



ST PHILIP'S SCHOOL

CURRICULUM, PLANNING AND PREP POLICY

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Scope

This curriculum policy applies to the whole school, including EYFS.

Objectives

St. Philip's School is a Roman Catholic prep school for boys between the ages of 7 and 13, which accepts boys of other religious denominations at the discretion of the Head Master. Our aims are:

- To develop each boy's potential as fully as possible by offering a broadly-based classical curriculum.
- To create a spirit of goodness and industry that does not fear failure. We have high expectations of our pupils and we believe that they thrive when challenged, provided that they feel secure and confident.
- To ensure that every pupil has a sense of being personally cared for, so that he is aware of the commitment and concern of all his teachers. Having experienced this, he should be inspired to do his best and to pass this concern to others.
- To enable each one within the School to discover and respond to God in his/her life, and to build a community of service reflected by personal commitment to the teaching of Christ for the greater glory of God.

Rooted in a firm spiritual belief the 'whole curriculum' also includes the 'hidden curriculum' or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach our children to grow into caring, responsible people with a love of learning, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they can achieve their true potential.

The vast majority of St. Philip's boys will, at the age of 13+, take the Common Entrance examination for entry to public schools, or equivalent examinations, including scholarships. A very wide number of schools receives our pupils, and it is crucial for their well-being that an appropriate choice of school is made.

The School's curriculum aims to deliver the best results for all its pupils, and to that end it evolves to meet the pre-test and entrance exam requirements of senior schools, as well as the syllabus content set

by ISEB at Common Entrance (13+). Teachers also take into account National Curriculum (from September 2014) where helpful as well as all new changes suggested by ISEB across all subjects in 2021.

Skills

Through a broad and balanced curriculum, we develop skills of:

- language (the key tenets of communication – listening, speaking, reading and writing);
- numeracy (including IT);
- and thought (the power of reasoning).

We also develop:

- self-awareness;
- vitality and physicality;
- and creativity.

Fundamental British values

The School is committed to promoting and nurturing fundamental British values. Embedded in the curriculum and ever-present in the ‘invisible curriculum’, the pupils are taught the value of democracy, rule of law, and mutual respect and tolerance.

PSHE

PSHE is taught as a discrete subject in the timetable. Please refer to the School’s PSHE policy for full details.

Forms and setting

St Philip’s operated a single-form year group structure. In the final year, setting takes place in line with academic ability so that we can cater for the differing requirements of each pupil in preparing for Common Entrance and/or scholarship examinations.

St Philip’s year group	National curriculum equivalent
Reception	Reception
Form 1 (from September 2025)	Year 1
Form 2 (from September 2026)	Year 2
Form 3	Year 3
Form 4	Year 4
Form 5	Year 5
Form 6	Year 6
Form 7	Year 7
Form 8	Year 8

EYFS

The school ensures that the children in Reception have access to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum’s seven areas of learning:

- Communication and Language,
- Physical Development,

- Personal Social and Emotional Development,
- Literacy,
- Mathematics,
- Understanding the World and
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Through this the pupils are taught personal, social, emotional, physical development and communication and language skills appropriate for their age (see the EYFS policy).

Skills

The school does not adhere rigidly to the National Curriculum. Instead, we use it as a foundational reference point, expanding our teaching and learning beyond its scope. Every subject is given adequate time and resources to contribute uniquely to the overall curriculum, and the timetable is designed to maintain an equilibrium among all areas of the curriculum. Cross-curricular links are a vital part of this balance, and we strive to establish connections across subjects whenever feasible and beneficial.

- **English**

The aim is to enhance language proficiency and communication abilities via listening, speaking, reading, and writing exercises. This is supported with challenging texts and practical activities such as role-playing and debates.

- **Mathematics**

To develop the ability to calculate, understand patterns and relationships in number and space, as well as to think logically and explain reasoning.

- **Science**

The aim is to teach boys about nature, materials and forces, and to help them understand the world around them and to develop their skills of enquiry

- **ICT**

ICT is used in all subjects where educationally beneficial to support the individual subject disciplines so that boys understand how ICT and technology can be deployed for a wide variety of tasks

- **Environment**

boys learn about human beings and their environment both throughout history and in the modern world, particularly in History and Geography

- **Sport and PE**

Games lessons provide a wide variety of physical activities and training, which gives boys a clear sense of fitness, bodily health and sporting skill, as well as the ethics of good sportsmanship.

- **Creativity**

The curriculum outlets for exploring and developing pupils' creativity in Art, Music and English, where structure and composition are taught explicitly; art displays, concerts and poetry declamations celebrate the boys' achievements and provide opportunities for displaying their creativity.

Special educational needs (SEN)

Boys with specific learning needs are assessed by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and receive an Individual Educational Plan (IEP), in some cases based on an educational psychologist report. Boys with English as an additional language (EAL) may also receive individual support if language has a significant impact on their learning. Full details are stated in the SEN policy.

Assistance for bi-lingual boys or boys with English as an additional language

All boys with English as an additional language (EAL) will, if necessary, receive support at St Philip's. Where the impact is significant, weekly remedial support will be offered through a speech and language therapist.

Academic monitoring

The Deputy Head (Academic) is responsible for monitoring the academic standards of the School. Marking of prep on a weekly basis and giving numerical marks is the basis of academic monitoring and it is an essential duty that all teachers must perform on a weekly basis. The Deputy Head (Academic), in conjunction with the Head Master, carries out a cycle of work scrutiny to ensure consistent standards and systems of marking throughout the School, with feedback given to teachers.

Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) data informs the planning of teachers. Pupil performance is discussed at the weekly staff meetings, academic meetings after examinations and at parent-teacher meetings. Teachers frequently meet with parents on an ad hoc basis. Effort/attainment grades are sent home at half-term, with full set of written reports at the end of the academic year. Year 6 boys receive a mini-report with three action points in English and mathematics in addition to effort/attainment grades at Michaelmas half-term – this is to assist with preparation for ISEB Common Pre-Tests.

Examinations are held at the end of the Michaelmas and Summer terms. In Forms 3 and 4, the examination process is slightly more informal and focuses on establishing examination techniques. As the boys progress through the School they are expected to be increasingly independent in the whole examination process from preparation to execution.

Year 8 boys sit two Common Entrance mock examinations in November and March, set by the Independent Schools' Examination Board (ISEB). Final Common Entrance examinations take place in the first week of June, and are marked by boys' senior schools or internally by our teaching staff, depending on the senior school.

Tracking

The progress of each boy is tracked through his individual academic progress tracking summary. This collates the data from external standardised CATs and internal examinations.

Educational visits

Learning outside the classroom is an essential component of the St Philip's curriculum and every year group takes part in at least one school trip each term. School trips are seen as an enriching experience, which can bring to life aspects of the curriculum. School Trips that took place in the past include:

Class	Trips
Reception	London Transport Museum, Natural History Museum, Becketts Farm
Form 1	British Museum, Tower of London, Kew Gardens
Form 2	Hampton Court Palace, Museum of London, Science Museum
Form 3	Investigate at Natural History Museum, Science Museum, British Museum, Painshill Park, local Brompton library, Celtic Harmony Camp, London Wetlands, Theatre
Form 4	Imperial War Museum, art exhibitions, the British museum, Painshill Park, Celtic Harmony Camp

Form 5	Fishbourne Palace, Pevensey, Battle Abbey and Bodiam Castle, Canterbury Cathedral, Runnymede & Windsor, Olympic Park, Battersea Park and Power Station, Watt's Gallery, Science Museum, Clerkenwell
Form 6	Tower of London, Golden Hinde, Southwark Cathedral, Lewes Castle and Anne of Cleves House, the Wallace Collection, Fishbourne Palace, Battersea Park and Power Station, Chelsea Physic Garden, Globe Theatre, Lord's Cricket, Rome
Form 7	City of Bristol (residential), Ham House, National Maritime Museum, Cartoon Museum, Queen Mary Sailing Club, London Zoo, Globe Theatre, Design Museum, Rome
Form 8	Geography field trip, Houses of Parliament, residential adventure trip, Adur Centre, Epping Forrest, PGL Surrey, Canterbury, WCCS debate, Rome

Foreign trips

Since 2004 the school has organised annual ski trips to the Alps during the February half term holiday.

Every five years, the school organises a pilgrimage to Rome.

ASSESSMENT, MARKING, RECORDING AND REPORTING POLICY

The overall aims of this policy are:

- To provide direct and immediate feedback to pupils on their performance so that they can make progress and gain in confidence.
- To enable teachers to assess each pupil's attainment and progress.
- To enable pupils and parent to monitor and track progress.

Marking policy and written comments

All boys can expect their work to be marked to indicate attainment. Written work will have a grade, mark or constructive feedback to help with targets for improvement. Written comments are essential. Comments should always be constructive, offering praise where it is due, and indicating what steps should be taken to make further progress. Teachers will be explicit about the marking policy and at the start of the year they will make the policy clear to the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to do corrections once work is returned.

When a numerical mark is given, the teacher will ensure that the boys understand what that mark means in relation to the grade system. If a significant amount of work is below the required standard a boy may be given an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Sometimes verbal feedback may be given to individual boys regarding a certain piece of work. If only verbal feedback is given VF should be written next to the work and dated.

Recognition of quality

Individual teachers may choose to recognise the quality of a piece of work by giving a house point or Head Master's Credit. These should be entered via the pupil's prep diary and stored on Sharepoint.

Recognition of effort

Individual teachers may choose to recognise the effort a boy has put into a piece of work by giving him a house point. These should be entered via the pupil's prep diary and stored on Sharepoint.

Marking and continuous assessment

In core subjects (English, Maths, Science) the boys' work is expected to be marked at least once a week at the very minimum and results recorded. In subjects with fewer lessons, where there is a written homework the work should be marked every two weeks at the very minimum.

Marking by pupils

In some subjects it may be educationally helpful for pupils to mark their own work. Such marking should always be reviewed later by the teacher.

Recording

Staff are required to keep accurate records detailing all grades or marks allocated to pupils. This is essential so that progress can be monitored. It also ensures greater continuity in the event of staff absence. Assessment results are recorded by the member of staff either in a written mark book or electronically.

MARKING POLICY

Marking essentially has two functions: to provide an assessment record and to provide feedback to the pupil.

Points to consider include:

- Can pupils read your comments?
- Do you allow time for pupils to read your comments?
- Are your comments written with the same level of care and attention to detail you expect from your pupils?

Your marking should:

- Provide clear feedback to pupils about strengths and weaknesses;
- Recognise, encourage and reward a pupil's effort and progress;
- Help parents understand the strengths and weaknesses in their sons' work;
- Provide a good record of pupils' progress;
- Focus teachers on the areas of learning where groups and individual pupils need specific help;
- Set Clear targets on how to improve their work;
- Show emphasis on how well presented their work is;
- Use Green / Red pens when marking – Red is for the teachers to correct mistakes made, Green is for the students marking their work.
- Numerical Marking should be encouraged only in subjects or activities where if implemented, it can help the students academically progress and improve their level of knowledge.
- Descriptive Marking should be encouraged in most cases as this can be indicative and guide students assess and improve their work accordingly with clear steps to take and guidance on how to achieve the desirable target.

PLANNING

Department policies and planning

Each department produces a long-term plan saved in the staff common area in the curriculum folder.

Curriculum folder

All academic planning is stored in live documents on the staff common area in the curriculum folder.

Long-term planning

Each subject produces a long-term plan detailing key topics taught from Years 3-8 for each half of term. The long-term plan should indicate the key topics, on a half-termly basis, taught to each year group.

All planning is submitted to and checked by the Deputy Head (Academic).

Medium-term planning

Medium-term planning outlines teaching to each Year Group or class on a week-by-week basis. Medium-term planning consists of a scheme of work and is completed on a standardised form. Schemes should include:

- weekly aims and activities;
- opportunities for cross-curricular links;
- opportunities for links to fundamental British values;
- self-evaluation.

Medium-term plans must be submitted to the Deputy Head (Academic) and will be available to all members of staff by being saved in the shared area of the drive.

Short-term planning

Short term planning takes the form of a working document for the subject teacher to annotate and comment informally on:

- their aims for the week and the extent to which they were fulfilled;
- what may need to be amended for the following lesson;
- what opportunities for learning arose, or require further reinforcement;
- the strengths and successes of the lesson, or ways in which the lesson could be improved.

Individual lesson plans

Individual lesson plans should be provided for any lesson that is being observed, for example during an appraisal or inspection, and for all lessons taught by training teachers.

Homework/prep

Academic staff have a responsibility to set prep on the timetabled days. The completion of prep by boys is compulsory. Prep diaries are signed by Form Tutors at the end of each School day, and by parents after the completion of all work set.

Subject teachers should ensure boys have recorded the prep set in their prep diaries, and each prep should take account of the following guidelines:

Form 3 20-30 minutes per night and 60 minutes at weekends

Form 4 40 minutes per night and 60 minutes at weekends
Form 5 45 minutes per night and 80 minutes at weekends
Form 6 45-60 minutes per night and 120 minutes at weekends
Form 7 45-60 minutes per night and 120 minutes at weekends
Form 8 60 minutes per night and 120 minutes at weekends

Marking and assessment

Academic staff are required to mark all work, classwork or prep, within one week of its collection.

HOMWORK POLICY

Aims and objectives

Through this policy the aim is to:

- provide a consistent approach to homework across the school and across year groups;
- provide appropriate homework to meet the needs of our pupils;
- provide homework which reinforces and enriches classroom work, or prepares pupils for future learning;
- ensure that homework is marked and pupils are given positive feedback;
- foster positive attitudes towards independent learning;
- encourage pupils to develop good work habits and discipline for future life;
- prepare pupils for their next stage of learning;
- promote the partnership between home and school.

The purpose of homework

The purpose of homework is to support pupils in their aim to achieve the highest possible standards. The School believes that homework is one of the main ways in which pupils can develop independence in their learning. However, parents also play an important role and are asked to show an interest and provide support.

Homework should be completed within reasonable time parameters, according to year group. However, the school accepts that some pupils will have a desire to take their learning further in certain curriculum areas and at certain points in their academic careers. Such independent research is encouraged and celebrated.

Homework content

Homework is set every night, but its focus shifts as pupil's progress through the school. There is an emphasis on Maths and English in all year groups. Homework expectations for each year group are communicated to parents through the Curriculum Outlines which are published on the School's website each term.

Homework is set in the following subjects:

Y1 & Y2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Reading	English	English	English	English	English	English
Spelling	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
Maths	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
English	RS	RS	French	French	French	French
			History	Classics	Classics	Classics
			Geography	History	History	History
			RS	Geography	Geography	Geography
			Classics	RS	RS	RS

All boys are expected to write the expectations for each piece of homework in their prep diaries. Subject teachers should ensure boys have recorded the prep set in their prep diaries, and each prep should take account of the following guidelines:

Forms 1 & 2: 20 minutes, twice per week

Form 3 30 minutes per night and 60 minutes at weekends

Form 4 40 minutes per night and 60 minutes at weekends

Form 5 45 minutes per night and 80 minutes at weekends

Form 6 45-60 minutes per night and 120 minutes at weekends

Form 7 45-60 minutes per night and 120 minutes at weekends

Form 8 60 minutes per night and 120 minutes at weekends

Teachers are expected to:

- set tasks appropriate to the needs and abilities of the pupils
- plan tasks which support or enrich classroom learning.
- provide sufficient information so that pupils and parents/carers know what is required and the timescale involved
- mark homework and give feedback as appropriate
- celebrate effort and achievement in homework tasks through the rewards system

Form Teachers are expected to:

- sign prep diaries on a daily basis
- contact parents where any problems with homework arise

Pupils are expected to:

- listen carefully to instructions given about homework and fill in their homework diaries accordingly
- make sure their Form Teacher sees their diary each day
- complete their homework to the best of their ability
- take pride in the work they complete
- hand their homework in on time

Parents are asked to:

- provide a suitable environment for pupils to work
- ensure that sufficient time is set aside to complete homework
- provide the necessary equipment
- take an active interest in the work to support, the child's learning, whilst ensuring that in the main it is the child's work.
- support reading development by listening to their child read, reading to their child and discussing texts with him, especially in Forms 3, 4 and 5
- help ensure work is handed in on time
- sign prep diaries on a daily basis

The home school partnership is considered fundamental to the success of homework. Dialogue is encouraged and parents are always welcome to email or make an appointment to discuss their son's homework with the relevant member of staff.

Reading

We recommend that boys in Reception to Form 3 read for 10 minutes each evening with their parents. We recommend that boys towards the end of Form 3 and in Form 4 read for 20 minutes with their parents every evening to develop their verbal fluency. Each boy in Reception to Form 4 will also receive personal reading time with a dedicated teacher at least once during the School week. Boys write regular book reviews. It is expected that boys in Forms 5, 6, 7 and 8 will read at least 30 minutes daily on an independent basis.

Marking and assessment

Academic staff are required to mark all work, classwork or prep, within one week of its collection.

Collecting prep

Prep must be handed by each boy to the teacher who set it. Prep is due the next lesson after it has been set.

Illness

When pupils are ill, they may be asked to catch up on work missed, particularly in the core subjects. This is at the discretion of the teacher and will depend on the nature of the activity and the length of absence. If a child suffers from a lengthy or ongoing illness, the School will work with parents to make arrangements to support the child's learning, as far as possible.

Unsatisfactory homework

If a child's homework is deemed unsatisfactory or they simply fail to complete it, they will sit a homework detention on either a Tuesday or a Thursday at break time and will complete the work during that time. Where this becomes a persistent problem, parents will be contacted.

Provision at school

Most pupils undertake homework at home. Homework club is offered daily from 4.00 - 5.00 pm at the School. This is run by a member of staff and is for homework only – a quiet environment is maintained. Pupils are expected to complete their homework independently, although obviously some help is given, particularly to younger boys, by the member of staff running homework club.

Parents are still asked to ensure that homework has been completed and sign the homework diary accordingly, once their sons are at home.