

**Curriculum Policy**

Notre Dame Prep School provides pupils with the knowledge to become independent learners who are able to explore a curriculum which is relevant, engaging and scholarly.

Teaching and learning is of upmost importance at Notre Dame, with an education which uses the best of traditional values and modern teaching methods. Lessons are taught in a welcoming environment which aims to encourage children of every ability to make good progress, challenge their thinking and stretch their academic knowledge. When pupils leave Notre Dame Prep School, we want them to be knowledgeable and well-adjusted young people who have the thinking skills, work ethic and intellectual curiosity to make a successful transition to secondary education.

A variety of teaching methods are used to ensure that every child is able to perform in lessons to the best of their ability. Lessons are planned to be well suited for the ages and aptitudes of the pupils in the class, including those who are very able, have English as an additional language and those with Special Educational Needs.

The curriculum taught at Notre Dame Prep School largely follows the 2015 National Curriculum, allowing children to study a broad range of topics and enables them to acquire a broad knowledge and understanding of the world that they live in. Pupils are encouraged to actively take part in lessons, to participate in discussions and increase their independent learning as they progress through the school.

The school curriculum is planned by class teachers to be informative, creative, relevant and inspiring, to allow children to develop their own interests and skills and to help them to prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in a British Society.

All children have the opportunity to learn and make progress. Marking of work, feedback and regular assessments ensure that children are monitored closely and aware of their targets for improvement and development. The SENCO works closely with class teachers to ensure that children with special educational needs are provided with the tools they need to access the curriculum or with specific learning strategies or information related to the needs of the individual. Records such as IEPs, specialist reports and tracking data is stored on the school server and is attached to the pupil's individual record on SIMS (see also the school’s policy on Privacy and the Protection of Data).

A teacher is responsible for the overseeing of each of the different subject areas. Subject Leaders hold a file which contains policies and schemes of work for their area of the curriculum, in addition to samples of children's work and assessment information. Subject Leaders will aim to observe other members of staff regularly. Policy details and long term planning is also available on the school server.

Our school curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of educational experiences, such as termly school trips and visits, and enables them to acquire skills in speaking and listening, and literacy and numeracy.

**EYFS**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2025) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and that they are kept healthy and safe, thus ensuring that children have the knowledge and skills that they need to start school.

Four guiding principles shape practice in our EY settings. These are:

* Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
* children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
* children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time
* Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

There are seven areas of learning and development which shape our EYFS Curriculum. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

* Communication and language
* Physical development
* Personal, social and emotional development
* Literacy
* Mathematics
* Understanding the world
* Expressive arts and design

Progress in EYFS is shared with parents using Tapestry.

**English**

Literacy skills are predominantly delivered through the English curriculum, although this forms a large part of most lessons throughout the school day. The marking policy reinforces the use of literacy skills in all subjects.

Progress and attainment are monitored throughout the year through the use of assessments and target setting.

Children in Prep 1 sit end of year NFER tests and Prep 2 sit NFER tests during the Spring Term. Children in Prep 3, 4 and 5 will sit NFER assessments in Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) and Reading in the Autumn Term and in the Summer Term. Writing is assessed throughout the school year. Children in Prep 2 and Prep 6 sit the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Tests at the end of the academic year. The Phonic Screening check is administered in line with DfE guidelines. Assessment data is recorded on SIMs by class teachers.

Drama is an important part of the curriculum, particularly when developing speaking and listening skills. This is incorporated into the body of English lessons, and is used to great effect during the Christmas Nativity Plays in EYFS and KS1 and in the Summer Musical for KS2. Some pupils also attend Speech and Drama lessons as an optional extra curricular activity.

**Maths**

Numeracy skills are mainly delivered through the Maths curriculum, and is often utilised in a variety of subjects including Science, DT, Computing and Geography. The Maths curriculum enables children to use and apply mathematics, understand shape, measures and data handling. Children are encouraged to develop their logical thinking and problem solving skills as they become more confident in the handling of number.

Progress and attainment are assessed regularly with NFER tests. Children in Prep 2 and Prep 6 sit the KS1 and KS2 tests during the summer term.

**Science**

Science is delivered through the science curriculum. This enables pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding of nature and the word around them, encouraging the development of enquiry and investigative skills and recording of information. There are also cross-curricular link to the RSE and PSHE curriculum.

**RE**

All pupils in all ages have Religious Education lessons, and we have introduced the new Catholic Religious Education Directory (RED) as our programme of study throughout the school. Prep 1 and Prep 3 are using the new scheme ‘The Vine and The Branches’ to support this. Notre Dame has a strong Catholic heritage, while welcoming those of other faiths. RE serves to educate pupils about Christian ethics and helps to equip them to live a moral life informed by Christian choices and values. Pupils learn about and discuss moral and ethical issues and study the beliefs, values and stories of other faiths. All of the children attend Mass every half term, and will attend other services throughout the year when possible.

**RSE**

In accordance with our school ethos we deliver a sex, health and relationships education programme to all our young people within a caring and informative framework, taking careful consideration of the Catholic beliefs and values within the School. This includes discussion of families, those who care for us, caring friendships, online relationships and keeping ourselves safe. ‘Ten:Ten’ is used as a programme of study.

**Computing**

Technological skills are developed in computing lessons, where pupils use a broad range of software and apps to communicate ideas, organise data and research topics using the internet. Computing skills are further developed through the use of laptops and iPads in other areas of the curriculum, enabling children to use technology in a variety of situations and contexts. All children are taught about the importance of E-Safety and how to stay safe online.

**PSHRE**

PSHRE covers a range of topics throughout the school and is relevant to the age of the children. The ‘Young Citizens', scheme is used in KS1 and KS2, with a strong focus on moral values, what it means to be a good citizen and have respect for others, the environment and fundamental British values. As a Roman Catholic school, we endeavour to nurture a love of God, and to teach the children about our school ethos of love and care, where all people are treated as individuals; respected, nurtured and valued. Our PSHRE Curriculum has been designed using the PSHE Association guidelines and pays regard to the 2010 Protected Characteristics Act. Our school PSHRE Newsletter is sent termly to allow parents to engage with the subjects taught at school and includes reference to discussion topics and books based on the termly theme.

We foster positive relationships with peers and adults, looking for mutual respect and lessons are taught throughout the school about the importance of consent.

In the EYFS, PSHRE is an important part of the curriculum and underpins much of day to day teaching and learning. Children are introduced to a range of books to support their exploration of the diversity of their community and the importance in the respect and appreciation of others.

Children are taught about puberty and sex education when they are in Prep 5 and Prep 6.

**Humanities**

History and Geography are taught both explicitly and as a part of topic work. History encompasses a range of times, both ancient and modern and teaches children to learn about the past and how we can use that to inform what we do today. Pupils learn about their local environment and the world around them as part of the Geography curriculum.

**MFL**

French or Spanish are taught throughout the school, starting with simple songs and vocabulary and progressing to conversational and written language at the end of KS2. Pupils learn how to speak another language and about the culture and practices of another country as part of their lessons.

**PE**

The physical education curriculum enables all children to participate in a wide range of sporting and physical pursuits. Children are encouraged to be sportsmanly in game or match situations and teams will regularly attend fixtures both at school at other venues. All children in Pre-Prep to Prep 6 take part in swimming lessons.

**Art and Design**

Art teaching explores a wide range of media and approaches throughout the school. The display of artwork is evident around the school and is a chance for children to take pride in the work that they create. This is further explored in extra- curricular art clubs and competitions. DT is taught to all pupils through construction, food preparation and the design of products. Children are encouraged to evaluate the process of making and final products and will encounter opportunities for independent working and problem solving.

**Music**

The music curriculum encourages all children to think of themselves as musicians. The children have the opportunity to use a wide variety of instruments and will learn about music from different cultures. Peripatetic teachers offer a wide range of instruments for individual lessons. Musical achievement is celebrated in assemblies, the Carol Service and the Easter Concert, and the school choir attends the annual Norfolk Festival and performs at St John’s Cathedral.

**SEN**

Pupils identified as needing further support or assistance will be made aware to the SENCO. All teaching at Notre Dame is inclusive and differentiated to suit the needs and abilities of all children. Some children will be given an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which will explain specific targets and the relevant provision to help meet those targets. Children requiring extra help may be further supported through 1:1 or small group work in The Green Room. A record of support is kept in the form of IEPs and other reports which are stored in the SEN file and on SIMs. The SENCO uses the Lucid Rapid Dyslexia screening software if a need to do so has been identified by a member of staff or requested by a parent.

**See also:**

Admissions Policy

All Academic Policies

Equal Opportunity Policy

SEN Policy

Houses

Pupil Behaviour & Discipline

Anti-bullying Policy

Report Writing Policy

Assessment Policy

Preparation for Exams Policy

Marking & Feedback Policy

Gifted & Talented Policy

Safeguarding Policy

RSE Policy

***Reviewed September 2025 by S Smith***

***Approved September 2025 by K Laudan***

***To be reviewed no later than September 2026***