



CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING (incorporating Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural provision) POLICY

This policy refers to Wellington Prep School

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1. Introduction

The Curriculum Statement for Wellington Prep School reflects our vision and values, which are summed up by our motto “Learning for Life”, as well as our desire for children to develop a ‘Love of Learning’.

Our curriculum content is based on guidance provided by IAPS (Independent Association of Preparatory Schools), the National Curriculum regulatory requirements and professional judgement. It is delivered with careful consideration of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Latest update 2021), Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018), the ‘Equality Act 2010’ (May 2014), the Statutory Guidance ‘Relationships education, relationships and Sex Education and Health Education’ June (2019), the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (Latest update 2021) and other relevant DfE legislation. It should be read in conjunction with the Curriculum outline, which is a working document, found on our website as well as other published School policies.

Our forward-thinking, outward-looking curriculum delivery is based on the needs of our children. We offer a broad and balanced range of academic, artistic, creative and physical learning for all children. While the National Curriculum has been fully considered in each subject, we have chosen to pursue a variety of curricula in order to support, extend and enrich our children’s education, and to prepare them for successful and smooth transition to the Senior School and beyond.

The teaching and learning of all Wellington Prep School pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), will be of the highest quality and this will be achieved by:

- employing and engaging staff of the highest calibre;
- appropriate accountability to all those involved in our School;
- rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems;
- fostering a school spirit and ethos which encourage all in school to aspire to the highest of ideals.

The School has a fundamental base of core values: kindness, community, inclusivity, equality and empathy and we strive for our school to be a welcoming community, open to all.

2. Aims and objectives

All children, irrespective of their ability or age, have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account.

Our curriculum aims are:

- to provide our children with an extensive and challenging range of activities in a stimulating and well organised learning environment;
- to have high expectations of the children and ourselves;
- to cater for the needs of individual children of both sexes from all ethnic and social groups;
- to develop a growth mindset and a positive attitude to new challenges;
- to cater for the needs of individual children including the most able, those who are experiencing learning difficulties and pupils with Statements of Educational Need;
- to develop confident, creative and curious learners who are able to make informed choices;
- to ensure that there is a match between the child and the tasks he / she is asked to perform;
- to enable our children to be confident and independent communicators;
- to create and maintain an exciting, rich, stimulating and enjoyable environment;
- to ensure that each child's education has continuity and progression;
- to provide children with a broad and wide-ranging programme of work;
- to help children acquire knowledge, skills and qualities which will enable them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, morally and creatively;
- to teach subjects which will enable them to develop these skills, including: English, Mathematics, Science, Religious Education, Computing, French, Spanish, History, Geography, Art, Design Technology, Physical Education and Wellbeing, Music, Drama and PSHEE, and the seven areas of development of EYFS and the characteristics of effective learning;
- to encourage children to become independent, responsible, confident and considerate members of the School;
- to ensure that the staff plan collectively and review their work regularly;
- to describe accurately what teachers wish the children to achieve throughout their activities (via long, medium and short term plans) based on children's prior attainment;
- to timetable subjects carefully to ensure appropriate time allocation for subjects and an appropriate curricular balance;
- to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and those of no faith;
- to ensure that staff are aware that the school precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school;
- to recognise the role that parents play in their children's education and make every effort to encourage parental involvement in the educational process;
- to promote a thoughtful attitude towards the local and wider environment and a sense of social responsibility;
- to prepare our children to lead productive and positive lives in British society and beyond.

The curriculum is planned to promote a variety of learning opportunities (active learning, experiential and reflective learning, teamwork, collaboration and co-operation, as well as children's responsibility for their own learning). See Annex A for our Independent Learning publication.

We are preparing our children for an exciting new world. Exponential technological advances will shape our children's careers and lives in ways we cannot yet imagine. However, we can be certain that all our children will have to face and solve problems in their futures. Our responsibility is to help equip them to be effective, confident and determined problem-solvers.

We believe that one of the most important building blocks in helping them to become good problem solvers is to develop their creativity in its widest sense. Creativity is the ability to think, perceive and develop ideas in new and challenging ways. Creativity is as important to the Sciences as to the Arts.

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."
Albert Einstein

Our children should be involved in:

- questioning and challenging;
- making connections and hypothesising;
- seeing relationships;
- envisaging what might be;
- exploring ideas and taking considered risks;
- keeping options open;
- reflecting constructively on ideas, actions and outcomes;
- playing and exploring.

All teachers endeavour to nurture all children's creativity and will use a variety of strategies, including:

- developing curiosity;
- appreciating uncertainty and the importance of making mistakes as part of the learning journey;
- providing time for children to reflect, fix, discuss, consider, think, etc;
- managing the stress/pressure (the importance of discovering *versus* the need to find the "right" answer) felt by children when pursuing answers and ideas;
- encouraging and appreciating "soft" thinking, making the most of insight and intuition (explaining one's own rationale rather than "following the rule");
- stretching boundaries;
- fostering collaborative learning;
- providing a supportive community/environment.

These skills are highly demanding and require superb professional judgement. However, they also require teachers who are prepared to take risks in planning and delivering lessons; something we value as a School.

3. Curriculum

Children in Key Stage 1 will develop their understanding of the seven areas of learning and development in the EY curriculum: personal, social and emotional development, communication and language, physical development, literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design. Keeping Maths No Problem and English (Spelling, Comprehension, Reading) as the core subjects we have restructured the rest of the curriculum to allow the children to learn through guided play.

The children go to Forest School one afternoon a week. Forest School builds self-esteem, confidence, resilience and improves wellbeing. The children are exposed to elements of risk in a controlled environment, their resulting level of independence rises and they face age-appropriate challenges and scenarios.

The new 'Awe and Wonder Science Lab' and 'The Art Hive' will provide extra spaces, enabling opportunities for extended play. Children will move seamlessly between subjects, developing skills in focus weeks. IT will be an enabling subject and History/Geography/RS/Languages will be grouped for the specific purpose of discovery.

Music and Drama will continue to be taught by specialists, following the 3-18 ethos and as well as their dedicated spaces in Avenue and The Studio musical instruments will be available in classrooms so that the children can continue to use music as a medium in which to learn.

When the children transition to Key Stage 2, in Years 3&4, they are with their teacher for Maths, English, RS, PSHEE, Geography and Science but have specialist teaching for History, ICT, SPW, French, Music and Drama. The children are encouraged to use the skills they have developed in Key Stage 1. They will continue to use the Lab and Hive, timetabled for extending periods of time to allow for maximum creativity and discovery. An appropriate balance between an IDEAS approach (Introduce, Demonstrate, Explain, Activity repeat of D and E as appropriate and Summary) and guided play is encouraged still.

In Years 5&6, when the number of specialist teachers grows again, now encompassing Art, DT, Spanish and Science, the children experience the full Wellington School Campus provision, using the Senior School Science labs with their full range of equipment.

The curriculum for Wellington Prep School is mapped with that of the Senior School, which results in a seamless transition from age 3 to 18. Staff regularly meet to discuss subject content and the published curriculum plan is a working document, published on our website. Subject leads at WPS liaise directly with Heads of Department at WSS through the year.

There is much emphasis and recognition of the development of skills. Wellington School's ACES program has evolved into being embedded within day to day teaching. The inclusion of the language appropriate to and acknowledgement of these skills enables the children to recognise when and how they are developing and embedding these into their natural application to learning: planning, reading, problem solving, practical skills, digital skills, responsibility, creativity, resilience, designing, presenting, taking the initiative, commitment, leadership, organisation, reflection and evaluation, self-motivation, independence and explaining.

Children regularly reflect and evaluate, completing age-appropriate forms after every reporting cycle.

Children in Years 1 to 6 are invited to apply to become 'Learning Detectives' and take learning walks around school and feedback to teachers on their findings.

Only reading homework will be set for Key Stage 1 children, which will allow them to develop at their own pace. In Years 3&4 this will be joined by spellings and their topic projects. Year 5&6 do have a more rigorous timetable of prep, in preparation for Senior School.

Opportunities are regularly given for children to foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils and embed the school values in lesson time, calendared events, collapse timetable days, guest speakers, charitable initiatives to name a few. We support pupils to embrace diversity and to guard against discrimination of any groups of people, pupils or adults, including those listed as having 'protected characteristics' as identified in the Equality Act 2010 and its schedules: disability, ethnicity (including gypsy and traveller groups), gender, gender identity and transgender, faith, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, age. In this way we aim to offer equality of opportunity for all.

Of particular importance in promoting SMSC development is the example set by adults in the school, the quality of relationships and the standard of assemblies and collective worship. The SMSC principles then filter down and are a fundamental part of the school philosophy.

4. Assessment

Assessment is an integral and vital part of teaching and learning as it informs planning and individual next steps. Assessment for learning strategies are embedded in our practice. Regular summative assessments are carried out to establish level of attainment, which also inform future planning.

Teachers use assessment information to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils and the Management Team use it to monitor outcomes and the implementation and impact of the curriculum.

Reports to parents give clear and accurate information on children's progress. Effort is commented on within the body of the reports and attainment given on a three point scale: working towards expectation, meeting expectation and demonstrating a greater depth of understanding.

A separate WPS Assessment Policy is planned for September 2022.

5. Meeting individual needs

Teachers have high expectations for all pupils and ensure that there are no barriers to pupils achieving to the best of their ability. From time to time a child may need some additional support. Our Learning Success Department ensures that all children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are able to maintain appropriate progress. We also work very closely with outside agencies when a multi-agency approach is required. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Pupil Passports are developed to structure and monitor this progress. Under the leadership of the School's Head of Learning Success, the School ensures that parents are made aware of the children's achievements, as well as focusing on areas and strategies for development. Staff are supported in identifying pupils' difficulties and planning teaching strategies, to liaise with parents and outside agencies, to co-ordinate any extra help that may be required and to plan additional support and interventions.

We provide for able children by:

- developing a mastery approach to teaching and learning;
- offering entitlement to appropriate education through differentiated and challenging activities;
- working at higher cognitive levels with focus on enrichment as well as extension;
- offering opportunities to develop specific skills and/or talents;
- having a concern for the whole child (e.g. social and emotional as well as intellectual);
- providing a classroom environment that encourages and acknowledges success;
- developing effective thinking skills and metacognition;
- encouraging individuality.

One of the great benefits of a prep school education is the wide range of opportunities that our children can explore from an early age, giving every child the chance to find his or her niche.

6. Continuing Professional Development

CPD is focused on school development targets, curriculum development, statutory requirements and personal professional development (staff individual PDR). This takes various forms including observation, learning groups, conferences, speakers and further study.

7. Responsibility

All staff are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and acted on. When evaluating the use of and impact of this Teaching and Learning Policy, our school leaders will evaluate to what extent there is evidence of the impact of teaching on academic attainment and progress as well as the impact of teaching on pupil engagement and passion for learning, capacity for independent and critical thinking, self-awareness and resilience and self-confidence.

8. The school day

Children learn best when they are happy and safe. Supervision of all children is maintained at all times, appropriate to the age of the child and the activity. Risk Assessments are completed and are monitored by the Head of the Prep School (see Supervision Policy for further details).

The School is open five days a week from 7.30am until 6pm. The children enjoy a rich and fulfilling school day, taking advantage of all of the facilities on offer, and through our clubs provision extend, challenge and enhance their day to day experience.

Curriculum time for **Reception** and the **Infants** (Years 1 and 2):

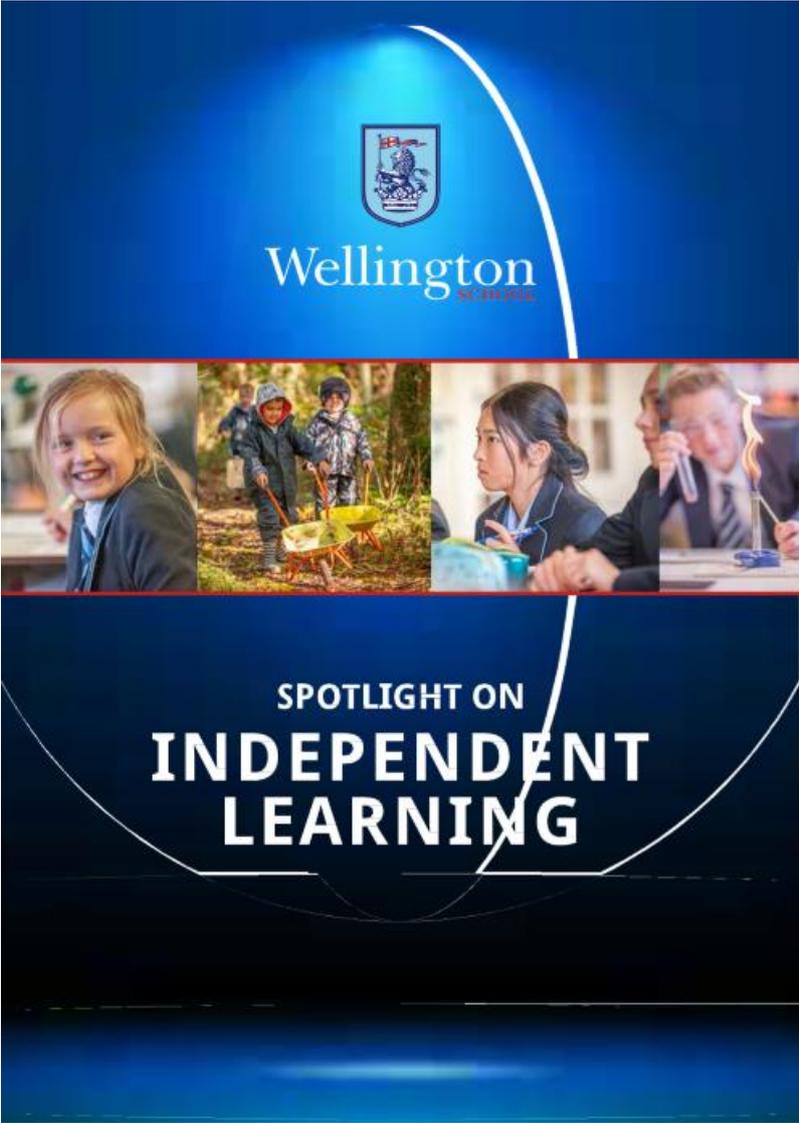
8.30 am to 3.30pm (6hr /day, 30hr /week N.B. this does not include lunch)

Curriculum time for the **Middle and Prep Years** (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6):

8.30am to 3.45pm (6hr 10 min/day, 30hr 50mins/week N.B. this does not include lunch)

*All our provision is designed to ensure that we fulfil our school motto of 'Learning for Life'.
Learning does not stop at the end of the school day.*

Annex 1 – Independent Learning



Independent Learning in the Prep School

Teachers are Facilitators

The culture of Independent Learning runs throughout the school, we start to develop this in our Prep School children in a variety of different ways:

- Using skills and knowledge to provide a play-based learning environment
- Building on and incorporating children's interests
- Planning and preparing an environment that teaches fundamental skills
- Providing opportunities for children to put those skills into practice on their own



Actions

Aaron Wier, our English Co-ordinator and himself an aspiring writer, has introduced several new resources and schemes to help support and propel the children's learning forward, such as MightyWriter, an interactive Velcro mat to aid sentence structure and Spdzone, an online spelling resource for all year groups. He has also introduced Writing Retreats, to inspire a love of writing and to give children a purpose to write for a specific audience.



Some Examples...

Early Years

Filling a glue pot, putting on a coat for play time or find the resources necessary to create a model.

Encouraging children to have confidence in their own abilities, through lots of positive reinforcement for their success and support for failures they have along the way. Otherwise, they will remain over reliant on the support of adults or their more confident peers.

Year 1 and 2

Topic lessons, using a combination of independent research to collect facts and incorporate what they've learnt in the lesson. Recently Year 2 looked at the types of creatures that have been discovered in the deepest depths of our oceans. They saw how the creatures have evolved to thrive in that specific habitat and then they had to research more common sea creatures to see how they also thrive in their environment based on their interests.

Year 3 and 4

Ensuring the children know where to find everything they need to assist their learning journey. Project work encourages children to explore their learning further within a particular project, such as Ancient Greece or Electricity. They can develop their own knowledge by investigating something that they are interested in and present their learning in a way that they want to.

Year 5 and 6

Lessons have an 'open environment'. The teacher is not the imparter of knowledge but the facilitator of learning. Lessons involve talk, sharing methods, working in groups and recording their ideas in journals - this encourages pupils to be active learners. Hearing concepts being explained from different points and in ways that might be closer to their thinking aids independent thinking.



Rewarding initiative

Pupils are encouraged to try out and develop new skills.

Encourage dissenting views and ask open-ended questions.

Pupils are encouraged to debate important topics at both a school level and a global level. E.g. From Product responsibility to Climate change, morality and the Holocaust

- What is freedom?
- What is democracy?
- Presenting ideas in charity speeches
- Encouraging collaboration

Play
Opportunities
Positive re-enforcement
Choices
Research
Discovery
Collaboration
Encouragement
Initiative

Independent learning



Head of Years 5 & 6 Roger Hichin has integrated Singapore Maths throughout the Prep school and travels the world lecturing on it. He is committed to it because it supports independent learning by:

- Building mathematical fluency without the need for rote learning
- Introducing new concepts
- Teaching mental strategies to solve problems

