



YORK HOUSE

Curriculum Policy

Reviewed September 2025

This Policy applies to all sections of York House School, including EYFS

This document sets out the aims and objectives which York House School sets out to achieve for all pupils while they are at the school.

T. 01923 772395
www.york-house.com
@YorkHouseSch

The general principle governing the curriculum of the school is that every child shall be entitled to and shall take up a curriculum which is balanced, broadly based, and contributes towards achieving the School Aims:

- To educate pupils to the highest standards to achieve Senior School entry results that compare favourably with competitors.
- To provide quality co-curricular experiences in outdoor learning, art, sport, music, drama, and all other aspects of our co-curriculum
- To develop positivity of outlook, leadership and self-reliance in all our pupils through successful and caring relationships, encouragement and rewards.

In addition to this, we offer a curriculum that:

- gives all pupils the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an EHC Plan.
- provides an opportunity to develop basic and essential skills, including those of speaking, listening, numeracy and literacy.
- through its breadth and the high quality of its learning experiences engages children, fosters a passion for knowledge and skills, and helps promote a life-long love of learning.
- promotes pupils' personal, and social education, health and well-being, encouraging pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle all in accordance with the school's aims and ethos.
- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all children at the school, and provides equality of opportunity regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, religion or belief.
- prepares the children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences ahead in secondary education and leading on into adult life and the world of work, and of life in British Society more generally
- encourages at every opportunity a chance to develop pupils in accordance with the school's pupil aims:
 - To be self-reliant
 - To have a positive outlook
 - To leave people and places better than we found them

The Curriculum Leadership Team (CLT)

All aspects of the Curriculum are overseen by the CLT, in conjunction with the Headmaster and consisting of members from each section of the school. The role of the CLT is to ensure we provide a high-quality curriculum, and that practice in the school reflects this policy. The successful implementation of this policy is checked through Lesson Observation, Learning Walks, Scrutiny of Work, Scrutiny of Planning and a variety of other informal means.

Curriculum Allocation of Lessons

Curriculum allocation is reviewed each year by the CLT to ensure that the curriculum maintains its focus, balance, appropriateness and breadth in all areas of the school.

The numbers denote a lesson in the day.

	Maths	Literacy	Phonics	Reading	UTW	EAD	PD	CL	PSED	CIL	French	PE	Swimming	Outdoor Learning	Music	Comp	Pure Skills	Total / 50
Nursery	3	3	3	0	1	1	1	2	1	28	0	2	0	2	1	0	2	50
Reception	3	3	3	0	1	1	1	2	1	28	1	2	1	0	1	0	2	50

	Maths	English	Science	ADT	Classics	Comp	Drama	Finance	Form	French	Games	Geog	History	Music	Outdoor	PE	Phonics	PSHE	Reasoning	STEM	Swim	TPR	Trivium	Total Lessons
Pre Prep Lessons time 45/40 min																								
Y1	6	6	2	2	0	1	1	0	7	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	5	1	0	0	1	1	0	40
Y2	6	6	2	2	0	1	1	0	7	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	5	1	0	1	1	1	0	40
Lower School Lessons time 45/ 40 min																								
Y3	7	7	2	2	0	1	1	0	3	1	5	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	40
Y4	7	7	2	2	1	1	1	0	3	1	5	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	0	40
Middle School Lessons time 45/ 40 min																								
Y5	6	6	2	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	7	2	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	40
Y6	6	6	3	2	2	1	1	0	1	2	7	1	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	40
Upper School Lessons time 45/ 40 min																								
Y7	5	5	4	2	2	0	1	0	1	3	7	2	2	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	40
Y8	5	5	4	2	2	0	1	0	1	3	7	2	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	40

Lessons are between 45 - 40 minutes long depending on the time of day, each counts as 1 lesson in the table above.

Organisation, Planning and Monitoring

All teachers follow the guidelines for planning. This is monitored by the CLT through planning checks.

YHS Planning Expectations

- Planning uses a subject yearly overview as a starting point (e.g. Curriculum Map)
- Planning explicitly states the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn (WALTs)
- Planning clearly demonstrates the progression of knowledge and/or skills through a week/half term/term
- Activities and tasks planned help children achieve WALTs
- Activities and tasks planned are varied, engaging and stimulating
- Activities and tasks planned, where appropriate, use WILFs to help pupils understand the steps to success
- Tasks planned and resources prepared are differentiated to support all learners

What 'Evidence of Planning' might look like:

Planning Type	Description	Includes	Format	Availability
Long Term Planning/ Curriculum Map	Overview of topics for the year	All topics covered	YHS Standard Format	Stored and updated on Y Drive in the Curriculum Map Folder
Medium Term or Short Term Planning	A thorough plan of the weekly/half termly/termly learning	<p>Must Include:</p> <p>Clear detail of the specific knowledge/skills being taught (WALTs)</p> <p>Clear progression of learning through a week/half term/term</p> <p>Key Vocabulary required for lesson/unit</p> <p>Could include:</p> <p>Detail of lesson/session activities, assessment, differentiation, resources etc</p>	<p>Teacher Choice of Format:</p> <p>Highly detailed Curriculum Map</p> <p>Weekly Learning Grid</p> <p>Scheme of Work</p> <p>Other format</p>	Stored and updated on S Drive in the Planning Folder
Class Provision Map	Detail of specific needs and strategies in place for certain learners	<p>All SEN or EP pupils</p> <p>Strategies you use to support them</p>	YH Standard Format	Stored on the Google Classroom
In the moment planning	<p>Anecdotal notes in a teacher's planning or notes on weekly or lesson planning</p> <p>or observations or notes after marking an assessment recording next steps.</p>	Evidence of incidental teaching moments that have led to a change of direction, new outcome, and child-initiated learning.	Teacher's own format.	Teacher's own records/ notes/mark books/planner/ tracking sheets

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which is based on the following seven areas of learning:

Prime Areas

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

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World;
- Expressive Arts and Design

The curriculum planning focuses on the Early Learning Goals and on developing children's skills and experiences, as set out in this document. The school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play. By engaging in well-planned and structured activities, teaching in Reception classes builds on the experiences of the children in their pre-school learning.

During the children's first term in the Nursery class, their teacher begins to record the skills of each child upon entry to the school. Continuous observation plays an important part in the future curriculum planning for each child.

The Early Years Outcomes are used as a tool to monitor children's progress and this is recorded and tracked on a tracking document which is added to and examined at regular points during the academic year. Each child is assessed as being on track, not on track or working beyond the expected level.

We are well aware that all children need the support of families and teachers to make good progress. As a result, we strive to build positive links with the families of each child by keeping them informed about the way in which the children are being taught and how well each child is progressing.

Please see the EYFS Policy for more detail.

The Pre-Prep

The Pre-Prep includes Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, with parallel 2 classes in Reception and in Year 1 and 3 parallel classes Year 2. Class groups are split according to age. From Year 1 the teaching follows a programme of English, Maths, Science, Computing, History, Geography and Religious Studies, Art, Design & Technology, PSHE, Music, Religious Education, STEM and Drama in line with National Curriculum guidelines.

A bank of iPads is available for each class to use in lessons. There is a continuous and structured provision across all subject areas in the Pre-Prep, including the seamless provision of phonics from Nursery to Year 2, following a Government approved phonics teaching programme. Physical Education (and Games in Y2), Swimming, Music, Drama, Computing and French are taught by or alongside specialist teachers.

Planning throughout the department takes account of differing levels of achievement and ability with differentiated activities and adaptive teaching.

Pupils in Year 2, begin their journey on Accelerated Reader, an online software that is used to motivate, monitor, and manage students' independent reading practice. Pupils take Star reading tests to obtain their reading ages and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This allows the teachers to define the readability range within which pupils should read to best develop their reading while avoiding frustration.

Regular assemblies are held in the department. Every Year 2 pupil performs a nativity, and Year 1, Reception and Nursery also perform in a festive concert. All children take part in Sports Day in the summer term. Children also participate in class assemblies, with the exception of Nursery. Educational visits take place throughout the year to places of interest related to work in the classroom.

A variety of After School Clubs are offered to children in Pre-Prep which vary from term to term. They have included sports, creative activities, ICT, Drama, foreign languages, dance and outdoor learning.

Lower School

The Lower School covers Years 3 and 4. There are three mixed-ability classes in Year 3 and three mixed-ability classes in Year 4. Throughout the Lower School, all children are taught English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, French, ICT, Music, Art, PSHE, Drama, Swimming, PE and Games and Theology, Philosophy and Religion (TPR) in line with the National Curriculum guidelines. In addition, Reasoning is taught in the Lower school. Outdoor Learning is taught in Y3 and Classics in Y4.

From Y4 children are split into four ability-based sets for the teaching of Mathematics. In English, Y4 have four mixed ability sets. Lessons in English and Mathematics take place every day and where possible, are scheduled for the morning.

The Lower School builds on the solid foundation established by the Pre-Prep. Pupils are taught by Form teachers as well as subject specialist teachers in some subjects including, History, Classics and TPR in Y3. Both Year 3 and Year 4 have ICT, Music, French, History, Drama, Physical Education, Games and Swimming specialist lessons.

Pupils in the Lower School are encouraged to join a variety of co-curricular clubs ranging from cartoons to gymnastics. They also have the opportunity to take part in York House Challenge Days outside of normal school hours. Children present a class assembly once a year to their families. These focus on an element of their learning or a recent trip or could be a festival such as the Harvest festival assembly. Some children have individual lessons learning to play a range of musical instruments.

Children in Year 3 and Year 4 have access to the Google Classroom- which informs families and pupils of the work set and can be used for pupils to submit Homework or classwork occasionally.

They also begin to use Atom Learning, an educational technology platform which provides Key Stage 2 education and secondary school exam preparation, to support their reasoning skills and core subjects. Accelerated Reader - an online software that is used to motivate, monitor, and manage students' independent reading practice and Freckle is used to in a similar way to create individualised online learning for pupils in Mathematics.

During their time in the Lower School children go on a number of educational visits which enhance their learning. All children in the Lower School go on a residential trip during the academic year. Year 3 spend one day at an activity centre and then returns to our school site to camp out. Year 4 go away for two nights to Hindleap Warren in the Ashdown forest.

Middle School

The Middle School covers Years 5 and Years 6. There are three mixed-ability forms in each year group. Throughout Middle School, all children are taught English, Mathematics, Science, French, Games, STEM, Geography, History, Computing, Classics, ADT, Music, PE, Drama, TPR, PSHE, and Swimming. This teaching is in line with National Curriculum guidelines and some subjects begin to teach aspects of the ISEB Common Entrance specifications. Year 5 has the opportunity for Outdoor learning within their curriculum.

Children in Year 5 and Year 6 also have access to BOFA, a learning platform which gives tailored teaching in Verbal and Non-Verbal reasoning, English and Maths. Furthermore, they continue to use Atom Learning to support their core subjects and Reasoning lessons. Accelerated Reader continues to be used to track their progress in Reading and Freckle in Mathematics.

In Y5 and Y6 the children continue to be split into ability groups for Mathematics. In English, the cohort is split into mixed ability sets with one support or extension set. Lessons in English and Mathematics take place each day and where possible are timetabled for the morning. In Y6 pupils are set into three different classes for a variety of different subjects that include Science, French, History and Classics.

Pupils in Middle School are encouraged to join co-curricular clubs, which include choir and a wide variety of sports clubs and special interest clubs. Some children have individual lessons learning to play a range of musical instruments.

Educational visits take place throughout the year to places of interest related to work in the classroom. Educational groups visit the school to enhance teaching and learning at various times during the year. As well as the opportunity to perform in recitals and assemblies across the year, children in Y5 also perform a summer production.

At the end of the academic year, all children in the Middle School have an opportunity to go on a residential trip. Year 5 spends three days at the Bushcraft Centre (under canvas) and Year 6 spend five days at an residential activity centre in various locations depending on availability.

The Upper School

The Upper School comprises of Year 7 and Year 8. There are either one or two forms per year group, depending on numbers.

Pupils are taught English, Mathematics, Science, French, Geography, History, Classics, and TPR, according to Common Entrance specifications. PSHE, STEM, ADT, Music, PE & Games, and Drama loosely follow the National Curriculum and all subjects can follow the specific demands of future schools.

Where year group number allow pupils are set for Mathematics and Science, History and Geography, Classics and French. Other subjects are taught in streamed grouping due to the nature of the timetable. English is taught in mixed-ability groups. In Y8 Trivium lessons are introduced.

Pupils in the Upper School are encouraged to join co-curricular clubs, which include Music (choir, big band and orchestra), Drama (school play) and a wide variety of sports and other clubs numbering over 20 for the Upper School children. Clubs are offered before school and after school, as well as during some lunchtimes.

Several visits take place during the year, including trips to museums, galleries, theatres and places of historical interest, sports tours, and visits to various educational locations (for example Geography fieldwork).

All year groups go on a week-long residential trip: Y7 travel to France for a week in the Summer Term and early in the Autumn Term, and Year 8 head to North West Highlands in Scotland for a survival and outdoor skills trip, at The Ridgeway Adventure Centre.

After the Common Entrance Examinations in June, all pupils in Year 8 enjoy a “Leavers’ Programme” which involves collapsing the “normal” timetable and undertaking a group of educational activities for the last four weeks. These will involve visits to the theatre, sports events, Career Advice, important PSHE topics, and various presentations by guest speakers.

Sports matches are played against many schools in a range of sports; unless there are exceptional circumstances, all pupils will have represented the school at sports in their time in the Upper School. The School choir and Orchestra participate in local festivals and regularly perform for families, staff and governors and groups within the community. The School play is a major production every year in the spring term for Years 6, 7 and 8.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

If a child has a learning difficulty and/or disability our school does all it can to meet these individual needs through ‘reasonable adjustments’. Please see the Learning Support Policy for more information on this.

The curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. The curriculum may be adapted, as necessary and appropriate, to support a child’s individual needs. If it is necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, following the advice of external agencies, then we do so only after the Families of the child have been consulted.

Much emphasis is also placed on the school tracking systems, where class teachers are responsible for ensuring that all pupils receive the necessary level of support in lessons – please see the Raising Achievement guidelines.

Exceptional Performers

Children with high underlying ability and performance are identified and supported at all stages of their school career in a variety of ways. Please see the Exceptional Performance Guidelines for more information.

The school tracking systems also place emphasis on individual class teachers supporting high achievers in their subject areas – please see the Raising Achievement Guidelines.

Assemblies

In the Pre-Prep the children meet twice a week for Assembly. These are opportunities to talk to children about key values from The York House Way and celebrate children’s successes. Children from Years 3 to Years 8 meet three times a week for assembly on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The Wednesday sectional assembly is where the pupil’s

stars are celebrated. During these assemblies, the efforts and successes of the pupils are commended as they compete to win individual badges, as well as the combined House Flag to celebrate the most successful House. Assemblies across the school are led by a variety of staff, often leaders for those sections. A number of Friday Assemblies are led by outside guests of the school.

PE and Games

All pupils are expected to take part in the school's Physical Education and Games programme. All pupils are given curriculum time to pursue activities in formal PE, Games and Swimming lessons led by qualified personnel. Pupils can only be excused from PE and Games lessons for medical reasons, for which communication from the family is required. Further opportunities to follow sporting and physical activities are offered in clubs and as part of the Leavers' Programme in Year 8 as well as in extra-curricular activities.

Homework

Homework should be a reinforcement of the learning experience at school and should promote independence, self-reliance and enjoyment. Tasks set for homework should be manageable, worthwhile and achievable and should need a minimum of adult input. Families are encouraged to take an interest in the homework tasks of their children. As the children move up the school the homework load increases along with the length of activity. This progression ensures the children are well-prepared for the rigours of homework at their future school when that time comes. Please see our Homework Guidelines for further details.

Personal, Social, Health and Education

Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHE) provides a vital foundation for the personal development of young people in preparing them for adult life. It reflects the school's aims and ethos, and encourages respect for other people, particularly with regard to the Equality Act of 2010.

We educate the child as a whole person and build this into the curriculum throughout the school. As pupils get older, this includes the provision of Relationship and Sex Education and Career Advice. All advice is presented in an impartial manner by teachers. Please see the PSHE Policy for more details.

Careers Guidance

Careers Guidance is available to all children in the school. Aspects of the working world, people who help us etc. are referred to throughout the curriculum. For pupils in Year 7 and Year 8, up-to-date Careers Guidance is provided as part of the Leavers' Programme and in PSHE sessions it is presented in an impartial manner, enabling them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options, and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.

House Days

To encourage our pupils to explore collaborative and experiential learning, we hold a House Day each term which involves a collapsed timetable and a range of activities which help promote one of our three key pupil aims.

Outdoor Learning

The school encourages outdoor learning throughout all age groups. We believe strongly that children benefit greatly from learning in an outdoor environment, and that pupils learn better when learning is not restricted to the classroom. Outdoor learning is embedded in curriculum planning and is also a key part of the co-curricular life of the school. All pupils gain the opportunity to regularly learn outdoors. Please see the Outdoor Education Guidelines for more details.

Independent Learning and The Trivium

As pupils progress through the school we aim to ensure that there are more and more opportunities for independent learning. Assessment for Learning from an early age encourages children to take charge of their own learning and gain understanding of their progress. Project work across a range of subject areas, and often with a cross-curricular theme, allows pupils the freedom to plan, organise, work and assess themselves independently. One of our key pupil aims is 'Self-Reliance', and the House Days provide an opportunity for pupils to attempt tasks with little input from teachers, encouraging their initiative, collaboration and resilience. Year 8, pupils study 'The Trivium', during which they get the opportunity to learn the skills they need to successfully research, think and study independently across a variety of topics, this includes undertaking independent learning tasks and projects.

Traditional British Values

The Curriculum always promotes and upholds key British Values, and we aim to include opportunities for this across a range of subjects and year groups.

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Gray". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Headmaster

Date: September 2025

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "H. Gray". The signature is highly stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chair of Governors

Date: September 2025

Please see the Policy Review Matrix for the next review date