



VITA ET PAX PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Curriculum Policy

Reviewed April 2018

Introduction

Vita et Pax offers a full-time supervised education for all pupils aged 3 – 11 years. Our curriculum is broad, balanced, coherent, relevant and accessible. The curriculum recognises the unique value and potential of each pupil and encourages pupils' personal growth and development in all areas to enable the children to become confident, responsible and considerate members of the community.

The spiritual education and development of pupils is fundamental to the ethos of our School and is interwoven with, and indeed reinforces all other aspects of the curriculum. The curriculum at Vita et Pax provides experiences of mathematical, scientific, technological, linguistics, human / social / physical / aesthetic and creative education as well as ensuring that the children are appropriately challenged throughout their education.

At Vita et Pax, the children are immersed through many different learning opportunities such as learning through assemblies, school trips, the extended extra-curricular activities and the many opportunities that the school provides to enrich the children's learning experience.

Aims:

- To be a School where children enjoy the excitement of becoming independent learners, feel safe and happy.
- To encourage and support the spiritual, physical, personal, social, moral and intellectual development of every child by providing a wide and rich range of educational and cultural experiences.
- To recognise each child's unique value and gifts, ensuring that children feel appreciated for themselves not just their achievements.
- To instil in pupils a sense of personal responsibility and self-discipline encouraging them to always try their best.
- To teach pupils to respect and care for other people in the immediate environment [home and School] and the wider world, thus fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect between staff and pupils.
- To establish close links between home and School - keeping parents informed about their child's progress, School policies and activities.
- To regularly assess and monitor the progress of each pupil, ensuring that the education provided is appropriate to his/her age and ability thus enabling each child to develop and use their talents and abilities to the full.

At Vita et Pax School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the School, irrespective of age, race, gender, special educational needs, disability, religion or socio-economic background.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected with the School feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in School life.

The School Day

EYFS:

Nursery Term Time only

Morning session 08:30am - 12 noon

Lunch 11:30am – 12 noon

Afternoon Session 12 noon – 15:30pm

Reception (ages 5-6) 8.45 – 3.15

Key Stage 1:

Year 1 & Year 2 [ages 5-7 years] 8.45 – 3.15

Key Stage 2:

Years 3 – 6 [ages 7 – 11 years] 8.45 – 3.30

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we adhere to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are seven areas of learning and development. All areas are important and interconnected.

The three prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

In addition, children's spiritual development is nurtured through the religious education teaching scheme, Come and See. The children participate in a combination of adult-led and child-initiated activities each day both inside and out. The classroom and outside space are organised into different learning areas with resources available and clearly labelled to help the children to become independent learners. We use small group or whole class sessions as

opportunities to introduce a new topic and demonstrate and encourage particular aspects of learning or specific skills.

During the day in Nursery children can select their own activities. In Reception, the children are introduced to more structure and the activities are directed and differentiated to a greater extent. All our activities are planned so children work towards attaining the 'Early Learning Goals' by the end of Reception.

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

Pupils are provided with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, creative and spiritual education. Religious Education [R.E.] We use the scheme recommended by the Diocese of Westminster, Come and See. The religious life of the School is further supported by daily prayer, the celebration of termly Mass, seasonal festivals and assemblies, which are prepared by the children. Our Religious Education programme makes a significant contribution to children's human and social education and in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC).

We are a Catholic School but welcome pupils of all faiths and belief systems whose families support the ethos of the school. We encourage all pupils to strive for academic excellence in a spirit of open and shared enquiry, whilst developing their individual potential and qualities of character so they can make a positive contribution to the world. Whilst SMSC is integral to all aspects of our curriculum, PSHE and Religious Education make a strong contribution.

Pupils are led towards distinguishing right from wrong, to respect the law and towards acting consistently with their beliefs and with a view to the consequences of their own and others' actions. We actively promote fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Our school:

- leads pupils towards becoming confident and positive contributors to their community and effective users of its services and facilities according to their maturity;
- enables pupils to gain insights into the origins and practices of their own cultures and into those of the wider community;
- takes steps to ensure that the pupils appreciate racial and cultural diversity and avoid and resist racism, and
- ensure that pupils are able to understand and respond to risk, for example risks associated with extremism, new technology, substance misuse and personal safety.
- enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.

A variety of trips, assemblies, visiting speakers, circle time, charity days and an active School Council and Mini Vinnies enhance the above and other areas of the curriculum, raising pupils'

awareness of the environment, religious practices, racism, bullying, e-safety, world poverty, healthy lifestyles and helping pupils achieve personal goals.

English

This is largely addressed by the core text approach which provides for the teaching and progression in, speaking and listening, reading, writing, spelling and grammar. Regular assemblies, productions give pupils further opportunities to develop their oracy skills. Book weeks, our visiting storyteller, theatre trips and visiting drama groups provide additional stimulus. Reading and writing skills are practised and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum.

Mathematics

This is largely addressed by the Inspire core scheme based on Singapore Maths. It provides for practical activity, exploration and discussion as the scheme promotes a concrete - pictorial - abstract approach, ensuring secure foundations and deep understanding of mathematical concepts. The Oxford Inspire Maths Scheme is used throughout the school from Year 1 to Year 6. Mathematical skills are also addressed where appropriate through Science, Geography, Design and Technology, ICT and Art. The Numicon approach is introduced in Nursery and further developed in Reception whereby children begin to embed early mathematical concepts.

Science

Science is an important, core subject, which aims to stimulate and excite pupils' curiosity about phenomena and events in the world around them. The pupils learn to become confident and independent scientists, who have the ability to think logically and clearly through using experimental evidence, and modelling through scientific method. In addition, developing the skills associated with Science such as enquiry, observation, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments, recording their findings, considering the reliability and validity when drawing conclusions and evaluating methods used, whilst adhering to the importance of fair testing and relevant aspects of health and safety is an essential part of Science teaching.

Computing

Through Computing lessons and the wider curriculum, pupils are taught to use programming/coding software, create, store and organise digital content, know how to keep safe on-line, word processing, modelling, multi-media, research, internet, spreadsheets, and databases. Pupils use a range of iPad apps to support their learning in class.

Art and Design and Technology

Art and Design and Technology includes developing, planning and communicating ideas, working with different tools and materials and evaluating processes and products. It

encompasses workshops delivered by designers and artists as well as both short and long term projects.

Humanities

History and Geography make a major contribution to the pupils' knowledge and understanding of people and their environment and how human action now and in the past has influenced events and conditions. Local studies and school trips to places such as Windsor Castle, The Toy Museum, The Gunpowder Mills and The British Museum as well as a Year 5/Year 6 residential visit each year support and enhance pupils' learning experience.

PE

This area aims to develop pupils' physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and ability to evaluate and improve performances in a variety of team and individual sports e.g. invasion games, football, netball, hockey, dance, gymnastics, swimming and inter-School matches. Pupils also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health. There is a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and clubs to support the Physical Education [P.E.] programme which includes: Football, Netball, Multisport, Irish Dancing and Ballet. The school has a number of sporting teams that compete locally, regionally and nationally.

Music

Music plays a significant role in the celebration of termly Masses, Christmas, Easter and Summer Term Productions, Class Assemblies and religious festivals. We also have a school orchestra and choir that meet weekly and perform at selective events throughout the year.

Spanish

Linguistic skills are further taught through the teaching of Spanish [Nursery –Year 6]. The children acquire vocabulary and early grammatical skills through the teaching of song, stories and film making. The teaching of Spanish is theme based each term and develops children's acquisition of the Spanish language.

Teaching and Learning

The most important role of teaching is to promote learning in order to raise pupils' achievement. For us, teaching includes lesson planning, the implementation of plans, as well as marking, assessment and feedback with next steps. It also includes support and intervention strategies. In assessing the quality of the teaching in our schools, we take account of the evidence of pupils' learning, achievements and progress over time. When evaluating the quality of teaching in our schools, we consider how successful the teaching is in promoting the learning, progress and personal development for every pupil.

Effective Teaching - Expectations of Staff

Staff are expected to actively promote the curriculum aims by:

- having high expectation of pupils.
- employing a variety of learning and teaching methods.
- ensuring that pupils are enabled to access the curriculum and given opportunities to be successful.
- delivering lessons which build upon previous experience, providing continuity and progression.
- providing learning opportunities which offer depth and challenge and motivate and inspire pupils.
- involving pupils in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular formative feedback through discussion, assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging pupils to evaluate their personal achievements.
- developing pupils' skills to become independent learners.
- encouraging, rewarding and valuing achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment.
- working in partnership with children, staff and parents/guardian/carers to achieve shared goals.
- keeping parents/guardians/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their pupils through reports and parents evenings.

Effective Learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. We encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

Assessment and marking are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Informal formative assessment takes place continuously in the classroom as well as being updated on our cloud based assessment tracking tool. Through a system of consultations with the child, parent-teacher meetings and regular assessments, we monitor progress and celebrate achievements. Formative assessment, summative assessment, work sampling and moderation and pupil assessment weeks. Parents' Evenings take place twice a year alongside parent/child learning conversation evenings. Parents receive termly approach to learning

reports as well as exam data bi-annually. All teachers are available to discuss pupil progress with parents at any point during the academic year.

Enrichment opportunities

All pupils have the opportunity to develop existing interests and nurture new ones through a variety of clubs and enrichment activities, which operate during lunchtimes and after school for example debating, public speaking and maths masterclasses.

Educational visits/off-site activities are integral to our curriculum and there is a wide range of educational opportunities that extend beyond the classroom door. Our school's curriculum offers a series of educational journeys that deepen the pupils' understanding of the world around them. For example our Year 5 and 6 residentials develop teamwork and resilience.

Our overall aim at Vita et Pax is to develop the whole child by immersing them in an exciting and challenging curriculum that enables each individual to reach their God given potential.