

# Curriculum Policy

This policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the EYFS.

## **Introduction**

St Hugh's' curriculum encompasses all the activities planned to promote learning, personal growth and development, including the various extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the children's experiences. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum' – what the pupils learn from the way members of the school community interact with each other and are expected to behave. We want our pupils to grow into positive, responsible people who can work and cooperate with others, while at the same time developing their knowledge and skills that enable them to achieve their true potential. We value the breadth of the curriculum that we provide. We aim to foster creativity in our pupils and to help them become independent learners.

## **Aims**

The aims of our school curriculum are:

- To enable all pupils to learn, and develop their skills, to the best of their ability;
- To promote a positive attitude towards learning and to engender a curiosity about their world, so that pupils enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid base for lifelong learning;
- To teach pupils the basic skills of literacy, speaking and listening skills, numeracy and information and communication technology;
- To enable all pupils to be creative and to develop their own thinking;
- To enable pupils to take responsibility for and become increasingly independent in their learning;
- To enable all pupils to be resourceful and resilient in their learning;
- To enable all pupils to learn cooperatively and collaboratively;
- To help pupils understand Britain's cultural heritage and fundamental British values;
- To appreciate and value the contribution made by all ethnic groups in Britain's multi-cultural society;
- To provide effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society;
- To enable pupils to be responsible citizens with a strong sense of community;
- To help pupils to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to distinguish right from wrong;
- To help pupils to understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- To provide personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) which encourages pupils to respect and care for themselves and others, and to become responsible and well-informed members of society;
- To provide full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education

## **Curriculum Provision in Pre-Prep (EYFS – Year 2)**

### **EYFS**

The curriculum for the early years is integrated into the scheme of work followed throughout the school and incorporates the Early Learning Goals and Development Matters for children's learning on entering compulsory education.

The content of the curriculum includes:

#### **PRIME AREAS**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language Development
- Physical Development

#### **SPECIFIC AREAS**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World (which includes Science, History, Geography, Religious Studies, ICT and French).
- Expressive Arts and Design (which includes Art, Craft, Music, DT and Drama).

In Nursery, each term, a broad theme is adopted to include the seven areas of learning. Planning is carried out on a half-termly basis to take into account the children's interests and experiences, and weekly 'continuous provision' ensures a stimulating nursery environment is provided.

In the Reception classes a whole-term thematic approach is also used, alongside the planning of key literacy and numeracy skills to be taught.

In both Nursery and Reception, however, response to the immediate interests of the children is considered crucial for an appropriate, relevant and inspiring curriculum for all children and this is factored into planning.

### **Years 1-2**

In Years 1 & 2, we adopt an inter-disciplinary topic approach to curriculum planning. We develop the curriculum carefully, so that there is coherent and full coverage of all early learning goals and subject skills, and that there is planned progression in all curriculum areas.

The curriculum is broad and teaching is tailored to meet the needs of the children: academic work and creative play are both central to the children's development.

Gradually, we place increasing emphasis on the more formal elements of literacy and numeracy, as well as encouraging the all-round development of each individual. Science, History and Geography are taught through a creative curriculum. Art, Music, ICT, French, RS, Sport and Drama are also an integral part of the curriculum in the Pre-Prep.

Weekly circle times held by class teachers are used to deliver the PSHEE programme which follows the 'Family Links' scheme. Family Links is a national organisation and independent charity committed to promoting emotional health and wellbeing in schools so that all children can aspire, flourish and achieve. All pupils from EYFS to Year 2 attend a Wellbeing session six times a year and there is also a weekly Wellbeing Club. These sessions are delivered by specialist staff. As part of the programme, First Aid is taught to the pupils in alternate years from Reception upwards by the School Nurses.

Forest School provides an opportunity for those in EYFS-Year 2 to learn in an outdoor environment where the children develop other associated skills and discover more about the world around them. The Forest School activities are often linked directly to classroom learning.

### **Curriculum Provision in Middle School (Years 3-4)**

Thinking and Learning is at the heart of the curriculum in Middle School. Equipping the children with skills essential to being successful learners throughout life such as independence, resilience, creativity and problem solving, ensures that they are able to apply themselves most effectively to whatever tasks are presented to them and are able to be ambitious in their achievements.

The children follow a broad curriculum, which includes the following subjects: English, Maths, Science, French, History, Geography, RS, ICT, Art, DT, Drama, Music, PSHEE, Cognitive Skills (CogS), PE and Games. These subjects are taught by a combination of MS teachers and specialist subject teachers. The introduction of setting in both Maths and English in Middle School enables children to progress at their own pace through the syllabus.

From Year 3, pupils also cover Current Affairs within Form Time on a weekly basis. Pupils are able to discuss issues that arise in the news with their teacher and peers.

In Year 4 we aim to develop the children's thinking and reasoning skills by introducing them to Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning. This is delivered through a range of paper exercises, games and puzzles which take place in Cognitive Skills sessions.

The Forest School initiative offers all children in Middle School the best possible opportunities for learning and success in an outdoor environment. PSHEE continues to follow the 'Family Links' scheme of work and is delivered by class teachers. Children attend half-termly Wellbeing sessions delivered by a specialist and First Aid is taught by the School Nurses.

Pupils in Middle School also benefit from a self-directed, cross-curricular, independent learning project linked to the Ashmolean Museum and 'Take One...' initiative during the Spring term.

Children have dedicated reading times throughout the week. We aim to encourage our pupils to become fluent, independent, and critical readers, who question and reflect on what they have read and who enjoy reading for pleasure. To this end, the children in Middle School are using the Accelerated Reader scheme. This is a computer-based program, which monitors and manages independent reading practice. It regularly tests vocabulary, decoding and comprehension through book-based quizzes.

### **Curriculum Provision in Upper School (Years 5-8)**

In Upper School, pupils are given the opportunity to experience an even wider range of subjects: French, History, Geography, RS, ICT, Art, Drama, Design Technology, Music, Latin, PSHEE, Current Affairs, Pre-Test Preparation, Sport as well as the core curriculum subjects of English, Mathematics and Science. Indeed, as a preparatory school, we pride ourselves on the breadth as well as the depth of the curriculum we offer.

Year 5 and 6 pupils continue with the Accelerated Reader scheme, but are expected to rely and less and less on the programme, with the aim of becoming entirely independent readers by Year 7. To support this aim, children have dedicated time to read for pleasure and discuss their reading during English lessons.

The PSHEE syllabus follows the PSHE Association's Programme of Study and is organised around three core themes: health and wellbeing, relationships and living in the wider world. The main topics taught under these themes include: rights and responsibilities, healthy relationships, valuing difference, growing and changing, keeping safe, drugs awareness, online safety and social media, healthy lifestyles, money and economic wellbeing, feelings and emotions, taking care of the environment, personal identity and transition, career progression and relationships and sex. The programme seeks to actively promote fundamental British values.

All children in Upper School attend six Wellbeing sessions in the year, organised half-termly, based around the School's core values of kindness, respect, independence, curiosity, collaboration and courage. These sessions are delivered by a specialist. Over the course of the inputs, students learn how to regulate their emotions, cultivate a positive mindset and develop a range of functional coping strategies. In addition, the children continue to be taught First Aid in alternate years by the School Nurses.

### **Curriculum and life-long learning**

We want to produce effective and life-long learners – not just children who have learned a lot. We believe that learning is learnable. Therefore, alongside all that we already teach, we are also focusing on discrete aspects of learning because we wish to produce robust, dynamic and creative learners, who learn from their mistakes. These transferable learning skills will be useful however the world develops: employers are actively seeking these skills, and we believe we need to teach them overtly. The key principles are based on the concept of Building Learning Power (BLP).

In Pre-Prep and Middle School, children are being taught to “think about thinking” and understand that they need to “learn to learn”. Important characteristics of learning have been linked to certain animals to make it more memorable and accessible for them. There are visual reminders to which the children and staff can refer. The children are encouraged to focus on one (or more) characteristics in many of the tasks they undertake and work to targets which refer to these learning skills.

In Years 5 and 6, we further develop the children's thinking and reasoning skills using online sites to deliver verbal and non-verbal reasoning exercises, through weekly Pre-Test Preparation (PTP) lessons. These also help pupils approach pre-testing with greater confidence. Pupils also receive coaching on interview technique.

## **Curriculum and Inclusion**

The curriculum at St Hugh's is designed to be accessed by all pupils who attend the school. If it is necessary to modify some pupils' access to the curriculum, in order to meet their individual needs, then this is done only after their parents have been consulted.

If a pupil has special needs, St Hugh's does all it can to meet these individual needs. We pay due regard to the SEND Code of Practice and follow our own SEND Policy. This process is carefully overseen by the Head of Learning Support who liaises with members of staff who are responsible for the individual pupils' needs at that stage in their education. In Nursery and Pre-Prep this is the Head of Pre-Prep, in Years 3 and 4 this will be the Head of Middle School and in Upper School the Deputy Head (Academic) in conjunction with the relevant Heads of Department.

We are committed to meeting the needs of pupils with disabilities. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not placed at a disadvantage compared to non-disabled children. Teaching and learning is appropriately modified for children with disabilities, for example they may be given additional time to complete certain activities, or the teaching materials may be adapted. If a pupil with an EHC Plan joins the school, they will be provided with an education which meets the requirement of the EHC Plan.

We also provide appropriate support to those who are More Able and Talented (see separate policy). A range of strategies are also employed to identify our more able and talented pupils. The process of identification is ongoing and begins when the child joins our school. Teaching and learning is planned in such a way that we enable each child to reach for the highest level of personal achievement. We develop strategies for independent learners and provide a broader intellectual stimulation for those who have academic gifts. Children with talents in any domain will be identified and Heads of Department will keep 'watch lists' so that such pupils may have the benefit of specialist programmes and enrichment opportunities. Our scholarship programme is inclusive and rapidly expanding with many pupils applying for scholarships in Art, Music, Drama, DT and Sport. These pupils have additional opportunities for independent study and are given extra tuition, support and extension activities.

### **Organisation, Planning and Monitoring**

Heads of Department are responsible for drawing up and reviewing the planning documents for their subjects. These outline the programmes of study for the year, state the objectives and may also contain guidelines for the teaching of these.

Individual teachers are responsible for the planning of the lessons they teach, although this may be done in collaboration with colleagues to ensure a consistent approach and appropriate differentiation. They are responsible for reviewing the efficacy of each lesson and using this to inform the planning of future lessons. This self-reflection ensures that the programme of study is delivered in such a way that meets the needs of individual pupils.

Medium Term Plans provide clear guidance on the objectives and the methodology used to deliver each topic or area of the curriculum.

Curriculum planning will not undermine fundamental British values.

### **The Role of Pre-Prep Subject Coordinators**

The role of the subject coordinator is to work within Pre-Prep and EYFS to:

- maintain and update aims and objectives for the subject in the Pre-Prep
- prepare and maintain long and medium term planning in Pre-Prep
- monitor and observe teaching and learning
- manage continuity and progression
- act as a source of professional advice
- order and manage resources in conjunction with Head of Pre-Prep
- liaise regularly with the Head of Department
- encourage staff to integrate the policies on the subject into other areas of the curriculum
- keep abreast of educational thought

### **The Role of the Head of Department**

The role of Head of Department is to:

- oversee the curriculum and planning for the subject
- provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject;
- monitor standards being achieved;
- help identifying and providing suitable resources for More Able and Talented pupils
- monitor pupil progress in that subject area;
- observe the teaching and teachers' planning of the subject throughout the school;
- support and advise colleagues on issues related to the subject;
- provide efficient resource management for the subject;
- oversee the quality of teaching and learning for the subject;
- maintain a departmental development plan.

St Hugh's provides Heads of Department non-contact time each term, so that they can carry out their duties. It is the role of each Head of Department and Subject Coordinator to keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level. It is their duty to review the way the subject is taught at St Hugh's, and plan for improvement. The development planning links to whole school objectives. Each Head of Department reviews the curriculum plans and ensures that progression is planned into the schemes of work.

The Head of Department monitors the way that a subject is taught throughout the school. They examine all subject plans and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. They also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed. Furthermore, HoDs have a responsibility to monitor that the curriculum in their areas does not undermine fundamental British values.

### **Overall responsibility for the Curriculum**

The Headmaster has overall responsibility for the curriculum. Together with the Deputy Head (Academic) and the ALT he oversees curriculum planning and provides guidance to Heads of department through INSET and Heads of Department meetings (other aspects of this monitoring of the curriculum are detailed in the *Assessment Policy*).

Reviewed: January 2021

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