

Our Lady's Day-Nursery, Nursery and Preparatory School

CURRICULUM POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Our aim is to fulfil the potential of each child in our care by providing a sound broad curriculum

A Broad Curriculum

- In its most narrow definition, our remit is to prepare our pupils thoroughly for the academic entrance examinations of their chosen senior school.
- However, we believe that we are preparing children not only for their senior schools, but also for the life that lies beyond them.
- We regard these years (from the ages of 3 months to 11) as forming the base on which our pupils will build their future education.
- We therefore aim to give our pupils as broad an education as possible during their time with us.
- To this end, we place a strong emphasis on a broad curriculum, with Languages (French, Mandarin and Spanish) Art & Pottery, Dance and Movement, Football and Games all taught by specialist teachers from a child's 2nd birthday.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is given a very strong emphasis and the school's catholic ethos of treating everybody equally underpins the aims and the delivery of the curriculum.

Aims of the curriculum:

At Our Lady's we undertake to:

- Have high expectations of the children and ourselves
- Raise levels of attainment for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best
- Prepare pupils to the standards and style of entrance examinations to senior schools suited to their abilities and temperament
- Develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners who are able to make informed choices
- Foster a love of learning from the moment children enter our Day- Nursery.
- Foster self-esteem and personal responsibility, linked to respect for the needs and feelings of others
- Encourage open, considerate and positive relationships between all members of the school as a whole.
- Ensure equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, class, special needs, and belief
- Show respect for all cultures and nationalities
- Provide a safe, happy work place
- Foster a thoughtful attitude towards the immediate and wider

Environment around us.

The Foundation Years

The Foundation Stage, which underpins the curriculum in Our Lady's Early Years Foundation Stage is distinct in its identity. The curriculum, by which we mean everything that the children do within the school, is planned in accordance with the Early Years Foundation framework.

Six interrelated and interdependent areas of learning encompass all the development stepping stones. It is vital that the stages of development are recognised, as how children learn is as important as what they learn. All Foundation staff ensure that a range of strategies are used in learning and that the teaching is varied and adapted to suit the needs of the individual child.

The six areas of learning are: Personal, social and emotional development
Communication, language and literacy
Mathematical development
Knowledge and understanding of the world
Physical development
Creative development

Learning experiences are planned to ensure that individuals are appropriately challenged and have all the foundations for future learning securely in place.

Many children joining Our Lady's will come from nurseries that follow the Foundation Stage curriculum, as it is designed for children from birth to five, and some will bring related records with them. However, all children will undertake a Baseline Assessment during the first half term of Reception in order to ascertain individual stages of development, strengths and needs. This style of teaching depends on careful and flexible planning, including the involvement of subject specialist teachers in Art & Pottery, Dance & Movement, French, Spanish, Mandarin, Football and Games.

Assessment in Early Years

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

It covers the six areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

At Our Lady's we make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects the identified needs of each child.

Mainly in the Foundation Stage, assessment takes the form of observation and this involves the teacher and other adults, as appropriate.

This collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage is a statutory requirement.

During the Foundation Years, each teacher keeps progress records and records examples of each child's work – these progress records contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at parent/teacher meetings.

At the end of the Foundation Years, if a child is continuing their education at Our Lady's, these records and profiles are shared with the appropriate teachers in order to plan for the next stage of development and education of that child.

Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum begins formally in Year 1 and the syllabus is planned in accordance with the National Curriculum.

Form teachers are responsible for teaching English, Maths, Science, Topic (History & Geography) Art, RE, ICT, Subject specialist teachers are employed in Dance & Movement, French, Spanish, Mandarin, Music, Football and Rugby and games

The Prep School

The syllabus for each academic subject is planned in accordance with the National Curriculum and with the requirements of the Common Entrance and Scholarship examinations at 11+

Key Stage 2:

In Years 3 to 6 the syllabus content and skills taught in Mathematics, English, ICT, Science, History and Geography are broadly in line with the National Curriculum. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are key Resources but we take our children well beyond the level expected at the end of Key stage 2 in order to prepare them for Entrance Examinations and scholarships.

French, Spanish and Mandarin are taught by specialist teachers and follow their own syllabuses.'

The RE syllabus follows the 'Here I Am' and 'CTS' programmes of work.

The broad curriculum continues to be delivered with generous allocations of time to the specialist-taught Art & Pottery, Dance & Movement, French, Spanish, Mandarin, Football, Rugby, Games & Swimming

Throughout the School PSHE and Citizenship is an integral part of the curriculum. It is not taught in isolation and is the responsibility of all staff who come into contact with the children. The syllabus is delivered through subject teaching, circle time, assemblies, church services, charity/ community involvement, outings, class roles and responsibilities and guest speakers.

In addition, discrete lessons are provided to cover personal safety, sex education and drugs education.

Day Trips and Residential Trips

The curriculum, particularly Geography and PSHE ,is enhanced by residential trips undertaken by Year 6 children to Calshot Activity Centre in Hampshire.

Homework

Homework is discussed with all parents whose children are attending the Prep school at the beginning of every Autumn Term and a homework timetable is published for each form.

As we are a small school, any issues or worries surrounding homework are addressed very quickly with the children or/and parents.

The Homework Diary is signed at home daily and checked by the form teacher until children enter Year 6 whereby the onus of responsibility is given to the children and checking is done on a periodic basis.

Special Educational Needs

The school buys in the services of a trained SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) when needed.

Her role is to support staff in identifying pupils' difficulties and planning teaching strategies, to liaise with parents and outside agencies, to co-ordinate any extra help that may be required and to offer support to small groups in class.

We identify and meet the needs of able and talented children. A Gifted and Talented register is held in the school office where all teachers have access to it. We work closely with specialists and professional agencies to ensure that children's needs are met.

Assessment and Reporting

Assessment is an essential part of the teaching process. Regular assessments are made of pupils' work to establish a level of attainment and to inform future planning. Teachers use assessment information to track the progress of individual pupils and the Curriculum Co-ordinator uses it to monitor how effective the teaching and the curriculum is.

Reports to parents give clear accurate and useful information on their children's progress.

Equal Opportunities

We believe all pupils in the school should have equal opportunities and equal access to the curriculum. (See Equal Opportunities Policy)

Staff development

In-service training is provided in order to update and improve standards of teaching and learning. Training needs are regularly assessed. Initiatives in curriculum development and teaching and learning styles are monitored to ensure teachers are well-equipped to deliver the curriculum effectively.

This policy was reviewed and updated on 03.09.09
Angela O'Reilly – Deputy Head