

Curriculum Policy

Junior School

Policy Owner(s)	Assistant Principal (Curriculum Development)
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1. Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with the following complementary documents:

- Homework, Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Teaching Policy
- Learning Support Policy
- PSHEE syllabus

The School's aim is to be an academic school and a place for learning and scholarship. The curriculum policy of the three constituent parts of the school reflects this aim. Our vision is that our pupils should grow up to be independent learners who are able to explore their thinking within a curriculum which is relevant, engaging and scholarly. In the Junior School, pupils study the full range of National Curriculum subjects for KS2 although there is a necessary focus on the core skills of English and Mathematics. While we want pupils to know things, we also encourage them to weigh the evidence, be critical of what they hear, see and read, reflect on their outcomes and apply their learning through problem-solving activities. We take account of the ability of every pupil and ensure that each is challenged, and their talents fostered. When pupils leave Highgate Junior School, we want them to be knowledgeable and well-adjusted young people who have the thinking skills, study skills and intellectual curiosity to sustain them in their secondary education. The school's academic direction based on literacy, numeracy, core values, transferable as well as intra-and-interpersonal skills supports the pupils' personal development. These aspects underpin all levels of our spiral curriculum that aims to encourage pupils to build upon existing knowledge, concepts and skills as they progress through the school. Logical progression, enrichment, challenge and creativity are at the centre of the School's increasingly diverse schemes of work where links and connections are being identified in and between subject areas, for extra depth and understanding.

2. Meeting the regulatory requirements for the quality of education provided (curriculum)

2.1. Schemes of work

Full details are available in schemes of work: for Years 3 - 6: these take the form of departmental schemes produced by Subject Coordinators and coordinated by the Assistant Principal (Curriculum Development). Relevant Subject Coordinators or Heads of Year, in liaison with the Assistant Principal (Curriculum Development), ensure that the content of the schemes of work is suitable for each year group. The National Curriculum is shadowed in most subjects and, in Mathematics, pupils are taught via the mastery approach for deeper understanding. Heed is taken of aspects of gender, race, religion and other protected characteristics when formulating and choosing schemes of work, and lesson plans make provision for adaptations in accordance with the aptitudes of pupils.

The needs of any pupils who have an identifiable Special Educational Need, or those pupils who present with a learning difference are coordinated by the Junior School Learning Support Department under the guidance of the Director of Studies who ensures that statutory requirements and individual needs are met. The policy is laid out in full in a separate document.

2.2. Speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills

Pupils acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy. Attention is paid to these skills across the curriculum and not just in Mathematics and English. Pupils are assessed in English and Mathematics by appropriate work set in each year and by standardised and non-standardised tests. These tests include INCAS/CPI, which are sat by all pupils in the school, as well as half-termly tests and interim assessments. Pupil participation in class at every level ensures that high standards of speaking and listening are maintained. Questioning and collaborative learning are at the heart of our academic aims and methods, as described in the *Teaching Policy* (qv).

2.3. Language of instruction

Lessons are conducted in English; where English is not the pupil's first language, we are satisfied at the point of entry that the pupil is able to cope with the teaching provided. When the pupil simply needs help in bettering their fluency and understanding, special arrangements are made through the Director of Studies. The EAL register is updated regularly and additional support is considered for pupils where necessary.

2.4. Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE)

Personal, social, health and economic education and citizenship is provided and lessons in each year group reflect the aims and ethos of the school. Topics covered encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to fostering respect for others and awareness of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

- (i) Each class receives 50 minutes of PSHEE teaching each week with lessons based on the JIGSAW scheme. Talks by visiting experts supplement this programme. Relationship and Health education runs across KS2 and is taught in age-appropriate lessons from Year 3 through to Year 6. Economic issues feature as part of the PSHEE schemes of work in each year group. In addition, pupils have various opportunities to develop their economic understanding in curricular and co-curricular contexts.
- (ii) Particular PSHEE topics form part of the assembly programme for each term.
- (iii) Many moral and social issues are raised and discussed in other subjects and all teachers are encouraged to deal with such issues as they arise. Issues of friendship, neighbourliness and citizenship inevitably tend to occur, and are addressed daily, often through form time.
- (iv) Children receive weekly Religious Education lessons (rebranded as Religion, Philosophy, Ethics) which provide an additional forum for exploring PSHEE topics.

- (v) Health Education matters are taught within PSHEE from Year 3 to Year 6.

2.5. Programme of activities, opportunity to learn and make progress

All pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress. The academic programme is open to all pupils. We aim to create a safe environment where all are stimulated to learn and to pursue both a full general programme of education and their own specific interests. The curriculum is the same for every child, although there is both extension opportunity and learning support for those requiring it. Teachers consider the needs of pupils, as a class and as individuals, when preparing lessons. Teachers pay heed to the Pupil Profiles drawn up for pupils with learning differences or with an EHC plan, and provision is made by the Learning Support Department if they deem a pupil needs extra assistance when their first language is not English. Teachers are also aware of pupils who are deemed ‘most able’ and consider their needs in their lesson preparation. See *Learning Support Policy* and *Able, Gifted and Talented Policy* for details of our provision and methods of teaching pupils with learning differences and those who are ‘most able’.

2.6. Life in British society

The breadth of the curriculum provides pupils with the experiences of many issues which they will face in life in British society. The PSHEE programme at all levels explicitly encourages pupils to think about human relationships in an age-appropriate way and the topics of alcohol and drugs awareness, internet safety and sexual development and relationships are covered. Topics relating to responsibilities as a British citizen are also provided in the PSHEE syllabus, through participation in School Council and in the process of electing prefects, Eco Council Reps and other positions of pupil responsibility in the school. The need to actively to promote British values is dealt with, in assemblies with the imprimatur of the Principal and senior team and in the discussion of social and cultural values in the PSHEE programmes and House system (this element is expanded in the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education policy). The School’s co-curricular clubs programme provide other stimuli. The Educational Trips and Visits Programme contributes further to this broader education and cognisance is taken of the British element in the formation of the annual programme.

3. The structure of the School and its curriculum

3.1. The structure of the School and its three sections

Regular meetings between the Deputy Heads and Principals of the three schools and between Senior School Heads of Departments, Pre-Prep and Junior School Subject Coordinators, the Director of Studies, JS Assistant Principal (Curriculum Development) and the Pre-Prep Academic Team enable curriculum coherence and provide for a focus for curriculum change and development. The Director of Studies and the Assistant Principal (Curriculum Development) meets with The Principal of the Junior School to ensure there is consistency and continuity between the schools.

Age	NC year	Key Stage						
4-5	Reception	Foundation	Pre-Preparatory School					
5-6	1	KS 1						
6-7	2							
7-8	3	KS 2		Junior School				
8-9	4							
9-10	5							
10-11	6							
11-12	7	KS 3				Senior School		
12-13	8							
13-14	9							
14-15	10	KS 4						
15-16	11							
16-17	12	KS 5						
17-18	13							

3.2. Junior School

All pupils in Years 3 – 6 study English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Religious Education (rebranded as RPE = Religion, Philosophy and Ethics), Art, DTE, Computing, Modern Languages (French in Years 3 and 4, Spanish in Year 5 and a language carousel in Year 6), Drama, Music, and Sport and Exercise (SpEx). Each subject is led by a Subject Coordinator who meets regularly with teachers of their subject area to discuss curriculum matters and to ensure consistency and continuity within the Junior School. Formally, Subject Coordinators meet regularly with the Assistant Principal (Curriculum Development) to review the teaching, set priorities and discuss developments for their subject.

The flexibility of the Junior School curriculum allows for cross-curricular links to be made. Planning happens within year groups, which allows for a horizontal, thematic approach to be taken, as well as a vertical, skills- and knowledge-based approach. Thus, it is not uncommon for the teaching of English, for example, to reinforce the teaching of Humanities and vice versa. In Years 3 and 4 a majority of lessons are taught by class teachers, enabling cross-curricular links to happen naturally out of the time spent with children. In Years 5 and 6 the core subjects of English, Maths, Science and

Humanities will be taught by Form Teachers or subject specialists, depending on expertise. Cross-curricular planning is discussed during subject coordinator meetings and at Heads of Year meetings and implemented across the subjects in regular lessons and in Year Group Time activities.

Modern Languages teaching in the Junior School is designed to give pupils an introduction to French and Spanish (and additional languages in Year 6). With an emphasis on oral skills, the children are encouraged to appreciate the sound and feel of these languages and to see patterns and make connections between them. In addition, the children are taught to develop a cultural appreciation of the countries in which the languages are spoken.

The figures below refer to the numbers of 50-minute lessons allocated per subject per week.

Subject	Period Allocation			
	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
English (incl. Literacy Skills)	5.5	5.5	4.5	4.5
Reading	1	1	1	1
Mathematics (incl. Mental Maths)	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
Science	2	2.5	2.5	2.5
Languages (French/ Spanish/Languages Carousel) + WolloW	1	1	1.5	1
History	1	1	1	1
Geography	1	1	1	1
RPE (Religion, Philosophy, Ethics)	1	1	1	1
Art	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
DTE	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Music	1	1	1	1
Sports and Exercise	1	1	1	1.5
Games	1.5	1.5	3	3
Digital Literacy	1	1	1	1

Drama	1	1	1	1
PSHEE	1	1	1	1
Form Time	1.5	1.5	1	1
Principal's Time	0.5	0	0	0
Circle Time	0.5	0.5	0	0
Year Group Time	1	1	1	1

In addition to time during registration, each class has up to 2-3 periods (25 mins) in the timetable for the teacher to use as best suits. This might be used for pupils to respond to marking and feedback given in their books or for other form matters. It also gives pupils the opportunity to reflect on their weekly learning and on their own individual targets, as well as participate in structured discussions and activities that focus on the development of character skills and values.

3.3. The Wider Curriculum in the Junior School

- (i) **Sport and Exercise (SpEx).** Physical Education (Fitness) is taught in all year groups, as is Sport. A rich variety of sports are on offer; those naturally interested in sport are encouraged and fostered to develop their talents to a high level. On the other hand, it is recognised that not all are natural sportsmen/women, and some pupils have an aversion to sport. We are committed to encouraging physical fitness and provide a full range of activities, so that each pupil at every level can find something to his/her liking and so develop physical fitness and the ability to be part of a team and to work together. Competition is encouraged and excellence in team and individual sports, as in other areas of school life, is nurtured and very much valued. Physical fitness and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle are reinforced through the PSHEE programme. Outdoor adventurous activities have been embedded in the SpEx curriculum and the provision continues to support and complement the wider curriculum, such as Humanities, Science and extra-curricular activities.
- (ii) **Digital Literacy.** All pupils in all year groups have formal lessons in Computing which includes information technology. The schemes of work in this curriculum area introduce pupils to the principles of how digital systems work, and how to put this knowledge to use through programming. Children are also taught to be able to use, express themselves and develop their ideas through Computing so that they can be active and responsible participants in a digital world. It is our belief that Computing is an essential tool, not only in and of itself, but also to support pupils' learning in all subjects. Each subject's Scheme of Work should consider the use of Computing within that subject and should indicate where specific skills are being required and practised in particular tasks. Many subject resources exist as SMART Notebook activities and teachers are accustomed to using web-based learning tools to support their teaching. Class sets of iPads are available for use in all subjects and by all year groups in order to promote independent learning and curiosity in the classroom, allow for

collaborative learning, develop communication skills and pupil creativity and help embed digital learning within the wider curriculum.

- (iii) Religious Education (RPE = Religion, Philosophy, Ethics).** All pupils, within all year groups, have Religious Education classes. Highgate has a Christian heritage, while welcoming those of all faiths or none, and the ethos of the school relies heavily on Christian ethics (see separate document on *Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development*). Religious Education serves to open all pupils' eyes to the spiritual dimension in their own and others' lives. It matters to us that our pupils are equipped to live a moral life informed by choices and values and are helped to navigate their way through uncertain and unchanging times. Pupils learn about and discuss moral and ethical issues and study comparative religion, making them aware of the beliefs of others by whom they are surrounded in North London. In addition, schemes of work in almost all subjects inevitably touch upon issues of a religious, moral or ethical nature.
- (iv) Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Citizenship.** All three parts of the school follow carefully structured programmes of PSHEE. These programmes have as their ethos, and often through specific modules or explicit wording, the preparation of young people for life in British Society and encouraging respect for other people, and especially those with the protected characteristics inherent to the programme. The specific topics are delivered by a variety of means: formal lessons, form periods, assemblies, etc. A separate PHSEE document spells out the content in the Junior School.
- (v) Extra-curricular activities.** A wide range of extra-curricular activities is on offer and is listed in a separate document. All pupils are encouraged to choose one or more activities to pursue either at the end of the school day or at lunchtime. Some activities have an academic base, some are more practical and artistic. The specific provision of the aforementioned activities is tailored to the age of the pupils concerned, and care is taken to ensure that there are activities to suit both boys and girls and a variety of interests. There are school plays within year groups, and we also encourage pupils to take up a musical instrument and to take part in the many orchestras, choirs, music groups as well as musical performances such Performance Platforms.
- (vi) Trips, visits and 'visiting speakers' programme.** Over the course of the year, numerous trips, visits and visiting speakers are arranged in each year group to enrich the curriculum. During Years 3-6 Year Group Time, parents, grandparents, carers, teachers or pupils talk on subjects that interest them. Year 6 go on a residential trip in the Summer Term, Year 5 go on residential trip in Michaelmas term, and Years 3 and 4 have an overnight camp out in the school grounds.

3.4. Safeguarding and the Prevent Strategy

- (i)** In the delivery of the curriculum, teachers will, at all times, follow the school's Child Safeguarding and Welfare policy and will inform the DSL of any comments or behaviour from a pupil which gives grounds for concern.

- (ii) It is the role of the curriculum to deal with the Prevent strategy in a positive way. See 3.3(iv) above for the use of the PSHEE syllabus to deal formally and specifically with British values; see too the PSHEE syllabus itself and the Spiritual, Moral, Cultural and Social policy.
- (iii) We have identified areas across the curriculum where British values are covered in some form in the normal course of study; teachers will use these opportunities to discuss and promote these values in an appropriate and reasoned way in an academic and scholarly context.

Table of substantive changes

Section	Detail of Change	Date	Owner
All	Reformatted and updated to reflect current provision	September 2023	VN
2.4 3.2 3.3 (vi)	Changes reflecting how RSE is run across KS2. Changes to lesson allocation; adjustments made to reflect 2024-25 timetable. Humanities split into parallel History and Geography lesson. No OWL sessions; these are allocated to Form Time. Changes made to ‘Trips, Visits, and Visiting Speakers’ Programme. No ‘Lunchtime Lectures’ and residential trip introduced to Year 5.	August 2024	VN
All	Review – no substantive changes	August 2025	AO’B

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www.highgateschool.org.uk

A registered charity, no.312765

Highgate School

North Road, London N6 4AY

Telephone: 020 8340 1524

Email: office@highgateschool.org.uk