **Wave 1 Quality First Teaching**; the effective inclusion of all pupils in high-quality everyday personalized teaching. Such teaching will, for example, be based on clear objectives that are shared with the children and returned to at the end of the lesson; carefully explain new vocabulary; use lively, interactive teaching styles and make maximum use of visual and kinesthetic as well as auditory/verbal learning. Approaches like these are the best way to reduce, from the start, the number of children who need extra help with their learning or behavior.

#### **Wave 2**

Wave 2 describes targeted small-group intervention for pupils who can be expected to catch up with peers.

#### **Wave 3**

Wave 3 is about intervention for children for whom Quality First Teaching and Wave 2 catch-up programmes/interventions are not enough. It may need to be a more intensive programme, involving more individual support or specialist expertise and the child would have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) / SEN Support Plan, and be on the SEN register.

Interventions are reviewed and their impact evaluated regularly – not just at the end of the programme or half term/term. Progress is monitored through written records on whole school intervention sheets by the teaching assistant carrying out the intervention, and through on-going discussion with the class teacher. Interventions and impact are also monitored annually by the SENCO.

Parents are kept informed of their child's progress regularly. Termly targets are identified with parents and pupils together during consultation time where 'Learning Conversations' are held. These conversations are held in the Autumn and Spring Terms. There is also an opportunity to meet where needed in the Summer Term after the written, detailed annual report to parents is shared.

Parents are provided with information and guidance to enable them to support their children in the development of basic skills.

Opportunities shall be provided for pupils to develop and apply basic skills across all areas of the curriculum.

### **Responsibilities of Senior Leaders and Management**

Self evaluation identifies the school's priorities, taking evidence from analysis of performance data, assessment tracking and classroom observations. Curriculum action plans are written by subject leaders annually. Staff and governors monitor their progress regularly.

The Head Teacher monitors teaching and learning through formal observations with external validation e.g. LA / DA Heads / SIA. Senior leaders lead half termly 'pupil progress' meetings with staff that are also monitored by governors. The outcomes of these meetings are shared and discussed at senior leadership level. Planning and book scrutinies are also carried out regularly. Written and verbal feedback is shared with individuals.

These provide evidence for appraisal reviews and support the building up of the picture of the quality of teaching and learning overtime.

### **Basic Skills and Inclusion**

At Easterside Academy we teach basic skills to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. The teaching of basic skills is part of the school's policy on providing a broad and balanced education to all children. In our teaching, we provide learning opportunities for all pupils. We strive hard to meet the needs of those with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language; and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

For further details, see separate policies: SEND; EAL; G&T.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.