



ORCHARD HOUSE  
SCHOOL

# **Curriculum Policy**

**September 2025**

## CURRICULUM POLICY

*To offer a broad based curriculum in order to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, promote enjoyment in learning, and to provide knowledge/skills to equip pupils for work and leisure as active, confident and responsible members of a rapidly developing society. (Ethos and aims policy)*

### Status

1. This policy reflects the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023, (effective January 2024).

### Consultation

2. This policy was originally drawn up following consultation with all the staff and, in particular, with the SLT. The aim is to ensure progression, continuity and learning. In addition, fellow Heads of independent preparatory schools in the area contributed their views. The requirements of the secondary day schools, including those grouped together under the North London Consortium, those testing using the ISEB Common Pre-test, the independent day schools with their own entrance system, the ISEB for those taking Common Entrance for boarding schools, The Primary Framework for Literacy and Mathematics, DfE circulars and guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority also informed the policy.
3. The curriculum offered gives children the opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards of mathematics and English whilst ensuring they can become confident in physical, artistic, practical and social skills. The school provides a broad and balanced education allowing for the individual needs of each child to be met within well-planned learning experiences. Areas of learning include:

### Assessment

4. Elements of the curriculum are assessed using National Curriculum criteria but assessments will also be made with regard to other external influences e.g. 11+ entrance exams and common entrance. Formal assessments are conducted termly focusing in reading, spelling, writing and mathematics. In addition, termly summative tracking takes place for foundation subject, English and maths across Key Stage 1 and 2.
5. *See Assessment, Recording & Reporting Policy*

## **Equal Opportunities**

6. Access to programmes of study is based on academic suitability and appropriateness, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, religion or belief.
7. Orchard House School also seeks to promote community cohesion.
8. Disabilities: In accordance with the statutory requirements the school aims to make the curriculum accessible to all pupils as far as is reasonably practicable.

## **Differentiation**

9. Most subjects are taught in mixed ability groups and a variety of differing teaching and learning methods and materials are used in all courses to suit pupils' different needs. Mathematics and English are set according to ability from Form 3 through to Form 6.
10. Support groups are provided by maths and English set teachers in Form 6 to ensure there are no gaps in knowledge prior to the children's examination period.
11. Learning support is provided by specialist teachers for pupils who need help in a specific area of learning. (see SEND Support policy)
12. MAT provision is overseen by the MAT coordinator and pupil profiles are created setting out specific provision for these identified children. Differentiated work is evidenced in planning for these groups of children and may be highlighted in green.

## **Early Years**

13. The curriculum is planned with reference to the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2023, effective 2024, covering the following areas of learning:
  - **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive 9 relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set

themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

- **Communication & Language**

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

- **Physical development**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives<sup>7</sup>. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and

varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

- Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

- Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

- Understanding the world

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses

and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

- **Expressive Arts & Design**

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

*(see EYFS policy for details)*

## **KS1 & KS2**

The curriculum is planned with reference to the National Curriculum across KS1 & KS2 with the addition of supplementary resources to support the National Curriculum areas of learning.

### **14. Mathematics**

The national curriculum for mathematics aims to ensure that all pupils:

- become fluent in the fundamentals of mathematics, including through varied and frequent practice with increasingly complex problems over time, so that pupils develop conceptual understanding and the ability to recall and apply knowledge rapidly and accurately
- reason mathematically by following a line of enquiry, conjecturing relationships and generalisations, and developing an argument, justification or proof using mathematical language
- can solve problems by applying their mathematics to a variety of routine and non-routine problems with increasing sophistication, including

breaking down problems into a series of simpler steps and persevering in seeking solutions

## 15. English

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

At Orchard House school our English curriculum is supplemented with the Hamilton Trust scheme of work.

## 16. Science

The national curriculum for science aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics
- develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them
- are equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future

Alongside the national curriculum for science, Developing Experts is used as a supplementary resource to enhance scientific enquiry and application.

## 17. RSE

The revised curriculum will begin in the summer term of 2021 with statutory elements integrated into the existing scheme of work, focussing on the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, including family and friendships, in all relevant contexts, including online. This sits alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy and awareness of the wider world we live in.

This forms part of the wider work of the school in fostering pupil wellbeing, developing resilience and life skills fundamental to pupils being happy, successful, and productive members of society. This also complements the ethos of the school and its values, helping to develop personal attributes including kindness, integrity, generosity, and honesty.

The following areas of the curriculum following a specific blend of the national curriculum and private schemes of work:

18. History; Geography; Music; French; Art and Design Technology; ICT; Physical Education; Swimming; Religious Education; PSHCEE; Drama; General Knowledge/Current Affairs; Classical Studies and reasoning skills.
19. Subject specialists teach Computing, French, Music, Art, Drama, Swimming, Physical Education and in Forms 4, 5 and 6, there may also be some lessons in Classical civilisation, Latin and Mandarin.
20. The headmaster, deputy head and SLT when devising the timetable ensure that the balance of subjects and the time allocated for each subject is appropriate.

## Extra-Curricular provision

21. A broad range of extra clubs and squads are provided across KS1 and KS2 to extend and support the curriculum across the school. These are provided by form teachers and specialist teachers throughout the school. The clubs vary from invitation only; clubs focusing on our MAT children, where potential scholars have been identified and those offered to all children.

## Relationship to other policies



22. This Curriculum policy embraces policies and procedures for Admissions, Assessment, Assemblies, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, Homework, Educational visits, SEN Support, Sex Education and Teaching and Learning.

### **Subject policies, plans, work scrutiny and monitoring**

23. Full details of the subject policies and long-term plans are contained in a separate section on the shared file on Google Drive. Class teachers make copies as needed.
24. When subjects are not taught by subject specialists, the medium-term plans for these areas are drawn up by the Form Teacher at the beginning of every half-term. These plans are placed on Google Drive and checked by the Subject Co-ordinators and SLT with reference to the schemes of work. Medium-term plans by subject specialists are checked by the Deputy Head, academic and Key Stage leaders. There are opportunities for discussion and subject development throughout the year, when the subject co-ordinators meet and set up and review their action plans.

### **Monitoring**

25. Subject Co-ordinators may observe class teaching throughout the year across different Key stages. During the observation (approx. 20-60 minutes), the Co-ordinator should make notes on the common subject observation sheet with particular reference to the children's learning and achievement levels, as well as lesson content. Feedback must be provided verbally in a scheduled meeting and a soft copy uploaded to BlueSky. See Appendix.
26. Subject Co-ordinators are also responsible for work scrutiny of their subject area. Core subjects Maths, English and Science are to be monitored twice yearly whilst non-core subjects are to be checked formally once a year. Subject Co-ordinators are to choose three books from each year group, from a list of children's abilities provided by the form teacher. These scrutinies of work are to be logged in iCal in advance and as with observations, feedback must be given verbally and a soft copy uploaded to BlueSky.
27. Where subjects are non-book based, these Subject Co-ordinators are responsible for demonstrating the children's work through the use of Google Sites, creating an 'Evidence file' for their subject. These Evidence files are monitored by the Deputy Head, academic and SLT throughout the year.
28. Subject Co-ordinators are to manage their subject in line with the Curriculum schemes of work and subject action plans throughout the academic year.

29. Subject Co-ordinators set termly tracking objectives to review and monitor pupil progress across their subjects in both Key Stage 1 and 2.
30. At the end of each academic year subject Co-ordinators are responsible for logging, which children's books are to be kept for reference.

### **Rôles and responsibilities of headmaster, other staff, governors**

31. The headmaster will ensure that:
  - all statutory elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met. This will include how the subject will be taught and assessed, the use of language, and the use of information and communications technology
32. Other staff, eg the Deputy Head, academic and member of SLT, will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy and is responsible for liaising with Subject Co-ordinators to discuss their subject's focus, in line with the Curriculum schemes of work..
33. The governors will ensure that:
  - they consider the advice of the headmaster when approving this curriculum policy
  - parents receive timely reports on the progress of their child
  - they participate actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum