



ALPHA PREPARATORY SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

'Learning how to learn is life's most important skill!'

Tony Buzan

At Alpha Preparatory School, we ensure the pupils have a range of learning experiences that challenge, stimulate and inspire them, promoting independence and initiative. We endeavour to deliver a memorable and meaningful curriculum.

Our curriculum was described by our Year 6 students as:

The curriculum at Alpha is taught using a comprehensive range of different methods. Whether it is the explosions of volcanoes in science or the calming music in art, the staff provides a variety of opportunities to discover, making it a fun, positive and enjoyable learning environment. Ideas are shared in lessons and everyone is included.

The curriculum does not focus on just the academic, but it incorporates the holistic development of all its pupils. Knowledge is crucial to the academic success at Alpha and this is not taken lightly; this magnificent school goes above and beyond the National Curriculum. Innovative ideas are created by the staff to suit each particular age group. Our curriculum ignites a hunger for learning and the potential to achieve. All the pupils love to learn in the amiable ambience at Alpha. Kindness pervades the school, giving the pupils both the reason and power to show compassion.

IMPACT

The overarching objective of Alpha's Curriculum Policy is to deliver the school's aims as follows:

- to strive for academic excellence through the provision of effective, inspiring and stimulating teaching;
- to engage children in active learning contexts across the curriculum in order to develop their ability to think independently, creatively and critically;
- our children are given opportunities to develop life skills, focusing on their individual strengths and areas for development;
- to have a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils and ensure that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
- to have high expectations of every pupil;
- to foster their positive attitudes and learning practices so that they develop their capability for lifelong learning;
- to provide a mutually supportive partnership of parents, staff and pupils – sharing responsibility for learning;
- to help pupils understand Britain's cultural heritage and traditional British values and customs.

IMPLEMENTATION

The management of the School Curriculum helps the School to raise standards, establish an entitlement for all pupils, promote continuity and progression and promote parents' understanding of the curriculum. The curriculum must be responsive to changes in society, economy and the nature of schooling itself. The School's curriculum is designed to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths. This is achieved through PSHE, RSE and religious studies lessons, educational visits to places of worship and through our e-safety programme and through assemblies. It is also reinforced through the organisation of charity events or through visitors or speakers attending the school. We ensure that all members of the school community have a voice, and are listened to, and mutual respect is exercised by all.

Roles and Responsibilities

In consultation with the Headmaster and Deputy Head, the Assistant Head Academic has overall responsibility for monitoring the quality of the curriculum and is responsible for liaising with Heads of Department to ensure that long-term, medium-term and daily planning provides for all pupils to participate in a wide range of stimulating and challenging learning experiences. The Deputy Head is responsible for coordinating, in liaison with the Assistant Head Academic, all aspects of timetabling and room allocation. It is the responsibility of the Deputy Head to ensure that the curriculum is delivered in a fair and balanced manner.

Curriculum Planning

The Leadership Team, Heads of Departments and classroom teachers plan the curriculum in three phases.

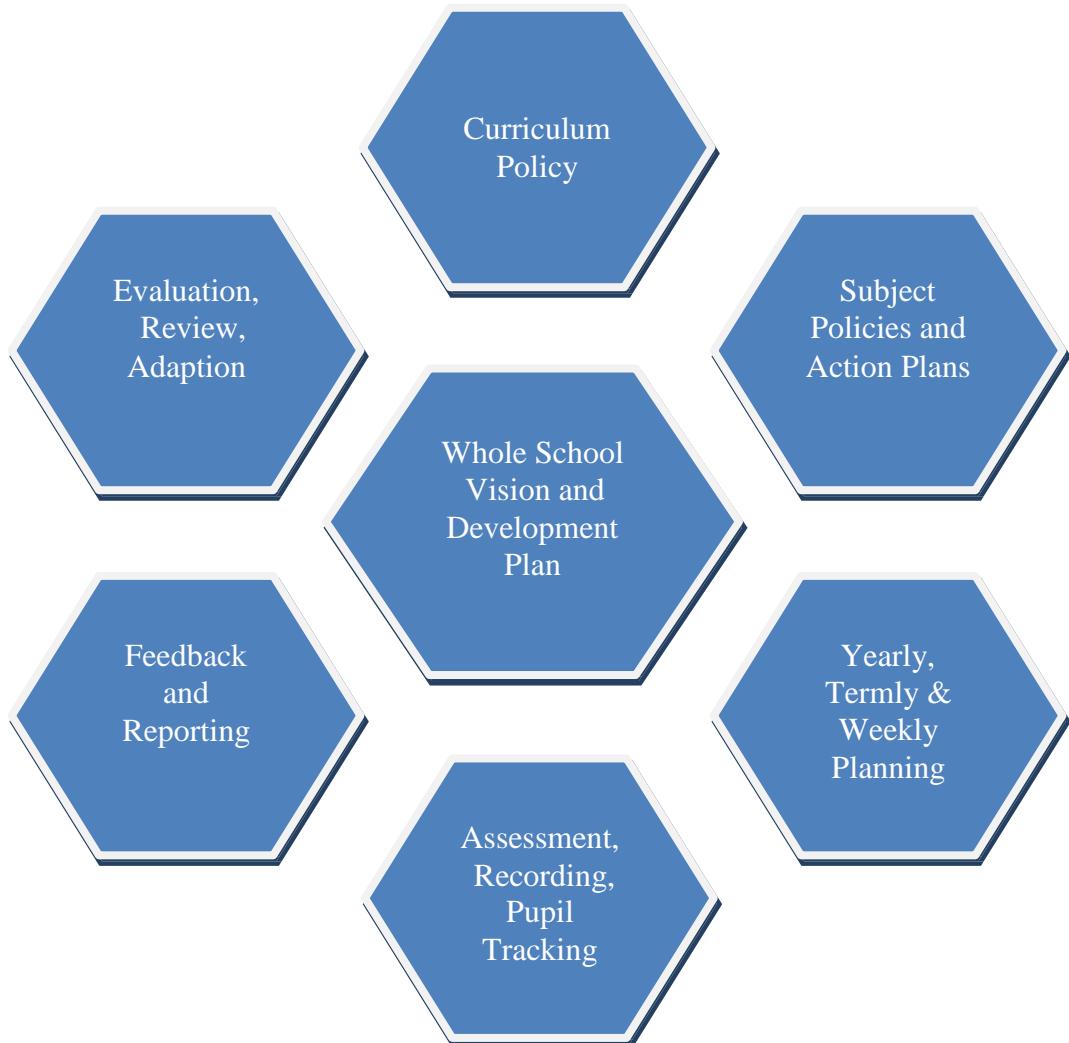
Long-term plans for each stage – a curriculum framework outlining what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. We review this long-term plan on an annual basis. These are available on the school website.

Medium-term plans provide the learning objectives and learning outcomes, with suggested activities, resources, computing use and differentiation.

Short term plans are those that teachers write on a weekly and daily basis. These set out the learning objectives for each session and identify what activities and strategies will be used to achieve the learning objectives for a lesson.

Heads of Departments are responsible for producing Long term plans, curriculum statements and action plans for their area of expertise. They are also responsible for ensuring the subject is resourced, so that it can be effectively delivered. Teaching staff are responsible for producing Medium Term plans, with the support and guidance of the Heads of Department who monitor their implementation, the quality of teaching and learning and pupil progress in their subject area.

The Curriculum Process



The National Curriculum

The Early Years curriculum is determined by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which is a legal requirement. The National Curriculum provides a broad guide for the Pre-Prep and Prep Schools' curriculum, and this is reflected in our schemes of work. However, as an independent school, we are able to select aspects that we feel are best suited to the needs of our pupils and to supplement these with our own ideas and expertise.

Content and Delivery

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage begin to explore the world through structured and child-initiated activities and free play, with indoor and outdoor learning experiences that form the basis for their learning to progress throughout the school. We follow the EYFS Framework (2020 revision) which comprises of seven areas of learning:

Prime	1 Communication and Language
	2 Physical Development
	3 Personal, Social and Emotional Development
Specific	4 Literacy
	5 Mathematics
	6 Understanding the World
	7 Expressive Arts and Design

Other pupils in Pre Prep (KS1, Years 1-2) and the Prep School (KS2, Years 3-6) are taught the following subjects:

English
Mathematics
Science
STEM
Spanish
Geography
History
Religious Studies
PE, Games
Swimming
Computing
Art
Design and Technology
Music
Music and Movement
Reasoning
PSHE
RSE
Life Skills

In Years 5 and 6, we evaluate our pupils' skills for 11+ preparation. Lessons are planned specifically with these exams in mind.

Lesson Allocation

The Deputy Head is responsible for the timetabling of the curriculum throughout the school. There are 5x35 minute lessons, 2x20 minute lessons and 3x40 minute lessons from Years 2 to 6 per day with some additional activities being taught during lunchtime (x35 minutes). Nursery, EYFS, and Year 1 have 1x20 minute lesson, 1x30 minute lesson, 5x35 minute lessons and 2x40 minute lessons per day.

The average weekly lesson allocation is as follows:

	MAT	ENG	SCI	COMP	HIST	GEO	RS	MUS	CHO	MEL	M&M	DRA	PSHE/CIR	CLE TIME	STEM	SPA	FRE	PE/GYM/ TEAM GAMES	ACTION KIDS/BUS GAMES	SPORT	Y FEET	SWIM	ART/ CDT	VR/NVR	P4C	CHESS	LIB	ACTIVITY /READER S	LUNCH/ BREAKS/ SNACK	ASSEMBL Y/WELL BEING	STORY/ PHONICS /EOD	STR PLAY	K&U	OUT PLAY	PSE	EAD	SUM MINS US=2050 LS=2025
Y6	270	255	130	70	75	55	40	80	70			40	40	35	75	35	70	150			80	35		15		370	60					2050					
Y5	285	275	125	80	80	40	40	75	70			40	40	35	70		50	150			80	35	35	15		370	60					2050					
Y4	295	250	125	70	70	40	40	80	35	35		40	40	40	80		50	150			90	70	40		20		330	60					2050				
Y3	290	275	145	80	80	40	35	75	35			35	40	35	75		55	150			90	70	40		20		345	40					2050				
Y2	310	385	125	70	80	50	40	80	35			35	40	35	75		120				80				20	35	375	60					2050				
Y1	240	330	70	70	40	40	40	70				35	40	35	65		70		35		70	35				425	60	175	80			2025					
R	240	265		65				70				30	30	30		70		90		60		65					575	60	175	65	135		2025				
N	230	230						75				35		30		35		70		35							575	20	175	130	180	105	35	2025			

NB: There are some timetable variations due to staggered lunchtimes, break times, and when the children attend swimming on a rotating termly basis. Year 6 reasoning sessions become Life Skills lessons in the summer term.

Timetable Variations:

PSHE is also taught during Circle Time and Wellbeing sessions in lieu of assembly on a Tuesday morning. Some year groups timetable certain subjects in blocks e.g. half-term Art; half-term DT. An EYFS timetable is also available.

Academic Enhancement (Please refer to the Academic Enhancement Policy for more information)

Inclusion

The Deputy Head (Academic Enhancement Coordinator) is directly responsible for coordinating the SEND provision in the School. The Deputy head also oversees the identification of EAL pupils and the most able pupils (G&T), in collaboration with The Assistant Head of Equality and Diversity and form teachers, supporting staff in ensuring challenge and opportunity at an appropriate level for these children. In addition, they are responsible for overseeing the work of the Pre-Prep, EYFS additional support.

- All children have a right to access a full and inclusive education
- All children have a right to expect to learn in a caring and considerate and safe environment where the staff and the children are all valued for their contribution
- Alpha Preparatory School is committed to the early identification of children in need of Academic Enhancement (SEND) and to adopting clear and open procedures which are outlined in the Academic Enhancement Policy
- Alpha Preparatory School is committed to working closely with parents who are fully involved in all decisions that affect their children's education
- Alpha Preparatory School will provide, within available resources, the highest possible quality support and inclusive education for children with SEND
- Alpha Preparatory School will actively promote multi-agencies working to support children with SEND

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The curriculum provision offered for inclusion by the Alpha Preparatory School is in two strands. The first is general support for the EYFS and Key Stage 1 classes, aimed at providing all children at Alpha with the best possible start to their school career. This support is directed by the class teacher and is intended to be as flexible and helpful as possible.

The second strand of provision is aimed at children who are identified as having learning difficulties and who need additional support to achieve their full potential in line with their ability.

Gifted and Talented Pupils

In England, the Department for Education (DfE) distinguishes between gifted learners and talented children: **Gifted learners** are those who have particular academic abilities; **talented learners** are those who have particular abilities in the creative arts (such as music, art, and design, drama, and dance) or PE.

Gifted and Talented Provision

Within a school population, 10% to 15% of pupils are identified as gifted and talented. Gifted pupils are seen as around the top 10% of each year group in academic subjects. Pupils are considered talented if they have exceptional ability in the visual and performing arts, music, and sports. If a child is achieving noticeably higher than their classmates, they are eligible for specific extension lessons as well as the regular differentiation within the classroom.

The school aims to provide for children identified as gifted and talented:

- within the classroom
- in small extension groups and tasks (or on some occasions one to one lessons)
- in the numerous extracurricular clubs available.

All children are provided for in terms of their emotional, social and intellectual development.

Homework and Extra-Curricular Activities

At Alpha we endeavor to create an atmosphere in which children can learn to become independent, well-motivated and self-disciplined in their approach to learning: active support and involvement from parents enhances this process. By setting regular homework, we emphasise the partnership between home and school. We believe that homework undertaken in a quiet and calm environment contributes significantly to a child's progress. From Nursery to Year 6, habits can be developed that will lay the foundations for future study.

We also recognise that children can become very tired due to the demands of the school day and that homework can sometimes become a self-defeating exercise rather than the intended positive experience. The staff at Alpha are sensitive to the needs of the children and take each case of missing homework individually. Should a child miss homework on a regular basis, the staff follow our Behaviour Policy Rewards and Sanctions.

Why do we set homework?

- Homework helps the children to understand how to do work independently and learn how to manage learning time beyond school hours
- Homework helps students to find and organise information, and complete independent research
- Homework can help to develop a good sense of personal responsibility for learning

- Homework is set to pre-assess or assess learning, to consolidate learning or to support and/or extend learning
- Longer homework tasks or projects, allow children to explore a topic in greater depth using their own agency for learning
- Homework should improve/consolidate knowledge, thus improving confidence
- The setting of Homework allows parents to be informed about, and connected with, what their children are learning, allowing for potential 'out of school' experiences, trips and holidays

Homework is set each day across the school covering a range of subjects. Every child is also encouraged to read and practise their spelling and times tables. All children are encouraged to live and eat healthy. Our pupils are consistently reminded of the importance and value of exercise and fresh air and the benefits this has for both our physical and mental well-being. In line with the school's own food provision, healthy eating is also promoted and the children are encouraged to maintain a balanced diet as part of an overall healthy lifestyle.

Year Group	Time Allocation per task	Subjects per Week
N		Reading each night, Books from the lending library. Audio memory weekend challenge. Name recognition and practice Weekly number rhyme.
R	10-15 minutes 1 subject per night Reading every night.	5x reading 1x spelling/ phonics Activity pack set each week.
Y1	15-20 minutes 1 subject per night Reading every night.	2x English 2x maths 1x spelling 1x science 1x humanities
Y2	20 minutes Between 1 and 2 subjects per night Reading every night.	1x English 1x maths 1x spellings 1x science 1x humanities
Y3	20-25 minutes Between 1 and 2 subjects per night Reading every night.	2x English 2x maths 1x spelling 1x science 1x geography 1x history 1x Spanish
Y4	25-30 minutes Max 2 subjects per night Reading every night.	2x English 3x maths 1x spelling 1x science 1x history 1x geography 1x Spanish

Y5	30-35 minutes Max 2 subjects per night	2x English 2x maths 1x spelling 1x science 1x geography 1x history 1x reasoning 1x Spanish
Y6	30-40 minutes Max 2 subjects per night	2x English 2x maths 1x spelling 1x science 1x geography 1x history 1x reasoning 1x Spanish

Homework Diaries are seen by the Form Teacher on a daily basis and we expect parents to acknowledge the homework set on a regular basis. The Deputy Head checks all Homework Diaries at least once per half-term. Homework is differentiated to ensure that it is achievable and parents are encouraged to record in the homework diary any difficulties experienced in its completion.

Keeping a homework diary is an important routine for pupils and parents. The most basic information needed for a well-kept diary includes the subject that has been assigned, details of the assignment and the date the homework is due. Homework is set each night, as per the homework timetable. The pupils are given a clear explanation about the task along with the required expectations. Any extra information is available for parents on SMH (Satchel Platform). The Homework Diary is used as a means of communication between home and school where necessary.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Our extra-curricular activities and school visits are offered to all our pupils, including our before and after school clubs.

All (Year 6) pupils are encouraged to go on our residential visit to the Isle of Wight.

All (Year 5 and Year 6) pupils are encouraged to go on any residential music trip, for example to France (2022), Manchester (2023) and Malta (2024).

All pupils in Years 2 - 6 are encouraged to take part in the Young Voices Concert in: Manchester (March 2023, Year 4 - 6), Wembley Arena (February 2024 ,Year 3 - 6), Wembley Arena, (February 2025, Years 2 - 6)

All pupils are encouraged to take part in sports day, class assemblies, school plays and concerts, special workshops and day visits and events.

No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability.

Communication with Parents

A curriculum information meeting is held at the start of each academic year, to discuss the expectations of the forthcoming year and to address queries. Alpha Preparatory has an open-door policy for inquiries that crop up during the year. Termly report cards are sent out via the Parent Portal for Years R-6. These give a snapshot of how a pupil is performing. A full report is distributed at the end of the Summer Term and two Parents' evenings are held during the year.

Learning Links in the Community

At Alpha, we value the importance of developing links between the school and local, regional, national, and international communities. Through visits, assemblies, and special events, Alpha pupils learn how to participate and appreciate the roles and responsibilities of active citizens. To achieve this we organise author visits, trips to various places of worship, residential trips e.g. France, Manchester, Malta and the Isle of Wight. Charities to be supported are chosen by the School Council e.g. The Lily Foundation. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of one-day educational visits e.g. the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum, Tower of London. We take part in various competitions e.g. general knowledge, science, and maths quizzes, and STEM. These opportunities help to develop children's agency, independence, teamwork and responsibility in a different environment.

Impact

Planning and curriculum content is reviewed regularly to ensure that: it meets the needs of our children and our intent; it provides good continuity and progression within each year group; it meets curriculum requirements and offers balanced coverage of subjects. Enrichment and extension activities are also monitored to ensure that pupils are stretched and encouraged to think independently. Regular summative and formative assessment examines the impact of the implementation of the curriculum.

Pupils leave Alpha Preparatory school as respectful, skillful, ambitious and kind individuals, with a thirst for life and all it has to offer.