

Aims

St. Christopher's School's curriculum aims to offer a broad and balanced education suited to pupils of all abilities from aged 3 – 11 years.

More specifically the curriculum aims:

- To contribute effectively to pupils' intellectual, physical and personal attainment and development;
- To be appropriate for the age, ability, gender and ethnicity of pupils;
- To prepare pupils for the next stage of their education;
- To provide continuity and progression throughout the key stages;
- To provide a suitable and effective learning environment for those pupils requiring special provision, including very able pupils and those with statements of special needs, and for those pupils who have English as an additional language and any other children with a range of additional needs;
- To provide equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and progress;
- To provide access to extra-curricular activities for the purpose of enrichment.
- To actively promote Fundamental British Values- tolerance, respect, rule of law individual liberty.

Breadth of the Curriculum

The subjects and courses provided in the school at each key stage are designed to be broadly based in order to promote effective learning and personal growth. Schemes of work exist for all subject areas at all key stages. The school's curriculum aims to provide all pupils of compulsory school age with an educational experience in the following disciplines:

- Linguistic
- Mathematical
- Scientific
- Technological
- Human and social
- Physical
- Aesthetic and creative
- Personal and Spiritual

Linguistic

The school aims to develop pupils' communication skills and to increase their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. These aims apply primarily to the teaching of English, but also to the teaching of French, taught from Reception upwards.

Latin is taught to pupils in Preps 5 and 6.

Mathematical

Mathematics is a core subject. The school aims to develop a knowledge and understanding of mathematical principles by using a variety of teaching methods including practical activities, exploration and discussion.

Scientific

Science is also a core subject throughout the school and the curriculum aims to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces. It aims also to develop those skills associated with science as a process of enquiry; for example, by observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording findings.

Technological

The school's technological curriculum encompasses two main subjects, both of which are taught throughout the school. Pupils of all ages are taught how to use information and communication technology (ICT). Equally, design technology (DT) gives pupils the opportunities to work with tools and equipment, exploring materials and components and to evaluate the processes and ideas by which products are made in the Upper forms. Working from design drawings the children produce completed tasks having used a wide variety of skills in the process. In DT the curriculum allows for considerable overlap with ICT in terms of computer-aided design.

Human and Social

This area is concerned with people and their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. The subjects that make the strongest contribution to this area are history and geography, which are taught throughout the school. History is taught chronologically giving the children an overview which will enable them at the secondary phase to set events in their correct place in the historical sequence.

The geography syllabus draws on the children's experience of their own environment, initially using map working skills to record and explore and examine. Further studies of weather conditions, other countries and world geography follow in the Upper school.

Physical

This area aims to develop the pupils' physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses, and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. In Nursery, Reception and Prep 1 Music and Movement sessions are held each week. Years 3-6 have a PE session and at least two afternoons of games off-site each week. All pupils in the Nursery and Prep Departments have a weekly swimming session at Totnes Pool. The school takes part in competitive tag rugby, netball, X-country, swimming, Athletics and cricket against other schools and as part of the Independent Schools Association regional and, in some cases, national competitions. There is Inter House tag rugby on St. Christopher's Day each year; as well as Inter House competitive netball, swimming and athletics.

Aesthetic and Creative

All subjects are capable of contributing to the aesthetic and creative, an area concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. However, the curriculum includes specific subjects that are particularly suited to eliciting personal, imaginative and practical responses. Art, music and literature are prominent. Drama is also a timetabled subject throughout the school.

Music plays a very important part in the creative curriculum. Each form has two periods of form music per week. Ensemble groups have been initiated. Peripatetic lessons in a variety of instruments are offered and the school has a choir and orchestra. Nativity plays, school productions and concerts encourage confident, creative performances and enjoyment for all. Twice-termly poetry assemblies encourage each child's confidence in performance as well as enjoyment of the subject.

Personal and Spiritual Development

The Learning for Life curriculum also contributes to pupils' personal and spiritual development. Most subjects offer opportunities to explore issues that impact upon the personal growth and development of pupils. Contact between pupils and form tutors, for example during registration periods, promote personal, social and health education. Sex education and relationship skills are dealt with by the School Nurse with Prep 6 children. The School Nurse also plays a full part in the implementation of the Learning for Life Curriculum.

Prep 6 play host each year to elderly members of the public from Totnes Caring for an afternoon of tea, entertainment and interaction reinforcing their skills of listening and communicating with a different generation.

However, the formal curriculum also has an important role to play in this area.

The Religious Studies curriculum, as well as dealing with spiritual development, also deals with relationship skills and our responsibilities towards each other and to all God's creation.

Year 6 pupils are given advice, help and support in making both their choices and the transition to secondary education. Children are prepared for entrance exams, 11+ and Common Entrance.

Balance of the Curriculum

The curriculum is planned to provide sufficient allocation of time for each subject or course of study.

In the Prep School time is allocated to subject areas, and activities follow recommended guidelines; a timetable exists for both the Upper and Lower school to follow. From Prep 1 most subjects are taught by specialist teachers.

A range of extra-curricular activities exists to supply and diversify the curriculum. These include cookery, chess, country dancing, art club, DT club, Nature Club, Farm Club, Quiz club, debating, recorder groups, choir, orchestra, Herb Garden group, ballet, jazz dance and Board Games.

Appropriateness of the Curriculum

Size of Teaching Groups

The curriculum is organised so that teaching groups are small in number. In the Prep School the maximum form size is 16 pupils, although the average teaching group is 12. However, some forms are taught in even smaller groups in order to receive the appropriate levels of teaching.

Teaching Week

The teaching week is designed around a single teaching week cycle of the following hours:

- Nursery 21 hours 25 minutes
- Reception 21 hours 25 minutes
- Prep 1 (Year 1) 25 hours 21 minutes

- Preps 2-6 (Years 2-6) 28 hours 20 minutes

Progression and Continuity

Each subject area uses National Curriculum guidelines as a basis in order to provide progression throughout the key stages, but in most cases work goes beyond the guidelines.

Standardised testing and teacher assessment is used to measure progress (see Assessment policy)

Gifted and Talented

Primary Maths Challenge (Mathematical Association)

Junior Maths Challenge (University of Leeds)

Prep Schools general knowledge quiz.

Special Needs

In terms of content and organisation the curriculum takes account of the needs of those pupils requiring special provision. Please refer to the school's special needs policy