



## **Exeter Pre-Prep School**

### **Curriculum Policy**

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This policy applies equally to all pupils across the school, including EYFS.

## Introduction

At Exeter Pre-Prep School we are committed to providing an environment in which all pupils are challenged to be the best they can be and one in which pastoral care and wellbeing underpin personal academic achievement.

We believe in creating the desire for lifelong learning and aim to stimulate a real thirst for learning. We believe that a truly excellent school is about more than academic achievement alone; it is also about developing a passion for learning, a capacity for independent reasoning, self-awareness and resilience, self-confidence without arrogance and genuine interests that extend beyond the confines of the classroom.

We firmly believe in developing the whole person, aiming to ensure that when pupils leave us they display good social skills, an awareness of good manners and considerate, respectful behaviour towards others.

## Our Curriculum

The curriculum provision at Exeter Pre-Prep School enables pupils to acquire skills in Speaking, Listening, Literacy and Numeracy and this includes all those pupils in the EYFS.

The curriculum enables all pupils to have the opportunity to learn and make progress, including those pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and also the most able. For children whose home language is not English, the school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop their English language skills.

The curriculum's provision includes the preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life in a manner that is appropriate for children of pre-prep age. Each class teacher, supported by teaching assistants, is responsible for the delivery of the majority of curriculum subjects, while some subjects are taught by subject specialist staff.

Teaching and learning occurs through a variety of whole class, group, paired and individual methodologies, utilising a wide range of approaches from didactic teaching through to independent learning with continuous provision.

All curriculum subject matter is appropriate for the age and aptitudes of the pupils in each school year. Our curriculum provision enables all pupils to have the opportunity to learn and make progress, including those with special educational needs or disabilities who may require learning support. Every opportunity is provided to enable pupils to develop their speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills, as set out in the schemes of work for each curriculum area.

The curriculum provides for the teaching of PSHE which is taught to class groups as a timetabled discrete subject. The PSHE curriculum reflects the schools' aims and ethos.

Curriculum provision precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school. Where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. This policy is available to parents and prospective parents on request from the school office.

## Exeter Pre-Prep School Curriculum

Exeter Pre-Prep School curriculum encompasses the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework for children in Nursery and Reception. In Years 1 and 2, the curriculum is based on, but not restricted to, the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1.

### The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS Profile summarises and describes children's attainment at the end of EYFS. It is based on ongoing observation and assessment in the three prime areas and four specific areas of learning, and the three characteristics of learning, set out below:

#### The prime areas of learning

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

#### The specific areas of learning

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

#### The characteristics of learning

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

A completed EYFS Profile consists of 20 items of information; the attainment of each child is assessed in relation to the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG). Assessments will be based primarily on observation of daily activities. For each ELG, staff must judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected at the end of the Reception Year (expected) or not yet reaching this level (emerging).

The completed assessment is known as the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, details of which will be sent home with the child's report towards the end of the summer term. Outcomes of these assessments are also used to inform the next teacher who will use the information to assist their Year 1 planning.

Further information about the EYFS is available at: [www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage](http://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage). Nursery/Reception teachers can also help parents further if they require any additional guidance.

## KEY STAGE 1

### English

We aim to enthuse and inspire all children, whilst instilling a life-long love of reading. Children experience a range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry throughout the year. With lively, interactive teaching, we aim to produce confident, literate communicators who enjoy using their creativity and vocabulary. Regular and effective literacy teaching introduces children to new skills and

to new ways of learning. Pupils learn to compose stories and gain an understanding of language. We encourage pupils to achieve confident literacy and maintain their inspiration through reading, classroom discussion and role play.

### **Phonics and Reading**

All children are usually heard to read individually every day in order to help them develop effective strategies and to monitor their progress. The teacher will record comments in the child's reading diary each day. For further practice, the reading book is sent home and it is hoped that parents hear their child read aloud on a daily basis. The children read from a range of schemes and free readers. There is a good selection of reading material available across the school. The main reading scheme is Oxford Reading Tree and we follow the Twinkl Phonics programme (supplemented with some Jolly Phonics songs and resources) to teach phonics across the school.

### **Writing**

In regular handwriting lessons, children use handwriting patterns to establish rhythm and control in writing, using comfortable and efficient pencil grip. They will practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing, ensuring correct letter orientation, formation and proportion. Teachers provide additional support for children whose fine motor skills are slow to develop, to avoid the consequence of them becoming frustrated with this aspect of writing.

### **Mathematics**

A practical approach creates an understanding of concepts on which all future study is based. Right from the start, the emphasis with mathematics teaching is to ensure early skills are achieved through practical, fun-filled activities; only then can children at such early stages of their education begin to conceptualise those mathematical 'building blocks.' Every child will develop at his or her own pace. Our goal is to bring mathematics to life and all activities are selected to challenge, stimulate and satiate each child's natural quest for learning.

We believe it is important that children are given a broader view of mathematics and that they are taught how to apply their knowledge and skills to real life problems and investigations. They are provided with opportunities to practise and apply their learning in a variety of practical ways, using different approaches and developing strategies to solve problems. Our mathematics curriculum is matched to the needs and ability of each child and children are assessed continually.

### **Science**

Science is largely 'hands on' and investigations are the basis for all topic work. Science is about teamwork, communication, patience, creativity, research and presentation. It is about having the knowledge, understanding and confidence to make decisions about what you do in life. In our lessons, there is an overriding emphasis on enquiry, engagement and enjoyment. Along with an acquisition of knowledge, we aim to develop the skills necessary to apply that knowledge to real life situations.

### **Computing**

Our children live in a rapidly changing age where technology is an important part of everyday life. Our aim is to provide a positive and meaningful learning experience for each child and a degree of confidence and competence in using and applying simple IT skills. Every child across the school has

access to an interactive whiteboard, programmable robotic devices and digital cameras. Teaching is provided in class to complement cross-curricular activities.

## Humanities

**History** gives children the opportunity to develop an awareness of the past in ways which are different to the present. They are helped to set their study of the past in a chronological framework and to understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past. Initially the children are taught about everyday life. They move on from familiar situations to those in the more distant past. The children also research some topics using information taken from the internet, linking computing and humanities to a greater degree. The aim is to stimulate pupils' interest in the past, examine developments in other countries, foster a sense of identity and assess key historical decisions and judgments.

**Geography** takes a lively and thought-provoking look at the world's natural and man-made environment. This gives children a chance to develop a sense of place as well as knowledge about the world. Topics range from domestic to global issues with emphasis on pupils' understanding of the world around them and the impact of humans on the environment. They are encouraged to use a process that involves posing questions, making observations, collecting and classifying data, interpreting, explaining, communicating and evaluating information from their studies.

**Religious Education** enables children to gain an insight into Christianity and other world religions. RE is taught in a discrete weekly lesson in Key Stage 1, and also through assemblies and visits by the Chaplain at Exeter School and the local clergy. We aim for the children to become reflective and feel that they can safely ask thought-provoking questions, as well as learning respect for, and understanding of, all religions.

## Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)

PSHE aims to give children the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to lead confident, healthy and independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. We openly discuss social and moral dilemmas, the consequences of right and wrong behaviour and other issues which may emerge in the life of the school. PSHE also includes Relationships Education and is taught through a weekly timetabled lesson as well as through other subjects. Morning assemblies are also used to reinforce school rules and polite conduct. We have a weekly Head's celebration assembly where children are given badges and awards for effort, kindness, good manners and achievement. This helps to develop self-confidence and positive self-esteem. Regular individual target-setting allows our children to recognise their strengths and weaknesses and make simple choices. Children sit together, often in circle time, to discuss their thoughts and feelings and share responsibilities in a respectful atmosphere.

## Physical Education

PE at Exeter Pre-Prep School is about developing a child's whole body management and enabling the child to feel happy, secure and confident in their own space and the environment around them. We aim to explore, encourage and extend each child's natural physical abilities and health related knowledge, in order to meet the challenges which lie ahead in life in general. We aim to achieve a balance between aesthetic and practical, individual, partner and team work, to give each child a sound and broad base from which to achieve success and fulfilment in sports and leisure activities throughout life.

Each class has two timetabled PE lessons a week. In gymnastics, the children learn to extend their range of movement and use their bodies imaginatively and safely in a given space and on small and large apparatus. Dance encourages movement, imagination and interpretation and is enjoyed throughout the school. The children are gradually introduced to all the major games through being taught ball handling, aiming and passing skills, moving and dodging, until eventually they can move on from small game situations to the game proper. Children from Reception to Year 2 also have swimming lessons at Exeter School on Friday mornings, with classes taking part on a termly rotation.

### **Art and Design Technology**

We aim to provide the children with as wide a range of artistic and creative experiences as possible. Opportunities such as drawing, painting, pattern making, modelling and many other creative activities are available to them throughout the year. They develop the ability and confidence to work with a wide variety of materials and techniques. We believe that they are never too young to know a Monet from a Mondrian, and they are introduced to strategies for making judgments and responding appropriately to both their own work and the work of others, including their peers. Our children have the opportunity to explore, experiment and create and, in the process, they have lots of fun!

### **Forest School**

Each class has a weekly Forest School lesson taught by Mrs Smyth, who is a qualified Forest School Leader. The lessons take place in a designated space within the school grounds around a fire. The children have the opportunity to handle tools safely, explore nature and learn about fire safety. The lessons help to build confidence, sensitivity, resilience and curiosity, and provide a forum for cross-curricular activities discretely integrated into the outdoor environment.

### **Music**

Children in the Nursery and Reception enjoy discrete music and movement lessons every week. Music, movement and rhyme are also integrated into other areas wherever possible and appropriate. Children in Key Stage 1 receive weekly music lessons taught by Mrs Guthrie, Music Co-ordinator at Exeter Junior School. Whole school performances take place throughout the year and we take every opportunity to include every single child in the school. Individual instrumental lessons are also available for interested pupils by request.

### **French**

Every class from Reception to Year 2 enjoys a weekly French lesson as part of the curriculum, taught by Mrs Richards. As is appropriate for young children, French is taught through songs, games and gestures. This teaching method engages all children and provides an opportunity for them to respond to the teacher and each other in short bursts of authentic language.

## **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

Summative assessment takes place once termly for all children and the results are tracked through the school. Formative assessment takes place continually in all subjects in all classes.

Our aim as a school is to keep parents fully informed about their child's progress. If we have any concerns along the way, then parents will be contacted by the class teacher and a meeting will be

arranged to discuss strategies for improvement. In the past, some simple additional support/intervention at home and in school, is all that is needed. We provide termly reviews in the autumn and spring terms which are both followed by a Parents' Evening. A more comprehensive report is provided in the summer term, and we offer Parents' Evenings by request.

### **Homework**

Homework is not compulsory at Exeter Pre-Prep School.

Children from Nursery to Year 2 are asked to read/ share books with their parents at home daily. A reading/communication diary is provided for home/school liaison, and this is checked daily in school.

Children in Nursery and Reception will often receive some phonics-related or key word activities to enjoy at home. They may also be set optional work for the school holidays. In Key Stage 1, mathematics and English homework are set once a week on Google Classroom. Children also receive a weekly list of spellings to learn. In Year 2, the children are also encouraged to learn their times tables.

Any child who needs extra help in any subject may be asked to complete additional tasks at home following discussions with parents.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

All children are encouraged to reach their full potential. Our paramount concern is that every child is happy, maintains their self-esteem and makes very significant progress. Should there be concerns regarding a child's development, discussions will take place between the class teacher and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator when appropriate, to discuss the best way forward for the child.

The school does not employ or engage staff to cater for children with specific learning difficulties. If other needs develop, the child's class teacher will provide as much support as possible, but it may be recommended that the child transfers to a school where more specialist support can be provided.

### **BRITISH VALUES**

We recognise not only the importance of allowing pupils to flourish academically but also our wider role in preparing them for their adult life beyond the formal curriculum. Part of our role in that preparation is ensuring that we promote and reinforce British Values to our pupils. The government set out its definition of British Values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy and considered them to be democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. At our school, these values are reinforced throughout the curriculum and daily life of the school community.

The examples that follow are an indication of some of the many ways we seek to embed British Values in our school and should be seen as an indication of our approach rather than an exhaustive list.

**Democracy:** At Exeter Pre-Prep School, the principle of democracy is reinforced where possible with the democratic process being employed for important decisions within the school community; for instance, amongst other things, pupil voice in school council elections. The principle of democracy is also explored in Humanities lessons as well as in assemblies.

**The Rule of Law:** The importance of laws, whether they be those that govern the classes, the school or the country, are consistently reinforced on a day-to-day basis in school; for example, when dealing with behaviour and through school assemblies. Students are taught the value and reasons behind rules and laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when these are broken.

**Individual Liberty:** Students are actively encouraged to make independent choices, knowing that they are in a safe, secure and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for students to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and an empowering education. Students are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and receive advice about how to exercise these safely; for example, through our exploration of E-Safety in Computing and PSHE lessons.

**Mutual Respect:** Respect is at the core of our school philosophy and is modelled by students and staff alike. The school promotes respect for others and this is reiterated through our classroom and learning environments. In line with our commitment to democracy, pupils are able to voice their opinions and we foster an environment where students are safe to disagree with each other in an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding. Mutual respect is also embraced through the promotion of the concept of 'fair play' in PE lessons and the supportive attitude encouraged when pupils are faced with the success of others. We very much promote mutual respect between students across different year groups within the school and many pupils adopt a nurturing and familial approach to those younger than themselves.

**Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs:** This is achieved through equipping students with the ability to understand their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving them opportunities to experience such diversity within the school community. Students are actively encouraged to share their faith and beliefs within the School. Our RE curriculum provides a broad and balanced education on a range of faiths, religions and cultures. Along with celebrating the usual Christian festivals, Chinese New Year also forms part of our yearly calendar, in recognition of Exeter Pre-Prep School pupil demographic.