



Curriculum Policy

Policy Title:	Curriculum Policy
Last Review:	August 2025
Next Review:	August 2026
Responsibility:	Deputy Head, Headmaster
Other relevant policies:	EAL Policy Equal Opportunities Policy Marking, Assessment and Feedback Policy PSHE and Citizenship Education Policy Relationships and Sex Education Policy Religious Education Policy Special Educational Needs Policy TAG Policy Teaching and Learning Policy The Homework Policy

Values and Aims

This policy outlines the mechanisms for providing full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996.

West House School is a unique place. It has an individual identity that combines traditional values with innovation and vibrant vision. The School is committed to developing all of its pupils by offering them the best start to their formal education and preparing them for what lies beyond. The curriculum is designed to deliver an education that is rich in opportunities which encourage all pupils to learn and allows them to make progress.

A principal aim is to provide an inclusive education which prepares pupils for entry examinations to Birmingham's leading selective schools. Mathematics and English lie at the heart of a curriculum which also includes the teaching of verbal and non-verbal reasoning techniques. Furthermore, Mathematics and English have evolved to address the expectations and requirements of the secondary schools to which pupils transfer. A high priority is placed on providing all pupils with opportunities to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy, numeracy and mathematics.

The School acknowledges the principles of the National Curriculum but aims to be more extensive in its delivery to ensure that all pupils receive opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes. To that end, an appropriate amount of curriculum time is dedicated to linguistic, scientific, technological, creative, aesthetic, human and social, cultural and physical activities.

The Humanities curriculum is designed to offer a diverse learning experience which covers a range of themes and topics to which pupils can relate and which will appeal to the pupils' aptitudes and interests.

The curriculum is constantly evolving to ensure that the school responds to the demands of living as successful citizens in the 21st Century and it is therefore designed to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. PSHE and Citizenship play important roles and the scheme of work for PSHE is designed to reflect the aims and ethos of the school.

Curriculum Design and Organisation

The School is organised according to the National Curriculum stages for different age groups, known as Key Stages. The following make up Primary education:

Stage	Year Groups	West House Designation
Early Years (1 to 3 years)	Nursery and Kindergarten	Early Years
Foundation Stage (3 to 5 years)	Pre-School and Reception classes	Early Years Foundation Stage
Key Stage 1 (5 to 7 years)	Years 1 and 2	Pre-Prep Department
Key Stage 2 (7 to 11 years)	Years 3 to 6	Prep Department

At West House School, a number of pupils enter the first year of the Foundation Stage (Pre-School) from within the school's Early Years Department, where they have already experienced a programme of activities which is in accordance with the EYFS Statutory Framework. As a result, they have encountered and developed their skills in the three primary areas and four specific areas of learning.

In terms of organisation, Reception forms part of the Pre-Prep Department and Pre-School part of the Early Years Department.

Pupils in Reception are taught exclusively by their form teacher. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 are taught for the most part by form teachers, with elements of specialist teaching being introduced appropriately in music, games and PE, art and design and the World of Languages (WoLLoW). Pupils in Years 4 to 6 are subject taught.

All pupils are given equal access to the curriculum. However, where additional learning support is necessary, pupils may be withdrawn from lessons in order to develop essential skills and understanding.

Timetabling

Pre-Prep Department

In Pre-Prep the school day runs from 8.30am to 3.25pm. The morning session is divided into three 40-minute lessons and one 20-minute lesson. The afternoon session is divided into two hour long lessons and a 30-minute lesson. The total teaching time during the week for Years 1 and 2 is 23 hours and 20 minutes (DfE recommends a minimum of 21 hours per week).

Maths and English lessons are taught every day. Pupils may study other subjects on a weekly, half termly or termly basis and this varies from year to year.

Prep Department

In Prep the school day runs from 8.30am to 4.10pm. The day is divided into eight 40-minute lessons. The total teaching time during the week is 26.66 hours (DfE recommends a minimum of 23.5 hours per week).

Maths and English are taught daily. The curriculum is designed to provide pupils with broad learning opportunities and includes well above average allocations for music, games and PE in line with the ethos, values and aims of the school. Pupils may study other subjects on a weekly, half termly or termly basis and this varies from year to year.

Other Features

The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs for art and design, drama, football, cricket, rugby, fitness, chess, board games, technology, nature and music. These are taught by qualified coaches and members of the teaching staff.

Individual music lessons are encouraged and taught on a rotational basis during the school day by specialist musicians.

Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to enjoy learning cookery skills.

All pupils are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Even the youngest pupils have the opportunity to take on responsibility in the role of 'Milk Monitors' and 'Daily Leaders'. As the boys move through the school, such opportunities become more prevalent with positions as Form Captains, House Captains, Librarians, Confident Communicators, School Councillors, Monitors and Prefects becoming available. A system of School Contribution Awards for boys in Years 5 and 6 reward examples of selflessness and citizenship within the school community.

Visits to the school by members of the public services and representatives from various charities enhance the wider curriculum and provide further preparation for adult life.

Responsibilities

1. The Headmaster

The Headmaster has the overall responsibility to ensure that all legal requirements are met and that the school delivers a broad, balanced and appropriately challenging curriculum. The Headmaster is responsible for:

- Finalising the annual timetable for the Prep Department.
- Ensuring that the highest standards of education are maintained through the appropriate deployment of teaching staff with regard to curriculum delivery.

2. The Director of Teaching and Learning

The Director of Studies has the day to day responsibility of ensuring that the curriculum is being delivered in accordance with this policy. The Director of Teaching and Learning is responsible for:

- Ensuring curriculum balance in terms of time allocation to individual subject areas.
- Working in liaison with Heads of Department in carrying out annual monitoring and reviewing processes with regard to the school curriculum.
- Making recommendations to the Headmaster in relation to producing a draft timetable for the Prep Department.
- Monitoring the delivery of the curriculum through assisting with the appraisal of teaching staff in terms of lesson observation.

3. Nursery Manager and Foundation Stage Coordinator

The Nursery Manager has the overall responsibility to ensure that the Early Years Department is following an agreed timetable of activities and teaching. The Nursery Manager alongside the Foundation Stage Coordinator is also responsible for ensuring that the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum meets the requirements of the Early Learning Goals prescribed by the Statutory Framework.

4. The Head of Pre-Prep

The Head of Pre-Prep is responsible for planning a programme of study in the prime and specific areas of learning for Year 1 and 2 and organising the targeted support of Teaching Assistants.

5. Heads of Departments

Heads of Departments are responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate continuity and progression between School Departments.
- Making recommendations to the Director of Teaching and Learning prior to the drafting of timetables for the following academic year.

6. All Teaching Staff

All members of the teaching staff are responsible for delivering the agreed curriculum in line with the Teaching and Learning Policy and to ensure that subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those with statements of educational needs.

Teachers of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 3 have a responsibility to liaise with teachers/keyworkers from the year below in order to establish a smooth transition across departments of the school.

National Curriculum Tests

West House School does not participate in the end of Key Stage National Curriculum Tests. Further details can be found in the Marking, Feedback and Assessment Policy.

Assembly

The Education Act (1994) requires each school to provide a daily, corporate act of worship. Parents wishing to withdraw their child should contact the Headmaster.

Religious Education

West House School has a fully integrated Religious Education Policy based upon the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus.

The School is an inclusive community. However, the school recognises that some parents may wish to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience. Parents considering this option should contact the Headmaster to discuss any concerns or anxieties they may have about the policy, provision and practice of Religious Education at the School.

Personal, Social, Health, Economic and Citizenship Education (PSHE)

PSHE is a requirement of the school curriculum and is planned to reflect the aims and ethos of the school. PSHE is covered in dedicated curriculum time, is embedded in subject teaching and may also be covered in extra-curricular activities and assemblies.

West House School has adopted the PSHE Association Programme of Study (updated Jan 2017) as a framework for teaching PSHE and Citizenship. The Programme provides termly planning suggestions for KS1 and 2 across three core themes (Health and Wellbeing, Relationships, Living in the Wider World). Teaching resources are provided by Coram Life Education through their SCARF programme.

Year group tutors should plan PSHE lessons together, to ensure consistency of provision and equality of access to this subject.

The School Nurse, from Birmingham Community Healthcare, assists in the teaching of issues relating to personal health and hygiene.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

As part of the Department for Education statutory guidance, since September 2020 the school has been required to teach Relationships Education/RSE.

Relationships education takes place throughout the school and is taught in an age appropriate manner, fostering positive interaction and the development of life skills. It is a core theme of the PSHE curriculum.

Sex education is delivered through a short course by the School Nurse to pupils in Year 6, using age appropriate materials. Parents are informed about the sessions, are invited to view the resources used and, in accordance with the statutory guidance, may withdraw their child if they wish having made a request, in writing, to the Headmaster.

Further information can be found in the RSE Policy.

Drugs and Alcohol Education

The School supports the teaching of relevant drugs and alcohol education. As part of the entitlement to the curriculum, great care is taken in matching the approach to such issues to the maturity of the pupils.

British Values

West House School actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

This is achieved through a range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities which are planned or occur during timetabled lessons, PSHE, assemblies and educational visits and through the school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. (See Appendix)

Special Educational Needs

The West House School Special Educational Needs policy and EAL policy are designed to ensure that all pupils have access to a full curriculum. Where a pupil has an Education Health Care Plan, the school SENCO will be responsible for ensuring that the educational provision fulfils its requirements.

Homework

Homework is a crucial element of the partnership between home and school. It gives parents the opportunity, from the outset, to support their children in their learning whilst enabling them to reinforce the status and importance of the work covered at school.

There are varying tasks which are set to include learning tables and spellings, sharing reading books and also topic work. Some of the work will be of an investigative nature, in which other members of the family may wish to become involved.

Remote Learning

In the event that remote learning becomes necessary the school will provide a timetable of lessons and activities. Wherever possible and practical, sessions will include an element of live teaching and work and/or resources will be available via Google Classroom, Class Dojo or Capture (EYFS).

Monitoring and Review

The Director of Studies will carry out a review of this policy once every year.

Appendix

Promoting Fundamental British Values

It is a requirement that pupils must be effectively prepared “for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.” This involves the active promotion of “the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs”.

West House School addresses this requirement in a wide variety of ways:

Democracy

- Elections for House and Form Captains and the School Council (Prep Dept.)
- Votes for Golden Time activities etc. (EY, Pre-Prep Depts.)
- Studies of the four countries of the UK and the basic constitutional structures
- Speaking and listening – debating issues fairly
- Topical discussions regarding UK and world affairs including elections, referenda etc.
- Curriculum subjects
- Assembly topics

Rule of law

- Understanding right from wrong
- A School Code of Conduct, originally devised by pupils, which is reinforced regularly
- Class Charters/Rules, again devised and agreed by pupils
- Reward systems which promote the correct attitudes and behaviour (stickers, GWPs, Golden Time)
- Clearly defined sanctions for inappropriate behaviour, as defined in ‘Enabling Progress’ document
- Occasional visits from members of external agencies (police, fire etc.)
- Educational visits to various establishments such as Safeside, Warwick Law Courts etc.

Individual liberty

- Encouragement of taking responsibility, as much as is possible, for their own learning
- Making choices but understanding the importance of considering options carefully
- Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised how to exercise these safely, e.g. through e-safety teaching and PSHE lessons
- Freedom of speech is encouraged through pupil participation in discussions
- The importance of Child Safety and Anti-Bullying are rigorously emphasized
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities from which to choose, is on offer

Mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

- Learning to share, take turns and listen respectfully to others
- Respect for individual differences is actively promoted
- Through the PSHE and RE curriculums pupils are encouraged to discuss and respect differences between people, such as differences of faith, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality and differences of family situations
- Celebration and/or commemoration of significant events during the year e.g. Eid, Diwali, Christmas, Easter, Remembrance
- Celebrating the successes of others when awards and prizes are given
- Enjoying the performances of others during drama and music assemblies
- Showing sportsmanship when taking part in games lessons and matches