

CURRICULUM, TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY

Applicable to:	RGS Prep, including EYFS
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Date of last review:	June 2026
Date of next review	Trinity 2027

1. Overview & Aims

The Royal Grammar School, Guildford and RGS Prep (together, “the School”) are committed to providing the highest standard of education and pastoral care. This policy reflects the School’s values, ensuring clarity and consistency for pupils, staff and parents.

Throughout this policy, the terms ‘child’, ‘pupil’ or student’ are used to refer to all those attending the School. At the time of publication, the school is a boys' school but is preparing to become co-educational. Nursery, Reception (Shell) and Year 3 at RGS Prep, and Year 12 (Lower Sixth) at RGS Senior will become co-educational from September 2027. Year 7 (1st Form) at RGS Senior will become co-educational from September 2028.

Our key curriculum aims are to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all pupils
- Enable pupils to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Support pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support pupils’ physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Prepare pupils at school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life
- Offer targeted special provision in response to indicators of special ability and/or interest (Inspire, and subject-specific Scholarship provision)

The curriculum is divided into stages to provide appropriate continuity and progression:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Key Stage 1
- Key Stage 2

The Early Years Foundation Stage (see EYFS Policy for more detail):

The curriculum in the Nursery and Shell classes is built around the four principles of the EYFS:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships

- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

The seven areas of learning and development are covered in the educational programme. **The prime areas** of learning are as follows:

- Communication and Language
- Physical development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied are:

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

In planning and guiding pupils' activities, teachers focus on the three characteristics of learning and reflect these in their practice and assessment processes:

- **Playing and exploring** - pupils investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning** - pupils concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically** - pupils have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Structured and imaginative play forms an important part in the EYFS curriculum. Adult intervention is for a real purpose, and in all areas, language is one of the prime indicators of achievement and progress.

Key Stage 1 and 2:

The National Curriculum is used as the guiding principle but is tailored to engage with the aspirations of RGS Prep pupils.

- **Linguistic** - This area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of the English language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. In addition, French, Spanish and Latin are taught to pupils at various stages in their learning journey.
- **Mathematical** - This area helps pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically. The knowledge and understanding of mathematics are developed through practical activities, exploration, reasoning and problem solving.
- **Scientific** - This area is concerned with increasing the pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with working scientifically. These include observation and discussion, conducting experiments, forming hypotheses and recording findings.
- **Technological** - This area is concerned with the use of information and communication technology, developing, designing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to design, create and build and evaluating processes and products.

- **Human and Social** - This area is concerned with people and their environment and how human action now and the past, has influenced events and conditions. Geography and history make a strong contribution in this area alongside religious education (RE) which promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Personal, social, health, citizenship education (PSHCE) aims to promote the fundamental British values to develop tolerance and understanding towards each other whatever their background; to prepare our pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life; lead pupils toward confident, healthy and responsible lives, both as individuals and as members of society as a whole. This area is underpinned by the school's Values.
- **Physical** - This area is concerned with the pupils' physical development, co-ordination and tactical skills. The area aims to help pupils evaluate and improve their performance and imaginative responses. Pupils also gain knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health. The physical curriculum is covered through physical education (PE) and games.
- **Aesthetic and Creative** - This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are creative elements to all subjects, the creative curriculum is principally delivered through design technology, art, drama and music.

Curriculum implementation by Year Group

Nursery	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Phonics	Phonics	Phonics	Phonics				
Literacy	Literacy	English	English	English	English	English	English
Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
Understanding the world	Understanding the world	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
		History	History	History	History	History	History
		Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography	Geography
Communication and Language	Communication and Language	Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education
PSED	PSED	PSHCE	PSHCE	PSHCE	PSHCE	PSHCE	PSHCE
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Games	Games	Games	Games	Games	Games	Games	Games
Music	Music	Music	Music	Music	Music	Music	Music
Art and Design	Art and Design	Art and Design	Art and Design	Art	Art	Art	Art
	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish	French	French	Spanish and Latin	French and Latin
		Swimming	Swimming	Swimming	Swimming	Swimming	Swimming
			Computing	Computing	Computing	Computing	Computing
				Design Technology	Design Technology	Design Technology	Design Technology
						VR/NVR	SSCA

Procedure for curriculum change

Decisions about curriculum planning and implementation can be initiated at any point whether it be formally or informally by a group of pupils, parents, staff or governors. These would be raised at SLT meetings with further discussion with the whole SMT.

A normal course of implementation of any major changes will be brought to the RGS Education Committee of Governors for their approval. Following this, ideas will be put in front of Heads of Departments at their termly meeting and ultimately all staff. Where appropriate the views of parents and/or pupils will also be sought.

The Deputy Head (Academic) will discuss these aims with Heads of Department so the decisions are part of their short-term plans which will be reflected in their department's scheme of work. Longer term plans will be noted in the School Development Plan with details discussed by the Deputy Head (Academic) with Heads of Department. Heads of Departments have at least one termly department meeting - part of which will be to implement any initiatives. Planning for the short term is the responsibility of individual teachers; however collaborative planning is encouraged. Teachers are responsible for their individual lesson planning.

2. Teaching & Learning

Through our teaching, we focus on the pupils' learning:

- To become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent.
- To develop positive relationships with peers and adults.
- To develop self-respect and respect for ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others in the school community, the local community and in a broader cultural context.
- To grow into reliable, positive citizens who can make a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.
- To recognise the need to prepare for living in the wider British society.
- To take pride in their work and the work of others.

Teachers help pupils to progress so that they can attain the highest level of their personal achievement. Teachers seek to establish good working relationships with all pupils, treating them with kindness and respect, giving equal opportunities to take part in all activities.

The Behaviour, Rewards, Discipline & Exclusions policy supports classroom management. All pupils are expected to comply with these jointly devised rules to promote the best learning opportunities for all. Praise is paramount in order to foster positive attitudes to learning. We conduct our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all. Teachers are able to attend relevant courses to develop their practice. Teaching Assistants are deployed effectively where appropriate.

We acknowledge that pupils learn in different ways and that pupils need to develop strategies that allow them to learn in ways which suit them best.

Various methods are employed to create an environment that is open and non-judgemental:

- Investigation and problem solving
- Individual, pair, group and whole-class work
- Questioning and answering

- Use of ICT
- Trips, fieldwork, workshops, clubs
- Variety of media
- Activities which include art, drama, music and sport

When evaluating teaching and learning we have agreed to consider:

- Classroom observation / environment
- Sampling pupils' work
- Sharing pupils' work with colleagues
- Displaying work throughout the school
- Sharing good practice
- Pupil voice

Displays

Displays in classrooms and corridors are used to support the curriculum, teaching and learning. In order to enable pupils to focus, teachers follow the guidelines below:

- Only put work/posters on display boards.
- Use neutral coloured backing paper.
- Don't overcrowd displays. Create space around items displayed. Make sure work is presented in a way that can be easily read by pupils.
- Have minimal distractions on the IWB wall.
- If using a washing line to display work, put in a place that is not in sight during direct teaching time.
- Make boards as interactive as possible. Add questions/statements to engage the observer.
- Pupil work displayed does not have to be polished final copies. It is useful to display the learning journey (draft, edited work and final copy)
- Display board celebrating pupils' work should be updated termly.
- Have a balance between working walls, celebration of pupil work and static displays (Learning Habits/Values)
- The following must be displayed: Values, Learning Habits, safeguarding, fire evacuation route, form notice board.
- Display boards in corridors can be more vibrant, if appropriate.

Presentation of Pupils' Work

Pupils are encouraged to feel proud of the work they produce. By teaching and implementing the guidelines below across the school, pupils will learn good practice and reduce the cognitive load required to learn requirements for different teacher styles.

- Each piece of work is dated on the top left.
- Each piece of work should have a title. This could be a learning objective, if appropriate.
- Pupils write in pencil or blue ink pen (as per the stationary requirements).
- Date and title are underlined in pencil using a ruler.
- When labelling or annotating work, a pencil and ruler is used to draw lines. A pen/pencil is used to label.
- Editing of work is done in green pen.
- Proofreading corrections are done in red pen.

- Teachers' marking and feedback can be done in a colour of their choice as long as it is not blue or pencil.

Heads of Department should be consulted for any subject specific differences.

Homework

- From EYFS to Year 4 homework will only be set on four afternoons per week (Monday-Thursday)
- Year 5 and 6 will have homework on each school day
- There will be the flexibility to have two nights to complete the homework
- There will be no homework set on the first and last weeks of term
- No homework will be set during examination periods for Year 5 and 6

Year Group	Time	Subjects
EYFS	15 min. including reading with an adult	Phonics
Year 1	15 min. plus reading with an adult	Spellings
Year 2	15 min. plus reading with an adult	Spellings, times tables and maths.
Year 3	20 min. plus 15 min. reading for pleasure (preferably with an adult)	Spellings, English, maths and mental maths.
Year 4	20 min. plus 15 min. reading for pleasure (preferably with an adult)	Spellings, English, maths and mental maths.
Year 5	30 min. plus 15 min. reading for pleasure	English, maths, VR and science. Atom Learning from January.
Year 6	30 min. plus 15 min. reading for pleasure	English, maths, VR and Atom Learning in preparation for 11+. In February, VR and Atom Learning will be replaced by science and languages/history/geography on rotation.

Homework Timetables 2025-26

Days below are guidelines and can be changed by Year Teams in discussion with the Deputy Head (Academic):

Year 3	
Monday	Maths
Tuesday	Times Tables
Wednesday	Spelling
Thursday	English
Year 4	
Monday	VR/NVR
Tuesday	English
Wednesday	Maths
Thursday	Science
Friday	Maths (Atom from January)
Year 5	
Monday	VR/NVR
Tuesday	English
Wednesday	Maths
Thursday	Science
Friday	Maths (Atom from January)
Year 6	
Monday	Maths
Tuesday	VR/NVR
Wednesday	English
Thursday	Maths
Friday	Atom 10 minutes of each subject
Year 6 from Feb half term	
Monday	Maths
Tuesday	French/Latin on rotation
Wednesday	English
Thursday	History/Geography/RE on rotation
Friday	Science

Role of Heads of Department, SMT and Governing Body

The Heads of Department, SMT and the Governors support the curriculum throughout the school in a variety of ways including through:

- Staying up to date with curriculum developments in subject areas.
- Allocating resources effectively to support the use of appropriate teaching strategies.
- Ensuring that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning.
- Monitoring teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations.
- Monitoring how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment.
- Ensuring that the CPD and staff development policies promote good quality teaching.

Role of the Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. We inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- Parents' evenings
- Reports
- Information and workshops on supporting their children
- Holding an annual curriculum familiarisation evening
- Termly curriculum overviews on the Parent Portal
- The Learning Journey in EYFS and reporting to parents on the Profile at the end of Shell (Reception)
- Curriculum communication through the newsletter

We believe that parents need to work in partnership with the school to support their child in implementing school policies. Parents need to take responsibility for:

- Ensuring their child has the best attendance record.
- Ensuring their child is equipped for school for all activities.
- Informing the school if there are matters outside of school likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour.
- Promoting a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.

3. Learning Habits

Our Learning Habits provide a framework and common language for pupils, teachers, parents and the wider school community to share when discussing learning and the development of our pupils' thinking.

The Learning Habits in Pre-Prep have emerged from the EYFS Characteristics of Effective Learning and include:

- Accuracy - setting high standards and always striving to do ones' best
- Listening - with understanding and empathy. Trying to understand another's point of view.
- Persisting - persevering in a task to completion
- Independence - thinking independently; '3 before me'
- Taking responsible risks - trying new things; being adventurous

In Prep our Learning Habits consolidate the Pre-Prep ones but also engender new enthusiasm within the learning environment:

- Reflection - being aware of one's thoughts and being able to change perspectives and transfer knowledge, as well as reflecting on individual progress.
- Perseverance - looking for different ways to achieve a goal.
- Independence - being able to support one's own learning and progress.
- Risk taking - reaching outside of one's 'comfort zone' and taking sensible risks with learning and behaviour.
- Engagement - resisting complacency and going above and beyond with their learning.

The Learning Habits are embedded in all we do, and all members of the community use them and discuss the associated vocabulary. The Lanesborough Rose is displayed around the school, in classrooms and in pupil planners.

4. Special provision

The Head of Inspire and Heads of Department identify pupils who demonstrate special ability and/or interest via means including pupil voice, parent voice, and staff survey. Inspire delivers in-year opportunities to individuals, with benefit extended to whole cohorts wherever possible. Art, Sport, Music and Drama Departments offer Scholarship programmes, and all Heads of Department are proactive in extending especially able or interested children through a variety of provision including participating in competitions, collaborating with other schools, and visits. In-class differentiation and adaptive teaching ensure all students are stretched and challenged during curriculum delivery, and an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs and activities offers additional opportunities in response to pupil need.