

# Priory School

## Junior School Curriculum Policy

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. We base our studies on the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but extend it to include the range of extra-curricular activities in order to enrich the experience of the children. This also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

### **2. Values**

2.1 Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear at our school, that are explicitly Christian in origin, based on a belief in the unique and irreducible value of each child as a son or daughter of God. There is no denominational requirement for entry but the underlying ethic is made clear both verbally and in documentation. This clear statement of the school ethic provides a framework of mutual value and respect that underpins behaviour and rules. The curriculum is the specific means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives, based on this concept of the ultimate and irreplaceable value of each human person.

2.2 These then are the main values of our school, upon which we have based our curriculum:

- We value the way in which all children are individual and unique, and respect their family life and the values therein held dear. We understand that in asking us to educate their child, his or her parents are agreeable to that being done in a context of mutual respect based on a Christian ethic. This by definition respects sincerely held beliefs and values, of whatever cultural, religious or ethnic background; and looks in each instance for the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth, in the context of their own values.
- We therefore value the importance of each person in our community. We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community based on this mutual respect.
- We respect each child in our school for who they are, and treat them with fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to fulfil him/herself, both in learning and in personal development, and provide full and equal opportunities for all the children in our school.
- We value our environment, and we aim, through our curriculum, to teach respect for our world, and how we should care for it for future generations, as well as our own, being in essence "the stewards of creation".

### **3. Aims and objectives**

3.1 The aims of our school curriculum are:

- to enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability;
- to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- to teach children the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology (IT);
- to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking; and to explore their talents in self-expression, in music, drama & art; and in physical sports
- to teach children about their own local and national history, so that they understand how their society has developed and what are its values and how these have been embodied in the various public institutions and procedures to enable them to take an active role as citizens
- to help children understand the range and continuity of English, British, European & Global culture; how it evolved particularly in our country; and what has contributed to the current diversity of our society with particular emphasis placed on a historical understanding of this process
- to teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and of the importance and relevance of the realms of the imagination, of the mind and of the spirit; of the relation of the arts to this domain; and to understand and distinguish right from wrong;
- to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, of the nature of law and of human liberty; and how this has evolved into an overall framework of human rights with equal opportunities for all, and an emphasis on the resolution of differences by discussion and mutual tolerance
- to enable children to have respect for themselves and to have a sound self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others and to resolve differences by open and agreed procedures

### **4. Organisation and planning**

4.1 We plan our curriculum in three phases. We agree a long-term plan for each key stage. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. We review our long-term plan on an annual basis.

4.2 With our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that we use when teaching each topic, with an over-arching emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy Strategies for our school. Other foundation subjects are based on skills and content development and we make use of national schemes of work for much of our medium-term planning in the foundation subjects.

4.3 Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson.

4.4 At Key Stage 1 the curriculum at our school places a greater emphasis on the core and foundation subjects, and we teach these subjects separately and according to the ability of the child. We ensure that children are in year classes that reflect their peer group, with setting for Literacy & Numeracy that reflects their level of understanding. This enables personal development, with movement between sets, while retaining an overall peer-group class context. This is fully explained to all Junior School parents. We also ensure that over the three terms of the academic year, each child has the opportunity to start to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects over and above the core subjects. We already teach a language at this level (French) prior to the national implementation of language teaching at KS1.

4.5 At Key Stage 2 whilst the emphasis remains on the core subjects, foundation subjects begin to be taught separately, so that each term a child will have an equally balanced timetable with additional teachers for subjects such as Science, French, ICT, Music, Art, Drama etc.

## **5. Children with special needs**

5.1 The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so only after the parents of the child have been consulted.

5.2 If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs.

We have a team of qualified support teachers in Literacy, Numeracy and Speech & Language. We also can draw on specialist Dyslexic tutors and the resources locally available e.g. for ASD children. If a child presents with special needs, or displays signs of having special needs, in consultation with the parents an assessment of this need is made by suitably qualified staff either internally or externally. In most instances the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation, drawing on in-class support by the SEN team. If a child's need is more severe, we use further support provided by our support teachers, and any appropriate external agencies with whom positive communication is actively fostered.

5.3 The school provides an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each of the children who are on the special needs register. This sets out the nature of the special need, and outlines how the schools will aim to address the need. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals.

## **6. Key skills**

6.1 The following skills (deemed 'key skills' in the revised National Curriculum) are actively fostered and encouraged:

- communication;
- application of number;
- information technology;
- working with others;
- improving own learning and performance;
- problem-solving (to which we add the resolution of differences)

6.2 In our curriculum planning we plan to help children develop these skills, so that the children's progress can be identified and monitored. All subject areas contribute to a child's progress in these skills. Our school believes that all children need to make good progress in these skill areas in order to develop to their true potential.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

7.1 The Head of Junior School is responsible for the day to day organisation of the junior curriculum and monitors the lesson plans for all teachers, ensuring that consistency with both subject content and individual learning and development is maintained. Regular liaison with parents is considered vital to this process or monitoring and review. Monthly "tracking" reports are issued direct to parents to assist this process.

7.2 Subject content is also monitored to ensure each subject is taught throughout the school from Junior to Senior. Subject teachers examine long-term and medium-term planning, and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used and resources made available and properly used.

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