
SAINT NICHOLAS SCHOOL

CURRICULUM POLICY

Note: This policy applies to all sections of the school including EYFS.

This policy is written with due regard to the Equality Act (2010) and within the EYFS to both the Equality Act and the SEND Code (2015)

Reviewed July 2019
Next review July 2020

The curriculum at Saint Nicholas School aims to effectively prepare the pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

The curriculum promotes and does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

This policy takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils including pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and those with an EHC plan.

Introduction

Saint Nicholas is fully committed to supporting pupils and teachers in effective teaching and learning; to promoting the enjoyment of learning; to securing progress and high standards of attainment for all. The curriculum at Saint Nicholas not only includes the formal programme of lessons but also the vast range of co-curricular activities, trips and visits which serve to enhance the educational experience provided.

The curriculum gives pupils' experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. All pupils will have the opportunity to acquire and develop their speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Where a pupil's principal language of instruction is a language other than English, additional EAL support will be provided. It is important that acquisition of a new language goes hand-in-hand with cognitive and academic development. Strategies we employ to meet the needs of a student with EAL may include tailoring the curriculum to suit the needs of the individual, adapting teaching methods, increasing the use of collaborative learning, moving from speech into writing, and auditing the language demands of the curriculum. This is important to ensure the student reaches their educational potential and plays a positive part in school life, the community and society as a whole.

The curriculum is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of all pupils. Where a pupil has an EHCP, the curriculum will be tailored to fulfil the plan's requirements. Designated learning support staff work with those children who are identified as having specific individual needs.

The use of specialist teachers throughout the primary age range enhances the pupils' experience.

The school is divided into 3 sections:

Lower School – Pre-School & Reception (EYFS), Years 1 to 5

Middle School - Years 6 to 8

Upper School - Years 9 to 11

1. EYFS

The curriculum is designed to meet the criteria outlined in the EYFS framework. Specific learning objectives are designed around 3 prime areas:

Communication and Language,

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional development

and 4 specific areas:

Literacy,

Maths,

Understanding of the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Children work to objectives outlined in these areas of learning.

In Pre-School pupils are taught PE & Games by specialist teachers.

In Reception specialist teachers deliver the lessons in music, drama and PE & Games.

1.1. Lower School

Key Stage 1 & 2 – Years 1 to 5

The curriculum broadly follows the statutory requirements outlined in the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1&2. This comprises English, maths, sciences, geography, history, religious studies, art & design, computing and PSHEE. Pupils are also taught French, music, drama and PE & Games by specialist teachers. All subjects have discrete teaching time with English and maths taught every day.

1.2 Middle School – Years 6 to 8

Key Stage 3

From Years 6 to 8 the curriculum follows the Framework for Key Stage 3. This comprises English, maths, separate sciences (biology, chemistry and physics), French, geography, history, religious studies, art, music, design & technology, food technology, computing, PSHEE, PE and Games. In September of Year 7 German and Latin are introduced with pupils electing to continue one of these from the beginning of the Spring Term. Some subjects are taught in form groups which are mixed ability, others are taught in ability sets. The exact pattern of the setting may vary from year to year depending on the ability spread of the year-group.

1.3 Upper School – Years 9 to 11

Most pupils will follow a programme with nine or ten GCSEs made up from a curriculum of Core and Optional Subjects. In some circumstances, where possible, this 'common' curriculum may be adjusted to meet individual needs.

Core Subjects

All pupils must study English Language, English Literature, mathematics and three sciences; biology, chemistry and physics. This examinable component of the core curriculum leads to the potential for pupils to gain five or six GCSEs, the exact number dependent on whether pupils take separate science (3 GCSEs) or Core / Addition Science (2 GCSEs). As part of the core curriculum pupils also have weekly lessons in Games, Physical Education and Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education.

Optional Subjects

Pupils choose four options from; art, computer science, drama, food technology, French, German, geography, history, Latin, music, PE and 3D design. It is expected that students opt for at least one modern foreign language although in exceptional circumstances this requirement may be waived in consultation between the student, parents and the school.

2. PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH and ECONOMIC EDUCATION.

Personal, social and health education (PSHEE) is taught throughout the school and reflects the school's aims and ethos. The PSHEE curriculum enables children to become healthy, independent and responsible members of society. We encourage our pupils to play a positive role in contributing to the life of the school and the wider community. In so doing we promote their personal and Social, Moral, Cultural and Spiritual development.

We teach our pupils how society is organised and governed, about their rights and responsibilities and what it means to be a positive member of a diverse, multicultural society. The PSHEE programme encourages respect for all people including those with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Pupils are encouraged to think of others and to be aware of others' needs by supporting various charities. Pupils learn about the safe use of the internet through PSHEE and computing lessons and through targeted assemblies which raise the awareness of risk and best practice. Pupils have the opportunity to take on positions of responsibility throughout the school. Opportunities to further enhance pupils' personal development are taken within regular assemblies and throughout the curriculum.

Careers guidance, within PSHEE, aims to enable pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of options, including timely advice to help them choose GCSE courses and their destinations after leaving Saint Nicholas

School. Our careers programme allows students to develop a knowledge and understanding of the education, training and employment opportunities available to them after they leave Saint Nicholas. We support students in exploring the range of different routes through education and into the various careers available to them after they leave the school. We provide opportunities for students to develop skills that will make them more employable and will benefit them in the workplace. Additionally, we facilitate student encounters with employees and employers, further education providers and higher education providers, to provide a range of impartial advice and support. We also help the students develop an understanding of themselves and how their particular attributes, aspirations and like and dislikes may affect their choice of career. We offer independent careers advice to both key stage 3 and 4.

In the Lower School, PSHEE is delivered by the Class Teachers for one hour per week. In the Middle School, PSHEE is delivered by a specialist teacher for an hour per week within a timetabled lesson. In the Upper School PSHE is delivered through the Pathways programme which is supported by a large team of staff and a range of specialist visiting speakers. The Pathways programme incorporates key life skills, careers education, citizenship, enterprise, financial capability, first aid and self-defence, outdoor learning and health and well-being. The careers programme is designed to inform pupils impartially about the range of career options open to them and to enable them to make informed choices about the future. Pupils are encouraged to fulfil their potential. Pupils are also provided with opportunities to develop leadership skills through the DofE Award programme and to work in the community.

3. LEARNING SUPPORT

Students who are identified as having a special educational need or disability are provided with a curriculum that is fully accessible and takes into consideration their cognitive, physical, mental and/or social needs. It is important to ensure each student reaches their educational potential and is able to access their education and full potential regardless of the barriers to learning. Strategies required to meet the needs of a student with a special need or disability may include tailoring the curriculum, adapting teaching methods, differentiating resources, in-class support from a learning support assistant, and 1:1 or small group intervention.

Further detail is in the separate Learning Support policy.

4. PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES

We recognise not only the importance of allowing students to flourish academically but we also embrace our wider role in preparing them for their adult life beyond the formal examined curriculum. Part of our role in that preparation is ensuring that we promote and reinforce British values to our students.

The government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy and subsequently updated (most recently in September 2015). It considers British Values to be democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. At Saint Nicholas School these values are reinforced in a pervasive manner and permeate the school community.

The examples that follow are an indication of some of the many ways we seek to embed British values at Saint Nicholas School and should be seen as an indication of our approach rather than an exhaustive list.

4.1 Democracy

At Saint Nicholas School the principle of democracy is consistently reinforced, with the democratic process being employed for important decisions within the school community, for instance, elections or the school council. The principle of democracy is further explored in History and Religious Studies as well as in tutor time and assemblies.

4.2 The rule of law

The importance of laws and respect for the law is appropriately reinforced within the school setting as a respect for school rules. Within PSHEE and within assemblies, students are taught the values and reasons behind laws, how they govern and protect us and the consequences when laws are broken. Visits from authorities such as the Police and Fire Service are annual events at the school and help reinforce this message.

4.3 Individual liberty

Within Saint Nicholas School students are actively encouraged to make independent choices knowing that they are in a safe, secure and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for students to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an empowering education. Students are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights, responsibilities and personal freedoms and receive advice about how to exercise these safely, for example through our exploration of E-Safety in computing and their tutor time activities.

4.4 Mutual respect

Respect is at the core of our school ethos and is modelled by students and staff alike. Mutual respect is embraced throughout the curriculum from the concept of 'fair play' in PE to the student mentoring programme which promote mutual respect and support between students across different year groups within the school.

4.5 Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

This is another value which is at the core of what is a diverse and multi-cultural environment within Saint Nicholas School. Tolerance for others is expected and promoted throughout the curriculum and explored within religious studies, history, English, PSHEE and through assemblies. Additionally, students are actively encouraged to share their faith and beliefs within the school.