



Old Vicarage School

Curriculum Policy

This policy applies to all pupils in the school including those in the EYFS.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's policies on: Accessibility, Individual Needs and English as an Additional Language.

Our policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the School curriculum supports our School ethos and fulfils our School aims.

- Our ethos is to ensure that all Old Vicarage pupils are given every opportunity to achieve and 'be the best they can be' across all areas of the curriculum.
- Our aim is to ensure that, through our curriculum policy, we promote the intellectual, spiritual, personal and social growth of each girl and equip her for a world that requires courage, resilience and flexibility.

We believe our curriculum should:

- Excite and extend the intellect and interest of every pupil, whatever their strengths and weaknesses, and build their confidence and self-esteem in all areas.
- Develop lively, enquiring minds, the ability to question and argue rationally and to apply themselves to tasks, and physical skills.
- Provide sufficient breadth and depth of information, skills and experiences to provide a firm basis for future educational opportunities and choices.
- Recognise the value of ICT to facilitate learning.
- Prepare pupils thoroughly for success in external exams (11+ Consortium, Common Entrance and scholarship papers).
- Provide the personal, social and moral knowledge and skills necessary for happiness and for responsible and caring citizenship.
- Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of others.
- Actively 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.
- Encourage and celebrate achievements and aspirations.
- Effectively prepare the pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of senior school.

The School curriculum

The School curriculum is carefully planned in order to achieve the policy aims detailed above. It is broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated and enhanced by a range of extra-curricular activities.

We recognise that every girl has a different knowledge base and skill set, as well as varying aptitudes and aspirations. Accordingly, teaching is tailored to girls' particular strengths and abilities and all pupils are given the opportunity to learn and make progress.

PE and Games include netball, hockey, cricket, athletics, gymnastics, dance and swimming. Extra-curricular activities include choirs, orchestra, drama and sport. Pupils may have individual instrumental or singing lessons. There is also an extensive clubs programme across the school which encourages girls to explore new skills and develop their own particular interests. Weekly creative curriculum lessons provide Upper School pupils with further opportunities to broaden their education.

Pupils of all ages are taken on regular trips to support their work in the classroom, extend their knowledge and provide new experiences. Residential visits for older girls help to develop independence, confidence and teamwork.

Enabling access to the curriculum

All pupils have equal access to the main curriculum. Teachers assess, support and encourage pupils with learning difficulties which enables them to learn and achieve across the main curriculum. More-able pupils are given extension work to help them develop at a speed which is more appropriate and satisfying for them. Suitable provision is made for disabled pupils as required, although the School has physical limitations in this regard.

Curriculum outcomes

The following constitutes some of the key elements of knowledge which girls should possess on leaving Old Vicarage School at the end of Year 6:

- An ability to communicate effectively, through listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- Numeracy and a sound grasp of the application of mathematics, including the ability to problem solve and to think logically.
- Knowledge of the natural sciences, materials, physical processes and the world environment.
- A working knowledge of at least one foreign language and culture.
- A thorough grounding in the humanities in order to appreciate the historical culture and the development of the world around us.
- An understanding of world religions with a deeper appreciation of Christianity. The development of a strong moral foundation with a tolerance of other faiths, races and genders as a core value.
- Competence in the use of computers and other modern technology and the ability to apply these skills across the curriculum.
- An aesthetic and creative approach to life, particularly developed through music, art, dance, drama, literature and craft work.
- Fitness, an enjoyment of sport and concern for personal health.
- An appreciation of the cultural heritage of Britain, Europe and the world, including age appropriate knowledge of Britain's key institutions, fostered through PSHE, assemblies and external visits.
- An understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship and membership of a community.
- An ability to identify problems and work creatively towards solutions – the ability to think.

Content and delivery

The National Curriculum is used as the basis of our teaching. Pupils from Year 1 upwards study the following subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Art and Design Technology
- Drama
- French
- Computing
- Music
- Physical Education
- Personal, Social and Health Education
- Religious studies
- Topic – Humanities

The following subjects are added to the timetable from Year three upwards:

- Reasoning
- Mandarin (Year 4 upwards)
- Geography (Year 3 upwards)
- History (Year 3 upwards)

Lessons are taught in mixed ability classes and are differentiated where appropriate. The exception is English and Maths in Years 5 and 6, where there is setting (children of a similar ability grouped together in a particular subject). Subject specialism teaching increases as the girls progress through the school, becoming the norm from Year 3 onward. Homework is set in age-appropriate and manageable amounts to practise skills learned in class and to consolidate or extend the curriculum.

During the academic year, time is allocated for all year groups for curriculum enrichment and collaborative events including trips, productions, subject days or weeks, workshops and concerts.

Early Years

Old Vicarage has opted out of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, but our Pre-School and Reception classes still follow the Government's Curriculum Guidance which includes the seven areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language
2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
3. Physical Development
4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

The children learn through play as well as more formal lessons and through a mixture of child initiated and teacher led opportunities. This approach encourages self-expression while allowing them to develop the concentration and listening skills needed to learn. Learning experiences are often repeated to help develop confidence and lead to a greater understanding. Those girls who are ready will have their learning extended as appropriate.

Different topics are explored through a variety of mediums including books, drama, music, ICT, arts and crafts. Physical development is closely monitored and developed through PE and fine motor exercises and the children have specialist lessons in music and French and art.

All our Early Years children get the opportunity to play daily in secure outdoor spaces except in the worst weather. We also use these spaces for supervised learning activities.

Personal, Social, and Health Education (PSHE)

The School's Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) encourages self-awareness, confidence, and self-reliance. It gives girls the opportunity to express their personal opinions and feelings, whilst encouraging them to value the opinions and feelings of others and understand their rights and responsibilities within our diverse society.

We teach PSHE in a variety of ways via form time, assemblies and educational visits. Pupils are encouraged to play a positive role in contributing to school life and the wider community through the school council, fundraising events, supporting nominated charities and involvement in community activities.

PSHE permeates other subjects such as RE, English, humanities and science which have aspects of a moral or ethical nature and encourage debate and discussion.

Sex and Relationship Education

The school provides sex education in the basic curriculum through which we give the pupils information about sexual behaviour. We do this with an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all our work in school. The biological aspects of human reproduction are compulsory for all pupils, but parents may withdraw their daughters from any other part of the sex education provided.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development

The personal development of children, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. The SMSC development of our pupils occurs through explicit teaching, such as in PSHE sessions and planned assembly themes, and more indirectly, for example through the communication of our school ethos, implementation of our behaviour policies and participation in school events.

SMSC development is about everything we do to help our pupils build their own personal values, be honest with themselves and with others, develop positive relationships and become responsible young citizens. We encourage children to be kind, thoughtful and caring and teach them how to live and learn alongside people with different beliefs, cultures and lifestyles.

An important element of the SMSC programme is the teaching and promotion of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs.

Self Esteem and Self Worth

Congratulations are given to pupils at whole school and key stage assemblies, recognising achievements (both inside and outside of school), key milestones and good work, particularly individual effort and progress. All such successes are reported in the weekly newsletter to parents.

Political Bias

The School prohibits the promotion of political bias in the teaching of any subject. If a political issue is raised with pupils, teaching staff are required to ensure a balanced presentation of opposing views.

Review, Evaluation and Development of the curriculum

The Head has overall responsibility for the curriculum. Planning and content is regularly reviewed to ensure that it:

- Meets the needs of our pupils and our aims and ethos.
- Provides good continuity and progression within and across year groups.
- Meets curriculum requirements and offers balanced coverage of subjects.

Curriculum overview documents are provided to parents at the start of each academic year.

Signed: **Gillian Linthwaite**
Position: Head

Suzie Longstaff
Governor, Education Committee

Reviewed: June 2020

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