



CURRICULUM POLICY

Overview

The curriculum is all the activities the School organises in order to promote learning and personal growth in our pupils. It aims to give pupils experience in the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, social, physical, aesthetic, and creative aspects of education and to prepare them for their senior schools. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people who can work and co-operate with others whilst developing the knowledge and skills needed to realise their individual potential.

The curriculum is planned around the educational requirements of the National Curriculum and the Common Entrance syllabuses. As we are an independent school, we diverge from the National Curriculum where there is a sound rationale for so doing.

The subject matter is differentiated according to the ages and aptitudes of the pupils, including pupils with an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan (where a pupil has an EHC Plan, the education provided is determined by the requirements of that Plan).

Our curriculum also includes the range of co-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the learning experience of the children. The 'hidden curriculum,' i.e. what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave, is another factor to be taken into consideration.

The academic curriculum is obligatory for pupils except when it is beneficial to an individual pupil to be excused one or more subjects. Participation in after school clubs is encouraged but not compulsory.

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.

Aims

The aims of our school curriculum are to:

- foster a love of learning for its own sake by encouraging our children to ask questions and think for themselves;
- provide all children with a relevant and engaging learning experience that gives them a sense of place and a sense of purpose;
- encourage our children to develop the necessary skills to work productively as part of a group and to become resilient and reflective learners, unafraid of trying something new or making mistakes;
- enable our pupils to achieve the highest academic standards of which they are capable;
- promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- enable children to think critically and creatively;
- instil a sense of discipline, in particular the self-discipline that enables a pupil to make the most of his or her potential;
- provide EYFS children with a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional, and physical development and communication and language skills;
- help children understand Britain's cultural heritage;
- enable children to be positive citizens in society;
- teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development and to understand right from wrong;
- help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others;
- promote personal, social, health and economic education which
 - (i) reflects the school's aim and ethos, and
 - (ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (a);
- **for pupils receiving secondary education (Years 7 and 8 at MHV), access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that**
 - (i) is presented in an impartial manner,
 - (ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options, and
 - (iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
- **effectively prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life in British society through actively promoting Fundamental British Values to enable children to have respect for themselves and to develop good self-esteem;**
- **provide pupils receiving primary education (up to Year 6 at MHV) with relationships education and pupils receiving secondary education (Years 7 and 8 at MHV) with relationships and sex education (except in so far as the pupil is wholly or partly excused from sex education at the request of the pupil's parents);**
- **prepare our pupils for future stages in their education.**

The Prep School Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to be accessed by all pupils and the age, aptitude and needs of all pupils, including those with an additional need, are taken into account.

One of the main focuses of the curriculum in the Prep School is on ensuring that pupils are thoroughly prepared for their transition to senior schools, either at the end of Year 8 or Year 6. The senior schools chosen by parents in consultation with the Head are varied, including local maintained schools as well as independent day and boarding schools.

The table below shows the number of minutes allocated to each subject, in each year, in the Prep School.

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Art **	60	60	60	60	60	60
Computing*	40	40	40	40	50	50
Drama		40	40	40	40	40
DT/Carpentry **		60	60	60	60	60
English	400	400	250	240	210	200
French	70	80	80	80	120	120
Games	320	320	320	320	320	320
History/Geography	40	40	80	80	80	80
Latin/Spanish				80	110	110
PSHE	40	40	40	40	40	40
Maths	300	300	240	270	220	220
Music	80	80	80	40	40	40
PE^	50	50	50	50	50	50
RS	40	40	60	60	60	60
Science	60	60	100	160	200	200
Swimming^	50	50	50			

^In Year 6, pupils alternate between PE and swimming, with one week of PE followed by one week of Swimming.

Careers Guidance: In PSHE in Years 5-8, pupils explore their choice of future schools options and careers.

Pupils excused from a subject

In common with many other schools, pupils who have learning difficulties, in particular dyslexia, may be excused language lessons to focus on their literacy and maths skills. The decision is made in consultation with the Learning Support Department, parents and, where relevant, the pupil's designated senior school.

Prep (Homework)

Regular homework gives pupils the opportunity to consolidate and revise what they have learnt in class. It also helps them to develop the important skill of being able to work independently and hopefully puts in place good habits regarding organisation and time management that will stand them in good stead when they move on to senior school.

All pupils have the opportunity to complete their prep at school, supervised by teachers.

In Year 5, pupils are expected to spend 15 to 20 minutes on each piece of prep. Pupils in Year 5 are also expected to read, preferably aloud, for 15 to 20 minutes each night.

In Year 6, pupils are expected to spend 20 to 30 minutes on each piece of prep.

In Years 7 to 8, pupils are expected to spend approximately 30 to 60 minutes on each piece of prep.

An example Prep Timetable is given below

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Yr3					Maths English
Yr4					Maths English
Yr5	English	French	Science	French	Maths
Yr6	English Maths		Latin/Spanish	French Science	
Yr7	English Geography, Latin/Spanish	Maths		Science History	French History
Yr8	English	Science		Latin/Spanish, History/Geography, Maths	French, History/Geography

Co-curricular clubs and activities

A comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities is offered by the School. There are optional clubs after school every day of the week, and clubs also take place during break times within the school day. In addition, there is a programme of Saturday morning activities for pupils in Years 3 to 8.

Performing Arts

Performing Arts are an integral part of the cultural life of the School. Every child is encouraged to perform and to build their confidence when presenting in front of audiences. There are dramatic productions throughout the year - ranging from the Nursery and Pre-Prep Nativities to the final Year 8 musical production. Many children also follow the LAMDA course with examinations taking place at the end of the Summer term. Every child has the opportunity to sing in either

the Pre-Prep, Junior or Senior Choir, and there is also a Chamber Choir for special occasions, such as the Carol Service. Most children learn an instrument whilst at MHV and the school has an orchestra, as well as a multitude of ensembles.

The table below gives an overview of the various productions and concerts that take place over the course of an academic year.

Michaelmas	Lent	Summer
Harvest Festival Carol Service Tea-Time Concerts	Year 6 Play Year 4 Play Hastings International Music Festival Spring Concert Tea-Time Concerts	Year 8 Musical LAMDA recitals Tea-Time Concerts

Sport

A comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities is offered by the School. There are optional clubs after school every day of the week as well as a compulsory activity session on a Friday afternoon.

The School aims to provide a broad and varied sporting experience for all pupils.

Teams in all age groups compete in inter-school matches, which take place on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. The School ensures that all children are given a chance to play in fixtures against other schools.

MHV also enters several major sport IAPS competitions, such as football, netball and hockey, and takes part in more specialist competitions such as Equestrian Events.

	Michaelmas	Lent	Summer
Boys	Football Rugby	Rugby Hockey	Cricket Athletics Tennis
Girls	Hockey Netball	Netball Football	Cricket Athletics Tennis

The Pre-Prep School Curriculum

The total learning experience for our pupils includes not only the taught lessons of the curriculum but also the routines, behaviours, activities, and events that our pupils experience daily to ensure that all of them make the best progress possible from their starting points and attain high outcomes. Social and emotional wellbeing is seen as pivotal to the progress of each child and our curriculum is child centred, from the topics chosen to its delivery. The child's voice helps to steer our medium-term planning to ensure engagement and to determine next steps.

Co-curricular

A wide range of activities are used to enrich the timetabled curriculum. Our pupils are encouraged to take part in an extensive range of art, drama, music, sport, Forest School, and clubs. Themed days and weeks are held across the school year. These include World Book Day, French Day, Science Week, a Book Fair, Anti-Bullying Week, mental health awareness and fundraising events.

Pupils are taken to places of interest on a regular basis. Visits are organised to enhance our learning journey topics, and include opportunities to develop independence, teamwork, and responsibility.

Children are given the opportunity to learn a range of musical instruments. Children may begin individual piano lessons from Year 1. In Year 2, the children experience learning the harp and the recorder. Once they progress to Prep school, a wide range of instruments is offered, from tenor horn to the harp or saxophone.

Other opportunities

Our school aims to provide an education for life. Other aspects of our curriculum which enable our pupils to gain the skills, knowledge, and experience to be successful adults include representing the School Council, the Academic Committee, and the Eco Committee. The children in the Pre-Prep join with the children in the Prep School for these committees.

Timetabling the Curriculum in Pre-Prep

A balanced curriculum gives the children opportunities to develop in all aspects of school life. We strive to provide a wide range of experiences and activities in all learning areas, including specialist teaching in French, music, art, computing, gym, ball skills, and swimming.

Key Stage 1: Allocation teaching Time/minutes per week

	Year 1	Year 2
Maths	5 hrs	5 hrs
English incl. Phonics	6 hrs 20mins	6 hrs 20mins

Learning Journey (Science and Humanities)	2 hrs	2 hrs
PSHE/RE	1 hr	1 hr 10 mins
Physical Education	2 hrs	2 hrs
Music	1 hr	1 hr
Art	1 hr	1 hr
ICT	1 hr	1 hr
French	20 mins	20 mins
Swimming	1 hr	1 hr

The Early Years Curriculum

Our topic-based curriculum can change each academic year to suit the cohort. The EYFS framework, which is based on seven areas of learning and development, helps inform next steps and outcomes. We also support children in demonstrating the **three characteristics of effective learning**. Though these characteristics do not appear in the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1, at Vinehall we continue growing these behaviours throughout their time at school. For more information, [please see the Teaching and Learning Policy](#).

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. They consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences both inside and outside. Our experienced Early Years practitioners may also employ “in the moment” planning which arises from observing and interacting with children as they pursue their own interests and then assessing and moving the learning on in that moment. The Learning Journey captures the children’s learning and experiences throughout the year.

Teachers plan their timetables to include:

- opportunities for child-initiated and adult-led activities
- focus activities for individual pupils and small groups
- a balance of indoor, outdoor, and free flow activities
- specialist teachers to enrich the curriculum – French, gym, music, swimming, ball skills and Forest School
- using the facilities available – outdoor learning, vegetable garden, sports hall and pool
- special days, visitors and trips