

The Oratory Prep School

Curriculum Policy



THE ORATORY
PREP SCHOOL

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Curriculum Policy Overview

This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including those in the EYFS. The school follows a wide-ranging academic curriculum tailored to the needs of its pupils. All faculties stay up-to-date on its requirements and developments; much of what is taught draws upon best practices observed nationally and in other schools. As part of our responsibility to remain abreast of the national agenda, our subject leads are committed to reviewing any updates to the National Curriculum. If we determine that content and skills are relevant and useful to our context, we will take them into account, guided but not limited by the content. The curriculum aims to marry the strengths of the National Curriculum with the entrance requirements of the senior schools to which pupils apply, aligning with the aims and ethos of the school. The school will take all reasonably practicable measures to fulfill the requirements of any pupil's SEND or support guidelines, including those with a statement or EHC plan, in accordance with its obligations under the SEND Code of Practice.

The curriculum is balanced and broadly based, strongly promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental, and physical development of our pupils. It prepares them well for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life in British society, including provisions for their economic well-being. It enables pupils to acquire skills in speaking, reading, writing, listening, and numeracy. Where a pupil has English as an additional language, and in the rare event that they require specialist teaching to develop appropriate fluency, parents will be guided and supported in finding such assistance outside of school, in addition to being informed of the support the school can provide.

The school provides full-time supervised education for pupils aged 2 to 13. Up to the age of 5, pupils follow a curriculum that meets the learning, development, and assessment requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); further details can be found in separate EYFS documentation.

Throughout the school, the curriculum provides pupils with learning opportunities to develop strong core and cognitive skills, including mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic, and creative education, as well as linguistic and life skills appropriate for their ages and aptitudes. At each level, it provides opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences in preparation for the next stage of their education and their adult lives. The school is committed, through its curriculum and extracurricular pursuits, to helping pupils understand how to stay safe, build positive and healthy relationships, and promote the welfare and safeguarding of children at all times.

Aims of the curriculum

The school delivers its stated aims through a rich curriculum. At The Oratory Prep School, each pupil will:

- Participate and achieve in all aspects of school life, becoming a well-rounded and confident individual who is prepared for later life.
- Become an effective learner who takes pride in their achievements, facing and overcoming challenges.
- Develop courage and independence, demonstrating ownership of their learning and the school in line with the Catholic ethos.
- Be healthy, happy, and know how to stay safe.
- Be inclusive, tolerant, and fair-minded, valuing the importance of relationships with others.

Objectives of the curriculum

We are committed to providing an educational environment that challenges, nurtures, excites, and involves each pupil through a curriculum which:

- Prepares pupils at each level for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of the next stage of their education and lives.
- Challenges individuals academically, allowing them to discover their own intellectual strengths in the pursuit of academic excellence and encouraging a love of learning.
- Encourages independent learning and critical thinking skills, providing opportunities for pupils to express their learning and understanding in different ways.
- Is balanced and broadly based, encouraging pupils to explore a breadth of academic, cultural, aesthetic, creative, and sporting interests.
- Is flexible enough to respond to change and incorporates innovation as appropriate.
- Enables pupils to acquire skills in oracy, literacy, and numeracy.
- Uses technology effectively to support teaching and learning, allowing pupils to present their work in personalised ways.
- Ensures pupils understand their own personal safety and that of others, including awareness of safeguarding.
- Enables pupils to work collaboratively and successfully develop skills associated with human concepts.
- Encourages respect for others, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics stated in the 2010 Equality Act (i.e., age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil

partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation).

- Helps pupils understand themselves better and begin to see how their strengths, weaknesses, and interests relate to the world of work, providing impartial, non-stereotyped guidance and support to help them make informed choices about future subjects and consider their options for higher education, training, and careers.
- Ensures pupils develop an understanding of fundamental British values and uphold these throughout the curriculum. Further information can be found in the RSHE policy.

Curriculum Organisation

The curriculum is organised appropriately and effectively in terms of time allocation per subject. Pupils are mainly taught in mixed ability groups, with setting in certain subjects arranged when appropriate.

- Nursery to Year 2 are taught by class teachers, with some additional support. They have specialist teachers for Games, P.E., French, Forest School and Music.
- Years 3 and 4 are taught mostly by their class teachers, who divide their time between these classes to utilise their subject strengths. Subject specialists teach these classes for Music, French, P.E, Forest School and Games.
- Years 5 to 8 are taught all subjects by subject specialists.

Foundation Stage (Ages 2 – 5 yrs)

Pupils have a broad program of study based on the revised EYFS Framework, which became statutory in September 2021. This framework focuses on three prime areas of learning essential for children's readiness for future learning and healthy development: Communication and Language, Physical Development, and Personal, Social, and Emotional Development.

It also includes four specific areas of learning that build on the prime areas: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design.

Within these areas, the EYFS setting works to ensure that:

- Children develop the characteristics of effective learning, including Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Creating and Thinking Critically.
- There is a balance of structured activities and child-initiated play with opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors. The curriculum includes Music, Forest School, and Physical Education.

Key Stages One, Two and Three

Pupils have a broad and balanced curriculum with plentiful opportunities for active and personalised learning, both independently and collaboratively. Pupils learn the following subjects:

- **Academic:** English, Mathematics, Science
- **Linguistic:** French
- **Human and Social:** History, Geography, Religious Education
- **Aesthetic and Creative Education:** Art, Music, Dance, Drama, Forest School
- **Life Skills:** Personal Education, Perspectives, and Personal, Social, Health, and Citizenship Education
- **Physical:** Individual and Team Sports, Gymnastics, Clubs
- **Technological:** Computing, Digital Literacy, and Design and Technology

(Appendix 1 - Provides an example of our curriculum and approach)

Equal Opportunities

The curriculum at The Oratory Prep School is designed to ensure equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of ability, gender, ethnicity, religion, or disability. As a non-selective school, we operate a Learning Support Policy and a policy for more able, gifted, and talented pupils to ensure the needs of all learners are met.

Safeguarding

Within our curriculum, we build opportunities for our pupils to understand safeguarding issues that may affect them and to ensure they feel safe and supported at school. More broadly, our curriculum considers and promotes our pupils' mental and physical health and development to prevent any impairments that would affect the best possible outcomes for all our pupils. Opportunities within lessons to address and promote positive relationships, health, mental well-being, and resilience are adopted by all subject leads and practitioners in their daily practice as part of our broad and balanced curriculum offer. Our Pastoral Lead and PSHE Lead oversee this.

Additionally, our PSHE curriculum affords opportunities to be responsive to arising issues, and E-safety awareness is taught throughout the curriculum, particularly within the Computing and IT curriculum. Relationship Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are provided as

appropriate for the pupils' ages and stages of development, in line with statutory guidance effective from September 2020. The principles underpinning our PSHE curriculum aim to support our pupils in developing the skills they need to be happy, successful, and productive members of society; to respond positively to the increasing challenges they face; to develop the knowledge and capability to care for themselves; and to know how and where to seek support if problems arise.

Central to this is our pupils' ability to believe they can achieve both academic and personal goals; to persist in tasks that will help them reach those goals, even when the reward may be distant or uncertain; and to recover from challenges in their lives. This is complemented by the development of personal attributes, including kindness, integrity, generosity, and honesty. Further details can be found in the Relationships and Sex and Relationship Education (RSE) Policy. Relationships and Sex Education are mandatory parts of the school curriculum from September 2020 (delayed until Summer 2021), and the school has consulted with parents during the development of its curriculum in these areas, ensuring that this program complements but does not duplicate content covered in other subjects (e.g., citizenship, science, computing, and PE). (*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education guidance 2019*).

Pupil Progress and Assessment

Regular formative assessment and discussions with pupils enable them to gain visibility over their learning and progress, while colleagues work closely to ensure that learning is triangulated and moderated throughout the year.

Standardised testing carried out each year enables benchmarking of pupil attainment and progress against national standards.

Data Collection: The purpose of collecting any data about a pupil or cohort in the school is to understand and use it to make informed and evidence-based decisions about next steps and interventions that will lead to the best outcomes for those pupils. We compare data sets to ensure these have had the desired impact and to identify further actions needed. At The Oratory Prep School, we complete this termly so that teachers can create action plans from their analyses to maximize pupil learning and outcomes for the following term; this is quality assured internally by Heads of Faculty, with external quality assurance provided by our central education committee through governance.

Pupil progress meetings, held termly, help determine if pupils are reaching the required milestones in relation to their own ability and national and school indicators. Where pupils are not making adequate progress, they will be identified for close monitoring, small group intervention, or 1:1 intervention as appropriate. If it is determined that children are still not making adequate progress, they may be referred to the school's SENCo for further investigation into their needs. Where specific needs are identified and can be met with reasonable adjustments by the school, there will be no additional costs for support. If intervention from an outside resource is deemed most appropriate, the cost for these services will be the responsibility of the parent.

In EYFS, the school assesses according to the statutory Early Years Profile and the 2-Year-Old Progress Check. Results of the Early Years Profile are provided to parents and South Oxfordshire Local Authority on request.

Assessment and GDPR

Individual pupils' assessment data is part of their personal information. Care is taken with the collation, storage, and analysis of data. While it is appropriate to share consolidated assessment information outside of school, any individual data must be anonymized. This is referenced in the school's Assessment Policy.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We maintain an EAL register, which is updated annually. Across the school, there is a percentage of children for whom English is classed as an additional language, as defined by the DFE, though the majority are considered to be fluent in English. Our annual cohort composition determines what additional facilities and activities we will incorporate into our classrooms and environments.

We aim to provide opportunities for children to share their home language in learning as appropriate and ensure they have opportunities to share their heritage. We work to ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English from EYFS through Year 6. Where a pupil has English as an additional language, and in the rare event that they need specialist teaching to develop appropriate fluency, parents will be guided and supported in finding such support outside of school, as well as being advised of the support the school can provide. Where needed, we will also provide an interpreter to facilitate parent meetings and any opportunities that facilitate communication regarding a child's progress.

Careers Information Provision

As part of our preparation for senior schools, we encourage children and parents to engage in the admissions process from the end of Year 4 onwards. This includes parent presentations, senior school workshops, future schools events, and individual discussions with members of the SLT. We engage with local senior schools to provide the children with experience in different areas of the curriculum through visiting teachers running sessions or year group trips.

Children in Years 7 and 8 are encouraged, through their study of Perspectives and PSHE lessons, to explore career options and further education in preparation for transition to their senior school of choice. Children participate in interview preparation with the Deputy Head and the Headmaster, as well as receiving support in completing personal applications for senior schools.

Appendix 1: Exemplar of Curriculum Objectives

We believe that the key to successful learning starts with developing skills that pupils can carry forward into later life. Our curriculum is centered around building an interconnected approach to learning that develops key knowledge and understanding of the world around them while being meaningful and relevant to their everyday experiences.

Our approach to the curriculum ensures that subjects are linked by both a common theme and a key question. Our teaching ensures that during the same term, pupils can see the relevance between each subject they are learning while maintaining specialized subject teaching. In this way, children will understand what it means, for example, to be a scientist, geographer, or historian.

We want our pupils to be excited about their learning from the moment they begin a new theme or topic. Each new theme will be defined by a "theme hook," which aims to pique their curiosity and provide an overview of the term's learning. They may go on trips, have workshops in school, or participate in specific activities that build towards an end-of-term assessment.

Junior and Senior Prep Curriculum					
Key Aspects of Learning	Core Skills	Immersive and Experiential	Breadth of Curriculum	Characteristics	Information, Media and Technology
	Independence			Curious (questioning)	
	Critical thinking	Rich text centred	English		Communication
	Leadership		Maths	Innovative (risk taking/ disrupting/ creating)	(G suite and chromebooks)
	Creativity	Piques curiosity	Science		Computational thinking
	Communication	Provides a purpose and context for learning	Humanities	Adaptable	Computer science
	Organisation		The Arts	Resilient	E safety
	Collaboration		Technology	Moral Purpose (Newman Values)*	
	Reflection	Is relevant and	Language/culture		

		significant Builds knowledge and skills	PSHCE Perspectives		
Opportunities our curriculum provides	<p>Breadth and Balance in subject specific learning</p> <p>Excitement and engagement</p> <p>Challenge and Ownership</p> <p>Development of oracy, comprehension and writing skills</p> <p>Mastery approach in Maths</p> <p>Practical and physical experience</p> <p>Application of learning to different context</p>				
Relationships	<p>√Self awareness; relationships to others; global relationships and cultural diversity, Awareness of Identity</p>				
Experiences	<p>Forest School; Eco awareness; Sporting endeavours and opportunities; Musical and Drama opportunities; Local links;</p> <p>Educational trips; Visiting speakers/workshops</p>				