



Ardingly Prep

Prep School Curriculum Policy

This policy applies to:

Ardingly Prep School

Person responsible for this policy:

Assistant Head (Academic)

Review dates:

Last review June 2026

Next review July 2027

POLICY OBJECTIVE

To provide a forward-thinking, ambitious, and inclusive education that prepares pupils to be 'World Ready'; equipped with the knowledge, skills, understanding and character required to thrive in an ever-changing world. Through a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum, pupils develop academic excellence, emotional intelligence and a global perspective whilst fostering curiosity, resilience, creativity and empathy.

The curriculum is designed to inspire a lifelong love of learning and to enable every pupil to fulfil their potential through rich opportunities for discovery, exploration and personal growth. This begins in the Early Years where strong foundations are established through high-quality play-base, child-centered learning aligned with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework.

POLICY AIMS

- Deliver full-time, supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age, in line with Section 8 of the Education Act 1996 and ensure high-quality early education in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework.
- Provide a broad, balanced, ambitious and inclusive curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities and pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.
- Ensure continuity and progression in knowledge, skills and understanding from the Early Years through to Year 6, preparing pupils effectively for the next stage of their education and future success.
- Deliver a curriculum that reflects and exceeds the expectations of the National Curriculum through engaging, concept-based learning experiences that promote curiosity, creativity, critical thinking and independent enquiry.
- Develop high standards of communication, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum beginning with the EYFS Prime Areas of Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development.
- Foster the attributes, dispositions and learning habits that enable pupils to become confident, resilient, adaptable and reflective learners.
- Foster spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, aligned with British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect.
- Provide an inclusive learning environment that celebrates individual differences, equality of opportunity and encourages respect for all, with particular regard to the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
- Support pupils' personal, social, emotional and physical development through a comprehensive programme of pastoral care, PSHE education, enrichment opportunities and wellbeing provision.

- Encourage pupils to develop independence, responsibility and effective learning behaviours through reflective practice, self-assessment and age-appropriate learning opportunities.
- Use formative and summative assessment alongside standardised assessments to monitor attainment and progress, inform teaching and ensure all pupils are both supported and challenged to achieve their full potential.
- Equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, understanding and character required to become confident, compassionate and enterprising individuals who are prepared to contribute positively to their communities and thrive in an ever-changing global society.

POLICY PRACTICE

Curriculum Design: Discovering My World

At Ardingly Prep School, the curriculum is designed to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, understanding and characteristics required to become 'World Ready'. Through a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum, pupils make meaningful connections between subjects, develop intellectual curiosity and become confident, independent learners.

The curriculum is structured around three thematic schema that provide a coherent framework for enquiry, exploration and discovery throughout the academic year:

The curriculum is structured around three thematic schema:

Michaelmas Term: Ourselves

A focus on identity, belonging, relationships and culture, enabling pupils to develop self-awareness, emotional intelligence and an understanding of their place within the school, local and wider community. In the Early Years, this includes exploration of self, family, emotions and relationships through purposeful play and first-hand experiences.

Lent Term: Our World

An exploration of the natural world, communities, global issues and interconnected systems. Pupils develop their understanding of diversity, sustainability and their role as global citizens. In the EYFS, these concepts are introduced through storytelling, sensory experiences, outdoor learning and exploration of the immediate environment.

Trinity Term: Our Future

A focus on innovation, enterprise, creativity and future readiness. Pupils are encouraged to think critically, solve problems and explore how their actions can influence the future. In the EYFS, this is fostered through imaginative play, investigation, collaboration and open-ended learning opportunities.

Whilst these schemas provide a thematic framework, the curriculum ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study and provides clear progression in knowledge, skills and understanding across all subjects.

Foundational Pillars

The curriculum is underpinned by three foundational pillars:

Belonging

A nurturing environment that prioritises wellbeing, emotional intelligence, positive relationships and a strong sense of community. Pupils are encouraged to develop confidence, self-awareness and respect for others.

Exploration

Enrichment opportunities, educational visits, outdoor learning, clubs, leadership roles and co-curricular activities broaden pupils' horizons and inspire curiosity. In the Early Years, exploration is supported through continuous provision, Forest School experiences and carefully planned opportunities for discovery.

Discovery

Learning experiences are designed to promote enquiry, critical thinking, creativity and deep understanding, enabling pupils to make meaningful connections within and across subjects.

Learning Framework

Concept-based enquiry and cross-curricular connections guide pupils through meaningful learning experiences whilst ensuring rigorous subject-specific knowledge and skills are developed progressively.

In the Early Years, learning is supported through observation-led planning and an appropriate balance of adult-directed and child-initiated learning. Skilled practitioners create enabling environments that foster curiosity, independence, creativity and confidence, while responding to children's interests and developmental needs.

The curriculum promotes the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

The Discovery Passport supports pupils' personal development through ten key attributes organised under three core values:

Ingenious	Generous	Adventurous
Curiosity Critical Thinking Creativity Reflection	Collaboration Communication Compassion	Adaptability Risk-taking

Curriculum Content and Subject Provision

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the seven areas of learning are delivered through a carefully planned play-based curriculum aligned with the school's Discovery framework.

Learning opportunities are enhanced through high-quality interactions, stimulating environments, carefully selected resources, educational visits, visitors and outdoor learning experiences. Staff use ongoing assessment and observation to ensure activities are responsive to children's interests whilst supporting progression towards the Early Learning Goals.

Specialist teaching enriches the curriculum through music, French, Forest School and dance.

The EYFS curriculum encompasses:

Prime Areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific Areas

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Key Stage 1

In Years 1 and 2, pupils follow a concept-based curriculum that incorporates all National Curriculum subjects alongside Religious Education and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE).

Specialist teaching is provided in:

- Music
- Art
- Drama
- French
- Physical Education
- Games
- Dance

Pupils also participate in weekly Forest School sessions, promoting independence, resilience, environmental awareness and critical thinking skills.

Computing begins as a discrete subject from Year 2, supporting the development of digital literacy and responsible use of technology.

Key Stage 2

From Year 3 onwards, pupils benefit from increasing subject specialism and a broad, challenging curriculum designed to prepare them for the next stage of their education.

Specialist teaching is provided in:

- English
- Maths
- Music
- Art
- Drama
- French
- Physical Education
- Games
- Dance (in Year 3)
- Technology (termly rotation to include robotics, food technology and design) (Years 4-6)

Assessment and Monitoring

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process at Ardingly Prep School. It is used to identify pupils' strengths, inform future planning, support individual progress and ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged and supported throughout their learning journey.

Formative Assessment

Teachers use a range of formative assessment strategies, including observation, questioning, feedback and the review of pupils' work, to monitor understanding and inform next steps in learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, ongoing assessment is primarily observation-based and informs future planning and provision.

Baseline and Standardised Assessment

The school uses a combination of standardised and internal assessments to monitor attainment and progress. These include:

- Verbal Reasoning (VR) and Non-Verbal Reasoning (NVR) assessments at the end of Reception.
- Cognitive Abilities Tests (CAT4) in Years 3 and 5.
- Progress Test in English (PTE) and Progress Test in Mathematics (PTM) assessments at the beginning and end of each academic year in Years 1 to 6.
- Termly reading and spelling assessments.

Assessment outcomes inform planning, intervention, support, challenge and curriculum development. Further details can be found in the school's Assessment Policy.

Reporting and Communication with Parents

The school values strong partnerships with parents and maintains regular communication regarding pupil progress and next steps through:

- A Settling In Meeting during the Michaelmas Term.
- A Progress Meeting during the Lent Term.
- Termly written reports.
- Ongoing communication between home and school, where appropriate.

Timetabling and Curriculum Time

A structured weekly timetable ensures balanced coverage of core and foundation subjects, creative arts, languages, physical education and personal development. Lessons are 55 minutes in duration and are planned to provide breadth, balance and progression across all areas of the curriculum.

Curriculum maps and year group programmes of study ensure that learning is sequenced appropriately, enabling pupils to build knowledge, skills and understanding over time. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, timetables provide flexibility to respond to children's interests and developmental needs whilst ensuring full coverage of the EYFS curriculum through a balance of adult-directed and child-initiated learning.

Detailed lesson allocations by year group are set out in *Appendix 1: Curriculum Teaching Time Allocation*, which is reviewed annually to ensure the curriculum remains broad, balanced, ambitious and responsive to pupils' needs.

Homework and Independent Learning

Homework is designed to reinforce learning, develop independence and encourage positive learning habits beyond the classroom. Expectations are age-appropriate and reflect pupils' stage of development.

EYFS and Key Stage 1

Children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 are encouraged to read regularly at home and practise phonics through activities recorded in their reading records. These activities support the development of early literacy skills and foster a love of reading.

Key Stage 2

Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are expected to:

- Read regularly at home.
- Complete one English task and one Mathematics task each week.

Homework is typically set on a Wednesday and submitted on the following Monday. Tasks are designed to consolidate classroom learning, develop independence and encourage pupils to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

Inclusion and Differentiation

Ardingly Prep School is committed to providing an inclusive curriculum that enables all pupils to achieve their potential. Teaching is adaptive and responsive, ensuring appropriate support and challenge for pupils with differing needs, abilities and interests.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, learning is tailored through ongoing observation and assessment. Across the school, pupils may access targeted intervention, Learning Enhancement support, extension activities and enrichment opportunities as appropriate.

The curriculum promotes equality, diversity and respect, ensuring that all pupils feel valued, included and able to thrive.

Curriculum Leadership and Evaluation

The Assistant Head (Academic) has overall responsibility for the implementation, development, monitoring and review of the curriculum.

Subject Leaders are responsible for ensuring high standards within their areas of responsibility, including curriculum planning, progression, assessment and the ongoing development of teaching and learning.

The effectiveness of the curriculum is reviewed regularly through:

- Assessment analysis and pupil progress data.
- Learning walks and lesson observations.
- Book scrutiny and review of pupils' work.
- Pupil voice and feedback.
- Curriculum reviews and subject development planning.
- Monitoring of curriculum coverage, progression and standards.

This process ensures that the curriculum remains broad, balanced, ambitious and responsive to the needs of all pupils, while supporting the school's vision of preparing pupils to be 'World Ready'.

Appendix 1: Curriculum Teaching Time Allocation

All lessons are 55 minutes in duration. Allocations are reviewed annually and may vary to meet the needs of individual cohorts.

Subject Area	Years 1 & 2 (lessons per week)	Years 3 & 4 (lessons per week)	Years 5 & 6 (lessons per week)
English	5	5	5
Phonics	5		
Mathematics	5	5	5
Science	1	2	2
Humanities	1	2	2
Religious Education (RE)	1	1	1
PSHE	1	1	1
Computing	1 (year 2)	1	1
Technology		1	1
French	1	2	2
Art	1	1	1
Music	1	1	1
Choir		1	1
Drama	1	1	1
Wellbeing		1	1
PE and Games	2	4	6
Swimming	1	1	-
Dance	1	1 (year 3)	
Forest School	1		
Assembly/Form Time	3	3	3
Total Lessons per Week	32	34	34

Some curriculum content is delivered through cross-curricular and concept-based learning opportunities. Consequently, individual subject allocations may not fully reflect the breadth of learning experiences available to pupils throughout the academic year.