



# **ORWELL PARK SCHOOL**

**Nacton, Ipswich IP10 0ER**

## **CURRICULUM POLICY**

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# ORWELL PARK SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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.

Academic study forms the core of the education process at the School and we aim to make every lesson 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 enable pupils to become more resilient and through active, open-minded participation, to become the best that they can be.

Our extra-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.

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.

## 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 framework 2017 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.

Music, Dance, French, PSHE, PE and Digital Skills lessons further complement the Pre-Prep curriculum from Nursery to Year 2.

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.

## **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 Years 4 and 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.

## **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 setted within these subject blocks according to their potential in the subject areas (English and Humanities block, Maths and Science block, and Languages block). Potential academic scholars are streamed in Year 7 and join 7P. In Year 8, academic scholars are also streamed 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 Religious Studies. Latin is an optional subject at Common Entrance 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, Philosophy for Children (Year 6 only) or General Studies (7P/8s), 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 iPads 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 British 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 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. 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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **Digital Skills/Computing**

ICT forms 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. 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 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 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 ICT suites of 18 computers and some class sets of iPads for use in the Pre-Prep. The greatest majority of classrooms are also equipped with either an interactive panel, or a smart board or a projector, which are used extensively by the teaching staff.

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 and DVDs, as part of lessons.

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

### **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 Year 1-8, spiritual, moral and cultural development is supported by assemblies, tutorials, chapel sessions and a termly programme of evening lectures (The Orangerie Lectures), which all pupils, parents and the greater community are welcome to attend.

### **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 Orangerie lectures.

## **4. 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.

## **5. THE TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

The learning experience for pupils at Orwell Park is not restricted to the classroom. 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 recently been developed, where woodland learning takes place for Pre-Prep Children. This classroom is also used increasingly used for activities and lessons beyond the Pre-Prep.

## **6. SCHOLARSHIPS AND POTENTIAL SCHOLARS**

At the beginning of the Autumn term in their Year 7 year, pupils that have been identified by the Academic staff as possibly having the potential to attain an academic scholarship are taught as a group for all subjects, in order to challenge and encourage them to work together to the highest standard possible. Their progress and attitude to study are closely monitored and those pupils who are coping and progressing well, both academically and in their approach to their work, will remain in this group when they go up to Year 8, where they will continue their preparation for possible academic scholarship exams. Spanish and ancient Greek are also taught as optional subjects to more able pupils, who show a flair for, and an interest in learning foreign languages.

Parents are closely consulted at the end of Year 6, if their child is identified as a potential Scholar and this consultation continues throughout Year 7. We encourage every child to achieve their full potential, but the more intense programme of academic study in the potential Scholars' set may not necessarily be the best way forward for all children. Progression to the Year 8 Scholars' set is not guaranteed and the final decision on this will rest with the School.

## **7. ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

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. Further details on assessment and reporting can be found in the Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy.

## **8. EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS**

There is a comprehensive programme of assessments in place throughout the school, which 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).

## **9. 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 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 extracurricular 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 teacher's comments. The Pre-Prep Coordinator 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 their children and the tutor.

## **10. NURTURING GIFTS AND TALENTS**

This section should be read in conjunction with the School's 'Nurturing Gifts and Talents' policy.

### **Catering for the individual needs of pupils**

The School uses a system of setting from Year 5 in Maths and from Year 6 in all other 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 the 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 Potential Scholars' set (Year 7P) and the Scholars' set (Year 8s), pupils are given and 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 an EAL pupil to ensuring that a child with a passion for Maths is given additional opportunities to challenge themselves.

We continue to investigate ways of providing a more challenging curriculum to ensure all pupils are catered for.

### **Nurturing talents**

We seek to identify, develop and nurture talent in Music, Art, Design and Technology, Digital Studies, Drama and PE and Sports.

We aim to recognise talent as early as possible and to develop it through differentiation in lessons, and extra individual lessons and activities. We also provide opportunities to perform in music groups and orchestras, in plays, in sports teams as well as numerous other areas. Our activities programme provides children with the opportunity to develop their talents further and where appropriate, we use outside resources and facilities.

### **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.

## **11. LEARNING SUPPORT**

This document should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- The Learning Support Policy
- The EAL Policy
- The Admissions Policy
- The Equality and Diversity Policy which also contains the Accessibility Plan

It is the policy of the School that all children follow a broad and balanced curriculum. It follows therefore, that staff and the Learning Support Department work closely together 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.

### **EAL**

Children are assessed on arrival at the School and an individualised programme is drawn up for each child. It is the policy of the School that EAL children will follow the same broad and balanced curriculum as all the pupils. Occasionally children with EAL may follow a modified curriculum.