

HEADTEACHER VISION FOR THE YEAR 2023-24

Each school year, I present my vision for the coming academic year to shape the direction of travel for the school based on a local/school, national/ international and philosophical focus where I share rules for life (skills, values and attitudes) to run alongside a curriculum innovation. The teaching curriculum is planned through the School Development Plan. Look at the timeline below and see whether you can feel the difference the HT vision has made on the climate of the school.

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
<p><u>School</u>: Post-Ofsted action plan <u>Local</u>: sustainability <u>National</u>: new National Curriculum (emphasis on maths) <u>International</u>: standards – lessons from HT trip to Finland & Netherlands (arithmetic)</p>	<p><u>School</u>: mindfulness, PHSE, P4C, memorable experiences, history & geography <u>Local</u>: sustainability – saving energy, becoming even greener, renewable energy <u>International</u>: critical thinking skills – boosting our children’s brain power – lessons from research trip to Japan</p>	<p><u>School</u>: Behaviour: a calm environment and mindful individuals <u>Local</u>: consolidating sustainability (third year) <u>National</u>: new Ofsted framework (Inspection due July 2016) <u>International</u>: Phase one ICT – lessons learned from research trip to Sweden</p>	<p><u>School</u> – Developing reciprocal reading & growth mindset <u>Local</u> – Safeguarding and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) <u>National</u> – Outstanding practice (Ofsted inspection due from July 2016) <u>International</u> – Maryland goes Google initiative – lessons from research trip to Singapore</p>	<p><u>School</u> – Developing reading comprehension (Point Evidence Explain – P.E.E.) & growth mindset <u>Local</u> – Safeguarding – keeping our children safe in every area. <u>National</u> – Journey to ‘outstanding’ <u>International</u> – ICT innovation third year -Maryland goes Google initiative – lessons from research trip to Singapore</p>	<p><u>School</u> – Developing reading comprehension Talktime, Behaviour <u>Local</u> – Safeguarding – keeping our children safe in every area. <u>National</u> – Journey to ‘outstanding’ <u>International</u> – ICT innovation third year -Maryland goes Google initiative – lessons from research trip to Singapore</p>	<p><u>School</u>- Digital Literacy: The Media Room <u>Local</u>- i. Sustainability- Origins ii.Safeguarding iiiBlack History - Recognising the Past, Shaping the Future <u>National</u> Journey to ‘outstanding’ and the new Ofsted Framework. Intent, implementation and impact? <u>International</u> – Lessons from research visitors from Japan.</p>

2020-21	2021-22	22-23	23-24 ten year anniversary
<p>Coronavirus Pandemic National lockdowns</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">X</p>	<p><u>School</u> - OFSTED prep i.Maryland Story - preparing for Ofsted <u>National</u> - Values Education. Wellbeing (Health at every size) <u>International</u> - sustainability , world developments - citizens for the future</p>	<p><u>School</u> OFSTED prep post Covid <u>Local</u> Newham SEND review - <u>impact on our school</u> <u>National</u> - <u>suffering poverty</u> <u>International</u> Climate change</p>	<p><u>School</u> Understanding Pedagogy - Critical thinking <u>National</u> Safeguarding Social Media & AI - impact on our school <u>International</u> - Global warming</p>

HEADTEACHER VISION for school year Sept 2023-24



Last year, in 2022, I asked you to....	How did we do?
<p>LOCAL FOCUS - BE READY FOR OFSTED!</p>	<p>Success! After 5 years of preparation, Ofsted visited in February 2023. We were graded good with outstanding features. We also had the best Y6 SATs results outperforming local and national attainment.</p>
<p>NATIONAL FOCUS 2022 Focus on Inclusion (SEND)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SEND resources purchased for their enjoyment not just for access etc. supporting their mental health. ● focus on children’s overall social, emotional and academic development.. ● embed our values-led curriculum develops character and teaches all our children about humanity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The LSA team further developed the Nurture Room as a SEND hub but now we need to invest in bespoke SEND resources for the playground. ● There needs to be more understanding and focus on teaching about and supporting mental health, using our values as a foundation. ● We now need to revisit positive behaviour strategies, SEMH strategies such as emotional coaching, and rebuild a climate of reward and praise that is consistent.

a) Equality - child poverty

Last year, we expanded our work on equality to highlight the issue of child poverty. I asked you to:

- remain vigilant, noticing signs of poverty and reporting
- provide enrichment opportunities for all children (trips, clubs, excellence and enjoyment in learning)
- signpost to our support teams, e.g. our FSW and Children's Centre

b) HOW DID WE DO?

- Signposted needy families to the Children's Centre for free vitamins etc.
- Our Family Support Worker dealt with many cases ranging from debt management to rehousing.
- We work in partnership with the Start Young charity to ensure our poorest families are supported.
- Organise food vouchers for FSM children

INTERNATIONAL FOCUS: climate change

I asked you to ensure that, in order for our children to be future ready, they were educated on the following:

- how to save more water at school and at home.
- alternatives to fuel, such as solar power, hydrogen, biomass (waste) and wind power.
- plastic pollution
- impact of climate change on the weather around the world - wildfires, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, drought, tropical storms, mudslides and temperature extremes.

Review by Henry Watson, Sustainability Leader

Educating, and combating **climate change**, was a key part of the headteacher's vision for last year and we have taken many steps to make sure Maryland is always becoming more sustainable.

- The eco-warriors have engaged in projects regarding reducing **food waste** and **biodiversity** in the local area, while contacting our local Mayor and MP about the use of plastic bags in Newham and pollution in the local area.
- Further to that, the eco-warriors planned and performed **assemblies** to the school regarding different aspects of sustainability.
- We have also ensured themes of sustainability are embedded into our curriculum, with Year 6 covering the topics of Climate Change, alternative energy sources and Fairtrade, Year 5 studying the effects of **deforestation** and Year 4 studying **pollution** in local rivers. In KS1, Years 1 and 2 have written extended pieces of work covering the book "Clean Up," which focuses on pollution in the ocean.
- The school has invested in purchasing resources that were previously consumables, but are now **renewables**, e.g. glue sticks and pens.
- In 2022 a new heating system was installed replacing the electric blowers in the

Infant department.

- We created the **Sustainability Corner** in the Junior hall which is very popular as a Reading Spot.
- **We did not achieve our water conservation aim.**

2023 School focus - Understanding Pedagogy: Critical thinking.

Critical Thinking

Have you ever wondered why all the displays in the school change and I never allow the critical thinking one to be removed? Nine years ago this year I visited Japan on a research trip to try and discover how and why the Japanese were so successful with technology and science. The answer was that they ensured the children were taught how to think critically. I also visited Singapore, world famous for teaching critical thinking and finished my research by visiting the world famous Eton College (that has produced 20 Prime Ministers).

Critical thinking is the silent key to success. Children in all those settings learnt how to use reasoning, logic and analysis by themselves to problem solve. The example I always use is the Y5 children in Singapore who were following detailed instructions to make an electronic device for a motion activated light. They declined help from the teacher and the class technician because they desperately needed to prove they could do it independently! We launched critical thinking projects which included giving the children fun problems and quizzes, promoting board games and even training parents how to develop their children's critical thinking where they had to find answers themselves.

One of the ideas that was successful in Japan was to introduce a chess club. In Japan, children play two types of chess - everyday, the western version and the Japanese version. They play as part of the curriculum, every single day. This sharpens the children's prediction and analytical skills. At Maryland we gave every family a compendium of board, dice and card games free of charge. We bought a large collection of books that promote reasoning (e.g. Would you rather..) and even published our own 'Ready, Steady, Think' series in partnership with Singapore University. We introduced lessons starters with an investigative question as they did in Japan and introduced the 'convince me' statement in maths, getting children to

verbalise their workings. We visited 3 primary private schools and looked at the tasks children were given, particularly as homework and in tests, to develop their reasoning skills. Japanese senior schools all included debating in their curriculum which we introduced as an after school club. One of our biggest successes was winning the DebateMate competition in Newham where our Juniors team argued against other schools convincingly about the topics they were given.

With the development of computer games and STEM, there are many opportunities to develop on screen problem solving skills but can they transfer to answering an abstract question in an assessment paper, or write an essay when only given a title or answer the question What is your impression of, followed by solid reasons? How well can a child explain a solution or convince someone about a conclusion?

Let me give you an example of how we started to promote critical thinking with the children. We had a collection of abstract questions that had no wrong or right answers. It doesn't matter what the answer is but the explanation as to why that conclusion was made is more important.

What would you rather be...blue or green? Why? (extend by asking for 3 reasons at least). - use any colours but not black and white

Orange or apple? Land or the sea? Lock or key? Cat or a dog? Elephant or giraffe?

They don't have to be opposites, e.g. in the army they ask would you prefer to be? hungry or cold

What is your impression of our last Prime Minister? Why? (always ask why to extend thinking).

One of the test papers from Eton showed simply a picture of a deer lying under a tree and the task was to write 500 words using the picture as stimulus. We used this idea of an object to stimulate verbal skills and introduced Talk Time, something you can still do as a time filler.

Our work on thinking skills led to us teaching children about how the brain works, because, believe it or not, children are fascinated by this topic. Again this led to us teaching them about how parts of their brains managed their behaviour. We introduced emotional coaching- we taught them about their fast and furious brain and their sensible brain. We even had a brain scientist visit to do assembly!

So what do I want you to do for 2023/24?

I want teachers to:

- be re-introduced to the **principles** of critical thinking and brain power - the silent key to success
- integrate a critical thinking activity into daily or weekly practice
- promote thinking away from the screen - puzzles, quizzes, board games, debating, Talk time,
- get children to talk and reflect on their choices in order to resolve problems
- EYFS staff to understand the pedagogy of ShREC and Sustained Thinking

I hope you will now look at the Critical Thinking display on the wall through different eyes.

2023 NATIONAL FOCUS - Social Media and AI

The school went through a trying time with a social media campaign against us in Spring 2023. The following point sums up my vision in this area.

It is a priority for staff to be vigilant and knowledgeable about the pros and cons of social media, both public and private. Recognise that inappropriate use of social media is a safeguarding and possible criminal issue.

We must also keep up to date with innovations such as AI (artificial intelligence). AI can answer questions, complete written tasks, and respond to prompts in a human-like way but is it all good? What do we need to know? Ms. Boreham, DHT, has done the following research:

Pros of AI	Cons of AI
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Less human error● Helps in repetitive/mundane jobs (e.g. admin)● Encyclopaedia at your fingertips● Data analysis● Fosters digital literacy skills● Potential to reduce workload● Ability to provide interactive and immersive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lack of creativity and innovation● Over reliance means you become passive, lack the ability to be independent, think critically and problem solve.● AI can contain biases - perpetuate unfairness and discrimination● Transparency needed on how it is used so it is ethical.● When using AI we need to be fully aware of how AI systems work, what information is gathered

<p>learning experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to adapt and personalise learning to individual students (LbQ, Mathletics) increasing engagement and ensuring misconceptions are addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content AI produces is not always accurate or appropriate as it has limited regard for truth • AI cannot replace the judgement and deep subject knowledge of a human expert. • AI can produce unreliable information, therefore any content produced requires professional judgement to check appropriateness and accuracy • Schools need to be vigilant for malpractice
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So this year, we will:

- support pupils to identify and use appropriate resources to support their ongoing education.
- This includes encouraging effective use of age-appropriate resources (which may include generative AI) and preventing over-reliance on a limited number of tools or resources.
- encourage the use of critical thinking and reasoning when using social media or AI.

Resources

[Generative artificial intelligence in education. DfE](#)

<https://www.harrowschool.hk/the-pros-and-cons-of-using-ai-in-education/>

2023 INTERNATIONAL FOCUS: Global Warming

With **climate change** being a key focus of the Headteacher's vision last year, Maryland will continue to embed education about how to combat **global warming** across the school.

This year we will focus on:

1. **Premises:** All lighting in the school will be updated to LED in the Autumn term, which allows us to save money and energy, We will invest in water butts and investigate how to recycle, as well as conserve water.
2. **Parents:** organise a home project on sustainability and climate change, giving families opportunities to research how to live sustainably at home.
3. **Pupils:**The eco-warriors will continue to provide assemblies to pupils, while researching how to make the school more sustainable, for example conducting an experiment on microplastics from scourers, and comparing them to natural equivalents,

4. **Service providers:** Work with Juniper, our food and cleaning providers, to implement further sustainable practices. They will work with Newham council to reduce food waste, eliminate plastic containers and take part in further projects regarding reducing electricity wastage.
5. **The community:** The eco-warriors will also demand a greater focus on sustainability in the community from our local representatives. A £2,500 grant has been awarded to Maryland, allowing for a polytunnel to be built, meaning we can grow food all year round, while an adult eco-warrior team will be established, to help to maintain and improve the garden.
6. **National:** The school will join the Green School Project <https://www.greenschoolsproject.org.uk/about-us/>

Mrs.Lorna Jackson, MBE Headteacher September 2023

(with support from H.Watson & A.Boreham)

