



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE
READING • BERKSHIRE

Curriculum Policy

Policy Owner AH C&T	Associated documents	Legal Framework
Review by EdCom	Review frequency Annually	Next Reviewed date November 2025



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

READING • BERKSHIRE

Curriculum Policy

This policy relates to all sections of St Joseph's College, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Introduction

The College aims to ensure that the curriculum provision will enable all pupils to enjoy a broad and balanced programme with sufficient flexibility to target pupils' strengths, interests and enthusiasm. The curriculum is designed to successfully prepare pupils for life at and beyond St Joseph's College, in British society.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from January 2024 provides the basis for the education and wellbeing of our youngest pupils. We fully support the principle that children learn best through play, when engaged in well planned and structured activities, under the direction of dedicated and caring professionals trained in a range of disciplines.

The curriculum is delivered effectively in both indoor and outdoor learning environments. For children whose home language is not English, we take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home.

Their education follows the three prime areas of learning:

- Communication and language development involves giving high priority to children's spoken language and the promotion of a language-rich environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and fine and gross motor movement.
- Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to understand their own feelings and those of others; develop the ability to self-regulate behaviour and impulses when appropriate; develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities. Children must also be helped to understand how to manage their basic hygiene and personal needs, how to make healthy food choices and be supported to have good oral health.

and the four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy development involves supporting children with their phonic knowledge and sound-blending, to develop word and sentence reading. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

READING • BERKSHIRE

their interest and develop comprehension. Writing involves providing opportunities for children to write letters, to spell words, phrases and sentences.

- Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop a deep understanding of number to 10, and numerical patterns. Children must be supported to improve their skills in counting and using numbers to calculate simple addition and subtraction problems; and to use and explore shapes, space and measure.
- Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community, through opportunities to find out similarities and differences between things in the past and present; explore, observe and find out about people, religion and cultures, places and the natural world.
- Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and create with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology

We recognise that the three characteristics of effective learning:

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creating and thinking critically are essential for a firm foundation to be built.

The pupils in Early Years and Reception benefit from specialist teachers in PE, Music and French and ICT.

Infant and Junior Sections

The Prep School's curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. While the National Curriculum is a useful starting point, teaching staff will adapt and enhance their schemes of work to ensure that every pupil is motivated, inspired and challenged. This incorporates various extra-curricular activities that the College organises in order to enrich the children's experience. In addition, this includes the 'hidden curriculum' – what children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We value the breadth of curriculum we provide.

Pupils study English, Mathematics, Science, Art and Design Technology, Geography, History, ICT, Music, French, Physical Education, Drama, PSHEE, RSE and RE.

The pupils benefit from specialist teachers for Music, Physical Education, Science, Computing, Art and Design Technology. To provide more breadth and challenge for our more able pupils, teachers from the Senior School and Prep School teach small groups for Maths and English across all year groups.

We aim to provide a balanced programme by having the core curriculum subjects of Maths and English taught most days and other curriculum subjects spread across the week.

Creativity flourishes beyond the traditional curriculum, with choirs, instrumental lessons, concerts, plays and competitions. The curriculum is further enhanced by library sessions, peripatetic music lessons and LAMDA lessons.



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

READING • BERKSHIRE

Lower Seniors

All pupils study English, Mathematics, Science, Geography, Music, Classical Civilisation, Latin, History, RE, Physical Education, Games, French, Spanish, Art, Drama, Food Technology, RSE, PSHEE, Graphics and ICT.

All pupils are expected to study at least one Modern Foreign language. In Year 7 all pupils take French and Spanish for half of the academic year. Languages are taught in sets to ensure the needs of individual pupils are catered for and the various experiences of language learning prior to joining the College can be addressed. Separate arrangements are made for pupils who have a fluency in a language and arrangements are made to work more intensively with a teacher and language Assistant. Pupils with EAL are reviewed by the learning support department and recommendations for taking MFLs and learning support are made.

Upper Seniors

The curriculum in Year 9 is as per Lower Seniors except pupils are provided with the option of choosing four optional subjects from the following: Art and Design, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Drama, French, Graphics, Food Preparation and Nutrition, Latin, Music and Spanish. Option groupings are chosen to enable as many of the pupils as possible to take their first choice of subjects. Pupils select four optional subjects from the following: Art and Design, Computer Science, Drama, D & T: Electronics (Control Systems in Engineering), French, Geography, Graphics, History, Food Preparation and Nutrition, ICT, Latin, Music, PE and Spanish.

During Year 9 pupils and their parents are involved in choices of Options for GCSE. In Years 10 and 11 pupils study the core subjects of English, English Literature, Mathematics, Science Trilogy and Religious Studies to GCSE level. A Modern Foreign Language is also strongly advised, with the option of taking two languages available. Taking the three named sciences as separate GCSEs, rather than Science Trilogy (double science), is available to all pupils reaching the entrance requirements as part of the options process.

Option groupings are chosen to enable as many of the pupils as possible to take their first choice of subjects. Pupils select four optional subjects from the following: Art and Design, Computer Science, Drama, French, Geography, Graphics, History, Food Preparation and Nutrition, ICT, Latin, Music, PE and Spanish.

Years 12 and 13

The option choices in Years 12 and 13 are kept as wide as possible with the majority of students choosing three A Level subjects from the following subjects: Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Economics, English Literature, French, Further Mathematics, Geography, History, ICT, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy & Ethics, PE, Physics, Psychology, Spanish and Theatre Studies. The Extended Project Qualification is offered in Year 12. Students will continue their study of three chosen subjects to A2.

In Year 12 all students have the opportunity to take part in the CAFOD Young Leaders programme, Young Enterprise Award and the Community Sports Leaders' Award. The PE Department offers a wide range of curriculum options within its two periods of Senior



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

READING • BERKSHIRE

Games per week. Senior Games includes Years 12-13 and activities are run on a carousel basis. Students have a choice from a diverse range of sports as varied as team sports such as Rugby, Hockey, and Football, to Golf, Gymnastics and CrossFit.

In Years 12 and 13 students take two periods of Enrichment per fortnight. PSHEE and RSE are delivered within this time and there is also the opportunity for students to hear visiting speakers who address the students on a range of relevant topics. In Year 13, as part of their enrichment programme, students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and develop a range of skills that help prepare them for life after they leave the College.

Year 12 students have a careers lesson taught in a carousel with Extended Project study skills.

(The A level Curriculum allows Sixth Form students space to have study periods within the two-week timetable.) The aim of these is to encourage students to develop their ability to read and make notes from a wider range of books/resources than the core textbook set.

PSHEE

The College delivers a PSHEE curriculum which reflects the College's aims and ethos, respect for others, with particular regard to the protected characteristics and upholds fundamental British values, to students in Early Years to Year 13.

Early Years to Year 11 have a dedicated lesson per week for PSHEE and in Years 12 and 13 PSHEE is delivered as part of the Sixth Form Enrichment programme. **See the PSHEE Policy, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy** and the **British Values Statement** for further details.

Extra-Curricular

In addition to the set curriculum all students are encouraged to take part in an extremely varied programme of extra-curricular activities during lunch, before and after school and in the holidays. These include Drama, Music, Sport, Dance or organised team games, Science and Mathematics Clubs and Language support, Cultural or Fieldwork excursions. **See the Prep School and Senior School Termly Diaries** for details.

It is the combination of these aspects which should ensure that each student is able to fulfil their potential in both academic work and their personal development. Thus we are able to ensure students leave the College with good qualifications and also with the qualities necessary to continue to make the most of all the opportunities that they will have at university and in the future.

Careers

A comprehensive careers education programme is place for pupils aged 14 to 19 that gives pupils access to up-to-date careers guidance (in conjunction with our Head of Careers) in an impartial manner, enabling them to make an informed choice which helps to fulfil their potential. Careers education occurs as a formal topic within PSHEE, for example in the run up to Year 9 Options and also within subject areas as students explore the opportunities different subjects offer. Full details of the College's careers education can be found in the **Careers Education and Guidance Policy**.



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE
READING • BERKSHIRE