

Curriculum Policy

This policy sets out the school's expectations for classroom practice and the responsibilities of different staff in contributing to an outstanding learning environment. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

School's Aims/ Vision, Mission and Values	School Development Plan
Early Years Policy	Inclusion Policy
Subject Specific Policies and Action Plans	Professional Development Policy
PSHE Policy including:	Marking and Feedback Policy
SMSC	Positive Behaviour Policy
British Values	SEN Policy
Relationships and Sex Education Policy	Display and Presentation Policy

Links to: CHECK

Curriculum maps and Long-Term plans	Lower School topic overview
Breakdown of subject time	Assessment Programme
Staff CPD programme Autumn	Extra- Curricular Programme
Differentiation Guidance 2021-2022	Co-Curricular whole school mapping
Subject Overview	Assessment & AFL guidance 2021-2022
SMSC / Assembly themes overview Autumn	

Policy Dissemination, Monitoring and Evaluation

All members of staff and Governors will receive a copy of this policy. Copies may be reviewed by parents. This policy will be reviewed, evaluated and updated as required and formally on an annual basis to assess its relevance and effectiveness.

Date of update	(U) Updated (R) Reviewed by	How was updated disseminated	Parents informed	Policy on website	Governor approved
Sept 16	HG (U)	Staff briefing – email	Yes	Yes	
Nov 16	HG (U)	Email	Yes	Yes	
Jan 18	HG (R)	Email	Yes		
Sep 19	H. Gee	Staff INSET	Yes	Yes	
Jan 20	H.Gee (U)	Email to all staff	Yes	Yes	
Nov 20	H. Gee (R)	Uploaded to Teams			
Oct 21	H. Gee (U)	Staff INSET – TEAMS	Yes	Yes	
Oct 2022	H.Gee	Staff briefing			
Oct 2023	H.Gee	Staff Briefing	Yes		
January 2025	SMT/CD		Yes	Yes	Yes

Introduction

Teaching and Learning at Bowdon Preparatory School aims to equip all learners with the skills needed to succeed in a changing world. Learning is at the centre of all that we do. At Bowdon Prep we believe that learning is the process by which pupils gradually acquire and assimilate knowledge, concepts, skills, and attitudes to enable them to make greater sense of the world. Teaching and learning is central to our work as educators and it stems from the school's aims, ethos and vision.

Our purpose is to fulfil the potential of each child in our care. At the heart of our educational philosophy is the 'Looking for Learning' agenda. The aim of every lesson is to ensure that pupils are working harder than the teachers and are engaged in 'good struggle' for most of the lesson time. Every pupil is encouraged to achieve her maximum potential, wherever their talents, interests and enthusiasms may lie. The school's curriculum takes care to foster the spiritual, moral, cultural, physical and intellectual development of all its pupils, promoting independence, belief in themselves, perseverance, a drive for success, as well as tolerance and care towards others.

Most pupils will take entrance exams for a variety of seniors schools and pupils who show talent in sporting, academic, musical or artistic areas are encouraged to take scholarships in these areas in the independent school exams. In its most narrow definition, our commitment is to prepare our pupils thoroughly for the academic entrance examinations of their chosen senior school. However, we believe that we are preparing children not only for their senior schools, but also for the life that lies beyond.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also given strong emphasis and the school motto 'Believe, Persevere, Succeed' underpins the aims and the delivery of the curriculum.

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Curriculum Overview

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we offer, to promote learning, personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extracurricular activities that the school organises to enrich the experiences of the children. It also includes what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. The curriculum at BPS is tailored to the ability of our children and therefore extends beyond the National Curriculum. It provides a broad and balanced academic curriculum set in the context of generous time for PE and physical activity, extra-curricular activities and opportunities for pupils to develop their social education.

Early Years Foundation Stage **Do we need to mention the rest of school?**

The Early Years Foundation Stage, which underpins the curriculum in Kindergarten and Reception classes, is distinct in its identity. BPS has exemption from the learning and development requirements. We have an alternative programme in place to meet the needs of all pupils. See the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.

The curriculum is designed to implement the aims of a BPS education. At its heart, lies our school's vision and aims:

To continue to be recognised as a leading Prep school for girls, providing unforgettable learning experiences which inspire our girls to believe in themselves and to persevere and succeed in all that they do.

School Aims

- To provide an outstanding education, free from undue pressure, that inspires all pupils to achieve their full potential.
- To support personal development which puts wellbeing at the heart of our pastoral provision within a secure, safe and healthy environment.
- To manage the school's resources effectively and to ensure that the school can continue to attract more able learners.
- To recognise and promote our social responsibility.

At Bowdon Prep our curriculum aims to:

- Give full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age, which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- Ensure all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- Allow pupils to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy.
- Provide subject matter that is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those pupils with a statement, with learning difficulties and the able, gifted and talented.
- Ensure, where a pupil has a statement, education is provided which fulfils its requirements.
- Develop the whole child, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally and include personal, social and health education which reflects the school's aims and ethos.
- Extend beyond the boundaries of the school day, reinforcing the concept of lifelong learning and the links between home and school.

Access, Equality, Anti-discrimination

The school's commitments and policies are outlined in:

- The [Admissions Policy](#)
- The [EDI Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety in the Curriculum, Behaviour, Educational Visits and Anti-Bullying Policies](#)

The school's commitments and policies are outlined in:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Educational Trips and Visits Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy

Curriculum Structure and Subject Breakdown

The curriculum for all children comprises English, maths, science, history, geography, French (Rec to Year 5), music, RE, art, STEM, computing, drama, PE, PSHE and Go Explore. Pupils in Prep also have weekly sessions in verbal reasoning and non-verbal reasoning, and three current affair sessions each half term. In addition, Year 6 also receive one lesson of Leadership and Spanish per week. In the Lower school many of these subjects are taught through a topic-based approach (see subject overview).

There is a full breakdown of curriculum subject maps. The Head of Department reviews schemes of work annually **in conjunction with the Phase Leaders** to ensure consistency and progression of content and learning. Each subject of the curriculum has schemes of work (long- and medium-term plans) and policy documents stating:

- The aims and objectives for teaching and learning in that subject.
- An overview of the schemes of work to be followed by each year group.
- Teaching strategies to be employed in delivering the curriculum.
- Methods of assessment and recording.
- Resources available.

Grouping is used in some subjects and year groups where it is determined to be beneficial to facilitate adaptations for different characteristics of learning. ([See Grouping Overview](#))

Planning the Curriculum

The curriculum is planned in three stages:

1. Long term plans have been drawn up by Heads of Department to cover each year group. These plans work alongside government recommended planning to ensure a broad encompassing curriculum and have been drawn up to facilitate cross-curricular links.
2. Medium term plans are produced by Heads of Department and subject teachers. They state clearly the specific learning objectives which will be covered, give suggestions on how to cover them and explain how they will be assessed. This level of planning is detailed and kept within department TEAMS/SharePoint sites.

Maths	Problem solving maths	IT and Computing	History
English	Drama	Music	Geography
Science	STEM	MFL	RE
PE	PSHE and RSE	Art	Current Affairs
Go Explore (Forest School)		Leadership and Enterprise (Year 6)	

3. Short term planning is produced by class teachers to enable them to deliver what is in the medium-term plans. It is acceptable for teachers to use a variety of methods to plan their teaching on a day-to-day basis. These methods could include use of PowerPoint, use of a generic teacher planner or another structured plan of their choice. The reason for this freedom of choice is to allow teachers to develop their own styles and to give them the freedom to be creative in their planning so that they may feel empowered to offer deep learning experiences and un-restricted by a set lesson plan. Short-term plans **will include adaptations**, showing how the less able pupils will be supported and how the more able pupils will be challenged. They include the learning objectives; a basic explanation of the skills being taught and work to be covered and resources necessary. Basic short-term planning is generally prepared a week in advance but will be adapted as the week progresses. Different resources, learning objectives, levels of support or expected outcomes are means of providing adaptations, as are enabling questions, individual target setting and giving prior knowledge or help about topics to be covered. Short term planning will include consideration of how other adults in the room are to be utilised, and it is expected that support staff will be involved in the planning and assessing of pupil progress.

In addition to the planned curriculum, enriching experiences such as science days, concerts, school plays, sports activities, visits from authors and school visits to theatre productions, museums and places of interest, are planned to enhance the learning experience. We plan a series of trips each term for each year group

including residential trips in Year 3 to 6. In most cases these trips are directly linked to our topic work. Each year group will take part in a variety of workshops throughout the academic year.

- We undertake an audit of parental skills each year and this enables us to form connections with new organisations or to facilitate a workshop/talk led by a parent.
- We have themed weeks throughout the year such as Science Week and Modern Languages Week to help pupils to see links to the real world.
- We invite specialists from a range of institutions (e.g. the Science Museum). We also have links with small independent educationalists.
- Themed days: these may be designed to fit with national initiatives (e.g. World Book or Maths Day), to match with events in the UK (e.g. a national election) and also to highlight our curriculum subjects (e.g. Art Day).

Learning and Teaching

At Bowdon Prep School we recognise that all pupils have special skills, abilities and aptitudes and all have an entitlement to access a broad, challenging and appropriate curriculum. Every pupil is also entitled to experience a variety of teaching and learning styles, which enable them to achieve their full potential. We aim, through successful teaching and learning, to develop the whole child and to enable our pupils to become lifelong learners.

All teachers have a responsibility, collectively and individually, to contribute to the delivery of the broad, challenging and appropriate curriculum. In addition, they individually have a responsibility to strive to deliver lessons where the teaching and learning is of the highest quality and where the learning needs of all pupils are met.

We recognise that continued professional support and training at whole school, department and individual level is essential to empower staff to deliver effective learning experiences.

Pupils' learning will be monitored by how well they acquire new knowledge or skills, develop ideas and increase their creative effort to their work. The pupils should work at a good pace and be productive. They should show an interest in their work and be able to sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves. Pupils should understand what they are doing, be aware of how well they have done and know how they can improve.

During the lesson, teachers will be checking for understanding by listening to pupils and asking challenging questions. The teacher will ensure they involve all pupils, and that high standards of effort, accuracy and presentation are encouraged. At the end of the lesson the pupil outcomes will normally be consistent with the objectives set at the beginning. These objectives are made clear through the use of success outcomes, either visually shown throughout the lesson or written on the pupil's work. Teachers are expected to ensure that their lessons and/or activities:

- Inspire, motivate and challenge pupils (through high expectations).
- Have clear aims and success criteria and purposes which are shared with the children (success criteria describe to pupils what the teacher is looking for and how they will know they are being successful in their learning).
- Are well-structured, planned (with high quality resources) and timed, making good links to previous and future learning.
- Cater appropriately for the learning of pupils of differing abilities and interests.
- Ensure the full participation of all pupils.
- Incorporate regular feedback to pupils through thoughtful marking and discussion with pupils.
- Help pupils to form useful assessments of their level of attainment and what needs to be improved.
- Provide oral/written feedback to the children that enables them to develop their learning further.
- Involve teaching strategies which:
 - Suit the subject matter as well as the pupils.
 - Ensure pupils apply themselves with purpose and self-confidence.
 - Encourage pupils to display and develop learning skills as well as knowledge and understanding.
 - Encourage pupils to demonstrate independence and autonomy.

- Utilise AFL strategies and assess pupils both for summative purposes (to measure how well they have achieved) and on an on-going formative basis to lead future planning.

Staff Development

CPD training is provided to update and develop standards of teaching and learning. Initiatives in curriculum development and teaching and learning styles, are monitored to ensure teachers are well-equipped to deliver the curriculum effectively. A weekly CPD programme has been developed which is complemented by focus areas on staff INSET days. In addition to the CPD process, staff are encouraged to explore wider areas of professional development, as appropriate to their specialist area of teaching or areas of interest. Staff attending external courses during the academic year update and report at staff Phase Group or Department Meetings on relevant information, and content.

Assessment, Marking and Presentation

Assessment of pupils is on-going during lessons, and teachers will constantly assess pupils through:

- Observing pupils at and live nudges ([see Marking and Feedback Policy](#))
- Listening to pupils as they take part in discussion
- Questioning
- Setting tasks
- Testing

Full details of the testing carried out through the school can be found in the [Subject Policies](#) and the [Whole School Assessment Overview](#).

Assessment will improve learning and raise achievement if it is planned for. It works most effectively when pupils are actively involved in their own learning (this would include discussions with pupils, individually and in small groups, and the setting of individual targets). It should be used to inform future learning targets and consequently adjusts teachers' planning and teaching. Importantly, it should celebrate achievement and provide effective feedback to children through marking. Presentation expectations can be found in the [Presentation and Display Policy](#).

Homework

We believe that homework helps children and young people to become confident and independent in their learning, which will help throughout their time at school and in adult life. The aims of setting homework are:

- To develop a home-school partnership
- To consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding
- To extend school learning.

The setting of homework is supported in the following ways:

- All homework set is appropriate for the children it is aimed towards. The tasks are manageable in the time allowed and differentiated to stretch the most able and support those children with Special Educational Needs.
- Teachers will ensure that homework is an integral part of the curriculum and is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning. Pre-learning occurs where necessary.
- In Years 3-6, regular homework is set in English and maths with an increased focus on reasoning as they progress to Upper Prep. This can be on paper, as a project or set on the A.I. learning platform. There is a weekly spelling slot, times table practice and reading is expected nightly.
- Throughout the school pupils may be set project-based tasks during the holidays which aim to develop independent learning and research skills.

The time per week spent is flexible depending on the nature of the work, but generally is as follows (split between English and maths):

- Year 1 & 2 - 20 minutes per night
- Year 3 & 4 - 30 minutes per night
- Year 5 & 6 - 40 minutes per night

Homework is issued twice a week, and the children are expected to organise their time in whichever way they feel is best.

The Homework Policy is promoted throughout the school and its implementation and effectiveness is reviewed annually (it is also included in the Class Booklet and Welcome Meetings, to ensure that teachers and parents are completely clear about what is expected of pupils in terms of homework and how it should be organised and managed). Parents are encouraged to play a role in homework differentiation by advising pupil when homework has taken more than 10 minutes longer than the allocated time with the parental option to 'sign off' the homework at that point or assist their daughter in fixing on a pragmatic conclusion. Parents are also requested to support their child with the self-evaluation coding of homework (traffic light system).

Opportunity to learn and make progress for all pupils

The school is committed to a high-quality educational provision for all of its pupils, in order to facilitate continual progress and learning whilst at the school. Pupils' needs are individually assessed wherever individual circumstances or needs are suspected of impeding or challenging that learning, and support provision is initially led by the Phase Leader. Individual Support needs are discussed at Phase Group meetings **and are detailed on the pupil's Day Book with a description of the difficulty and guidelines for support**. This is similar for pupils who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) ([see EAL Policy](#)).

Phase Leaders/SENDCo work with teachers and parents in the event of individual learning barriers or circumstances disrupting a pupil's educational provision. Examples might be where a pupil is hospitalised, is unable to participate/attend all lessons or as extenuating home circumstances. Support plans are then put in place.

Children who need Specific Learning Support

Any pupil(s) with an EHCP or IEP have their needs coordinated and monitored by the SENCo, who ensures that statutory requirements and individual needs are met. Those children who have been identified to need specific learning support are supported in several ways within the curriculum. **Differentiation** within medium and short-term planning ensures resources and tasks are provided to allow full access to the curriculum. The SENCo works closely with the Phase Leaders, teachers, and Heads of Departments to ensure these children are identified and guidelines given to aid their academic development within the curriculum. More detail on this can be found within the [SEND Policy](#).

Meeting the Needs of Able Children

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of able pupils and to provide appropriate stretch and challenge for all its ability groups. It often goes well beyond nationally expected levels of achievement. The curriculum is constantly evolving in order to accommodate the needs of our children. Maths, English and PE is grouped in Years 4, 5 and 6, in order to ensure a more specific curriculum can be followed to stretch our most able children whilst supporting our less able pupils and to cater to all learning styles. In other subjects, the curriculum is enriched using many resources, often extending children at least a year beyond their chronological age. The AGT Policy provides more information on the provision for Able, Gifted and Talented children.

Differentiation and Progression within the Curriculum

To ensure there is smooth progression within the Bowdon Prep curriculum, Heads of Department meet regularly with their department to discuss the curriculum and the specific needs of the children. The development of the curriculum is a collaborative process but is overseen by the Head of Department to ensure all aspects of their subject are covered and reinforced throughout a child's progression within the school. It is ultimately the Head of Department's responsibility to ensure the medium-term planning complies with this need.

Teacher-led differentiation is encouraged and expected within every classroom as outlined in our Differentiation Policy. This differentiation can often be flexibly and subtly administered within every lesson and teachers are encouraged to regularly reflect on the range of simple methods that are available to deploy this within their teaching. Schemes of work are particularly designed, suiting the nature of our school, to support top-end differentiation and extension, giving teachers a range of extension opportunities, questions, material and links to stretch and challenge all pupils.

The curriculum is particularly designed to stretch the most able pupils, and to provide appropriate challenge and high expectations for all its ability groups. This often goes well beyond nationally expected levels of achievement. The school aims for academic *enrichment* alongside *extension*, and we integrate opportunities

into all departmental schemes of work.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development, PSHE, RSE and Economic Education

Form time takes place in three structured sessions each week, covering many areas of PSHE, RSE and e-safety. In addition, pupils also explore RE within the timetable at specific times where spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues are raised and discussed. British values, such as promoting respect for others, along with protected characteristics are promoted. In addition, each department ensures its curriculum is balanced in the SMSC areas, giving children the opportunity to discuss social and moral issues within different subjects and taking account of the wide range of cultures within our society. The department policies give specific examples of these opportunities within each subject.

Alongside academic development, wider character and emotional development is of equal importance to the school, as demonstrated by our underlying school values. An underlying resilience alongside a freedom to 'fail' and improve through a process of repeated 'failures' is essential to a healthy education and is particularly important in a high-achieving environment in which all individual successes, often of very different types and magnitudes, need cherishing and celebrating. The school values 'one another' not just because of what we do but because of a fundamental belief in the value and worth of each individual. PSHE and economic education at BPS reflects the school's aims and ethos and encourages respect for other people.

The Role of ICT

ICT should be planned in two ways. One is in the teaching of computing skills and software in Computing lessons. The other is where ICT is used to enhance the teaching of other subjects, such as putting in data to produce graphs in maths lessons or using PowerPoint to present information in history. ICT is used to track pupil progress, to enhance work for display, for writing reports, producing worksheets, research and for bringing the outside world into the classroom.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The teaching and learning provision at BPS is systematically monitored by Heads of Department, Phase Leaders and the Head. The aim of monitoring is to raise standards by ensuring best efforts, encouraging reflective teaching and thus continually improving provision.

Information about the quality of teaching is gathered through formal monitoring of teachers in a process of focused observation. The Phase Leaders and Heads of Department gather information and evidence about teaching and learning through the scrutiny of medium-term plans, by looking at samples of children's work, by classroom observation and by analysis of standardised test results where appropriate. This information is used to inform the annual Action Plans produced by Heads of Departments for every subject and the School Development Plan.

During the year, Heads of Departments work to achieve the agreed goals and targets in their Action Plans. They evaluate their success and share progress with staff in meetings, noting down any ideas or matters arising for consideration in the following year.

Rewarding Efforts, Achievement and Celebrating Success (see Positive Behaviour Policy)

Social, physical, creative and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an on-going process in all aspects of school life by:

- verbal or written praise by teachers, peers, Headteacher and parents
- displays of work
- opportunities to perform or share – in class or in assemblies
- encouraging self-esteem
- the awarding of stickers, certificates
- Merits, House points
- sharing success with the community

Extra-Curricular and Enrichment

At Bowdon Prep School we work hard to create a balanced curriculum which has breadth as well as depth. We believe enrichment activities play a vital role in the provision of a broad and balanced educational experience.

It therefore provides opportunities for girls to develop leadership and team working skills through the provision of a wide and varied extracurricular and enrichment programme, including themed days which all the girls participate in, theatrical productions, trips, outings and residential for pupils in Years 3 to 6. We foster links with local primary school and come together at several times of the year for enrichment and extra-curricular activities.

The school has a strong tradition of sporting participation, a range of music and performing arts activities and a variety of extra-curricular clubs. Members of the teaching team run extra-curricular school clubs along with external service providers. A wide range of age-appropriate clubs are offered both before and after school for Pre-Prep and Prep pupils. Typically, these could include cookery, language, craft, sports and choir. (see Extra-Curricular Programme)

At Bowdon Prep School we aim to give children opportunities to:

- Participate in a variety of clubs
- Safely enjoy well organised clubs
- Be involved in competitive activities which take place in a friendly and sporting atmosphere
- Make an active contribution to the school through their participation
- Develop and extend their skills

In addition to music lessons offered by peripatetic teachers, pupils also have the option of taking external examinations from LAMDA, an organisation accredited to offer exams in the 'Speaking of Verse and Prose' and 'Acting'.

Participation in extra-curricular activities is monitored to ensure that all girls take advantage of the opportunities available at school and that they balance these commitments with the requirements of their academic work.