



1. **Aims of the curriculum**

a. At The Chorister School we seek to provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment where pupils are motivated to learn, are valued as individuals and encouraged to reach their full potential.

b. In our curriculum we provide:

- early years supervised education for pupils of pre-school age, which gives children experiences in developing the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes that they require as foundations for good future progress and is appropriate for their needs
- full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age, which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education
- a programme of activities and subject matter which is appropriate to pupils' educational needs in relation to personal, social, economic and physical development and communication and language skills – including, if appropriate, those pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- pupils with the opportunity to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy
- personal, social and health education which reflects the school's aims and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act
- access to accurate up-to-date careers guidance for pupils in Years 7 and 8
- all pupils with the opportunity to learn and make progress including those with special educational needs
- adequate preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

c. In order to carry this out, we aim for all our pupils to:

- achieve high standards across the curriculum
- acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to the changing world in which they live
- respect and value themselves, other people and the environment
- develop enquiring minds with motivation to learn
- work independently and collaboratively
- take responsibility for their own actions and make informed choices
- have well developed communication and social skills
- have self-confidence and high self-esteem
- recognise themselves as citizens of the wider world

- extend themselves in mind, body and spirit
- d. To achieve these aims we provide the following:
- a welcoming, stimulating and safe learning environment
  - high expectations of our pupils and ourselves
  - a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum
  - high quality teaching using a variety of teaching strategies with differentiation of work in lessons and prep to cater for the needs of all children and pupil groupings based on ability
  - a range of resources that are effectively used to support learning
  - equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life
  - support, guidance and training for all those who teach and work with our pupils
  - we develop and maintain active partnerships between teachers and pupils, school and home, we foster and maintain links with our local and the wider community
  - we recognise and celebrate achievements in all areas of school life
  - we work enthusiastically together to achieve our aims

e. We aim for all the pupils in the school to follow a full curriculum and the highest standards are sought in all areas. There are policy statements on specific subject areas, devised by staff which may be viewed in school. The curriculum tries to foster the development of key skills in communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, inquiry, investigation and analysis, and social and personal awareness and interaction. In particular, it places key emphasis on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. In all lessons British values are promoted (SMSC).

f. The curriculum aims to ensure that pupils' experience of school will lead them to value and enjoy learning and develop the ability and the motivation to learn independently. The curriculum emphasises the need for greater attention to be paid to pupils who have special educational needs and emphasises the importance of achieving functional literacy and numeracy. The SENCo and Learning Support Department ensure that Learning Support Plans are provided for any pupils with significant learning difficulties or disabilities and, where required, may be provided for pupils whom English is an additional language. These plans are reviewed annually and the required curriculum is provided as set out in the statement. In addition the curriculum draws attention to the needs of gifted pupils.

## **2. Organisation of the curriculum, and how this helps us fulfil our aims**

### **a. Subjects**

We initially follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and thereafter study all National Curriculum subjects at KS1 and KS2, as well as RE. French is introduced from Reception, and Latin from Year 4. KS3 pupils follow Common Entrance courses in English, Mathematics, Science, French, Latin, History, Geography and RE. This curriculum is enriched by the study of Art, DT, Music, ICT, PE, Games and PSHCE, which is delivered in pastoral time as well as through the wider curriculum.

We therefore provide the following areas of experience:

**Linguistic** We develop pupils' communication skills and increase their command of the English language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. We also teach French to all pupils and Latin, or Classical Studies, from Year 4. The opportunity exists for individual pupils to take elementary courses in other languages, if this is beneficial to them in facilitating transfer at the age of 13. Pupils have done so in recent years in German, Mandarin and Greek.

**Mathematical** We help pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics is developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion

**Scientific** We increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and develop the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording findings.

**Technological** We develop pupils' technological skills through the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and design technology (DT). This allows pupils to develop, plan and communicate ideas and to work with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products and to evaluate processes and products.

**Human and social** We increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of people and the environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions through the study of history and geography.

**Physical** We help pupils develop their physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses, and to help them evaluate and improve their performance while taking part in games, swimming and PE. We also ensure pupils acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health.

**Aesthetic and creative** We encourage pupils in the processes of making, composing and inventing. There are aesthetic and creative aspects of all subjects, but art, music, the study of literature, dance and drama all make a very strong contribution to this area of the curriculum since they all call for personal, imaginative, and often practical, responses.

**Careers education** We introduce the world of work by asking people with different careers and interests to visit, meet and discuss their work with the pupils.. In this way pupils may start to know themselves and how their own strengths, weaknesses and interests relate to the world of work. We wish all pupils to fulfil their potential and we work to prevent all forms of stereotyping in the advice and guidance provided.

The Critical thinking programme includes careers guidance to help pupils to start considering a broad range of career options, and advice which may help encourage pupils to fulfil their potential.

The school has a career's programme and has appointed a Careers Leader to lead the careers programme for pupils from Form Five.

In recent years parents and ex pupils have been invited to make presentations to Forms 5 and 6 about their chosen career paths – these have included presentations on careers as a designer, a lawyer, a research scientist, an ethical financier, the army and the priesthood.

The annual Field Day excursions, for the whole school, are not curriculum based and offer an insight into places such as the Houses of Parliament.

### 3. Lesson allocations

#### **Early Years Foundation Stage (Pre-School and Purple Class Reception)**

##### **Areas of Learning**

Our EYFS provision complies with the Revised Statutory EYFS framework for children's learning, development and welfare.

The curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning and development, which are all equally important and interconnected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

We also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

When delivering the curriculum we consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child, using the information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each individual in all areas of learning and development.

In Pre-School, none of the areas are delivered in isolation from the others. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities throughout the Pre-School sessions.

In Purple Class, a similar balance of adult led and child-initiated activities occurs. However, the morning sessions concentrate further on allowing time for more structured Literacy and Mathematics based activities in preparation for the Pre-Prep learning environment. After school childcare is provided and it is appropriate, safe and stimulating for the EYFS pupils.

In planning and guiding the children's activities, Pre-School and Purple Class staff are also dedicated to reflecting on and extending activities in response to the different ways that children learn. There is a strong emphasis on the following three 'Characteristics of effective teaching and learning';

**Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

**Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

**Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between, and develop strategies for doing things.

### **Pre-Prep - Silver and Gold (Year 1 & Year 2)**

In Year 1 and 2 'Topic' will integrate Science, History and Geography. They may also be taught as separate subjects.

Reference is made to the requirements of the National Curriculum when planning but due to the small classes it is usual for teachers to plan activities which will challenge and extend the learning of the pupils beyond the scope of the National Curriculum.

The curriculum not only allows children to develop academically; emotional, social, spiritual and physical development is considered to be just as important. Provision is made within the timetable, in the planning of lessons and in the promotion of the Christian ethos to allow children to grow and develop as they progress through the Pre-Prep.

The Pre-Prep team regularly monitor the curriculum and timetable making additions and amendments where necessary. Pre-Prep teaching staff also liaise with subject co-ordinators in the Prep School to ensure continuity and progression. Teachers with specialisms in Art, Music, DT and PE teach in the Pre-Prep.

From purple class onwards our curriculum is supported at all levels by **prep** (homework). Our aims in setting prep are:

- to inspire enthusiasm for, and to consolidate the delivery in class of, knowledge, understanding or skills according to the relevant schemes of work.
- to instil in pupils good habits of independent study and planning of time.

## **Prep School**

Daily there are eight 35 minute lessons and one 30 minute lesson. There is a Form Tutor period of 30 minutes each morning and 5 minutes each afternoon. Each week there are two school assemblies, one House Meeting, one PSHCE lesson and one Senior or Middle School assembly. Each class has three 15 minute reading periods a week.

The allocation of time to different parts of the curriculum is undertaken in consideration of QCA recommendations as well as the particular needs of our pupils in differing age groups, and with particular circumstances. The curriculum aims to make the most purposeful possible use of academic time. Allocation of lessons for younger pupils aims to allow pupils the opportunity to develop key skills while stimulating curiosity and academic interest; in addition to this, lesson allocation for older pupils is made in order to maximise the potential for pupils' successful fulfilment of the demands of Common Entrance or Scholarship examinations.

Critical thinking is studied by Forms 5 and 6; the lessons include study skills, ICT, visiting speakers, creative learning and outside tours.

### **4. Pupil groupings in the Prep School**

Pupils in Forms 1 and 2 have informal teaching groups for Maths and English.

From the Third Form pupils are put into mixed tutor groups. However, their teaching groups are based on Maths and English attainment and ability. In the Fifth Form and Sixth Form there are three tutor groups, allowing the choristers to be in a separate tutor group, mainly for administrative purposes.

In the Sixth Form the most able are taught core subjects separately as a scholarship group (6S).

Differentiation is provided by support and a range of strategies from teachers and the Learning Support Department.

### **5. Teaching and learning**

The teaching at our school:

- enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
- fosters in pupils the application of intellectual, physical or creative effort, interest in their work, and the ability to think and learn for themselves
- involves well-planned lessons, effective teaching methods, suitable activities and wise management of class time
- shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs, prior attainments and Learning Support Plans of the pupils, and ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons

- Takes into account, in planning and delivery, the specific needs of pupils with an Education and Health Care Plan.
- demonstrates appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught
- utilises effectively classroom resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range
- has a framework in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress
- utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to behave responsibly.

## **6. Staffing**

Teachers are qualified appropriately both for the subject and the age of their pupils. This is a particular strength of the school.

Teaching staff are supported by the Learning Support Department, who support the learning of individual pupils both within and outside of lessons, and by the Gifted and Talented Programme. In the Pre-Prep and EYFS, teaching assistants support the work of class teachers.

Up to and including Gold (Year 2), pupils are taught predominantly by form teachers, with specialist tuition in Art, Music, DT, PE and Swimming. Pupils in the First (Year 3) and Second (Year 4) Forms are taught by a small team of junior teachers for English, Maths, Science, French, Geography and RE, with specialist tuition in other subjects. From the Third Form (Year 5) onwards, each subject is delivered by a specialist, who usually takes responsibility for the teaching of their subject throughout the school.

## **7. Management and staff development**

The Deputy Head is responsible for the management of the curriculum. Each academic subject is led by a designated member of staff, who has particular expertise in that subject, who takes responsibility for the development of departmental policies and schemes of work, as well as the departmental budget and liaison with other members of the department.

Opportunities for sharing good practice exist informally and formally through the annual appraisal system. Staff set targets pertaining to their own curricular subject and evaluate them. Support is available for staff wishing to participate in a variety of professional training courses.

## **8. References to further policies and Documents**

The following policies provide information relevant to the academic curriculum and can be found on our website ([www.thechoristerschool.com](http://www.thechoristerschool.com)) :

Admissions Policy

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Learning Support Policy

Rewards, Discipline and Sanctions Policy

Gifted and Talented Policy

The following information is also available in the Policies Section on our website ([www.thechoristerschool.com](http://www.thechoristerschool.com)):

Staff List

Academic Performance

You may also like to see the current School Timetable.

## 9. **Review**

This policy is updated regularly and will be reviewed in October 2019.