



## Donhead Preparatory School

### Whole School Curriculum Policy (including EYFS)

#### Introduction

This policy aims to create and maintain a common approach for effective teaching and learning, monitoring, and assessment, with the principles of Jesuit education at its heart. It is to ensure that we have common expectations for children in our school and will act as a tool for self-evaluation. The ultimate aim of Jesuit education is that the full growth of a person will subsequently lead to action.

#### Objectives

To outline how we move from an understanding of the principles guiding Jesuit education, to the practical level of making these principles real in the classroom.

- To outline how we will monitor the quality of teaching and learning, to ensure continuous improvement in these areas.
- To outline how we can evaluate and assess the pupils in our school effectively.

#### As a school we aim to:

- To provide a safe and stimulating environment, where we value the individual needs of each child. To provide an environment which enables the child to learn.
- To integrate a broad and balanced curriculum, within a Jesuit setting, that will cherish and build on each pupil's experiences to assist them in becoming compassionate, well-mannered, and skilled individuals. We aim to foster positive relationships.
- To help the pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills through a wide range of activities including mathematical work, drama, written exercises, demonstrations, and other activities aimed at enhancing these four key skills.
- To extend the foundations of religious education by developing personal values and beliefs and becoming aware of and respecting cultural and religious differences.
- To expect high standards and encourage each child to achieve their maximum potential within their learning comfort zone.

#### Our Curriculum

Our curriculum aims to be accessible but challenging to all pupils, in its breadth and depth. Subjects

are taught in a coherent, progressive sequence that enables the incremental acquisition of core concepts, knowledge and understanding. New concepts and skills introduced build upon pupil's prior knowledge and experience. Pupils are given opportunities to re-use and apply learned concepts within and across subjects to enable deep connections to be made and schema developed.

Individual subject policies outline the aims and key concepts in each discipline and the incremental knowledge and understanding gained at each stage. Unit plans make learning intentions and expected outcomes clear, and connections are made to support pupils to integrate and apply learned concepts to existing knowledge.

Curriculum Outlines are reviewed and where appropriate, updated by Heads of Department at the beginning of each academic year. These are available on the school website, to inform parents about the curriculum each child will follow throughout the course of the academic year.

Curriculum Information Sessions are hosted by Form teachers of each year group at the beginning of the academic year, to give an outline of the curriculum intentions for the year, daily and weekly routines, and expectations, as well as key year group specific information such as assessments, homework timetables and points of communication.

For new children admitted to the school, there is a meeting for new parents in the term prior to starting school.

Enrichment opportunities, hands-on experiences, and extra-curricular activities available throughout the year, enable pupils to cultivate their curiosity, broaden their knowledge and experiences, contribute to the school and wider community, and develop their own individual talents. Peripatetic music, before, during, and after school sport clubs are available to all pupils. Educational day and residential visits are planned throughout the school to support and complement the academic, cultural, personal, and spiritual development of all pupils. These are all suitable for a coeducational school and venues are checked to ensure they are appropriate and meaningful.

Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to experience positions of responsibility and the ability to enact change for the good of others in the following groups: Eco Council, Digital Leaders, Prefects, Acutis Group

### **British Values and SMSC**

The school understands and promotes the importance of British Values and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development (values) across the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance. An understanding of British

Values enables pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, whilst developing respect and a sense of harmony between different cultural traditions.

## **Early Years Curriculum**

The Early Years curriculum, as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework, takes into consideration what the pupil knows and builds on their knowledge and understanding, within a motivating and engaging environment. The curriculum is play-based, although we expect the pupils to engage in teacher-directed and self-chosen activities. The EYFS is divided into the following areas of learning and development:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These seven areas of learning and development together make up the skills, knowledge, and experiences for young children as they grow, learn, and develop. Although these are presented as separate areas, it is important to remember that for children everything is linked, and nothing is compartmentalised.

Each area is considered during medium-term and weekly planning. Medium term planning is topic based to enhance cross-curricular teaching. Weekly evaluations and observations help monitor each child's progress and development. These evaluations and observations help to inform planning and revise future tasks. Teachers assess children against the EYFS Early Learning Goals throughout the year.

## **Pre-Prep and Prep School**

The Pre-Prep aims to build on a child's achievements in the Early Learning Goals. At Donhead, we follow the guidelines of the 2014 National Curriculum to inform planning in Literacy and we use a Mastery approach in Mathematics.

Our curriculum across the school builds year on year. It is broad and balanced and, where appropriate, we aim to stretch and challenge our pupils.

## Homework

Homework is set to consolidate in class learning for example phonic patterns in the Early Years as well as further learning and exploration in the home environment e.g. looking for habitats in a local park. Parents are asked to support their children with daily reading, phonics and other tasks. Sound academic progress relies on effective classroom teaching and effectively deployed tasks or study to be supported and completed at home. Well-planned homework tasks contribute to pupils' subject understanding, securing concepts and preparing for next phases of learning.

In PP1-Elements, homework is set for pupils each week; the frequency and duration is appropriate to the needs and requirements of each year group and is outlined in greater detail in our Homework Policy.

## Teaching and Learning using The Ignatian Pedagogical Model

Ignatian Pedagogy aims to create a full and deeper formation of the human person. It is an educational process of formation that calls for excellence, encompassing the intellectual, the academic and more. It seeks to transform how young people look at themselves and others. The pedagogy itself is, therefore, the way in which teachers accompany learners in their growth and development. The teacher is a role model creating the conditions, laying the foundations and providing the opportunities for the continual interplay of the student's experience, reflection and action to occur.

### What does this mean in practice?

**Experience** – the teacher draws on the experience of the pupils, seeking to draw out what they know, feel, and believe, and giving them new language and means of expression to refine and articulate their experience. The teacher also contributes their own experience without allowing it to lessen the value of pupils' own experience.

**Reflection** – is at the heart of the Ignatian model. It is about being attentive to experience and then building upon it, discovering new things, acquiring new knowledge and skills, deepening understanding, and adding detail and truth to the picture pupils have of the universe, of human beings, and of themselves.

**Action** – in Jesuit education, learning leads to action. Teachers provide imaginative and engaging opportunities for pupils to try out new skills, to use new knowledge, to exercise new ways of expressing themselves, their beliefs, values and questions. Through action, rooted in reflection on experience, pupils begin to develop a truthful and coherent vision of the world and their place in it. Above all, they become 'men and women for others', agents of change who will, in ways big and small, make the world a better place.

The following factors, we believe, help to create this:

- thorough and collaborative planning.
- innovative and engaging classroom practice.
- excellent classroom management.
- a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject material, gained through excellent subject knowledge and a willingness to undertake regular professional development;
- using effective procedures for monitoring and assessment.

To this end, planning should, therefore:

- set high expectations for pupils learning;
- be focused on clear Learning Objectives, taken from a Scheme of Work;
- make use of cross curricular links where appropriate and make effective use of ICT where appropriate;
- be differentiated for the individual in planning showing a regard for the variety of ways children learn (Medium Term Planning and Weekly plans for Maths and English)

show clear and appropriate opportunities for assessment;  
be available for all members of the school community to access.

We will know we have been successful if our pupils:

Acquire new knowledge or skills, develop ideas, and increase their understanding.  
Apply intellectual, physical, or creative effort to their work.  
Are productive and work at a good pace.  
Show interest in their work, are able to sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves.  
Understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how.  
Are aware of what they need to do to improve.

### Teachers should:

Teachers are required to work within professional standards which “have been designed to set out a basic framework within which all teachers should operate from the point of initial qualification. Appropriate self-evaluation, reflection and professional development activity is critical to improving teachers’ practice at all career stages.”

They clearly set out “the key areas in which a teacher should be able to assess their own practice and receive feedback from colleagues. As their careers progress, teachers will be expected to extend the depth and breadth of knowledge, skill and understanding that they demonstrate in meeting the standards, as is judged to be appropriate to the role they are fulfilling and the context in which they are working.”

*DfE 2013*

### ***Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils***

Teachers should establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect; set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions and consistently demonstrate the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

### ***Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils***

Teachers should be accountable for pupils’ attainment, progress and outcomes. They should be aware of pupils’ capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these as well as guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made, and any emerging needs. An effective teacher should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how these impact on teaching, encouraging pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

### ***Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge***

Teachers should have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, being able to then foster and maintain pupils’ interest in their subject and address any misunderstandings. They should be proactive in demonstrating an understanding of developments in their subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship. Effective teachers should demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher’s specialist subject.

***Plan and teach well-structured lessons***

Teachers should impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time, promoting a love of learning and stimulating children's intellectual curiosity. Homework is set and, along with other out-of-class activities, should consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired. Allowing space to reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching is vital. Teachers should be motivated to contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

***Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils***

Teachers should have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome through differentiating appropriately. A teacher should also demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development. They should have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those of high ability, those with English as an additional language, those with disabilities and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support these children.

***Make accurate and productive use of assessment***

Teachers should know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including those statutory assessment requirements. They should use a variety of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress and be able to use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons. Giving pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, should be common practice, along with the opportunity for pupils to respond.

***Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment***

Teachers should have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy. With high expectations of behaviour, and an established framework for discipline, teachers should use a range of strategies, including praise, sanctions and rewards, consistently and fairly. Teachers should be able to manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them, whilst maintaining good relationships with pupils, exercising the appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

***Fulfil wider professional responsibilities***

Teachers should strive to make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school by attending Shared Vision courses run by the Jesuit Institute and participating fully in school life. They should develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support. Teachers should also take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues, as well as communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

## Monitoring Teaching

Teaching and learning is monitored by the Heads of Department and the Senior Leadership Team through lesson observations of different types, work scrutiny, "Learning Walks", feedback from pupils, feedback from parents in anonymous questionnaire, analysis of attainment and progress, and link Governor subject visits. Staff are encouraged to regularly visit one another in class. The aim of all monitoring is to encourage and share good practice, individual professional development and overall school improvement.

## Feedback to pupils

At Donhead, we recognise the importance of feedback as part of the teaching and learning cycle and aim to maximise the effectiveness of its use in practice. We are mindful also of the workload implications of written marking, and of the research surrounding effective feedback.

The sole focus of feedback and marking should be to further children's learning;

Written comments should only be used where they are accessible to students according to age and ability;

Feedback delivered closest to the point of action is most effective, and as such feedback delivered in lessons is more effective than comments provided at a later date;

Feedback is provided as part of assessment processes in the classroom, and takes many forms other than written comments;

Feedback is a part of the school's wider assessment processes which aim to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good progress.

All pupils' work should be reviewed by teachers at the earliest appropriate opportunity to provide the best impact on future learning. When work is reviewed, it should be acknowledged in books.

It is vital that teachers evaluate the work that children undertake in lessons, and use information obtained from this to allow them to adjust their teaching. Feedback occurs at one of three common stages in the learning process.

Type	What does it look like?	Evidence (for observers)
Immediate –  (at the point of teaching and this is	Teacher gathering feedback from teaching and takes place in lessons with individuals or small groups.  Given verbally to pupils for immediate action.	Lesson observations  Annotations or use of marking code, highlighting



mainly verbal)	<p>May involve a teaching assistant to provide support or further challenge.</p> <p>May re-direct the focus of teaching or the task</p> <p>May include highlighting/annotations.</p>	Evidence of verbal feedback with stamp or Verbal Feedback annotation.
Summary –  (at the end of a lesson/task which can be written or verbal)	<p>Takes place at the end of a lesson or activity.</p> <p>Involves whole groups (whole class feedback).</p> <p>Provides an opportunity for evaluation of learning in the lesson (by pupils and teachers referenced to the Learning Objective).</p> <p>May take form of self- or peer- assessment against an agreed set of criteria.</p>	<p>Lesson observations</p> <p>Some evidence of self- and peer assessment</p> <p>'I Can' statements</p> <p>Marking feedback</p> <p>Pupil annotation against Learning Objective.</p>
Review –  (away from the point of teaching and mainly written comments)	<p>Takes place away from the point of teaching. May involve written comments/annotations for pupils to read / respond to (initial/answer).</p> <p>Provides opportunity for assessment of understanding.</p> <p>May lead to adaptation of future lessons/target setting</p>	<p>Acknowledgement of work completed.</p> <p>Written comments and appropriate responses/action.</p>

*These stages are in order of priority, noting that feedback closest to the point of teaching and learning is likely to be most effective in driving further improvement and learning, especially for younger pupils.*

Feedback can be delivered through appropriate marking of work. It is the responsibility of individual teachers to employ the marking code or criteria used in their classes, and to inform pupils how to respond appropriately to feedback. There is a school-wide marking criteria, with some additional criteria which is subject specific.

In Pre-Prep, review marking will only apply for those pupils who are able to read and respond independently. Where pupils are unable to read/understand such comments, these are shared verbally, with the children, using a marking code.

In the Prep School, written marking and comments should be used where meaningful guidance can be offered which has not been possible to provide during the classroom session. In the case of groups of pupils having a common need, it may be appropriate for teachers to address as a whole class feedback session.

In most cases, written comments will be focused on extended pieces of written work. These will allow children's achievements to be recognised and provide further guidance for future learning.

A significant aim of feedback should be to ensure that children are able to identify how they can improve their work or further their learning. In some cases, targets are clearly set out through use of the marking code and accompanying comments. There is no expectation that targets are updated on a fixed term, but these should be reviewed regularly by both pupils and teachers and updated when they are achieved. 1:1 conferencing and 'I Can' statements would be a good opportunity for target setting discussions with children.

## Assessment

Ignatian pedagogy aims at formation which includes, and goes beyond, academic mastery. At Donhead, we are concerned about our students' well-rounded growth. Periodic evaluation of the student's growth in attitudes, priorities and actions, consistent with being a person for others, is essential. This can be a privileged moment for a teacher both to congratulate and encourage the student for progress made, as well as an opportunity to stimulate further reflection

Assessment provides teachers with useful information when planning lessons: it enables teachers to set targets for individuals and groups, it helps children to understand specific learning objectives and how to achieve them, it allows children to self-assess, it is used to inform parents of their child's achievements and progress, and it can provide relevant and valuable information to the SENCO.

Assessment at Donhead is ongoing and varied and forms an integral part of the successful delivery of our curriculum. Day to day assessment is evident through teacher observations, the marking of work and evidence taken from pupil achievements. Periodic assessment takes place at the end of topics and units, both by teachers and pupils, and in the form of self-assessment.

## Assessment in Early Years

Assessment in the Early Years is ongoing throughout the year and is an integral part of the learning and development process. Teachers and assistants in EYFS classes observe children and respond appropriately to help them to make progress with the Early Learning Goals.

Assessments are based on observations of what children are doing in their day-to-day activities. Judgments are made based on observational evidence gathered from a wide range of learning and teaching contexts, both child and teacher led, and these are then matched to the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Results of the EYFS Profile are reported to the Local Authority of Merton and the information is also reported to parents and carers of the child and relevant teachers in the Pre-Prep.

## Pre-Prep

Teachers in Pre-Prep 1 are informed through the detailed EYFS Profile of a child’s development and attainment to date. Assessment in Pre-Prep 1 is also ongoing and in the first term is a continuation of the observations and judgments against the Early Learning Goals.

In Pre-Prep, assessment is recorded in the format of a Pre-Prep Profile. This is an accumulation of assessed work from each term. Work includes a levelled piece of writing, a written comprehension, a numeracy activity and scores from White Rose Maths tests. Phonic tests are carried out at the end of the Michaelmas and Trinity terms, to determine phonic ability at the age of six.

At the end of Pre-Prep 2, the Pre-Prep Profile is sent home to parents so that they can see the progress and attainment of their child throughout Pre-Prep 1 and 2. A Progress Tracker of relevant attainment scores details progress throughout the Pre-Prep.

Children are also assessed formally in English and Maths at the end of each term by completing a standardised test. Children in Pre-Prep 2 will also do an online Cognitive Ability Test in the Michaelmas Term.

## Prep School

When the children enter the Prep School, they are exposed to more formalised assessments, as well as the day-to-day teacher assessment. These are detailed in the below table. Data is collated, evaluated and tracked as the children move through the school.

Where, as a result of assessments, children are identified with specific difficulties or weaknesses the results are presented to the SENCO at Donhead for further investigation. Our SEN Department is able to support individuals and, each year, makes use of our Teaching Assistants to carry out individual or small group work, where necessary.

Assessment takes different forms throughout the school and is appropriate to the children’ phase of learning. Our assessment procedures are summarised:

Assessment Type	Occurs	Who
Verbal and written feedback	Daily	All
End of unit assessments	Half Termly	PP1 - Elements
Baseline Assessment	Initially in the Michaelmas Term and end of year review.	EYFS
Early Learning Goals and EYFS Profile	Initially in the Michaelmas Term and reviews throughout the term	EYFS

Pre-Prep Profiles Levelled writing Comprehension Termly Maths Assessments	Each Term	PP1 and PP2
Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs)	October	PP2 - Prep
Michaelmas Term Assessment Week (English, Maths, Reasoning) (E	November	PP1-PP2  LP1- Elements
Phonics testing	End of Michaelmas and Trinity Term	PP1
Lent Term Assessment Week (English, Maths, Reasoning)	February	PP1 - Elements
Trinity Term Assessment Week (English, Maths, Reasoning)	May	PP1-Elements

## Reporting to Parents

Parents are partners with us in supporting and developing children's learning and we aim to develop a co-operative relationship.

We work hard to inform and support parents in how they can help further their child's learning and confidence at school. Parents' Evening meetings with teachers are held to discuss progress and strategies for further improvement in the Michaelmas Term and in the Lent Term with Form teachers as well as specialist subject teachers.

In addition to Parents' Evening, Reception teachers provide a report to parents in the Lent and Trinity terms with an effort grade for the seven key areas. The EYFS Profile and a formal report is then sent home for the parents at the end of the Trinity term.

From PP1 upwards, Effort Cards are sent home at October and February Half Term, detailing effort grades in all subjects. Attainment, Effort and Form Teachers comments are sent home at the end of

Michaelmas and Lent terms. Full written reports for each subject are sent home at the end of the year, including areas to improve for next academic year. As well as this, staff are always available for meetings.

## **Conclusion**

Teachers in Jesuit schools are urged to have great confidence that their students are called to be leaders. By encouraging the formation of a whole through a broad and engaging curriculum, we strive to achieve this. Staff are committed to delivering high quality teaching and learning.

Policy date 22.11.23 (subject to annual review)