Curriculum Policy

St. Francis' College

September 2026

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Introduction

The 'College' refers to all the staff and pupils of the Prep Department and Senior School which includes Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Prep (Key Stages 1 & 2), and Senior School (Key Stages 3-5).

Rationale

St. Francis' College aims to provide all its pupils with a full-time, supervised education through a curriculum that is broad, balanced and which promotes the spiritual, moral, intellectual, creative and physical development of all pupils. The College aims to maintain high educational standards in all academic activities, taking into account the age, aptitude and needs of each individual pupil.

The curriculum will give all pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education appropriate to their ages and aptitudes. The curriculum will be balanced to ensure that all areas of learning experience are given appropriate time and attention in relation to the curriculum as a whole. The College broadly follows the National Curriculum whilst still enabling subject and departmental staff a degree of professional autonomy in defining content. The principal language of instruction is English and all pupils, including speakers of English as an Additional Language, are expected to communicate in English during the school day.

The academic curriculum is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities at all key stages and by a programme for pupils' personal, social and health education appropriate to their ages. As part of their Personal Development programme, all students receive preparation and guidance on their choices for further study and careers. There is also a full programme of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for all year groups. A timetabled enrichment programme further complements this provision in Key Stage 5. The College also has a taught DREAMS curriculum, designed to promote the College's values.

The College accepts pupils of all faiths and none. All staff and pupils entering the College are expected to join in assemblies and whole College services which are broadly Christian in nature. The College has, at its heart, a desire to promote fundamental British values such as a belief in the rule of law, in democracy and in a mutual respect for those of different backgrounds and faiths and the importance of individual liberty. This desire underpins all its work with young people, both inside and outside the classroom.

Equal Opportunities

The College's curriculum has been designed in such a way that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and to make progress. The curriculum and the manner in which it is delivered will recognise pupils' different strengths and will endeavour to balance challenge with the likelihood of success. Thus the curriculum may be modified to take into account specific learning needs e.g. dyslexia or English as an Additional Language (EAL) or specific areas of strength e.g. in languages. The curriculum and its delivery will be appropriate to the age and previous experience of the pupils at each stage of their development.

Individual Needs (IN), EAL and More Able students

Following referral by a class teacher, or a parent or guardian, the Head of Individual Needs is responsible for identifying pupils with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities and for taking

appropriate action as set out in the **Individual Needs Policy. Lesson** plans and schemes take into account the needs of all pupils, including our More Able students, those with Individual Needs, those with an Education, Health and Care Plan, and those who speak English as an Additional Language. The Head of EAL is responsible for planning and drawing up timetables for EAL pupils. Please refer to the **EAL Policy** for further details. Following teacher recommendations and/or a high score in baseline tests, a student may be identified as More Able. Please refer to the **More Able Policy** for further details.

Schemes of work and differentiation

Schemes of work have been drawn up by all Heads of Department and are stored on the School SharePoint. These are frequently reviewed and brought up-to-date to reflect curriculum changes and our constantly evolving classroom practice. As a college we utilise the acronym PREPARE to support our lessons planning, based on Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, but we also respect subject autonomy and each HOD has their own handbook codifying excellent planning and delivery in that subject. Careful thought is also given by all staff to the needs of each individual student and, within the classroom, all teaching staff are aware of the importance of stretching and challenging the More Able, while also supporting those with individual learning needs**.** Teachers employ a teach to the top approach to lessons and use a range of adaptive teaching strategies to cater to the needs of all learners.

Disability

In accordance with the statutory requirements the College aims to make the curriculum accessible to all pupils as far as is reasonably practicable. Please refer to **Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan.**

Academic Timetable and Subject Options

EYFS

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the most recent EYFS statutory framework. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 3 areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.
The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

<u>Planning</u>
Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.
In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Teaching
Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.
As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Phonics
In The Prep School at St. Francis' College, teachers use the ELS (Essential Letters and Sounds) phonics scheme. ELS is a Department for Education validated programme designed to teach systematic synthetic phonics (SSP). Phonics is taught every day in Reception and continues into Year 1. The children are taught phases 1-4 in Reception, with phase 1 being introduced in the preschool. In Year 1 the pupils are taught phase 5, however the previous phases are revisited to ensure any gaps are addressed. Towards the end of Year 1, phase 6 may be introduced however this is mainly taught and embedded throughout Year 2.

The Prep School

Key Stage 1 and 2

The curriculum is taught across the two-week timetable made up of six periods of 55mins per day (for all but periods 5 and 6 which are shorter). The school day begins at 8.30am with registration and ends for all year groups in Prep at 3.30pm.

The following subjects are taught to all Preparatory Year Groups:

Art	Science	Personal Development
Drama	Music	Religious Studies
English	Physical Education	Latin (Years 5&6)
Humanities	Mathematics	Design Technology
Food & Nutrition (KS2)	Swimming	
French	Computing	

- Specialist teaching is provided for pupils in Years 5 and 6 in English, Maths and Science.
- A specialist teacher delivers all Drama and Music lessons.
- A specialist teacher delivers Food & Nutrition lessons to KS2.
- A specialist teacher teaches all French lessons.
- Specialist teachers teach all PE and Swimming lessons.
- Specialist teachers teach Latin to Years 5 & 6.
- A specialist teacher delivers Art and Design Technology to Years 4, 5 & 6.
- A specialist teacher teaches Computer Science to Years 5 & 6.

Senior School

The Senior School has a 6 period day of 55 minute lessons. The school day starts at 8.30 and finishes at 4.00pm.

Years 7, 8 and 9 (Key Stage 3)

The following subjects are studied in the first three years:

Art
Computer Science
Drama
English
Food and Nutrition
French
Geography
History
Latin
Mathematics
Music
Personal Development (non-examination)
Physical Education (non-examination)
Religious Studies
Science
Spanish (taught in Years 8 and 9)

Years 10 and 11 (Key Stage 4)

Most students take 9 subjects at this level. The **core subjects** taken by all pupils are:

English Language
Mathematics
Combined or Triple Science from 2026
Physical Education (Non-examination)
Personal Development (Non-examination)
DREAMS (Non-examination)
HPQ (Higher Project Qualification)

In addition to the above, all pupils are invited to choose four or five further subjects from the following list:

Academic PE
Art & Design
Business Studies
Computer Science
Drama
Food & Nutrition
French
Geography
History
Latin
Media Studies
Music

Photography
Religious Studies
Spanish

Some students in Set 1 for Mathematics will be invited to take Further Mathematics GCSE. This is taught alongside Mathematics GCSE, without any additional curriculum time.

In addition, all students are invited to complete the Higher Project Qualification.

Sixth Form Years 12 and 13 (Key Stage 5)

The following subjects are offered at A Level:

Art & Design
Biology
Business
Chemistry
Classics
Computer Science
Dance
Economics
English Literature
French
Further Maths
German
Geography
Government & Politics
Film Studies
History
Latin
Music
Photography
Physical Education
Physics
Psychology
Mathematics
Religious Studies
Theatre Studies

In addition, students in Year 12 complete an Extended Project Qualification, on a topic of their own choosing. This is taught in Year 12 lessons, typically completed over the summer holidays in Year 12 and submitted during the Autumn Term of Year 13.

All Sixth Formers take part in the DREAMS curriculum.

An enrichment programme is part of the Sixth Form curriculum provision, and covered within the DREAMS curriculum. This comprises a carousel of enrichment activities (ICT including coding, cooking on a budget, critical thinking, yoga, finance, presentation and interview skills).

In addition, all students have a PE lesson once per week.

Students in Years 7 -13 are also invited to complete the Arts Award (Bronze in Key Stage 3, Silver in Key Stage 4 and Gold in Key Stage 5) and/or the Duke of Edinburgh programme.

LAMDA and ABRSM music exams are also popular amongst students at the College

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Please refer to the **Marking and Assessment Policy** and the **Homework Policy.**

The Prep School

Written reports are issued for all pupils in the Preparatory School from Reception through to Year 6 twice yearly – at the end of the Spring Term (tick-box reports) and at the end of the Summer Term (full written reports). Pupils are assessed in subjects throughout the year as appropriate, with formal maths assessments taking place at the end of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. There are two Formal

Parental Consultation Evenings, which take place each year. The first takes place in October and the second one takes place at the end of the Spring Term, after the issuing of reports, to allow parents an opportunity to discuss their content. Each report will indicate progress, effort and achievement. For further details, please refer to the **Parent Handbook and College Calendar.**

Senior School

Every Half Term, from October half-term onwards, there is a communication with parents regarding the progress of their child. Each student in Years 7 – 13 receives reports per year. Students also receive regular tracking grades, commenting on academic attainment , effort and engagement, and enthusiasm. Students receive a full written tutor comment at the end of the Academic Year (Years 7-10, & 12). These reports and grade cards are available through the Parent Portal. Parent consultation evenings are held at least once a year for all Years (two meetings for Years 11-13) usually in the Autumn or Spring Terms. For details please refer to the **College Calendar.**

Careers guidance and preparation for life in British society

Throughout their educational programme, and through assemblies, tutor times, Chapel services, PSHE, leadership roles, School Council, and careers sessions, students are helped to prepare themselves for the workplace, for decisions relating to their careers, and for the opportunities, experiences and responsibilities of life in British society.

Partisan Views

All staff will ensure that where political views are brought to the attention of students, this is done so in a non-partisan way and they students are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. This is applicable to the following environments:

- In College, in both the taught curriculum and extra-curricular activities
- When taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school
- In the distribution of promotional material,

Curriculum Planning

In the Prep School, The Deputy Head of Prep has overall responsibility for the planning, implementation and monitoring of the curriculum. Long term plans are produced for each subject area and medium term plans are then used for many subjects. Where a scheme is used, there is no requirement for there to be a medium term plan.. The Deputy Head of Prep will report to the Head of Prep.

In the Senior School, The Deputy Head and the Head of Sixth Form have, between them, overall responsibility for curriculum planning, implementation and monitoring. Members of the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty/Departments/Subjects meet on a regular basis to review and plan the curriculum. Detailed schemes of work are produced on an annual basis for each subject area. These include explanations of how individual subjects implement the frameworks for assessment and homework. The Head reports to the Academic Committee – a sub-committee of the ILG Governing Body – on the current curriculum and recommends any changes.

A wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities form part of the overall curriculum. These activities are designed to provide opportunities for personal, academic and character development.

Related policies / documents

Marking and Assessment Policy
Disability Policy and Accessibility Plan
EAL Policy and Handbook
More Able Policy
Homework Policy
Individual Needs Policy and Handbook
Parent Handbook

Version Control

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