



CURRICULUM POLICY

Overview

The curriculum is all the activities the School organises in order to promote learning and personal growth in our pupils. It aims to give pupils experience in the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, social, physical, aesthetic, and creative aspects of education and to prepare them for their senior schools. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people who can work and co-operate with others whilst developing the knowledge and skills needed to realise their individual potential.

The curriculum is planned around the educational requirements of the National Curriculum and the Common Entrance syllabuses. As we are an independent school, we diverge from the National Curriculum where there is a sound rationale for so doing.

The subject matter is differentiated according to the ages and aptitudes of the pupils, including pupils with an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan (where a pupil has an EHC Plan, the education provided is determined by the requirements of that Plan).

Our curriculum also includes the range of co-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the learning experience of the children. The 'hidden curriculum,' i.e. what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave, is another factor to be taken into consideration.

The academic curriculum is obligatory for pupils except when it is beneficial to an individual pupil to be excused one or more subjects. Participation in after school clubs is encouraged but not compulsory.

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so only after the parents of the child have been consulted.

Aims

The aims of our school curriculum are to:

- foster a love of learning for its own sake by encouraging our children to ask questions and think for themselves;
- provide all children with a relevant and engaging learning experience that gives them a sense of place and a sense of purpose;
- encourage our children to develop the necessary skills to work productively as part of a group and to become resilient and reflective learners, unafraid of trying something new or making mistakes;
- enable our pupils to achieve the highest academic standards of which they are capable;
- promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- enable children to think critically and creatively;
- instil a sense of discipline, in particular the self-discipline that enables a pupil to make the most of his or her potential;
- provide EYFS children with a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional, and physical development and communication and language skills;
- help children understand Britain's cultural heritage;
- enable children to be positive citizens in society;
- teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development and to understand right from wrong;
- help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others;
- promote personal, social, health and economic education which
 - (i) reflects the school's aim and ethos, and
 - (ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (a);
- for pupils receiving secondary education (Years 7 and 8 at Vinehall), access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that
 - (i) is presented in an impartial manner,
 - (ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options, and
 - (iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
- effectively prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life in British society through actively promoting Fundamental British Values to enable children to have respect for themselves and to develop good self-esteem;

- provide pupils receiving primary education (up to Year 6 at Vinehall) with relationships education and pupils receiving secondary education (Years 7 and 8 at Vinehall) with relationships and sex education (except in so far as the pupil is wholly or partly excused from sex education at the request of the pupil's parents);
- prepare our pupils for future stages in their education.

The Prep School Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to be accessed by all pupils and the age, aptitude and needs of all pupils, including those with an additional need, are taken into account.

One of the main focuses of the curriculum in the Prep School is on ensuring that pupils are thoroughly prepared for their transition to senior schools, either at the end of Year 8 or Year 6. The senior schools chosen by parents in consultation with the Head are varied, including local maintained schools as well as independent day and boarding schools.

The table below shows the number of lessons allocated to each subject in each year in the Prep School. Each lesson lasts forty minutes.

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Art **	2	2	2	2	2	2
CADT*					3	3
Computing*	2	2	2	2	1	1
Drama			1		1	1
DT/Carpentry **	2	2	2	2	2	2
English	7.5	7	6	6	6	6
French	2	2	2	2	3	3
Games	6	6	6	6	6	6
Humanities~	3	3	3	4	4	4
Latin/Spanish				2	3	3
Life Skills	1	1	2	2	2	2
Maths	7.5	7	6	6	6	6
Music	2	2	2	2	2	2
PE^	1	1	1	1	1	1
RS/Ethics	1	1	1	1		
Science	2	2	3	3	6	6
STEM+			2	2		
Swimming^	1	1	1	1		

*In Year 6, Art, DT and STEM are taught on a carousel. Each class has two terms of each subject.

^In Year 6, pupils alternate between PE and swimming, with one week of PE followed by one week of Swimming.

*In Years 7 and 8, Art, CADT, Computing and DT are taught on a carousel. Each year group has one term with three lessons of CADT a week, one term with two lessons of Art and one lesson of Computing and one term with two lessons of DT and one lesson of Computing.

~In Years 6, 7 and 8, pupils alternate between Geography and History, with four lessons of one subject each week in one term (or half term) followed by four lessons of the other subject each week in the next term (or half term).

Careers Guidance: In Life Skills in Years 5-8, pupils explore their choice of future schools options and careers. Linked policies are the [PSHE Handbook](#) and the [Careers Policy](#).

Pupils excused from a subject

In common with many other schools, pupils who have learning difficulties, in particular dyslexia, may be excused language lessons to focus on their literacy and maths skills. The decision is made in consultation with the Learning Support Department, parents and, where relevant, the pupil’s designated senior school.

Prep (Homework)

Regular homework gives pupils the opportunity to consolidate and revise what they have learnt in class. It also helps them to develop the important skill of being able to work independently and hopefully puts in place good habits regarding organisation and time management that will stand them in good stead when they move on to senior school.

All pupils have the opportunity to complete their prep at school, supervised by teachers.

In Year 5, pupils are expected to spend 15 to 20 minutes on each piece of prep. Pupils in Year 5 are also expected to read, preferably aloud, for 15 to 20 minutes each night.

In Year 6, pupils are expected to spend 20 to 30 minutes on each piece of prep.

In Years 7 to 8, pupils are expected to spend approximately 30 to 60 minutes on each piece of prep.

An example Prep Timetable is given below

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3E					Maths English
4B					Maths English
5P	English Science	Maths			French
6PW	English Humanities	Latin/Spanish		French Science	Maths
7P	English	Humanities		Science	French

	Latin/Spanish	Maths			
7W	English Latin/Spanish	Maths		Science	French Humanities
8L	English Science	Maths Latin/Spanish		Humanities	French
8T	English Science	Maths Latin/Spanish		Humanities	French

Co-curricular clubs and activities

A comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities is offered by the School (please see the Activities Booklet on the school website for a complete list). There are optional clubs after school every day of the week, and clubs also take place during break times within the school day. In addition, there is a programme of Saturday morning activities for pupils in Years 3 to 8, as well as a Saturday Enrichment Programme of trips and events open to all pupils in the Prep School.

Performing Arts

Performing Arts are an integral part of the cultural life of the School. Every child sings in either the Pre-Prep, Junior or Senior Choir, and there is also a Chamber Choir. Most children learn an instrument whilst at Vinehall and the school has Junior and Senior Orchestras, as well as a multitude of ensembles.

The table below gives an overview of the various productions and concerts that take place over the course of an academic year.

Michaelmas	Lent	Summer
Year 5 & 6 Play Harvest Festival Carol Service Tea-Time Concert	Year 3 & 4 Musical Hastings International Music Festival Spring Concert Tea-Time Concert	Year 8 Musical Tea-Time Concert

Sport

The School aims to provide a broad and varied sporting experience for all pupils.

Teams in all age groups compete in inter-school matches, which take place on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, as well as Saturdays. The School ensures that all children are given a chance to play in fixtures against other schools.

There is a main sporting focus each term (see below), with this being augmented by a varied PE curriculum. The pupils have lessons in swimming, basketball, gymnastics, badminton, volleyball, small-sided games, tennis, golf, athletics, and fitness testing.

Vinehall also enters several major sport IAPS competitions, such as netball and hockey, and takes part in more specialist competitions, including Slalom Skiing, Clay Pigeon Shooting and Equestrian Events.

	Michaelmas	Lent	Summer
Boys	Football Rugby	Rugby Hockey	Cricket Athletics Tennis
Girls	Hockey	Netball Football	Cricket Athletics Tennis

The Pre-Prep School Curriculum

The total learning experience for our pupils includes not only the taught lessons of the curriculum but also the routines, behaviours, activities, and events that our pupils experience daily to ensure that all of them make the best progress possible from their starting points and attain high outcomes. Social and emotional wellbeing is seen as pivotal to the progress of each child and our curriculum is child centred, from the topics chosen to its delivery. The child’s voice helps to steer our medium-term planning to ensure engagement and to determine next steps.

Co-curricular

A wide range of activities are used to enrich the timetabled curriculum. Our pupils are encouraged to take part in an extensive range of art, drama, music, sport, Forest School, and clubs. Themed days and weeks are held across the school year. These include World Book Day, French Day, Science Week, a Book Fair, Anti-Bullying Week, mental health awareness and fundraising events.

Pupils are taken to places of interest on a regular basis. Visits are organised to enhance our learning journey topics, and include opportunities to develop independence, teamwork, and responsibility.

Children are given the opportunity to learn a range of musical instruments. Children may begin individual piano lessons from Year 1. In Year 2, the children experience learning the harp and the recorder. Once they progress to Prep school, a wide range of instruments is offered, from tenor horn to the harp or saxophone.

Other opportunities

Our school aims to provide an education for life. Other aspects of our curriculum which enable our pupils to gain the skills, knowledge, and experience to be successful adults include representing the School Council, the Academic Committee, and the Eco Committee. The children in the Pre-Prep join with the children in the Prep School for these committees.

Timetabling the Curriculum in Pre-Prep

A balanced curriculum gives the children opportunities to develop in all aspects of school life. We strive to provide a wide range of experiences and activities in all learning areas, including specialist teaching in French, music, art, computing, gym, ball skills, and swimming.

Key Stage 1: Allocation teaching Time/minutes per week

	Year 1	Year 2
Maths	5 hrs	5 hrs
English incl. Phonics	6 hrs 20mins	6 hrs 20mins
Learning Journey (Science and Humanities)	2 hrs	2 hrs
PSHE/RE	1 hr	1 hr 10 mins
Physical Education	2 hrs	2 hrs
Music	1 hr	1 hr
Art	1 hr	1 hr
ICT	1 hr	1 hr
French	20 mins	20 mins
Swimming	1 hr	1 hr

The Early Years Curriculum

Our topic-based curriculum can change each academic year to suit the cohort. The EYFS framework, which is based on seven areas of learning and development, helps inform next steps and outcomes. We also support children in demonstrating the **three characteristics of effective learning**. Though these characteristics do not appear in the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1, at Vinehall we continue growing these behaviours throughout their time at school. For more information, [please see the Teaching and Learning Policy](#).

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. They consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences both inside and outside. Our experienced Early Years practitioners may also employ “in the moment” planning which arises from observing and interacting with children as they pursue their own interests and then assessing and moving the learning on in that moment. The Learning Journey captures the children’s learning and experiences throughout the year.

Teachers plan their timetables to include:

- opportunities for child-initiated and adult-led activities
- focus activities for individual pupils and small groups
- a balance of indoor, outdoor, and free flow activities
- specialist teachers to enrich the curriculum – French, gym, music, swimming, ball skills and Forest School

- using the facilities available – outdoor learning, vegetable garden, sports hall and pool
- special days, visitors and trips