

Date: September 2024
Author: Senior Deputy Head Academic
Owner: Academic

Document No: SPS_DHA_007
Version: 001



Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy

2024 - 2025

This 'Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy' is reviewed annually by the Senior Deputy Head (Academic).

RATIONALE

The policy serves as the overarching framework that represents the why, what, how and when of teaching and learning at Sherborne Preparatory School.

This policy establishes principles against which other policies and procedures can be developed so that they are consistent across the whole school, from EYFS to Year 8.

AIMS

- At Sherborne Prep we aim to produce happy and fulfilled pupils through a stimulating but rigorous curriculum, which promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development and constructs experiences that help them to make sense of the world and prepare them for later life.
- Through creative, supportive and challenging teaching, our pupils will be immersed in an engaging curriculum that inspires independent thinking and intellectual curiosity.
- Opportunities are fostered to ensure the development of six core skills: leadership, collaboration, independence, thinking & learning, reviewing & improving and communicating.

10 KEY PRINCIPLES OF OUR APPROACH

1. We help all of our pupils to achieve their full potential.
2. We provide opportunities for active, stimulating, investigative learning.
3. We believe in the importance of securing a firm foundation of knowledge across subjects, to ensure successful progression.
4. We believe that developing core learning skills has equal importance to the acquisition of knowledge and that this will better prepare our pupils for their future lives.
5. We maximise opportunities to explore the interdisciplinary interaction between subjects.
6. We feel that it is important to provide parents with an understanding of progress through regular assessments and meetings.
7. We use data to inform our planning.
8. Our curriculum reflects the collective wisdom of our qualified staff, regarding content and how children learn.
9. Teachers are able to enjoy and maximise professional freedom.
10. We encourage collaboration and communication across all areas of school life: between staff, between pupils, with pupils and with parents.

CURRICULUM

Our school curriculum is informed by our vision and ethos. Our aims are supported by our departmental policies, created and managed by Heads of Departments in the first instance, but widely discussed within the whole school.

The children at The Prep 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, educational programmes and assessment arrangements of the EYFS.

Our curriculum takes account of the importance of academic, creative, social responsibility/citizenship, health/wellbeing and physical development. Experiences are offered in linguistic, aesthetic, literary, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social areas.

Our curriculum is designed to foster links, helping pupils to make connections between subjects and transfer learning.

TEACHING

Teaching at Sherborne Prep fosters intellectual curiosity and a spirit of enquiry.

Staff select the best teaching methods from a range of innovative and established practice to enable all children to acquire new knowledge and develop skills, based on what they already know and to make progress according to their ability. Learning differences are taken into account, as well as social or emotional factors which may affect a child's learning.

There is an emphasis on developing the PSB (Pre-Senior Baccalaureate) core skills of thinking and learning, independence, leadership, collaboration, communication and reviewing and improving.

Staff are asked to avoid the overuse of any of the following:

- 'Chalk and talk' or prolonged 'monologue'
- Asking children to copy lengthy information from a board or book
- Photocopied sheets
- YouTube
- Textbooks

Lesson content is distilled from the Schemes of Work contained in departmental documentation held on SharePoint. This sets out what is to be taught but also provides plenty of scope for spontaneity, whilst offering progression, support and challenge.

LEARNING

We recognise the need to provide opportunities for all children to learn in ways that best suit them. These include, but are not limited to:

- investigation and problem solving
- cross curricular tasks
- individual assignments
- group, paired, independent and whole-class work
- the integration of technology
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- creative activities
- debates, role-play and oral presentations
- participation in athletic or physical activity
- use of a range of ways of recording information – graphic organisers, mind maps, charts, extended writing, presentations, images etc.

PSB (Pre-Senior Bacculaureate)

Sherborne Prep is in partnership with the PSB. The PSB is an assessment model that has, at its heart, the development of the knowledge, skills attitudes and values required for children to succeed and flourish in an ever-changing world. Children are encouraged, recognised and celebrated in their achievements, and directly prepared for the next step of their educational journey. The PSB six core skills are leadership, collaboration, independence, thinking & learning, reviewing & improving and communicating. The development of these skills in pupils across the school is a vital component of their education at Sherborne Prep.

PSPQ (Pre-Senior Project Qualification)

A key part of the PSB is an independent project undertaken by pupils in Year 8. Children are supported through the process by an assigned mentor and their research can be presented in a variety of formats. This project is highly valued by senior schools as it develops independence, critical thinking and self-regulated learning.

Careers Guidance

Through the Personal Development a wider curriculum, children are encouraged to think beyond their life at school and are given guidance and advice in how to conduct themselves to be positive and productive citizens. Children learn about different jobs from Reception and from year 5 begin to learn the steps needed for particular career paths. KS3 focuses on preparation for senior school and beyond. Lessons, workshops and talks by key visitors encourage children to consider their futures and the pathways they may follow in their future to fulfil their potential.

LEARNING SUPPORT PROVISION

The policy of the Learning Support Department is closely aligned to the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (SEND)*. All staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the documents shared by the Head of Learning support, including EP report summaries, Pupil Profiles, and ensuring they follow guidelines and recommendations. All teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class. High-quality teaching is our first step in responding to pupils who have SEN.

When a concern about a child arises, the member of staff refers them to the Head of Learning Support by completing a referral form. The Head of Learning Support will then carry out the arrangements as specified in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy. This typically involves gathering relevant information about the pupil – analysis of data, looking through books, reading of reports, meeting with teachers and parents. Further steps may be taken to assess specific strengths and challenges.

Provision and differentiation are applied for those with English as a second language.

Provision is also given to children who are considered to be able, gifted and talented. Stretch, challenge and enrichment is provided within lessons and part of our extra-curricular offer.

Further details can be found in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy, our EAL policy and the Able, Gifted and Talented Policy.

MEDIUM TERM PLANNING

Schemes of Work are completed by the relevant academic staff and the Heads of Department ensure that these are available on SharePoint at the start of each academic year, in conjunction with key relevant teaching resources. These are working documents which are updated regularly.

PREP

Yrs 3 & 4	Year 3 – 30 mins each night Year 4 - 30 mins each night	English and Maths skills including weekly spellings, tables and reading.
Yr 5	30 building to 40 mins per night	English, Maths, occasionally French and Science, weekly spellings and reading.
Yr 6	Up to 40 minutes per night	All subjects and reading, weekly spellings and tables.
Yrs 7 & 8	Up to 60 mins per night. In some cases, pupils may be set additional extension tasks.	All subjects as required.

GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC STAFF ON THE SETTING OF PREP

- Pupils should be able to complete prep independently.
- All prep should be differentiated appropriately.
- Prep is an opportunity for pupils to practise learned skills providing revision and repetition
- Prep will be set on specified days, according to the timetable shared by the Senior Deputy Head. Teachers are asked to adhere to this timetable, to ensure children do not feel overloaded.
- Each subject prep should last for 20 minutes of active work. For Years 6-8, some teachers may prefer to set 1 x 40 minutes of prep, rather than 2 x 20 minutes, where relevant. In this instance, it is important to make it clear to pupils that they will need to self-manage their time over the course of the week.
- For pupils in Years 7 & 8, prep will be set on Microsoft Teams to enable each child to take responsibility and ownership of scheduled preps and timelines.
- For pupils in Years 3 – 5, prep will be written on the classroom board or reminded by the teacher during form-time. For pupils in Year 6, prep may be written on the classroom board or staff should ensure that all pupils have written down their prep correctly in their prep diaries.
- Ensure that children who missed the lesson due to LS, EAL, Music or Speech and Drama lessons have a copy or a note of the prep set.
- When set prep is completed, pupils in all year groups are expected to read, learn tables, spellings, vocabulary or update their PSB logs (where relevant).
- Pupils missing prep due to commitments may be expected to make up the time through an agreed extension arrangement. Individual circumstances and pressure must always be taken into account.
- Problems with the completion of preps should be referred to the pupil's form teacher and registered on the Trackit system.

GUIDELINES FOR Y6-8 FORM TEACHERS FOR SUPPORTING WITH PREP

- Display the prep timetable in classrooms.
- Regularly check that each child has noted down the preps expected each day in their prep diary or can locate it in Teams.
- Regularly check to ensure that pupils are keeping on top of their preps and assist with organisation where necessary. Remind pupils to “turn in” their preps on Teams.
- Keep a record of those pupils experiencing problems with the completion of prep, and those who are floundering on a regular basis. Concerns are raised using CPOMS; this alerts the Senior Deputy Head (Academic).

FEEDBACK POLICY *(under review)*

Marking is a written or oral response by a teacher about a pupil’s work and should take place within a week of the written task. Pupils are encouraged to review the quality of their own work and their understanding of the lesson objectives. Across all subjects, where relevant, high expectations and standards of spelling, punctuation, grammar and presentation are promoted. Various techniques, relevant to the age of the children, are used across the school. Marking might take the form of ticks, stickers, stampers (see below) and written comments for key pieces of work. Effective feedback is fundamental to learning and contributes an essential part of continuous assessment.

Lessons should include a **learning objective**, where appropriate. This could be written on the board if time allows.

Staff are asked to demonstrate the following in their marking:

Purpose	Nature
To recognise effort, motivate and encourage pupils	Regular, specific, meaningful and manageable marking
To gauge achievement against a given criteria and monitor pupil progress	Marking for different purposes, involving written and verbal feedback
To move learning forward by providing constructive formative feedback, specific guidance and direction	Correcting work in the presence of the child Timing, depth and detail of marking as appropriate for task and pupil
To give feedback about learning outcomes, teaching and lesson planning	Self, paired or class marking
To encourage children to reflect and improve on their own performance	All finished work responded to within the same week of each lesson
To indicate need for more teacher-pupil conversations about expectations and record	Pupils to be encouraged to review and improve work before handing in to teacher
To inform parents and report writing	Teachers to include support tasks or ‘challenges’ to encourage pupils to progress as learners

PRESENTATION OF WRITTEN WORK

Underlining should be done with a ruler.

Blue ink only to be used except for ruling or underlining. Blue fountain pen should be used from Year 4 when permission is given by the English teacher. Left handers are able to use Berol pens.

Correction fluid is not to be used.

SUBJECT SPECIFIC

English

In English, the nature of our marking will be influenced by the experience and attainment level of the students. Formative feedback, which will give clear guidance as to how the student may improve, is essential. Such feedback may relate closely to the learning objective or to other areas for improvement. Again, this will be influenced by the experience and expectations of the teaching group.

The quantity of spelling mistakes identified by a teacher will depend on the attainment level of the student and the teacher's belief as to the student's capacity to learn from such feedback. As a general guide, in the lower school, the teacher will identify no more than three spelling mistakes in a piece of work. In the middle and upper school, the student will be required to correct no more than three mistakes, though this may differ with high frequency words.

MARKING IN PRE-PREP

Rationale

Improving learning through assessment is aided by the provision of effective feedback to Pupils who need to be able to assess themselves and understand how to improve. The marking of Pupils' work is therefore an important part of teacher assessment. This policy sets out how Staff intends to ensure that marking in the Pre-Prep is an integral part of our assessment procedures.

Marking will be used to inform planning and therefore will be a continuous assessment. The marking will adhere to the marking policy.

Marking Procedures:

- Green ink pen used
- As far as possible, marking will be done daily or when a piece of work is completed
- Teachers will use feedback from marking to inform future targets and planning
- Wherever possible, marking will be related to a clear learning objective, which has been shared with the children
- Good presentation is expected and may be marked
- Marking will celebrate success whenever possible in order to raise self-esteem and encourage all children to work to their full potential
- Appropriate comments or prompt questions will be written in language that the child understands (this may assume having comments read to them for non-readers)
- A particularly successful piece of work may be awarded with a star or stickers in line with the school's system of rewards
- Every effort will be made to allow children time to reflect on marking and edit/improve their work

PRE-PREP ASSESSMENT

Nursery Teachers start the Early Years Foundation Stage Profiles and at the end of the school year hand on to the Reception Teacher.

Reception children all take a baseline assessment at the start of Reception. The Reception Teacher completes the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and sends the results to Dorset County Council and hands this information on to the Year 1 teacher.

Year 1 and Year 2 children complete a Progress in English and a Progress in Maths test at the beginning and end of the year. A standardised score is given. In addition, they complete the HAST-2 spelling test and the WRAT reading test at both the beginning and end of the year; a spelling and reading age is given. All results are tracked on our whole school tracking document.

STAFF MEETINGS

Regular weekly staff meetings are a forum for discussion regarding topical issues, such as assessment of learning, development of skills, the curriculum, progression, standards and links across the school. Heads of Department meetings occur fortnightly. Subject specific departmental meetings happen on an ad hoc basis, according to need.