

Who is this policy for?	All Classroom Based Staff
Policy Date:	March 2025
Date of next review:	March 2027
Who is responsible for monitoring and evaluating this policy?	Headteacher
Signed off Date: Governing Body	February 2025

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Side By Side Policies: Assessment Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, ESOL Policy, Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy, Homework Policy, PSHE and RE Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy - August 2024, Special Educational Needs Policy, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Children Policy, Teaching and Learning and 14-19 Policy as well as with the nursery (EY) curriculum, Kodesh Programmes, 14-19 framework and special events diary.

Aim

Side by Side aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that offers pupils the opportunity to learn and develop through a programme of studies that encompasses both קודש (Jewish) and חול (secular) topics.

Ethos

Judaism is a way of life which can't be separated out from the קודש (Jewish) and חול (secular) curriculum. The two are interdependent and complementary, and this is reflected in much of the teaching and activities in our school.

Teaching and Learning – Therapeutic Input

In addition to the קודש (Jewish) and חול (secular) curriculum, pupils access a range of therapies including speech and language, occupational, music and physiotherapy. Therapists work with the classroom staff to ensure that children are able to generalise their skills across the school day. All aspects of the day whether תפילה (prayer), preparing food, carrying out personal routines, personal care or playing with peers are all important elements of children's learning opportunities. We aim to work with children in a holistic way to enable them to reach their potential.

The curriculum has been designed so that:

- Pupils acquire literacy, language and communication skills to enable them to become confident, meaningful communicators and to believe that their views are valued.

- Pupils acquire numeracy skills which enable them to recognise and use numbers, calculate, use money and understand time, and also to recognise shapes, spaces and measures.
- Pupils access a full קודש (Jewish) programme to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding that will enhance their practice and generalise the skills and knowledge across the whole school day as well as at home and in the wider community (e.g. synagogue). They will be supported to read Hebrew that will enable them to access their prayer books, bible and other relevant texts.
- Pupils understand and make sense of the wider world and their community, recognising that they have rights and responsibilities as citizens.
- Pupils gain social skills that enable them to develop emotional literacy and initiate and sustain good relationships with those around them.
- Pupils gain an insight into their behaviour and learn that behaviours are a choice that they can control and that can affect their environment, whether positively or negatively.
- Pupils learn to regulate and process their sensory responses and use their senses to advance their learning and increase their appreciation of the world around them.
- Pupils improve and develop their mobility, fitness and their special awareness. They understand the importance of health and welfare, and they become proficient at carrying out every-day routines and activities.
- Pupils develop thinking skills that they are able to generalise and use in every area of their lives.
- Pupils appreciate that they 'own' their learning - they are not just passive recipients of knowledge, but can independently take pride in their work, develop their interests and take an active role in their own progress (AfL).
- Pupils are prepared for life as young adults and to join the workforce (if able enough).

CURRICULUM

OUR CURRICULA PATHWAYS – BRIEF OVERVIEW

At Side by Side, we provide a rich and varied curriculum designed to meet the individual needs of our pupils. Our approach combines meaningful learning experiences with personalised support, ensuring every child can develop essential skills and reach their potential.

Our curriculum is delivered through several distinct pathways. In the **Early Years**, the focus is on developing early communication, social interaction, and learning through play. The **Semi-Formal Framework** combines subject-based learning with practical life skills, providing structure while allowing for flexibility to meet each pupil's needs. For pupils in our **complex classes** who are assessed through the Engagement Model Framework, learning focuses on early communication, sensory exploration, and building meaningful connections.

Our **14-19 Department** places a strong focus on preparing pupils for adulthood. Through personalised programmes, practical experiences, and skill development, pupils gain independence and confidence as they prepare for life beyond school. This focus is integrated into both our Semi-Formal Framework and Complex Needs Classes, ensuring all pupils develop essential life skills at an appropriate level.

Jewish learning is an integral part of our curriculum. Our **Kodesh Programme** is embedded across the school, enriching pupils' understanding of Jewish traditions and values. Additionally, our **Hebrew Reading** framework mirrors the structure of our English literacy teaching, providing a clear and consistent approach to developing reading skills in both languages.

Each pathway is carefully designed to provide appropriate learning opportunities, ensuring our pupils are supported to grow, succeed, and thrive.

Early Years Provision (2 -5 Year Olds)

The Side by Side nursery curriculum has been created according to the guidance of The New EYFS (September 2021) and associated documents. In addition to the key areas of learning, the Nursery Manager and Class Teachers work closely so that the curriculum fully integrates Side by Side's קודש (Jewish Studies) and חול (secular) curriculum into the Early Years.

Learning through Play

Play enables our young pupils to learn and develop through doing and talking, encouraging them to learn to think. Our curriculum ensures that rich learning experiences and opportunities are planned and provided through a range of play activities. This will include a balance of adult led and child led learning which help pupils to make progress in each of the areas of development.

With some tasks, our pupils will decide how they will use the activity whilst others, an adult takes the lead in helping the pupils to take part in the activity. In all activities, information from the EYFS guidance has been referenced and updated to link with the New EYFS. We aim to link play closely to pupils' positive home experiences of Jewish life – events surrounding the birth of a new baby, weddings, שבת (Sabbath), festivals and traditions. Side By Side enable the pupils to experience play in the garden with a range of resources with a full 'outdoor classroom' attached to each of the Early Years classes.

Our Early Years is very focused on developing children's language. The environment is language rich with the pupils constantly hearing and contributing to appropriate conversations and discussion. This is particularly beneficial during structured play sessions where much of the play is child led. This area of the children's development is also supported by the Speech and Language Therapists. For children whose language is delayed or who are unable to produce sounds, the staff work together

with the therapists to develop alternative forms of communication whether through Makaton, visuals and a range of AAC high and low tech solutions.

Topic Cycles in the Early Years (EY)

The Early Years topic cycle runs across all our EY classes and is delivered at the level relating to their age and ability. The topics are repeated throughout their journey through our Early Years to consolidate and ensure there is progression in terms of developing their knowledge, skills and understanding (the topic cycle is located in the EY Curriculum File).

Kodesh topics cover the cycle of the Jewish Year, festivals and important days. The children learn the basics of Jewish Life incorporating life skills relating to the Halachos (laws) of Shabbos, Kashrus, Prayers and Blessings and daily Jewish living. An important component of all Jewish living at Side By Side is the development of Middos, good behaviour. These lessons are often derived from the weekly Sedra (portion of the bible)

Key Stage 1 – 5 – Semi-Formal Framework

Our programmes are guided by the Torah principles for חינוך (education) and whenever relevant, the Kodesh (Jewish Studies) programme is integration into other areas of learning. At each key stage, the curriculum reflects the range of topics covered within the current National Curriculum ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum.

Numeracy and Literacy

Learning to read and manage numbers is a core area of focus for the pupils. Numeracy and Literacy is timetabled throughout the week to ensure the pupils are given the opportunities to develop in these key skills.

We approach the teaching of reading primarily through phonics, using Read Write Inc. (RWI) consistently across the school to provide a structured and systematic approach to reading. This ensures all pupils receive consistent support in developing their phonics, reading, and writing skills.

For a small number of pupils for whom the RWI programme is not suitable, we follow a carefully considered assessment process with input from professionals before deciding to move them to a different programme, such as Match, Select, Name. This process ensures a clear pathway and rationale for selecting an alternative approach, tailored to the child's individual needs.

For pupils at pre-reading level, class teachers plan targeted programmes to build phonological awareness, laying the foundation for future reading development..

Writing is encouraged alongside reading activities, with additional input from occupational therapists to support fine motor development and writing progress. As with reading, we have a range of resources to support the teaching of numeracy. Number concepts can be abstract and it is important that the pupils are given concrete learning resources to help in their understanding of the concepts. The school uses Numicon from the Early Years through the school as well as other resources (e.g. Rapid Maths) working alongside to help the pupils make progress.

As well as dedicated teaching time for numeracy and literacy, these core skills will be integrated into all the relevant topics.

Nine Year Topic Cycle

To ensure that the pupils have a broad curricular experience, we follow a nine-year cycle that is structured in three, three-year cycles of topics. This ensures that the pupils can review those topics at different phases of their education, with the curricular areas (science, history & geography) tracked over a period of time. The teachers will monitor and provide a range of learning experiences covering the different curricular areas of the National Curriculum. The topics cross a number of NC areas, but will usually have a key focus in one subject area e.g. science, geography etc. Where relevant this will cross-link to their Jewish Studies curriculum. Each term the classes work on a **PSHE topic** to expand their experiences.

Life Skills are very important for the pupils to develop and throughout the week opportunities will be made available for the staff to support them. This can range from tooth brushing, road awareness and personal hygiene sessions etc. These skills will often be included in the pupils PSPs as well as relevant opportunities within the topics. Pupils working at the end of Key Stage 3 and in Key Stage 4 will work towards a range of qualifications, supporting them in preparation for their transition.

Whole School Project - Personal Care and Independence Around Food

We have introduced a whole school project focused on personal care and independence around food. Each term, we explore a different aspect, including food preparation, hygiene, mealtime etiquette, clean-up, and Birkas Hamazon. The project integrates key areas such as Care of the Classroom, General Hygiene, Jewish Ethos, and Healthy Eating, ensuring a holistic approach. Staff collaborate with SENCOs and therapists to support implementation, and therapists incorporate the term's focus into students' individual targets.

Our Complex Needs Classes

Side by Side supports a number of complex needs classes, who are assessed through the Engagement Framework. The 9-year curriculum cycle works in the same way as the classes on the semi-formal curriculum but the themes are designed to be relevant to the pupils.

Communication – In addition to the pupils’ literacy and numeracy programmes designed at levels relevant to the pupils, there is a strong focus on building opportunities to enable the pupils to have a voice and communicate in ways most relevant to them. This could include PECs, communication books, visual aids & eye gaze. The Speech and Language Therapists work closely with the teachers and TAs to develop these programmes.

In addition, we offer a range of specialist programmes to support the children. These programmes could include:-

- **TacPac** draws together touch and music to create a structured sensory communication between two people. It can be run as a whole class group session or on a 1:1 basis. Tacpac creates sensory alignment and helps people of any age who have a sensory impairment, developmental delay, complex learning difficulties, tactile defensiveness, and limited or pre-verbal levels of communication.
- **Attention Autism** is an intervention model designed by Gina Davies, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist. It builds communication, interaction, attention and learning skills through hands on, practical and fun activities. It aims to develop natural and spontaneous communication through the use of visually based and highly motivating activities. Gina’s primary objective is that the sessions are fun and “offer an irresistible invitation to learn”!
- The **Story Massage** Programme combines the benefits of positive touch with the fun and creativity of words – whether as story, rhyme or song. It offers a fun and fully inclusive way to bring together touch and language. The programme is enjoyed by children and adults of all ages and abilities in a wide variety of settings.

Kodesh (Jewish Studies) Curriculum

Under the leadership of our Head of Kodesh and the Nursery Manager, a comprehensive learning programme has been developed across the Early Years and school that reflects the weekly (Sedra), the yearly Jewish cycle of Yomin Tovim (festivals) and Yedia Klolis (general knowledge), thus the EYFS is embedded into the way all Kodesh learning happens across the Early Years sector of the school.

All the pupils Daven (collective worship) in the morning throughout the school (Mechina –afternoon prayers Mincha). This is a taught session with the Rebbe/teacher extending the prayers when the pupils are ready.

Cross Curricular

Wherever possible, we take the opportunity to link our קודש (Jewish Studies) and חול (secular) curricula. This is done through smaller, every day learning activities, such as

linking a numeracy lesson to the lighting of the מנורה (Menorah) at חנוכה (Chanukah), or preparing a special food for an upcoming יום טוב (Festival) in Food Technology.

At key points throughout the year, we hold special activities where the pupils spend time in workshops linked to an upcoming יום טוב (Festival). These workshops reflect EYFS/National Curriculum Subjects but are linked in theme to the יום טוב (Festival).

Hebrew Reading

SBS have developed a framework to teach the pupils to read the Aleph Beis reflecting the consistent approach we use in teaching English literacy. By integrating this approach, we aim to support the development of reading skills in both Hebrew and English. As the pupils build their basic reading skills, they will have the opportunity to study Hebrew texts, such as the Bible, linking this with their English literacy programmes. Additionally, revision work and notes will be sent home to allow parents to consolidate their child's learning. These sessions also incorporate key literacy skills, including phonological awareness, visual perception, memory, and general comprehension, all contributing to the pupils' broader language development.

14 – 19 Provision

Following DfE approval, we introduced an extended 14 – 19 provision with the first pupils joining the programme from September 2015. The key purpose of the provision is to prepare the young people for transitioning into a post-school environment. This may be in some form of further education, voluntary and/or work opportunities as well as engaging and feeling an integral part of their local community.

The core programme includes the following elements:-

- Participation and integration in community based learning.
- Life-Skills programmes including specific accredited programmes e.g. ASDAN courses.
- Functional numeracy and literacy skills.
- Preparation for work including relevant external qualifications, work experience, both off-site and in house, and taster opportunities.
- Social skills.
- Career Week - a weeklong programme in held in alignment with National Careers' Week, where our students explore different career opportunities such as a pop-up café, school post office as well as visits and talks from external professionals in the workforce.

ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

For pupils to effectively learn and make progress, it is vital that theirs and others behaviour does not create a barrier to learning. For some pupils with complex needs

this can be a significant challenge. We will work together with their parents and other professionals to develop an emotional wellbeing plan which will provide the support and encourage positive behaviour. Please see our Behaviour Management Policy.

PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP

It can sometimes be hard for parents to learn from their children what has happened in a school day. We also recognise that our curriculum is not limited to the hours that a pupil spends in school - for children with special needs in particular every experience can provide potential for learning. We therefore believe that it is crucial to work in partnership with parents so that our curriculum can truly be an extended curriculum, and a living curriculum.

To this end, we provide parents with a weekly curriculum summary for each class, to share what has been happening in the classroom throughout the week. For some pupils, link books are updated and sent home daily, to keep parents informed or to relay any important information. For the children who have direct therapeutic input, therapy goals along with ideas how to carry them out will be sent home. We also invite parents to parents' evenings, PSP meetings and Annual Reviews and generally encourage them to be engaged with their child's learning.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Our SEF and Development plan lays out in detail how we self-evaluate and how we ask others to become involved in our evaluation process.

We use data gathered through our Assessment Cycle (see Assessment Policy for more details) to gain information about the effectiveness of our curriculum as it can be measured through pupil achievement, both through individual progress and the progress of groups of pupils according to need. This is done when relevant and when the data gathered will be informative.

The curriculum is also monitored and reviewed on an on-going basis through our regular meetings with teachers and senior staff.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT – BRITISH VALUES

The school recognises the importance of SMSC. The ethos of the school reflects the life of the children and their families within the Orthodox Jewish traditions whilst at the same time ensuring that the school programmes actively promote British values into the school day. This is achieved through an integrated approach between the Kodesh and Secular curriculum as well as specific PSHE and/or citizenship topic based learning throughout the year.

The school programme emphasises the importance to facilitate the pupils' development of self-esteem and emotional health, keeping safe, respect for

themselves and for others. In addition to the class input and learning, where relevant, specific goals may be linked into the pupils' PSP or therapeutic targets. This will support and strengthen the pupils' emotional wellbeing at home, school and in the community.

Please also refer to our Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Throughout the year, the pupils are able to take part in a range of special activities that reflect different themes. These could involve linking into National Weeks; green, literacy and book week or other special event that may be approaching. Examples could include Jewish festivals, activities linked to the school topics or national events e.g. Poppy day, elections etc.

RSE POLICY (REFER TO FULL POLICY)

Early Years and Primary Pupils

As part of the children's Kodesh (Jewish Studies) and PSHE (class topics or individual support) the children cover the key areas of the RE and work to understand the importance of positive and healthy relationships with parents, peers and other adults, and different life events relating to their families.

Secondary Pupils

We recognise that pupils with special needs require tailored support to understand appropriate and safe social interactions as they progress through adolescence. This guidance will be provided through individual and/or group sessions, delivered at a level suited to each pupil's cognitive understanding, and aligned with the school's ethos.

As pupils move through their teenage years, they will receive personalised support to develop healthy relationship skills and appropriate boundaries. This will be done in consultation with parents and in a way that reflects the values upheld by the school.