

Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Policy

RATIONALE

This policy serves as the overarching framework that represents why, what, how and when the staff teach and the children learn at Sherborne Preparatory School (SPS).

This policy establishes principles against which other policies and procedures can be developed or checked so that they are consistent and coherent across the whole school, starting with the EYFS and finishing with Year 8.

AIMS

We educate the whole child and discover and nurture each child's abilities, both within the school day and with extra curricular activities.

We help every child to fulfil his potential through dedicated and enthusiastic teaching, setting a high standard for all.

We also understand that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment, in which we match the breadth and depth of tasks to the children's abilities.

We establish within each individual child a strong foundation from which they can confidently meet the challenges of the different examination systems at 13+ and which will enable them to make the most of their secondary education.

Through the delivery of the curriculum at SPS we want the children to:

- develop a sense of understanding themselves and the importance of building, fostering and promoting positive relationships with others
- develop resilience, purpose and independence, thinking for themselves and in so doing ultimately recognise the intrinsic pleasure in and value of learning for life
- grow into responsible, kind and happy adults

CURRICULUM

Our school curriculum is informed by the vision, ethos and values that we hold at our school. The above aims are supported by what we represent in our Departmental Policies, created and managed by Heads of Departments in the first instance, but widely discussed within the whole school.

The children at SPS have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which provides continuity and progression and takes their individual differences into account.

- The school implements the early learning goals, the educational programmes and the assessment arrangements of the EYFS
- Our curriculum delivers experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education
- Our curriculum is designed so that we hope we can create and foster links, helping pupils make connections between subjects and transfer their learning from one subject to another

Please see Appendix 1 which sets out the amount of time devoted to the delivery of each subject within our curriculum in the different year groups

TEACHING

The teaching at SPS fosters intellectual curiosity and a spirit of enquiry.

- Staff combine sensible innovation with the best of established practice to enable all children to acquire new knowledge, based on what they already know and to make progress according to their ability
- Staff will be fair, even-handed, helpful and encouraging in their teaching methods
- Staff learn to recognise the different learning styles of children. Any spatial, auditory or visual difficulties are taken into account and feature in teachers' planning, as well as social or emotional factors which may affect the children's learning.
- There is an emphasis on teaching children how to learn rather than simply 'cramming.'
- Staff are asked to avoid the overuse of any of the following:

Chalk and talk

The teacher 'monologue'

Photocopied sheets

Video/tape recorder/computer

Textbooks

Unstructured question and answer sessions

- Lesson content is distilled from the Schemes of Work contained in the Departmental Documentation. This sets out what is to be taught and to whom, but also provides plenty of scope for moving in directions that may be unprescribed, all the while working towards predetermined goals.

Appendix 2 is distributed to staff annually and demonstrates how their planning and teaching fits in to the broad aims of the school's aims and ethos.

LEARNING

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognize the need to provide opportunities in lessons that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. These include, but are not limited to:

- investigation and problem solving
- group work
- pair work
- independent work
- whole-class work
- asking and answering questions
- use of the computer and other ICT equipment
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest in Britain and abroad
- creative activities
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations
- participation in athletic or physical activity
- use of a range of ways of recording information – scatter grams, mind maps, lists, extended writing, images etc

LEARNING SUPPORT

The policy and procedure of the Learning Support Department at SPS is firmly based upon and closely aligned to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

- Where a particular concern about a child arises the member staff refers him or her to the Head of Learning Support who will carry out the arrangements as prescribed in the Learning Support Department's policy.
- Usually this will involve analysis of the difficulty and the establishment of a process to take any difficulty into account in the wider context of the child's overall learning.
- When planning work for and teaching learners with difficulties and/or disabilities staff give due regard to any advice provided and any IEPs a child may have, as produced by the Learning Support Department.
- The EAL department is part of the SEN department and support is offered to all children for whom English is an additional language in order that they have the necessary language skills to function and integrate into the school, the local community and wider national culture

Further details can be found in section 14.9 of the policy manual – 'Learning Support policy'

Further details of our EAL policy can be found in section 14.13 of the policy manual – 'English as an additional language policy'

ASSESSING, RECORDING & REPORTING

An annual cycle of assessment, recording and reporting occurs, beginning in the Pre-prep and spreading through to the Prep School.

Assessment informs planning and ultimately the lessons taught at SPS, however no undue emphasis is placed on mere examination success alone. Progress and achievement are compared with potential in order to ensure the best learning is occurring.

- Teachers make decisions about children's progress and achievement through a combination of their own informal, continuous formative assessment as well as results from traditional, planned-for summative assessments.
- The process includes Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning, CATs and MidYIS tests which are instruments designed to measure potential or test achievement at various points.
- Data relating to each child is collated by class and subject teachers and widely discussed both informally and during assessment meetings which are held twice a term.
- A description and analysis of progress, effort and achievement is fed back to parents and children via a system of termly grade cards, parents' evenings and a set of written reports produced at the end of the Autumn and Summer Terms.

Further details on the break down of marks and grades for assessments is available in section 14.12 of the policy manual – 'Assessments'

Further details on reports can be found in section 14.6 – 'Reports'

Further details on marking can be found in section 14.10 – 'Marking'

REVIEW

The Curriculum, Teaching and Learning policy is reviewed at a staff meeting annually, usually at the end of the summer term, by staff in all sections of the school.