



St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

St Swithun's Prep School including EYFS CURRICULUM POLICY

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Policy History	
Reviewed	February 2026
Date of next Review	February 2027

To be read in conjunction with:

- [SEND - Learning support policy](#)
- [English as an additional language \(EAL\) policy](#)
- [Feedback \(reporting, marking and assessment\) policy](#)
- [High-performing pupils policy](#)
- [PSHEE policy](#)

Introduction

This policy is written in line with the prep school aims:

- *To treat each child as an individual and strive to develop their character as well as their intellect, by offering a broad and inspiring academic curriculum alongside an enriching co-curricular and character development programme.*
- *To promote an enduring love of learning.*

St Swithun's Prep School provides a rich experience in all aspects of learning: linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, cultural, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative. All pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Our curriculum also promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect of those with different faiths and beliefs. Our PSHEE (Personal, social, health and economic education) encourages the children to have respect for others, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act (2010).

St Swithun's takes pride in providing and delivering a curriculum that is developed to equip and prepare pupils for the next stage of their education, as well as for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society in the 21st century. Our curriculum is closely aligned to the National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters.

Responsibilities

The head of prep has overall responsibility for the direction of the school, including the curriculum and standards for teaching and learning. Academic curriculums are overseen by subject heads. Pastoral activities are led by the deputy head. All teaching staff have a responsibility to deliver the curriculum as described in this policy and set out in the school's curriculum documents.

Inclusion and equal opportunities

St Swithun's Prep School is committed to ensuring all pupils, regardless of age, ability, race, religion, cultural background or disability, have equal access to the curriculum and that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress. This commitment is to both the co-education Preschool pupils and the girls in Reception and above.

The school complies fully with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled pupils. Teaching and learning is appropriately modified for pupils with disabilities. The school also has an annually reviewed Accessibility Plan.

Community cohesion

Through its curriculum, the school works towards creating a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community. This is respected, understood and supported in our ethos and practice.

Support for learning

There is specialist learning support in the school for all age groups. All staff are made aware of pupils' learning support needs at the beginning of each term.

Appropriate provision is made for pupils identified as having specific learning needs including those on the school's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) register and monitoring overview.

The school, its teachers and the special education needs coordinator (SENDCo) have a collective responsibility to ensure that any support need for lessons are available to these children. Please see the SEND policy for further details.

High-performing pupils

We provide a curriculum that aims to create opportunities for all pupils' abilities to flourish through fostering a culture of achievement and creating a climate of academic excellence. We have a shared vision to ensure all children achieve their absolute best and to also ensure there are ample opportunities for our high-performing pupils to exceed their previous achievements, in the context of challenge for all. This is through providing a high-quality provision for all pupils within the school, and regularly reviewing and updating the list of those pupils that are performing at a higher level. This shared vision will ensure we provide our pupils with the opportunity to excel in all academic subjects including reading, writing and maths as well as in the arts and sports.

We provide support to provide pupils with the opportunity for challenge and extension for all age groups. This is provided through the work of both form teachers and specialists. Provision is delivered through a combination of small group support for identified groups within lessons and supporting staff with planning for challenge and extension for individuals.

The successful embedding of High Performance Learning (HPL), a philosophy and framework that underpins all of the curriculum, has ensured that St Swithun's remains at the forefront of current educational research and pedagogy. Meta-cognition, self-regulation, strategic planning, intellectual confidence, generalisation, connection finding, "big picture" thinking, abstraction, imagination, appreciation of alternative perspectives, critical and logical thinking, precision, complex and multi-stepped problem solving, intellectual playfulness, flexible thinking, fluent thinking, originality, evolutionary and revolutionary thinking, automaticity, speed and accuracy are the qualities that we strive to imbue in the children from the moment they begin their educational journey. We also recognise the importance of developing the behaviours associated with

success at school and in life: perseverance, resilience, practice, enquiry thinking, being open-minded, taking risks, working collaboratively, being confident, demonstrating a concern and understanding of society and to be creative and enterprising. These qualities are encouraged and modelled throughout the children's time in the prep school.

Learning

We believe that children learn best when they...

- are in a stimulating and challenging environment which is caring, secure, and happy and where expectations and levels of praise are high.
- have a clear idea of what they are aiming to achieve, taking an active part in their learning.
- feel confident, have a positive attitude and have high expectations of themselves as learners.
- understand that one often learns by making mistakes and are never afraid to do so.
- make appropriate decisions and take responsibility for their own actions.
- know they are making progress and respond to praise and encouragement.
- are well motivated and enjoy the tasks.
- can apply their knowledge and skills to new situations.
- take pride in their own achievements and learn from their experiences.

Teaching

To achieve effective learning opportunities we recognise the importance of continued high-quality teaching.

To ensure that children engage in quality learning experiences, teachers will aim to:

- create a well organised, interesting and stimulating environment within which pupils are encouraged to become effective and confident learners.
- praise, celebrate and share achievements.
- have high expectations and provide a range of challenges to develop each child.
- clarify the focus of work with the children.
- deliver the curriculum in a variety of ways, adapting, where appropriate, the focus and pace of each lesson.
- have a good knowledge of the curriculum and the learning process and be enthusiastic in their approach.
- provide strong role models, which reflect the school's aims.
- ensure that every child irrespective of age, gender, ability, race, culture or religion can work towards achieving their full potential.
- ensure continuity and progression.

Early years foundation stage (EYFS)

All pupils with in EYFS learn through play, exploring their surroundings and developing characteristics of effective learning, with support from attentive and experienced staff. Each child is considered unique and their individual learning is catered for within school.

Positive relationships are key to every pupil's education. We pride ourselves in developing excellent working relationships with parents, understanding their role as the first and most enduring educators of their children.

- we provide an 'enabling environment', both indoors and outside.

- We provide a rich play environment where pupils can experiment and explore through firsthand experiences, encouraging them to have a sense of awe and wonder, whilst being able to ask questions and solve problems.
- We provide a safe, welcoming, happy environment where pupils can be helped to develop and grow.
- Our EYFS pupils follow the statutory guidance set out in the EYFS Framework (2025) and we provide learning opportunities throughout our continuous provision and a range of planned activities promoting the development of the prime areas of learning:
 - Personal, social and emotional development
 - Communication and language
 - Physical development
- Once at a good level in these areas, the specific areas of learning are introduced:
 - Literacy
 - Mathematics
 - Understanding the world
 - Expressive arts and design

Outdoor play in EYFS

The outdoor play area aims to provide a multi-sensory learning environment, catering for individual learning styles. Pupils have the chance to experiment with problem-solving activities, collaborative tasks and child-initiated learning opportunities, all within the HPL framework. Pupils will play and explore their environment and be willing to 'have a go'. Pupils will be active learners, showing motivations by being involved and concentrating, persevering and enjoying their successes. Pupils will be creators and think critically by having their own ideas, making links and choosing ways to do things.

Staff will support EYFS pupils by:

- Nurturing active questioning and an awareness of the world around them.
- Encouraging them to express their thoughts and ideas in a variety of situations.
- Helping them to become competent speakers and active listeners
- Developing their confidence by praising success and encouraging effort.
- Learning through play and first-hand experience.
- Actively encouraging the to problem solve.

Key stage 1 and 2

Subjects taught:

- English
- mathematics
- science
- history
- geography
- religious education
- computing
- French
- physical education (including swimming)
- visual arts
- performing arts (separate drama lessons from key stage 2)
- PSHEE (personal, social health and economic education)

PSHEE incorporates the teaching and learning of fundamental British values, citizenship and SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education). The PSHEE curriculum respects the school's aims and ethos and encourages respect for others at all times.

Curriculum overviews for each year group are shared with parents at the start of each academic year. Opportunities for cross-curricular learning are developed wherever possible and subject heads oversee the coherent provision that is made for the integration of such skills.

Organisation

Pupils are taught in mixed ability classes with all children being exposed to philosophies emphasising mastery and the highest expectations. Specialist teachers are timetabled across all ages and more time is allocated to the core subjects of English and mathematics for our younger pupils.

Planning

Subject heads are responsible for the implementation of the curriculum throughout the school and ensuring effective continuity and progression within and between EYFS, KS1 and KS2.

Subject heads are responsible for long-term planning. Teachers are responsible for translating this into medium- and short-term planning, with appropriate levels of detail.

Planning in the EYFS accommodates adult led and spontaneous child-initiated planning. Medium term planning will be much more fluid and ever changing in order to incorporate the interests and needs of the children. Emphasis is placed on promoting the characteristics of effective learning (COEL).

Relationship and sex education (RSE)

The school provides sex education in the basic curriculum for all pupils in years 5 and 6, during which pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. The curriculum is delivered in accordance with the law and parents may withdraw their children from any non-biological aspects of the sex education provided following discussion with the head. For further information, please refer to the separate RSE policy.

Political education

Political issues are introduced, where appropriate, in several subjects and presented in a balanced manner. The prep school parliament system of pupil voice also emphasises the democratic process and special election days, relevant lessons and discussions at key political times are prominent within the school calendar.

Outdoor learning

At St Swithun's we aim to develop the whole child, through offering a broad curriculum and valuing achievement in all areas. Outdoor learning, by which we mean any curricular or co-curricular learning that occurs outside the classroom, should play an important role in this holistic approach to education, and the aim is for all teachers to seek out regular opportunities to provide our children with outdoor learning experiences. In addition to this, children in EYFS benefit from weekly Outdoor Explorers sessions. Key stage 1 pupils also enjoy weekly outdoor learning afternoons which build on the bushcraft skills introduced in Outdoor Explorers and support their learning in other curriculum areas. Key stage 2 pupils have regular curriculum-linked outdoor learning sessions which may take place in the school grounds, our outdoor classroom or involve an off-site visit.

Physical education

All pupils are expected to take part in the school's physical education and games programme, which includes weekly swimming in the school pool. Pupils can only be excused from physical education lessons for medical reasons for which a note from parents will suffice.

Curriculum enrichment activities

The prep school has a wide and varied programme of cultural and sporting activities that take place outside of the formal curriculum. These include school trips, visiting speakers and workshops, school events and specific off-timetable whole school curriculum days such as STEM day.

Co-curricular activities

Activities that take place outside the formal timetabled curriculum include:

- Team games at all levels from year 3 upwards: netball, football, swimming, athletics, rounders, cricket
- Other sports: tennis, gymnastics, dance, cross-country, ballet
- Performing arts: choirs, orchestra, Little Voices, individual music lessons, and productions and concerts throughout the year in all year groups

Digital learning and the use of ICT

St Swithun's is constantly reviewing and moving forward with embracing ICT in teaching and learning. Cyber security and safety are paramount and a variety of steps are taken to maintain them, including parent information evenings, assemblies and regular staff training. At school, we use websites and apps which will best support the children's learning. Parents are advised to supervise their child's access to the Internet.

ICT is used as a teaching and learning tool throughout the curriculum. All staff have access to interactive whiteboards and these are used regularly. There are various trolleys of portable devices for use in the classrooms and all teachers are provided with their own school iPad. Several classes also have visualizers and all classrooms have been installed with mirroring technology / apple TV.

EYFS pupils use ICT in the classroom through using a variety of technology and age-appropriate programs on the whiteboard, iPads, Beebots and computers. Reception children also have opportunities to use the CAT Hub when appropriate.

In KS1 pupils are encouraged to gain confidence in the use of computers through weekly lessons in the CAT Hub and use of iPads in class teaching time.

In KS2, ICT is becoming increasingly important and more widely used in a variety of different ways. These include the broadening of a pupil's experience, increasing the range of teaching strategies, increasing the efficiency of lesson preparation and the way in which work is set and handed back. School iPads and laptops have been particularly successful in helping pupils with specific learning difficulties.

Homework

The purposes of homework include:

- reinforcing the partnership between school and home in promoting and supporting children's learning
- consolidating and reinforcing understanding and skills and developing mastery of a subject through repetition and practice
- using resources of all kinds at home, so that children experience resources for learning other than in school
- extending learning begun at school (e.g. through additional reading and/or research)
- encouraging children (particularly in upper KS2) to learn the discipline of simple time-management and to develop the confidence to work without teacher support

The demands of homework on pupils should be monitored and must not be excessive.

- Children should have the opportunity to relax at home, to have time to read for pleasure, to practise their musical instruments and to continue with out of school activities.
- Wherever possible, more than one evening per assignment should be allowed on the prep timetable.

The amount of time allocated for homework is:

- Reception: Children will take home reading books and library books to share, phonics practice resources and tricky word cards. Maths resources and games will be provided throughout the year.
- Year 1: Children will take home reading books to share and be given 30 minutes of practical literacy and numeracy activities per week.
- Year 2: At least 10 minutes reading daily and 40 minutes per week for other literacy and numeracy work.
- Year 3: 1 ½ hours per week for reading, other literacy and numeracy work and for occasional assignments in other subjects.
- Year 4: Between 3 and 5 assignments per week (max. time per task - 30 minutes).
- Years 5 and 6: Between 3 and 5 assignments per week (maximum time per task - 40 minutes) and occasional project-based tasks.

In addition to the above, all children are encouraged to read regularly at home, learn lines for productions, practise spellings and learn their times tables and number facts.

The role of parents in supporting a child’s homework includes:

- providing suitable places at home for homework to be completed
- supporting the school in explaining its value for learning to children
- encouraging and praising children in their efforts
- expecting children to meet deadlines for homework set and checking that they have done so.

This policy has regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

St Swithun’s Prep School policies are approved, ratified and reviewed regularly by SLT, staff and the Governing Body in the light of statutory requirements.

Reviewed & updated February 2025	SLT	
Ratified by Education Committee on behalf of Council/Governors February 2025	Dr S Bailey	Chair of Education Committee