

ST AMBROSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL



CURRICULUM POLICY

September 2023

Review: September 2024

This policy has been written in consultation with staff and governors of St. Ambrose Preparatory School and with due regard to the school's mission statement:

At St Ambrose we aim to provide an independent Catholic education for boys and girls of all faiths aged 3 to 11; St Ambrose is an inclusive school where the Gospel teachings and our school values are at the centre of everything that happens in our school family. At St Ambrose we strive to develop happy, fulfilled, well educated, confident and caring children who know and understand the love, joy and peace of Jesus; and to show our Faith by the way we live, showing care and consideration for each other, those around us and the environment.

Our Vision

Our Vision is to be an exemplar Edmund Rice School, with an enviable reputation amongst our peers, both as an organisation and for the services and facilities we provide, making us first choice for parents and pupils in our geographic area.

Our Ethos & Values

At St Ambrose we provide a Catholic school community in which pupils feel welcome, safe, recognised for their individuality – supported by a community of love, and affection. We strive to live the Gospel in all aspects of school life and policy, following Blessed Edmund's footsteps.

CURRICULUM POLICY

The Governing Body of St Ambrose Preparatory School understands its regulatory responsibilities and will maintain an effective oversight of this policy, by evaluating its effectiveness, and reviewing and implementing change.

Regulatory context

This policy is written with due regard to the requirements in paragraph 2 of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. This requires that the school provides:

- a) A written policy, with plans and schemes of work which take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including any pupils with an EHC plan
- b) these do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- c) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education
- d) the acquisition of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills
- e) personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aim and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
- f) where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, 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
- g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities, which is appropriate to their needs
- h) all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress
- i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

School Curriculum Statement

We believe it is vital that the school has a broad and balanced curriculum which furthers the well-being and the personal and social development of the pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

We recognise that all subjects contribute to the development of the basic skills of Speaking, Listening, Literacy and Numeracy. The careful planning and management of the school curriculum also enables the school to raise standards, establish an entitlement for all pupils, establish teachers' expectations in each area of the curriculum, and promote public, and particularly parents' and carers' understanding of the curriculum.

The Curriculum Policy:

- sets the school curriculum at the centre of the School Development Plan
- secures equality of access and opportunity for each pupil
- informs the development and use of staff, equipment and other resources.
- ensures a broad balanced curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils

Aim

To manage the curriculum effectively in accordance with the vision and aims of the school in order to meet the needs and aspirations of all pupils.

Objectives

1. To maintain a written policy for the effective management of the curriculum.
2. To allocate responsibilities for curriculum management clearly and appropriately.
3. To maintain an effective school curriculum informed by the school's curricular aims and principles, which meets statutory requirements.
4. To group pupils according to a clear and appropriate rationale, which promotes the school's vision and aims and to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to learn and make progress.
5. To express the curriculum in the form of policies, schemes of work and lesson plans, which take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils.
6. To enrich the curriculum with a programme of extra-curricular activities.

7. To resource the curriculum appropriately.
8. To improve curriculum provision continuously through a process of review.
9. To monitor and review on a regular basis the policy and procedures for curriculum management.
10. To ensure pupils above compulsory school age are set a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs.
11. To ensure that the curriculum does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and effectively prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British Society.
12. EYFS: To follow the statutory elements of the EYFS framework supplemented with academic work based upon our unique school framework.

Objective 1. To maintain a written policy for the effective management of the curriculum.

The Curriculum Policy (i.e. this policy) sets out the school's curricular aims and principles and the manner by which statutory requirements are met.

Objective 2. To allocate responsibilities for curriculum management clearly and appropriately.

The **Governing Body** is responsible for approving the School's Curriculum Statement and Policies for each curriculum area, after they have been formulated by teachers.

The **Headteacher** is responsible for ensuring that long-term, medium-term, weekly and daily planning provides a wide range of challenging learning experiences, taking account of the learning needs of all pupils, and that effective teaching motivates and inspires all pupils to achieve their best work

Subject leaders are responsible for providing Schemes of Work (long term plans) in consultation with other members of staff, and provide guidance to other teachers in drawing up lesson plans.

Individual teachers are responsible for drawing up and carrying out medium term plans and individual lesson plans, based upon those Schemes of Work, outlining objectives, learning

opportunities and methods of assessment.

The Headteacher and subject leaders are also responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in each area of the curriculum.

Subject Leaders take responsibility for the following subjects:

- English (Literacy, Speaking, Verbal Reasoning and Listening)
- Mathematics (Numeracy)
- Science
- Art and Design
- Design Technology
- Humanities
- Computing
- Music
- P.E.
- Religious Education and Multicultural Education
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (including Citizenship)
- Relationships & Sex Education
- Early Years Foundation Stage
- Individual Education (including Gifted and Talented and SEND)
- Modern Foreign Languages

To develop staff confidence and competence when teaching each subject, subject leaders will:

- attend appropriate staff development activities
- identify with the Headteacher whole-school training needs resulting from the Monitoring and Evaluation programme and any performance management procedures to be put in place (see School Development Plan)
- arrange for appropriate advice and information from Staff Development activities and other sources to be disseminated, where appropriate these will be included in improvement planning and turned into practice
- arrange school-based training

Other areas of responsibility are assigned to staff for:

- Assessment
- First Aid
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding/Child protection

A list of assigned responsibilities can be seen at Appendix A

Objective 3. To maintain an effective school curriculum informed by the school's curricular aims, ethos and principles, which meets statutory requirements.

The school acknowledges the flexibility afforded to it which enables it to fashion its own curriculum in a creative and innovative way, and takes these components as its starting point when designing and timetabling its curriculum – a curriculum which reflects the school's values, aims and aspirations and which is right for its children and the community it serves.

The school is committed to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children which:

- promotes their spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development;
- prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act(a)
- actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in school
- ensures that political issues are brought to the pupils' attention and that a balanced presentation of opposing views is offered.

The curriculum for Key Stages 1 & 2 gives pupils experience in linguistics, mathematics, science, technology, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative education as specified in the Schemes of Work, together with Religious Education and PHSE. PHSE is addressed through timetable sessions. The school acknowledges the flexibility afforded to it which enables it to fashion its own curriculum in a creative and innovative way, and takes these components as its starting point when

Curriculum Policy

designing and timetabling its curriculum – a curriculum which reflects the school's values, aims and aspirations and which is right for its children and the community it serves. The challenge is to customise this basic entitlement to learning, and, in the context of Government policies and initiatives, create its own distinctive and unique curriculum to reflect its aims and priorities. We also acknowledge national days/weeks such as Mental Health Day/week, Anti-bullying day, Religious days, Black History Month.

Subject policies are updated annually and stored on the shared drive for all staff to access.

Our **English** lessons develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary. Literacy is taught discretely and in a cross-curricular way, linking up with other areas of the curriculum. We teach our pupils to speak clearly, to convey their ideas fluently and confidently and to ask questions. Their vocabulary is developed systematically. Our pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and to read widely. English lessons are taught daily.

In **Mathematics** our teachers ensure that mathematical skills are taught every day. They also use every relevant subject to develop pupils' mathematical fluency. Our pupils understand the importance of mathematics, are encouraged to be confident in numeracy and to apply the skills that they learn to simple problem solving.

Science is taught as a separate lesson from Infant 1 to Prep 4 but in EYFS may be linked to our topic work where appropriate. We will encourage our pupils to be curious about natural phenomenon and to be excited by the process of understanding the world around them.

We emphasise the transformational power and impact of **creative subjects and the arts** as a vehicle for developing emotional intelligence, confidence, resilience and communication skills. We see art as a vehicle for creativity and individual expression and it provides opportunities for collaborative work. It is an important form of cultural expression and, therefore, has significance and meaning for all our children.

We do have discreet timetable time for the development of **Computing** skills (once a week from Reception to Prep 4) but our approach is to integrate ICT into all lessons: the use of iPads and other hardware is as much part of our learning tools as pencils and pens. Subject specific software, from one-off programmes to learning platforms, support teaching and learning across all years.

Modern Foreign Language (French) is introduced from EYFS. Pupils study French until Prep 4. Our approach is to make learning a new language fun! Young pupils are very receptive to learning

a new language; they like to mimic pronunciation and they can easily pick up and duplicate new sounds. They feel a real sense of accomplishment when they learn to say something new.

In their **Music** lessons pupils use their voices expressively and creatively by singing songs and speaking chants and rhymes. Pupils will also be taught to play a variety of instruments musically

and encouraged to play together in ensemble groups. We encourage listening to a wide range of music with concentration and understanding.

Some form of physical activity takes place every day. **PE** sessions focus on mastering basic movements including running, jumping, throwing and catching, as well as developing balance, agility and co-ordination. Early Years and Infant pupils have 2 PE sessions a week and Junior pupils have 1 PE session or a swimming/water polo session plus a double games session. Pupils are encouraged to participate in team games and to develop simple tactics for being an effective team member. Indoor PE is held in one of our large hall spaces and includes dance, apparatus work and gymnastics.

We often use topics in the Early Years and Infants to deliver **humanities** subject skills and understanding. In the Juniors, History and Geography are taught discreetly and rotated each half term. Our topic programme is carefully balanced and planned to be age appropriate across the years. Topic maps are produced to show how each is taught, the knowledge and skills covered and links to other parts of the curriculum. It is important to us that where appropriate art, music, literacy and numeracy and science are linked in topic teaching. Our topics have a **history** and **geography** base so that we teach location and place knowledge, weather and climate skills and knowledge and about significant historical events, people and places in our own locality.

PHSE and citizenship underpin all of our curriculum learning and provide opportunities for pupils to engage in broader skills relating to morality, health and team work. In our programmes we actively promote British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs to prepare our pupils for life in modern day Britain. Our citizenship lessons enable our pupils to understand the British democratic process and how to effect peaceful changes in society. All our year groups have timetabled PHSE time but we encourage a cross-curricular approach to the development of PHSE skills and understanding. We follow a scheme of work called Jigsaw, from the EYFS to Prep 4.

We teach **Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)** using the resource called A Journey in Love. *It is the recommended programme of study for Catholic schools for Sex and Relationship Education,*

Curriculum Policy

and has been written as a progressive scheme of work that supports the Religious Education, PSHE and Science curricula taught within the school. Throughout *A Journey In Love*, an aspect of the mystery of love is focussed upon in each group. Children and young people are encouraged to marvel at the wonder and beauty of God's creative love. This is reflected in each stage of a person's growth in the Primary Years through a series of suggested, progressive and developmental tasks, activities and reflections which focus on physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development. As with all aspects of learning, children are naturally curious and many will have questions related to their lessons. Opportunities to discuss questions form part of the lessons and again these are treated with care and understanding. *A Journey In Love* highlights the importance of parental input and children will be told to discuss their lessons at home.

Religious Education lessons are taught from EYFS to Prep 4 using the Catholic Scheme of work 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'. 10% of available teaching time each week is dedicated to this scheme of work. Religious Education is integrated in all we do in school e.g. assemblies, Collective Worship, daily prayers, celebration of Holy days, Mass. As part of the PHSE and RE Curriculum St. Ambrose Preparatory School has adopted a Multi Faith Week which usually takes place during the Spring or Summer Term.

Objective 4. To group pupils according to a clear and appropriate rationale, which promotes the school's vision and aims and to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to learn and make progress.

Class Placement Policy

There are 6 year groups plus Nursery and Reception. Each year group has one class apart from Prep 4, which for the academic year of 2023-2024 will have two.

Children can be accepted into the Nursery in the term following their third birthday and into Reception in the September following their 4th birthday.

Maximum Class sizes are:

Nursery	-	16
Reception, Infant 1 and Infant 2	-	20
P1, P2, P3, P4	-	22

Grouping within Classes

All classes are mixed ability groupings. Teachers use their professional judgement to group children as necessary in lessons. Targets for pupils are set and regularly reviewed. Some pupils are given support by focusing on subject specific language and high frequency words to ensure quick access to the curriculum. The advice and expertise of external agencies is sought and used as appropriate.

Objective 5. To express the curriculum in the form of policies, schemes of work and lesson plans, which take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils.

Policies are developed following a framework, agreed by staff and approved by governors. Schemes of Work are drawn up by the subject leaders after consultation with staff, and show the means by which Programmes of Study are followed in the school.

Lesson Plans are drawn up by individual teachers. These show the aims, objectives and principles of the School Curriculum Policy for all lessons, and are usually derived from the Schemes of Work. Lesson plans include differentiation if appropriate and how pupils will be assessed. Schemes of Work are reviewed regularly and developed in the light of experience and the needs of the school at any given time.

Objective 6. To enrich the Curriculum with a Programme of Extra-Curricular Activities Lunchtime and After School Clubs and Activities

Such activities are arranged to extend activities already undertaken as part of the Curriculum or to introduce further leisure or sporting activities for the benefit of all pupils - or of pupils of appropriate ages within limits of safety and manageable numbers.

The following activities are arranged whenever possible, at appropriate times: gardening, nature, chess, computers, recorders, football, tennis, rugby, cricket, golf, steel pans, art, drama, choir, orchestra, craft and music.

Visiting speakers are used to enhance the curriculum e.g. Multi Faith week. All voluntary helpers and visiting speakers are vetted according to the School's Safer Recruitment Policy.

Other Activities

Individual music lessons are arranged with the School's Peripatetic Music Teachers. These lessons

Curriculum Policy

usually take place during the school day, including in normal lesson times. They are undertaken on the understanding that children may miss other lessons in the curriculum as a result of their parents' choice to arrange lessons within school time.

Objective 7. To resource the curriculum appropriately

As part of their monitoring and evaluation activities, subject leaders will review the resources available in school and according to the yearly budget will acquire resources as appropriate.

Objective 8. To improve curriculum provision continuously through a process of review.

Aspects of the five core areas of RE, English, Mathematics, Science and Computing will be reviewed in each financial year, and aspects of all other subject areas reviewed as needs are identified, but no later than three years from the last review.

Issues arising from ISI, where applicable, may also become priorities for curriculum improvement. Other priorities for improvement will be introduced from time to time, such as the 'PHSE' initiatives.

Objective 9. To monitor and review on a regular basis the policy and procedures for curriculum management

The Headteacher and Governing Body in consultation with staff agree the School Development Plan and the priorities for curriculum improvement.

Objective 10. To ensure pupils above compulsory school age are set a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs.

Standardised assessments of English and maths are carried out each term using a number of different tests. Assessments are also made with regard to other external influences, e.g. Entrance examination results. These are all used to ascertain the quality of the curriculum being offered and to ensure it meets the needs of pupils and enables good progress.

Objective 11. To ensure that the curriculum does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and effectively

prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British Society.

As part of all that the school does, we aim to develop in every young person the values, skills and behaviours required for life in a British Society. All children will receive a rich provision of classroom and extra-curricular activities which develop a range of character attributes, such as resilience and grit, which underpins success in education and future life. Any behaviour which undermines these core beliefs is always challenged.

Objective 12. EYFS To follow the statutory elements of the EYFS framework supplemented with academic work based upon our unique school framework.

In the Early Years, we have developed a curriculum based around the Early Years Statutory Framework. This Framework provides several areas of learning. Literacy and mathematics are given main priority in terms of teaching time to reflect their status as core subjects.

These areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

High expectations enable pupils to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We also include the learning of a modern foreign language, music, drama and ICT skills in our curriculum. Free Flow Play is an important part of the weekly timetable. In the Early Years, the curriculum is mainly delivered by teachers to their own classes, although in some areas such as music and PE they are delivered by a specialist teacher. We have specialist teachers for Computing, French, PE, Games and Music.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the subject leader and Headteacher. This policy will also be reviewed in light of any changes to statutory guidance, feedback staff or pupils, and issues in the school or local area that may need addressing.

The governing board is responsible for approving this policy. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff, parents and, where necessary, pupils.

Policy reviewed by:	Mrs. M. Cooke
Review Date:	September 2023
Next Review Due:	September 2024

Appendix A**Subject Leader Areas of Responsibility 2023 – 2024**

Name	Position	Responsibility
Ms Sara Heron	Head	Whole School
Ms Sinead Aldridge	Deputy Head/Prep 1	DSL/SEND/Health and Safety
Mrs Marie Claire Cooke	Assistant Head/Prep 3	Curriculum/RE/SMSC/PHSE
Mrs Julie Conroy	SLT/Infant 1	EYFS Lead/Art & DT/EYFS/KS1 English Subject Leader
Mrs Louise Fielding	Prep 2	English/NVR/Science Subject Leader
Mrs Georgina Ostick	Prep 3	SEND/RE/RSE/SMSC
Miss Demi Leigh Clarke	Nursery Lead	PHSE with Mrs Cooke
Miss Claire O’Sullivan	Reception	History and Geography Leader
Mrs Laura Ellis	Prep 4	Maths Subject Leader
Mr. Rory Fallon	Computing and Sport	Head of Sport and Computing
Mrs Abigail Green	Music	Head of Music
Mrs. Julie Tourigny	Modern Foreign Languages	MFL Subject Leader
Mrs Antonia Gillespie	Sport	Girls’ PE/Games