



SOLIHULL

Preparatory School Curriculum Policy (with EYFS)

Owner: Deputy Head (Academic) of the Preparatory School
Reviewer: Assistant Head (Junior School) and Assistant Head (Alice House)
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Version 6

Solihull Preparatory School Curriculum Policy

Whilst this Curriculum Policy is pertinent to the specific needs and requirements of Solihull Preparatory School, it should be regarded in the context of the whole School.

Introduction

At Solihull Preparatory School we aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone and encourage pupils to develop helpful learning habits.

We prepare all pupils for the Solihull School 11+ entry examination, and both encourage and support them to fulfil their potential. Additionally, we aim to stimulate development through a wide range of co-curricular activities, and we try to give all pupils the opportunity to achieve some position of responsibility within the Prep School.

We broadly follow the National Curriculum but have the flexibility to adapt it to suit our specific needs and indeed go beyond it. In our annual review of the Prep School Curriculum, we consider current research and recommendations. The Preparatory School Curriculum Policy links closely with the Teaching and Learning Policy.

1. The aims of the Preparatory School Curriculum

- To provide opportunities for all pupils to learn, make progress and achieve to the very best of their ability.
- To promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.
- To provide wellbeing, personal development and SRE education which reflects Solihull School's aims and ethos and promote citizenship.
- To promote a positive attitude towards learning, encouraging pupils to develop confidence and acquire a solid basis for a lifelong love of learning.
- To provide pupils with opportunities to experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education, enabling them to acquire new knowledge, increase their understanding, develop skills and make progress according to their ability.
- To provide a happy, caring, secure and stimulating environment built on self-esteem, mutual trust, respect and positive relationships.
- To provide a broad, coherent, balanced and challenging curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils, whilst enabling all pupils to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy.

- To enable pupils to realise their full intellectual, aesthetic and physical potential and develop the ability to think and learn for themselves.
- To motivate each child to achieve the highest possible standards, academically, socially and morally.
- To encourage each child to develop self-discipline and the ability to work both independently, taking a positive interest in their own work, and with others.
- To encourage a questioning attitude in children to the things around them.
- To encourage children to express themselves freely and confidently and to experience success in their work and a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction from a task well done.
- To ensure that all children feel valued as individuals and are aware that each of them has an important contribution to make to society.
- To encourage children to respect one another's opinions and beliefs, property and the environment.
- To develop pupils' independent learning skills, encouraging them to become determined, adaptable, confident, risk-taking and enterprising learners.
- To develop a positive partnership between school, home and the community.

2. Organisation

The curriculum is well structured and carefully planned to meet the needs of all pupils. This is reviewed annually to ensure opportunities for cross-curricular links are maximised where appropriate. Detailed policies and schemes of work form the basis of a curriculum that provides breadth, depth, relevance, continuity and progression for our pupils. The curriculum aims to be a balance of the teaching and learning of knowledge and skills integrated within opportunities for independent learning.

Spanish is taught in all year groups from I1 to J4. MFL teaching is delivered by specialist staff from the MFL department. WPD is taught by the Form Tutor once a week.

3. Allocation of teaching periods per week

	I1	I2	J1	J2	J3	J4
English	9	9	8	8	6/7*	6/7*
Maths	9	9	8	8	6/7	6/7
Science	2	2	2	3	3	3
History	2**	2**	2	2	2	2
Geography	2**	2**	2	2	2	2
Art	2	2	2	2	2	2
RS	1	1	1	1	1	1
Computing	2	1	2	1	1	1
WPD	2	1	1	1	1	1
MFL	1	1	1	1	1	1
Music	1	2	2	2	1	2
PE/Swimming	2	2	2	2	2	2
Games	0	1	2	2	4	4
DT/Outdoor Ed	2***	2***	0	0	2	2
	35	35	35	35	35	35

*In J3 and J4, there is a two-week timetable, which allows for 7 periods of Maths and 6 periods of English in one week, and 6 periods of Maths and 7 periods of English in the other.

**In I1 and I2 pupils alternate half terms of history and geography lessons and this is called 'Topic'.

*** DT and Outdoor Education alternate fortnightly for pupils in I1 and I2.

4. Planning

Within the Prep School, we have an agreed whole school approach to planning which provides a balance between developing consistency in the planning processes and enabling teachers to work most effectively by utilising their particular strengths and interests. Effective planning must show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs, learning styles and prior learning of pupils, alongside the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught and the resources available.

There are three stages in our planning process:

Long term planning – a yearly overview of the whole curriculum, indicating what topics will be taught each term, and to which groups of pupils. This is reviewed on an annual basis.

Medium term planning - a termly or half termly plan for each subject, giving clear guidance on the aims and objectives for each topic.

Short term planning – these are written weekly plans, completed by every teacher, setting out learning objectives and teaching and learning activities
When appropriate, daily detailed lesson plans may be required.

All weekly planning must be submitted to a designated weekly planning folder on the School's network first thing each Monday morning. Medium term plans must also be saved onto the School's network inside the Prep School Schemes of Work folder each term. Weekly and termly plans are monitored regularly by the Assistant Head (Junior), Assistant Head (Infant) and the Deputy Head (Academic) and periodically by PMG. Weekly year group planning meetings are held by members of staff in each year group to plan English, Maths, Science and WPD collaboratively.

5. Assessment

In I2 and the Junior School, each year group takes formal written examinations at the end of each academic year. J2, J3 and J4 also sit formal written exams at the end of the Christmas Term. Verbal Reasoning (VR), Non-Verbal Reasoning (NVR), spelling, reading, Maths and CEM assessments are also used at different times during the school year to assess pupils from I1 to J4. Formal and informal assessments should be used in the planning, teaching and monitoring of all aspects of the Prep School Curriculum to enable pupils to make good progress. Details of all pupil assessments, and how assessment information is reported to parents, can be found in greater detail in the Assessment Policy and Prep School Handbook.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

Subject Leaders have an important role to play in the delivery of the curriculum. They should:

- Take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school.
- Support colleagues in their development of detailed lesson plans and implementation of the schemes of work, organising relevant internal INSET, liaising with other staff as and when appropriate.
- Monitor pupils' progress in their subjects; carrying out work trawls, observing lessons, modelling lessons for other staff to observe and reviewing planning.
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources.
- Be expected to keep up to date and inform staff of recent developments in their curriculum area by attending relevant courses.
- Arrange a variety of co-curricular activities to supplement the teaching in their subject, for example: visits to museums, theatres or other places of interest, visiting speakers and groups, residential visits, extra-curricular clubs.
- Liaise with Senior School Heads of Department to ensure smooth transition, ensure continuity and progression of learning, and to develop and foster links between the Junior School and Lower School.

- Review the way their subject is taught in the Prep School and plan for improvement, (writing annual reviews and plans for the Prep School Improvement Plan for their subject, within the context of the Solihull School SIP) and discuss and review their curriculum area and role as Subject Leader with a member of PMG.

Meetings between staff are held regularly to discuss curriculum matters, whether in whole staff meetings, key stage meetings, year group meetings or subject related meetings.

7. Inclusion

Every effort is made within the Prep School Curriculum to ensure that the subject matter of the curriculum is age appropriate and relevant to the aptitudes and needs of our pupils, including those with a Pupil Profile or a statement of special educational needs.

Effective screening measures are in place in each year group and pupils are closely monitored. Initial diagnostic assessment (in VR, NVR, spelling and reading tests) highlights and identify pupils who require specific help in literacy related subjects. Teachers may use professional judgement to further identify pupils needing extra help. EAL pupils are identified at the beginning of each academic year and relevant intervention and monitoring provided as and when necessary.

Pupils identified as requiring additional help with English receive support in small groups for one lesson per week, during a Curriculum Support lesson, during which the Learning and Curriculum Support Coordinator works closely with the subject teacher to help specific pupils master key skills and concepts. Curriculum Support is also provided to help pupils in the lowest Maths set once a week. Each pupil who has an Educational Psychologist's or Specialist Assessor's or medical report, identifying any specific learning difficulties, will have a Pupil Profile. The Pupil Profile will identify the particular areas of need and include strategies and targets to help future progress. Pupils with complex medical needs may also have a Pupil Profile to identify specific, appropriate support. Staff will also make individual judgements about the needs of some pupils on an individual basis, as appropriate, and judge how to adapt the curriculum to meet a specific pupil's needs.

Assessment data obtained at the beginning of each academic year highlights and helps identify our very able pupils. Teachers use their own professional judgements to further identify and stretch and challenge such pupils. Underachievement is also highlighted, and these pupils are monitored and targeted. All teachers are made aware of those pupils on the Learning Support register, as well as any very able pupils, to help ensure that all children achieve their full potential. Pupil data is tracked as pupils progress through the Prep school.

8. Implementation of the Curriculum

When implementing and planning the curriculum, the following areas are considered carefully to promote effective delivery:

- The grouping of children, demonstrating an understanding of their aptitudes, needs and prior learning
- The deployment of staff
- The management of resources
- The employment of assessment and record keeping

- The monitoring of the curriculum
- The variety of teaching and learning styles and methods
- Effective classroom management, which ensures that pupils are encouraged to behave appropriately and responsibly, and which uses effective strategies for managing pupil behaviour.

9. Management and Leadership

The Prep Management Group, supported by the Subject Leaders, is responsible for the monitoring of the curriculum. They ensure that the long- and medium-term planning is completed, as set out in the Preparatory School Curriculum Policy. They also monitor short term planning and ensure, through lesson observations, book trawls, Departmental Reviews and discussions with Subject Leaders, that lessons are being taught as detailed in plans and that relevant learning objectives are set and achieved. The Prep School curriculum is reviewed annually.

EYFS Curriculum Policy

1. Rationale

At Solihull every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their full potential. A child's experience in the Early Years Foundation Stage has a major impact on their future life chances.

Early childhood education provides the essential foundation for all future learning. We therefore provide a socially and emotionally secure environment with a less formal atmosphere, in which the children are able to learn successfully and play purposefully.

We also provide an environment in which they are able to develop their language and mathematical skills and to explore and experiment. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.

2. Aims

At Solihull we are committed to providing the very best individualised learning experiences for all children within the EYFS, and we aim to provide a secure, stimulating and positive learning environment where children can:

- Develop intellectually, socially and emotionally
- Develop curiosity in the world around us
- Develop a good moral judgement
- Develop good communication skills
- Become independent learners and creative thinkers
- Become happy and confident learners, with high self-esteem.

The Staff in The Early Years Foundation Stage at Solihull aim to achieve these objectives by:

- Ensuring that every child is unique, equally valued and reaches their full potential
- Providing a safe, stimulating environment in which children learn
- Planning for and delivering a broad, balanced curriculum
- Recognising and recording individual children progress and achievements
- Establishing a positive, on-going partnership with parents and families, acknowledging the vital role they play in their child's education

3. Admissions

The Early Years Foundation Stage, situated within Alice House, is organised into two age groups:

Nursery offers full and part time provision. Children may join the Nursery during the year in which they will turn 4. The Nursery is staffed by full-time qualified teachers and supported by teaching assistants with level 3 qualifications.

The children in Reception commence full time education in the September during the year in which they will turn 5.

4. Curriculum and Assessment

The children at Solihull follow the statutory framework for the EYFS. The EYFS Curriculum is based on the Early Learning Goals from birth to five. These Early Learning Goals set out what is expected for most children by the end of the Foundation Stage and are divided into the following seven areas of learning:

The 3 prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

The 4 specific areas:

- literacy
- maths
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Upon entry to Nursery and Reception, staff make baseline assessments based on their own observations and any information from a previous setting. During the first month in Reception, children also complete a baseline assessment in reading, phonics and Maths. Progress in all EYFS classes is then recorded through ongoing assessments and observations.

5. Planning

The EYFS employs a thematic approach to learning, using a two year cross curricular topic cycle. Weekly plans are based on an evaluation of the previous week's work, alongside the EYFS medium term plans, and include objectives for each area of learning. Wherever possible the children's learning is supported by visits in the local environment and to other places of interest. In Nursery and Reception, specialist teaching is provided for Swimming, Music and PE.

6. The Learning Environment

Our aim is to provide a positive, stimulating, safe and well-planned environment, which is attractive and welcoming to all. The EYFS classrooms and the outdoor areas are the children's learning environment and are designed to maximise learning opportunities and reflect children's needs.

7. Home-School Links

We recognise the importance of parents/carers as the child's first educators and as active partners in their child's continuing education. We encourage regular communication and parents are invited to discuss their child's progress with staff at termly parents open sessions. However, Solihull has an open-door policy for any concerns or issues parents may have. Parents of pupils in EYFS have the opportunity to attend curriculum workshops. These are very successful and give parents an insight into teaching methods used and how their child learns at school.

8. Reporting to Parents

In September, parents of all EYFS children are invited to a parents' welcome meeting during the first weeks of term. This gives the parents a brief outline of the curriculum, school day and expectations for the year in School. Written reports are sent home to parents in the Summer and Parents' consultations evenings are held in the Christmas and Easter terms.

9. Inclusion

We aim to create a climate of general awareness of racial, cultural, social and religious differences within the school. Provision is made to ensure that all children, regardless of race, creed, culture or special needs have equal access to the curriculum. Children for whom English is an additional language (EAL) will generally be supported within the context of the classroom activities.

Early identification of special needs can minimise difficulties in later schooling. In the Early Years Foundation Stage staff will closely monitor the progress of any children with special needs and will work in partnership with parents and outside agencies as necessary.

10. Health and Safety

There are a number of health and safety issues specific to the Early Years Foundation Stage; for all other issues reference should be made to the School's Health and Safety Policy.

- On educational visits adult: child ratios are adhered to.
- Resources and equipment are regularly checked and maintained for safety.
- When playing outside in the summer, care is taken to avoid over exposure to the sun, and parents are asked to apply sunscreen, a sun hat and water bottle.

11. Management and Leadership

- The Head of EYFS, supported by the Assistant Head and Deputy Head (Academic), is responsible for the monitoring of the EYFS curriculum. They ensure that the long and medium term planning is completed, as set out in the Preparatory School Curriculum Policy. They also monitor short term planning and ensure, through lesson observations, work trawls, and discussions with EYFS staff, that lessons are being taught as detailed in plans and that relevant learning objectives are set and achieved. The Prep School curriculum is reviewed annually.

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September 2024