



ORWELL PARK SCHOOL

Nacton, Ipswich IP10 0ER

CURRICULUM POLICY

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I. AIMS AND ETHOS

Orwell Park ('the School') welcomes children with a very wide range of talents and abilities. We recognise and celebrate the fact that every child comes as a unique person who needs to be nurtured and encouraged and our aim is to meet their differing academic needs and help them to achieve their full potential. By recognising and valuing difference and treating everyone with dignity and respect, we strive to create a truly effective learning environment, that has a positive impact on pupils' lives. Our EDI vision is to become a place that embraces, enables, and champions equality, diversity, and inclusion, and this includes the content of our curriculum and the way it is delivered.

Academic study forms the core of the education process at the School and we aim to make every learning experience as challenging and exciting as possible, encouraging our children to think, question and discuss. We work very hard to make the atmosphere in the classroom and other learning areas friendly, stimulating and supportive, so that each child feels valued, and able to contribute without fear of failure or ridicule if they 'get it wrong'. These principles, which are augmented by the Growth Mindset programme and have been established for the whole Orwell Park community (ie parents, their children and teachers), enable our pupils to be more resilient, and through active, open-minded participation, to become the best that they can be.

Our broad co-curricular programme supports and augments the academic programme. Pupils are able to take part in a variety of activities in sports, music and drama throughout the week. Each year, day and residential trips are organised to support the curriculum and expose children to the wider world. This policy focuses on the academic curriculum at Orwell Park.

We firmly believe that immediate recognition of instances of good effort and / or achievement, in the form of verbal praise and encouragement is one of the most powerful ways to motivate a child to learn and to build confidence and self-belief. We also have a reward system to recognise particular instances of good effort or achievement.

This policy refers to the whole school, including the Early Years.

2. THE CURRICULUM

Pre-Prep (including the Early Years Foundation Stage)

The Pre-Prep is organised into year groups:

- Nursery 1 (starting at age 2+)
- Nursery 2 (3+)
- Reception (4+)
- Year 1 (5+) (National Curriculum Year 1)
- Year 2 (6+) (National Curriculum Year 2)

Nursery 1, Nursery 2 and Reception follow the EYFS statutory framework effective from 1st September 2021, from age 2 to 5. The children are taught the prime areas, namely Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development and develop their

skills within the specific areas of Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils are taught English, Maths, Science and Humanities, as well as Critical Thinking, Music, Dance, Life Skills, RSE, PE & DT. French and Digital Skills lessons further complement the Pre-Prep curriculum from Nursery to Year 2. Parents receive a termly Learning Poster, detailing subjects covered. Regular curriculum updates are posted on Tapestry and parents can see progression and feel a part of their child's learning.

Full details of the curriculum and other matters specifically relating to the Pre-Prep are given in the Pre-Prep Information booklets, which are issued to all Pre-Prep Parents. As Tapestry provides full details, this is used as an up-to-date reference for all.

Middle School

The Middle School is organised into three year groups, starting with Year 3 and followed by Year 4 and Year 5.

Middle School pupils are taught in a mixed ability group by their own class Teacher for most subjects and are supported by a teaching assistant in some lessons. There is setting for Maths in Year 5. The class teacher is responsible for the timetable within the class and though the National Curriculum forms the basis of the teaching, our curriculum is considerably broader. In Years 3-5 the children's Class Teacher is also their Tutor. Specialist teaching takes place in the following subjects: Art, French, DT, Digital Skills, Music and PE.

Middle School pupils undertake a start of unit and end of unit assessments in maths and science. For English the Pie Corbett Talk 4 Writing approach is used and with this the pupils are assessed on a Cold Task, Amber Task and then a Big Write. The pupils are assessed on a system of Bands and Steps in all 3 core subjects.

Full details of the curriculum and other matters specifically relating to the Middle School are given in the Middle School Information booklets, which are issued to all Middle School Parents.

Senior School

The Senior School is organised into three year groups: Year 6, Year 7 and Year 8.

Senior School pupils are taught by subject specialists. There are three subject blocks and pupils are set within these subject blocks according to their potential in the subject areas (English and Humanities block, Maths and Science block, and Languages block). In addition, there is a mixed ability block consisting of non-examined subjects such as DT, Digital Skills, Art and PE. In Year 8, academic scholars are streamed for examined subjects and join the "8S" class (further information on this can be found in section 6 (Scholarships and potential Scholars).

Years 7 and 8 pupils follow a two-year course leading to the Common Entrance examinations set by the Independent Schools Examinations Board for 13+ entry to public schools or Academic

Scholarship examinations. Some Senior Schools use Common Academic Scholarship Papers, set by ISEB, whilst others set their own papers.

The examined subjects at Common Entrance (CE) are English, Mathematics, French, Science, History, Geography and TPR. Latin is an optional subject but one which Orwell Park pupils are expected to take, unless there is a good reason for them not to. In addition to the CE subjects, the children have timetabled lessons in PE, Design and Technology, Art, Music, Drama, Life Skills, Critical Thinking (from Year 1 to Year 8), and Digital Skills (also taught within subjects across the curriculum). It is our belief that children should learn to use digital resources naturally when the need arises. All pupils in Years 3 to 8 have their own iPad and are encouraged to use it (or computers) in lessons as directed by their teachers, or in their free time for individual research and investigations.

3. ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Fundamental Values

Orwell Park is committed to reinforcing the fundamental British values of tolerance, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect for, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith. Though we aim to challenge discriminatory and extremist concepts specifically in Life Skills lessons, we also strive to support core British values throughout the day, in assemblies and tutorials and in all other areas of the curriculum, including trips and visits. We strive to promote diversity, cultural awareness and global citizenship and this is exemplified by our annual exchange with Mayo College, India.

We monitor pupils' interactions in lessons, tutorials and in the Boarding House to ensure that they understand, respect and operate within the principles set out in the Prevent Strategy. We encourage staff and visiting speakers to ensure they remain impartial and inclusive in their delivery, and do not expose pupils to partisan views.

Children in the Pre-Prep have a weekly assembly which focuses on British Values and the School Values of Integrity, Kindness, Collaboration, Courage, Spirit and Respect. The Pre-Prep Deputy DSL also does a weekly safeguarding assembly.

Middle School and whole school assemblies and chapel services focus on the school values and pupils are encouraged to be outstanding ambassadors for the school at all times, using the values as a scaffold.

Literacy

The ability to read well and acquire good comprehension skills not only enables children to access fully the curriculum, but also opens doors to whole new worlds of imagination, creativity and inspiration. We encourage all our children to develop a passion for reading and a reading period is included as part of the daily School timetable. Activities during these periods include individual silent reading, paired reading with other pupils and reading to a member of the academic staff.

Some lessons take place in the School Library, which is stocked with a wide variety of books and

other reading materials. The children are also encouraged to have a book 'on the go' at all times and to read as often as possible. Book Fairs are also a regular feature of the School calendar.

The Middle School has a reading spine made up of various genres, celebrating diversity and different cultures. The pupils are encouraged to read from the spine, giving broad, inspiring reading experiences. There is a wide range of reading within the curriculum, ensuring all pupils experience enrichment through reading.

Pre-Prep children have 'Talk4Writing' as a scheme to support their early writing. They learn, from Nursery, to follow story maps, acting out stories and reciting key phrases. From this, children can sequence stories, complete comprehension tasks and become confident in speaking and writing.

Areas of experience

All required areas of experience, namely Linguistic, Mathematical, Scientific, Technological, Human and Social, Physical and Aesthetic and Creative are covered within the curriculum throughout the School, from Year 1 to Year 8.

At EYFS level, the curriculum includes all areas of learning and development, as defined by the EYFS Foundation Stage. 'In the Moment' Planning is key, with teachers noticing the interests of their children and planning to enrich learning. Educational rigour is expected; from Nursery onwards, children are encouraged to be 'Outstanding' and enjoy their learning.

Digital Skills/Computing

Digital Skills form an integral part of teaching and learning at Orwell Park, and all children in Years 3-8 have access to their own individual iPad, as an integrated learning tool and to access the Internet for individual research and exploration. Children in Pre-Prep have regular access to iPads and they use them to research, carry out their digital skills sessions, and film dramatic presentations for English and Topic work. Online Safety is regularly discussed, in lessons and assemblies. The School makes every effort to keep children's electronic devices safe, but does not accept responsibility for them.

Use of the Internet by pupils is closely monitored and controlled by staff and the rules of Internet use are made very clear to all our children.

Children are guided towards websites suitable and appropriate for their age and stage of development. Everybody is well aware that the Internet contains numerous sites that are unsuitable, and sometimes potentially harmful to children. The connection to the School's computers is filtered by our server Lightspeed Relay, and any pupil found attempting to view, copy or distribute unsuitable materials will be subject to sanctions that may include permanent termination of their Internet account.

All children in the Prep School (Years 3-8) and their parents sign an Internet agreement. We do not allow the children to play computer games, except those that have a genuine educational element and these may only be played in free time during the evening or at weekends.

The use of computers and/or iPads is also integrated into the teaching of all subjects across the curriculum. We have individual subject software for all subjects and all our children are taught to be competent and confident in the use of emails, word processing, spreadsheets, databases, computer-aided design (CAD), presentation software, desk-top publishing and the Internet.

We have two Digital suites of 18 computers and some class sets of iPads for use in the Pre-Prep. All classrooms are also equipped with an interactive panel.

Computing is taught as a discrete subject, Digital Skills, and is also incorporated into the teaching of all subjects across the curriculum. This includes:

- Use of computers/iPads for design and display work.
- Use of the Internet for independent research.
- Imaginative and creative use of Smart Boards/Panels
- Use of laptops as part of Learning Support.
- Use of educational television programmes, as part of lessons.
- Cross-curricular teaching in the form of STEM lessons at KS3 level.

Pupils are frequently reminded, in lessons and tutorials, of the need to acknowledge all sources and to indicate if extra help has been received with a specific piece of work.

Art and Design Technology

The Design and Technology department incorporates an Art and Pottery suite, Workshop, Design area, Food Technology room and two separate ICT areas. The children have timetabled lessons in Art and D&T each week and pupils in Years 3-5 also have Food Technology lessons. The children can also use these areas extensively out of lesson time (including during Activity time) and are encouraged to develop their interests in these areas. Pupils are briefed on health and safety in all lessons and activities which involve the use of specialised equipment or require a particular consideration to safety. In addition to this general teaching requirement, the programmes of study for each subject area above contain specific teaching requirements on health and safety.

Personal Social Health and Economic Education

PSHEE is promoted in a number of ways at Orwell Park. As well as discrete, weekly Life Skills lessons for all pupils from Reception to Year 8, spiritual, moral and cultural development is supported by assemblies, tutorials, chapel sessions and a termly programme of evening lectures (The Orangery Lectures), which all pupils, parents and the greater community are welcome to attend.

Orwell Park follows the Department for Education's statutory curriculum for Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, commonly shortened to RSE.

- We support three charities annually: this academic year it is the Green Light Trust, the Dogs Trust and the World Land Trust.

- We have set up Orwell Park Young Singers, where our pupils work on a weekly basis with children from local primary schools to prepare for a joint concert.
- We provide opportunities for leadership for pupils at Year 8, from Head Boy and Head Girl, Senior Prefects and Prefects, to Boarding Captains, Peer Listeners, librarians and House Captains, as well in earlier years eg pupil voice committees (school council, catering committee, boarders' forum, pupil academic focus group, eco-committee). We have also have sports team captains, though these are often rotated to give more children the opportunity to lead. Our success rate at leadership/all-round scholarships to senior schools is high and Old Orwellians often assume leadership roles at senior school (eg Head Girl and Deputy Head Girl at Uppingham this year).
- Many of our pupils thrive outside the classroom; with our own D of E programme – OPS Challenge – and the extensive Activities and Trips programme, which involves pupils working locally, nationally and internationally (including Mayo College, Rajasthan, India) to develop outdoor skills, resilience and leadership. The Year 7 Mayo exchange has been running for about 7 years and continued during the pandemic with shared online lessons and even online chess tournaments.
- Our Values, together with British values, encompassed in the artwork outside the Bursary, underpin all that we do, and the pupils learn about these in whole school and section assemblies, House assemblies, tutorials, and class discussion time.
- Our pastoral strength is underpinned by the preventative teaching throughout the curriculum, including Life Skills, Critical Thinking and TPR.
- This is a very cultural School, in which pupils have the highest possible opportunities in music performance, art, and drama; pupil work is also of an excellent standard. LAMDA lessons are very popular, though public speaking (and confidence through public speaking) has always been a key part of what we do (reading aloud competitions, poetry recitation competitions, public speaking competitions). Art, Music and Drama are a daily feature of life at Orwell.
- We greatly value to opportunity to come together weekly as a School, and to be quiet in Chapel; our Chaplain creates a short Service which is for all faiths and none but creates a period of safe reflection at the start of a busy day.
- We embrace a Growth Mindset approach and our GM coordinator talks to children in assemblies and lessons and liaises with parents.

Critical Thinking

Critical Thinking is taught to pupils in Years 1-8. Pupils are given opportunities to explore ideas; express their thoughts and listen empathetically to others; problem-solve; create; question; reason; analyse and evaluate.

Lessons involve a wide variety of activities: solving riddles; debating; creating solutions to practical problems; developing reasoning skills and exploring 'big' concepts such as 'truth' or 'fairness'.

Whilst pupils may practise Critical Thinking in a number of different subjects and scenarios, lessons give pupils the time to delve deeper and develop the skills needed to be clearer, better thinkers.

Careers Education

Orwell Park School's ethos highlights that the purpose of education is to "encourage pupils to take on challenges, overcome setbacks and develop the resilience, initiative, flexibility, creativity and collaborative skills that will prepare them for the next stage of education and beyond". The curriculum fully supports this ethos through providing impartial career education opportunities within the Life Skills programme, the Leavers' Programme, school assemblies and the evening series of Orangery lectures.

Co-Curriculum

Drama is a big part of the co-curricular offer at Orwell Park. Pupils from the Pre-Prep all the way through to Year 8 have many opportunities to participate in drama productions, from the Pre-Prep Nativity to the Prep School's annual production. Recent productions include 'The Pirates of the Curry Bean' (Pre-Prep), and Buggy Malone (Prep) which took place prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The 2022 production was *Annie*.

Productions in the Prep School take place on a purpose built stage in our Sports Hall, and we now have the opportunity for pupils to take LAMDA lessons to boost their confidence and proficiency in acting and performance. Dramatic success at Orwell is considerable, with pupils regularly obtaining performing arts scholarships at senior schools.

Children use drama to explore themselves and their environment, and it provides a safe route to self-knowledge and increased self-confidence. In lessons children learn to use mime and improvisation or create a script for performance; they learn to empathise and are invited to step into the shoes of other characters, real or imagined. Drama is very often used to explore situations, issues or dilemmas that occur in other areas of the curriculum such as English, History or Religion and it can play a very significant role in augmenting and deepening children's understanding.

There are countless opportunities to take part in co-curriculum **Music** at Orwell Park. From Orangery Recitals to Concerts, our fantastic facilities offer an unrivalled setting in which to develop a musical talent. Our site features a Digital Recording Studio for music-making, individual practice rooms and a Music Technology suite. The School possesses a number of pianos, including a Steinway Model D, on which pupils may practice and perform. Orangery Recitals form a key part of music learning and development, and all pupils learning an instrument are encouraged to take part from a young age to build confidence in

performance.

In addition to our own concerts and productions, Orwell Park pupils represent the school in regional and national ensembles. Building upon considerable Associated Board and Trinity exam success, they participate in the Suffolk Festival, Pro Corda, and the National Childrens' Choir and Orchestra.

Music is an integral part of life at Orwell Park, from singing in morning Assembly to instrumental lessons for over 90% of pupils; from regular choir and ensemble practices to rehearsals for one of over 60 musical events each year. Specialist visiting musicians teach the full range of orchestral instruments, and also offer, harp, accordion and bagpipes. Twenty-two ensembles, including wind band, jazz band and orchestra meet every week. Regular chamber concerts prepare for outstanding annual concerts; every year there is a Battle of the Bands in which pupils perform a wide variety of rock bands.

Sport is for all at Orwell Park. The extensive grounds provide abundant opportunities for children's games, both formal and informal. Excellent facilities range from assault course to floodlit astroturf, golf course to games pitches, swimming pool to squash courts and sports hall. Sport begins in the Pre-Prep with PE lessons for all classes, including Nursery and Reception, and hockey and tennis available as extra-curricular activities to pupils in Years 1 and 2. PE lessons continue in the main school, alongside a games programme which prepares boys and girls of all abilities for a full fixture list of matches against other schools. On match days, as many as 25 teams are fielded to represent the School.

Our major sports are:

Boys: Rugby, Hockey, Cricket

Girls: Hockey, Netball, Cricket

Many other sporting activities take place at various times in the School year: athletics, badminton, cross country, eventing, football, golf, gymnastics, karate, sailing, skiing, squash, swimming and tennis.

Trips: Orwell Park operates a broad and varied range of trips. These cover international opportunities at Mayo College in India, canoeing down the Ardèche river in France and developing the use of the French language in Normandy, to UK-based sports and music tours and local trips including: Hedingham and Walsingham Castle, Minsmere nature reserve, camping and undertaking expeditions as part of the OPS Challenge programme, and visiting parts of the ever-changing coastline of Suffolk. In experiencing day and residential trips as part of the Orwell Park curriculum, we ensure pupils have access to opportunities which will enhance their physical and mental well-being, develop friendships and bonds with their peers, and create memories which will last a lifetime.

Activities: A range of afternoon activities are run on non-games days and all activities aim to provide a period of structured enjoyment and are both numerous and diverse. The school has variations on afternoon activities for different year groups.

During the year, Middle School pupils are involved in a structured (carousel) activity each

week designed to give them an experience of high value. They are also given the opportunity to select from an activity from several options. This provides them with the opportunity to explore and develop current and new interests. The Middle School pupils have the opportunity to be part of OPS Quest, building and developing skills working towards the Senior School OPS Challenge.

Pupils in Years 6 and 7 have one session of OPS Challenge each week, an internal scheme run along the lines of the Duke of Edinburgh award. The remaining activity may be selected by the pupil.

Activities include art, musical theatre, squash, kit car construction, skiing, clay shooting, girls' tag rugby, 7s rugby for Year 8 boys and chess, astronomy and science club form part of an enriching cognitive co-curriculum.

4. NURTURING GIFTS AND TALENTS

The learning experience for pupils at Orwell Park is not restricted to the classroom. The comprehensive programme of in-service training for staff enable the School to keep abreast of the latest educational research. Staff and pupils are encouraged to make imaginative use of all areas of the School, both inside and out in the open air, to enhance their teaching and enthuse their pupils. An outdoor learning classroom has been developed, where Outdoor Learning takes place for Pre- Prep Children. This classroom is also used increasingly used for activities and lessons beyond the Pre-Prep. The School is now taking active steps towards securing an Eco School award.

CATERING FOR THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL PUPILS

The School uses a formal system of setting from Year 5 in Maths and from Year 6 in all other examined subjects, which aims to maximise opportunities for each and every pupil, including the most able pupils. We use differentiation within sets and also within mixed ability classes to engage, stretch and challenge pupils. Setting is decided by the School.

We use the results from standardised tests, in conjunction with the evidence of performance in class and examinations, to help identify pupils for appropriate sets. We make our decisions on an individual basis and the more able, as reflected in test scores, can be placed in top sets even though their current academic performance may not always appear to warrant this.

In the Scholars' set (Year 8s), pupils are given an accelerated programme to prepare them for the scholarship examinations of senior independent schools. The ability to analyse and discuss is as important as the accumulation of knowledge.

Each child is a valued member of our community and we seek to address individual needs on a case-by-case basis. This may include catering for the specific needs of a pupil with additional needs (including EAL) to ensuring that a child with a passion for Maths or Ancient Greek is given additional opportunities to challenge themselves.

The Learning Support Department works closely with parents and teachers to ensure that all children can access the curriculum through a combination of reasonable adjustments and individualised programmes of support. Occasionally, children with SEND may follow a modified curriculum.

EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

As well as a variety of in-class activities, the Orangery Lectures, which are open to all pupils from Year 3 onwards and to the greater community, enable our pupils to further their general knowledge and to feed their natural curiosity. The lectures are given by a variety of speakers from all walks of life, from senior school teachers to explorers and adventurers. The programme is informed by pupils' direct feedback at, for instance, the Pupils' Academic Focus Groups, made up of representatives from the Middle School and the Senior School. As far as possible, the lectures are linked to a specific academic department or area of study, and some are directly relevant for Career development.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Academic scholarships

Though we encourage every child to achieve their full potential, the more intense programme of academic study required to prepare for an academic scholarship attempt may not necessarily be the best way forward for all children.

At the beginning of the Autumn term in Year 8, pupils that have been identified by the academic staff as having the potential to attain an academic scholarship are taught as a group for all examined subjects, in order to challenge and encourage them to work together to the highest standard possible. 8s pupils are offered an introduction to Spanish or ancient Greek, with two lessons a week and a prep allocated to these subjects. Internal Scholarships are awarded to Year 4 pupils in the Spring term and to Year 6 pupils in the Autumn term.

Other scholarship attempts

Senior schools offer a variety of scholarships over and above academic scholarships, which include Art, DT, Music, Drama, Sport, Computing and General Scholarships. Pupils who show talent, enthusiasm and aptitude in one or several of these areas are supported in preparing through lessons, extra sessions and access to specialist coaching and training.

Once Year 8 Scholars have completed their academic attempts, they embark upon the ISEB iPQ programme, which requires in-depth research in an area of personal interest, a completed portfolio, and a presentation in an Orangery Lecture. The portfolios are marked internally, and moderated by the ISEB.

5. ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING ASSESSMENT

In Pre-Prep, children are assessed from EYFS-Key Stage 1, through Early Learning Goals, ongoing Tapestry feedback and baseline. Year 1 and 2 are formally assessed through Progress in Maths and English and termly unit assessments in each subject area in Year 1 and 2. Teachers are continuously assessing through personalised target cards and focused feedback, verbal and written. Writing is assessed half termly.

In the Prep School (Years 3-8), formal assessments indicating both attainment and effort are sent home to parents at half term and the end of term. These indicate a child's progress in each subject and the teacher's assessment of how much effort the child is making. Tutors review grades with their tutees and help them set themselves realistic targets for future improvement. Formal staff meetings take place after each assessment period to review grades and identify those pupils in need of monitoring. Pupils are also assessed annually using CATs, Progress in English and Progress in Maths.

The comprehensive programme of assessments in place throughout the school aims to enable each child to make progress and achieve.

Further details on examinations and assessments can be found in the School's ARR Policy (Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy).

6. REPORTING

In the Pre-Prep (EYFS to Year 2), subject reports are sent to parents at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms. A brief report is sent home at the end of the Spring Term.

In Years 3 to 7, subject reports, together with a Tutor's report, are compiled and sent to parents at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms. In the Spring Term, parents receive half-termly Effort and Attainment Progress Reports.

In Year 8, Subject Reports are sent at the end of the Autumn and Spring Terms, with a short leavers' report sent at the end of their Summer Term.

In the Prep School (Years 3 to 8), each subject report comprises a cumulative summary of the child's attainment and effort statistics for the year, a course statement (a factual outline of the work done and topics covered during the course of the term in each subject), and teachers' comments.

The accompanying Tutor's report reflects on these and incorporates information and comments on the child's extra-curricular activities and social progress. The Headmaster adds brief further comments.

In the Pre-Prep school (EYFS to Year 2), each report comprises a section detailing the programme covered and teachers' comments. The Head of Pre-Prep reviews the report and comments on the child's overall performance. The Headmaster adds brief, further comments.

Tutors discuss each report directly with their tutees, drawing their attention to the salient points of the reports and agreeing targets with them. Parents are also encouraged to discuss reports with

7. POLICY MANAGEMENT

This policy is reviewed and updated annually and should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- The Learning Support Policy
- The EAL Policy
- The Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- The Admissions Policy
- The Equal Opportunities Policy, which also contains the Accessibility Plan