

St Margaret's Preparatory School



Curriculum Policy

Date Policy Reviewed	Policy Reviewed By	Reason/Outcome	Next Review Due
September 2016	Carolyn Moss	Review	Sept 2017

Our Vision

- We want... every child to love coming to school and to love learning.
- We want... all children to feel secure and cared for.
- We believe... in teaching the whole child and finding exciting ways to enhance their learning experience so that when they leave St. Margaret's, they say what a fantastic school it is in every way.

And this is what we aim to do

- Provide a high quality education, where children can grow in knowledge and understanding.
- Equip all children with appropriate skills, attitudes and values.
- Create an environment where every child can fulfil their potential.
- Encourage every child to benefit from our caring staff and fine facilities.
- Enable every child to communicate with confidence in every situation.
- Treat every child with the highest standards of courtesy, loyalty, honesty and fairness, and expect the same from them in return.

Introduction

This policy applies to our whole school and Early Years, is a statement of the curriculum formation and development at St. Margaret's Preparatory School.

Purpose of the Policy

It is the policy of St Margaret's Prep School that pupils should receive a full time supervised education for those of compulsory school age which gives pupils an education in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative aspects. Children who are below compulsory school age may attend part time and are given experience of these areas through a programme of activities appropriate to their educational needs and development.

At St Margaret's, the curriculum is planned carefully to ensure boys and girls develop lively, enquiring minds across a wide range of subjects. Strong emphasis is placed on firm foundations of skills in literacy and numeracy, whilst a broad curriculum allows for a wide range of experiences that develop each individual. At the heart of our work is the desire for the pupils to become motivated, effective life-long learners, well-prepared for future opportunities, responsibilities and experiences.

Aims

We aim for children who come to St. Margaret's Prep School to experience a curriculum that will develop both a knowledge and understanding of the world and of themselves. This will pass on the skills necessary for further sustained

achievement at senior school and beyond. To this end, we aim to ensure that:

- pupils will develop a love of learning, and are able to make informed choices with a responsible and independent attitude towards work and their roles in society.
- the children work within an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- we cater for the needs of individual children of both genders from all ethnic and social groups, including the most able and those who are experiencing learning difficulties
- we have high expectations of the children and ourselves
- we recognise the crucial role which parents play and make every effort to encourage parental involvement in the education of their children
- we prepare pupils to the standards and style of entrance examinations to senior schools suited to their academic ability and personality

The Curriculum

Our school curriculum seeks to offer appropriate choices and flexibility in order to reflect the needs and interests of the pupils, including those pupils with special needs, and the pace most suitable to their learning. It is designed to help all pupils fulfil their individual academic and creative abilities, and exploit their talents to the full.

Underpinning the curriculum for all pupils is the principle of fulfilment. Further principles that apply are

- Fundamental British Values
- Breadth
- Balance
- Relevance
- Differentiation
- Equal Opportunities

Fundamental British Values

Each Curriculum Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that their policy is kept up to date, and that due consideration is given for the teaching of Fundamental British Values in their subject. For example, Science is a good vehicle for promoting FBVs, and examples include ensuring the pupils understand the criminal justice system (via Forensic Science Days); discussing conflicts of interest when examining the needs of man and animal habitats; research on famous scientists and role of British scientists through the ages and ideas of collaboration between nations. Each subject policy will highlight areas when British Values can be specifically addressed within each subject and Subject Co-ordinators are always available to advise teaching staff on such opportunities.

Breadth

Every child experiences a broad curriculum throughout the School. All classes study the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science. They also follow the foundation subjects of History, Geography, Music, Physical

Education, DT and Art. Information Technology & Computer Science is integrated throughout the curriculum with a separate lesson dedicated to the learning of new skills. A modern language (French) is studied from Nursery upwards, with Spanish added in Y5. Latin replaces VR in February of Y6. All children take religious studies. Classes are well looked after by the Form Teacher and they have a Form Period and PSHE lesson together where all sorts of issues and current affairs are discussed and dealt with. While many pupils are entered for 11+ entrance and scholarship exams to senior schools, the curriculum content is not dictated by the examination subject. Sufficient time is given to those examinable subjects, but the non-examinable is seen as equally important in the development of the whole child. The curriculum is encompassed in a 10 period day usually starting with a thirty minute assembly or Form time. In addition, extra-curricular activities are catered for before and after school, and at lunchtimes.

Balance

A deliberate effort is made to balance the curriculum between the main constituent elements

- Physical: - Sport, P.E., after-school activities
- Mathematical/Numeracy
- Linguistic/Literary - English, History, French, Drama, Latin
- Aesthetic/Creative - Art, Music, Drama, Music and Movement
- Technological & Scientific - ICT, Science, Design & Technology, Computer Science
- Moral - Religious Education, PSHE & C, Assemblies, Circle Time, Form Periods
- Human & Social - Geography, History, French, Spanish, RE
- Speaking and listening is an important part of all lessons at St Margaret's

Relevance

It is impossible, and also undesirable, for every element of the curriculum to be equally relevant but we are conscious of the need to provide children with the knowledge and skills that will be necessary for survival and success in the 21st century. With human knowledge growing at a staggering rate and technological skills requiring a constant upgrading of old skills and many new ones, a modern education is essential. We attempt to combine the best traditional values with the most vital and demanding of the new ones. Each subject has a Curriculum Coordinator, who constantly re-evaluates the syllabus content and methods, and the National Curriculum is always borne in mind. Inset training and attendance at courses is strongly encouraged to ensure that the school has a well-informed and well-trained staff.

The following constitute some of the key elements in a quality education:

- an ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;
- a thorough grounding in literature and the social sciences;
- a sound grasp of numeracy and the application of Mathematics;
- knowledge of the physical sciences and the world environment;
- a grounding in at least one foreign language;

- the ability to use Information Technology to retrieve and use information effectively;
- an appreciation of the cultural heritage of Britain and Europe;
- concern for physical health;
- an understanding of citizenship and morality.

Our curriculum has been created to incorporate these key factors and is under constant revision and re-thinking to ensure that they remain in the fore-front of our educational planning.

Differentiation

There is an ability range in all classes and this has to be catered for in differentiating the curriculum and recognising the needs of individual children. Please read the separate policy in the Teaching and Learning Policy and further guidance in the SEN policy.

Equal Opportunities

There is a general policy of equal opportunities for all in the curriculum with the exception of games afternoon where the boys concentrate on football, rugby and cricket and the girls on netball, hockey and rounders. Extra-curricular activities are open to our children and are they are all encouraged to participate in these.

Extra-curricular Activities

Many activities are available to all children.

Subject Co-ordinators

- take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school
- support colleagues in their development of work plans (including differentiation, extension and enrichment), implementation of the scheme of work, and in assessment and record keeping activities
- monitor progress in their subjects, including the list of G & T pupils, and advise on any action needed
- take responsibility for the ordering, annual audit and organisation of central resources for their subjects
- are expected to keep up-to-date in their subjects through reading and attending relevant courses.

Early Years

Our Early Years Department has a curriculum based on the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2012 where we support children in four Specific areas, through which the three Prime areas are strengthened and applied (Communication and Language, Physical Development, PSED). The areas are Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

Our curriculum is broad and allows the children activities and experiences to develop the following:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Opportunities for child initiated play, both indoors and outdoors, are integrated into the school day for Nursery children. The children in the Reception classes also have opportunities to engage in child initiated learning in their classroom or within their outdoor provision as part of their daily routine.

Successful teaching in Early Years relies on cross-curricular links; careful and flexible planning, including the use of subject specialists for Music, French and Games and PE.

Middle Years (Key Stage One, Years 1 and 2)

In Years 1 and 2, class teachers are responsible for teaching most of the curriculum but with specialists for Music, French, Games and PE. The curriculum is organised on an annual topic basis where mathematics and some language development activities are taught outside the topic framework. There is ample opportunity for the development of cross-curricular links and for topics to be explored beyond the scope of the standard curriculum.

The Prep Department (Key Stage Two, Years 3-6)

In the Prep Department, the curriculum is mainly subject based. For the majority of the time, the Year 3 classes are taught by their Form Teacher but the children are encouraged to develop some independence in moving around the school for their subject specialist taught lessons. This is important preparation for Year 4 when the pupils are taught by a greater range of teachers and are placed in sets for Maths, English and Verbal Reasoning. Science, French, Spanish, Latin, Music, Art & DT, PE and Games are all taught by specialist teachers.

The New National Curriculum guides our curriculum as pupils begin Key Stage 2, but there is ample scope to develop pupils further. As pupils move through Years 5 and 6, they are prepared for entrance examinations in English, Mathematics, VR and NVR. Following entrance examinations, pupils in Year 6 are taught Latin with an emphasis on cross-curricular links to English, History and the Creative Arts.

Whilst the New National Curriculum is the foundation of our teaching, we have ample opportunity to extend pupils beyond this either within the subject or in a cross-curricular fashion. Examples of this include the Forensic Science Days where a wide range of scientific, mathematical, literacy and comprehension skills are blended in a real-world scenario to develop the understanding and enthusiasm of pupils. Our dynamic performing arts and sports departments are other areas where the interests and abilities of the children are considerably developed – for example the Music Department currently offers

11 music ensembles for which children can audition and join.

In order to effectively deliver the curriculum, Classroom Assistants are used throughout the school as required. Assistants help in the classroom, in the library, in sports activities, on outings and visits and in providing other help. Secondary school pupils, FE students on work experience and student nursery nurses are also regularly accepted into school.

Subject Policies

Each subject has an individual policy where the aims, principles, curriculum and strategies for the teaching and learning of that subject are detailed. For further information, see the individual Subject Policies.

Teaching and Learning

The method through which we offer the curriculum is essential to ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential. The aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning at St. Margaret's Prep School are detailed in the:

- Policy for Teaching and Learning.
- Marking Policy
- Assessment and Record Keeping Policy

Planning

Consistent practice across the school is of paramount importance and regular meetings and monitoring activities take place to ensure that this happens.

The foundation for curriculum planning is the School Development Plan with the individual child at the centre of this. Planning is a process in which all teachers are involved. Progression is at the core of the curriculum.

- The curriculum is carefully balanced to ensure coverage of the new National Curriculum and more.
- Schemes of work for individual subjects are developed by Co-ordinators in collaboration with the whole staff and found in the back of each subject policy.
- Work plans are drawn up by individual teachers for each term and monitored by the Co-ordinator. These are overseen by the Headmaster and Deputy Head.
- Weekly staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards.

We attach great importance to preparing children for any transition. Detailed discussions take place before the transfer of pupils from one class to another, with written records to support this, and we work with secondary schools in a variety of ways to ensure that children settle down quickly in their new environment and make a confident start to the Key Stage 3 curriculum.

Differentiation is considered very important for all pupils at St Margaret's to learn to their potential and we have separate policies for this:

- Differentiation Policy
- Learning Support Policy

- Gifted and Talented Policy

Homework is considered to be a valuable part of the teaching and learning process and children are encouraged to work at home on a regular basis. Details of our aims and expectations can be found in the Homework Policy.

PSHE/SMSC

PSED in Early Years, and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship at St. Margaret's enables children to become healthy, independent and responsible members of society. We encourage our pupils to play a positive role in contributing to the life of the school and the wider community with an understanding of British Values included. In so doing we help develop their sense of self worth. We teach them how society is organised and governed. We teach them about rights and responsibilities. They learn to appreciate what it means to be a positive member of a diverse multicultural society.

PSHE and Citizenship is taught throughout the school (Foundation Stage, Pre-Prep and Prep Department) through weekly, timetabled lessons, and cross-curricular within other subjects and assemblies. The whole school ethos promotes our work in PSHE and Citizenship, as set out in our Mission Statement. Further details are included in the PSHE and Citizenship Policy and the SMSC Policy.