

# CURRICULUM SUBJECTS - in a nutshell

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## English and Drama

### Key Stage I

In Key Stage I, the focus is on developing language and literature skills. Regular reading increases the children's confidence as they move towards more independent reading. We follow the Read Write Inc Phonics scheme, which helps children with spelling and decoding new words. The KBER Handwriting scheme is used to develop fine motor skills and to introduce joined-up handwriting. Children are given the opportunity to write for a range of purposes and in a variety of forms, such as recipes, invitations, reports and stories and have an opportunity to perform in an annual Christmas production and an Eisteddfod in the Spring Term.

### Key Stage II

In Key Stage II the pupils are reading confidently and independently, choosing a wide range of genres and authors. Both comprehension and writing skills are developed by the study of a range of texts, including informative writing, reports, poetry, newspaper articles, and extracts from fiction and non-fiction. Spellings are learned and tested weekly, and grammar is taught in a variety of ways. Speaking and listening skills are developed in the classroom as part of every lesson. Drama skills are taught, and the children have the opportunity to perform in an annual Eisteddfod as well as a musical production and a charity concert.

# Mathematics

Pupils are taught Mathematics through the numicon scheme. The scheme develops the children's mental mathematics, problem solving and investigative skills. A range of resources are used to support the teaching and learning of Mathematics, including interactive programs, practical activities, games and written work.

Our aim is to encourage all our children to enjoy the many different aspects of Mathematics, to be prepared to take risks, not to be afraid of making mistakes and to achieve their potential in this exciting and multi-faceted subject. The children are encouraged to develop their mental arithmetic skills and to use the correct mathematical vocabulary, and we find that they quickly gain the confidence to talk about their work and methods at quite a sophisticated level.

Programmes of work for each term are designed to cover different strands of Mathematics: Numbers and the Number System, Shape and Space, Measures including money and time, Problem Solving, Data Handling and Investigations.

A variety of teaching styles and activities are used to suit different learning styles with children working as a whole class, individually and in pairs or groups as appropriate. The children have enjoyed participating in puzzles and maths challenges day which develop problem solving skills.

# Physical Education

## Key Stage I

Physical Education develops the child's fine and gross motor skills and her control and coordination in movement as well as her spatial awareness. The children learn about the benefits of being healthy and active and recognize the changes which happen within their body when they are active.

Key Stage I pupils thrive on participating in a range of sporting activities during their PE lessons which include movement to music, ball skills and athletics. In addition they have the opportunity to participate in after school football, ballet and gymnastics clubs.

All children have weekly swimming lessons, making full use of our delightful indoor swimming pool. Children regularly compete in friendly as well as competitive swimming galas both in school and against other schools.

## Key Stage II

Throughout the Junior Department the children take part in striking and fielding games, such as rounders, tennis and kwik cricket. Children play invasion games including netball and hockey, as well as studying dance and participating in cross country and athletics.

Pupils participate in team sports and develop their skills and tactical game play by training during lunch-time and in after school clubs. In addition they enjoy inter-house competitions in various sporting activities. The highlight of the sporting year is Sports Day: a family day where parents, pupils, siblings and staff gather to watch and compete to win the coveted Sports Day Cup for their house.

The extra-curricular sports offered after-school at various times of the year include: netball, hockey, tennis, rounders, gymnastics, football, cross country, karate and ballet.

## Religious Education

### Aims and objectives

Religious education enables children to investigate and reflect on some of the most fundamental questions asked by people. At Abbey School, we develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the major faiths, and address fundamental questions concerning, for example, the meaning of life and the existence of divine spirit. Children reflect on what it means to have a faith and to develop their own spiritual knowledge and understanding. We help the children learn about religions (AT1) as well as from religions (AT2)

## Science

In Science, we aim to build on children's natural curiosity of the world around them by offering rich and stimulating scientific experiences, and to develop an investigative approach to problems.

### Key Stage I

Key Stage I builds on EYFS experience where activities are based on everyday observations and exciting investigative activities. Children develop their knowledge and understanding of topics through hands-on experience. They use their senses and above all have the opportunity to develop their natural curiosity to ask questions and investigate the world in which they live. Topics include Life Cycles, Forces, Materials and Living Things in their Environment. The curriculum is enhanced through the use of the school grounds for activities such as Listening Walks and Habitat Studies. Children also visit places of scientific interest such as Paignton Zoo.

### Key Stage II

The Science curriculum for Key Stage II covers the strands of Life Processes and Living Things, Materials and their Properties, Physical Processes and Scientific Enquiry. Although Science is taught as a discrete subject, cross curricular links are made where appropriate to further the children's knowledge and understanding. All lessons are taught in our very well-equipped Science building, with support from dedicated laboratory technicians. As they progress through the Junior Department, pupils develop their understanding of scientific concepts through practical first-hand experiences which build confidence in tackling problems independently. Practical experiments develop their skills in scientific enquiry and their understanding of the collaborative nature of Science as they work together on investigations.

The teaching of Science is also extended through projects, presentations, displays, school-based workshops and out-of-school learning opportunities to carefully selected venues. We foster fascination and interest in Science and develop children's understanding of their local environment.

## History

### Key Stage I

During Key Stage I, pupils learn about other people's lives and lifestyles. They find out about significant men, women, children and events from the recent and more distant past, including those from both Britain and the wider world. Pupils listen and respond to stories and use sources of information to help them ask and answer questions. They learn about how the past is different from the present and begin to use common words and phrases relating to the passing of time. Children visit museums and other places of interest and begin to appreciate the importance of artifacts as evidence about life in the past. Loan boxes of artifacts are brought into school from the local museum. A popular outing in Year 2 is to The Victorian 'Bygones' near the school, which allows the children to compare and contrast a modern living with that of over a century ago. Amongst others, children also study the Great Fire of London and Florence Nightingale to aid their understanding of how the actions of an individual have a significant effect on the lives of others in History.

### Key Stage II

During Key Stage II, pupils learn about significant people, events and places from both the recent and more distant past. Typically the children study The Invaders, Ancient Civilizations, The Tudor Period and The Victorian Era and they experience at least one visit a year to a place of interest related to the topic they have studied. They learn about change and continuity in their own area, in Britain, and in other parts of the world. They look at History in a variety of ways, for example from political, economic, technological and social perspectives. Pupils use different sources of information to help them investigate the past both in depth and in overview, using dates and historical vocabulary to describe events, people and developments. They also learn that the past can be represented and interpreted in different ways. These skills of historical enquiry are invaluable across all curriculum subjects.

## Geography

Geography is a valued part of the curriculum; it enables pupils to develop their knowledge of people and places and begin to understand the physical, social and economic forces that shape our world. In Geography lessons the children explore the relationship between the earth and its people. Geography stimulates curiosity and imagination by allowing children to develop their geographical skills through the study of different places both close to home and further afield. Pupils are taught to use maps and atlases to locate cities, countries, mountain ranges, rivers, seas

and oceans. They use a range of resources including the internet to explore the environment and economies of the countries studied.

### **Key Stage I**

At Key Stage I, Geography focuses on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding relating to the pupils' own environment. The children begin to develop an awareness of the wider world and are encouraged to ask geographical questions about people, places and the environment. Children develop an awareness of their individual role and responsibilities in caring for the environment and in protecting the world's resources for future generations to enjoy. Geography is taught within a cross-curricular framework and includes such topics as: An Island Home, The Seaside, and Where in the World is Barnaby Bear? And this roving teddy bear accompanies pupils on their holidays.

### **Key Stage II**

Building on the foundations of Key Stage I, pupils continue to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of people, places and environments in the UK and overseas. Throughout the Junior Department Geography is taught as a separate subject but cross-curricular links are encouraged with English, Mathematics, ICT, History and Art. Outside the classroom, the children develop their skills in geographical enquiry through studies of the local environment, visits to field centres and topic based activities on residential trips.

## **ICT**

Children enjoy the facilities of a dedicated Junior ICT Suite which has recently been completely upgraded. The girls have timetabled ICT lessons where they learn specific ICT skills and practice them through working on tasks from cross-curricular lessons. In addition to ICT lessons, the ICT Suite is used for teaching subject-specific tasks and, of course, touch typing, a skill that our pupils excel in.

### **Key Stage I**

Key Stage I girls are introduced to the school network and they begin to use age-appropriate software for drawing and to input text and pictures. They also enjoy using the Bee-bot, a bright and colourful programmable floor robot which enables young children to learn through play about control and directional language, providing a perfect "hands on" introduction to robotics. As their ICT skills develop children begin to use the internet for research, for example Year 2 has been finding out about Florence Nightingale as part of a History topic. Children start to learn to touch type.

### **Key Stage II**

In Key Stage II the girls are taught to use computers with confidence and independence, and make increasing use of ICT for research and presentations using a range software programs. They also enjoy using cameras to photograph and film their work in a number of areas of the curriculum; older pupils recently filmed a nature documentary and are learning basic editing

skills to create the finished film. Children receive regular teaching about staying safe online. Children continue to learn to touch type.

## **Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship (please also refer to our Sex and Relationships policy)**

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) helps to give children the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy and independent lives. We aim to help them understand how they are developing personally and socially by tackling many of the moral, social and cultural issues that they face as part of growing up. The kind of questions that might come up in PSHE include: What acts indicate helpfulness? Why do we have to eat vegetables? What do the Members of Parliament do to help us? It is here that your child will learn about Citizenship, Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, Mental and Emotional Health, Wellbeing and Relationships. Learning opportunities take place in specific lessons as well as in assemblies and other activities that enrich pupils' experiences.

We use the SEAL (Social Emotional Aspects of Learning) programme to help deliver PSHE within the Junior Department. The SEAL programme is a spiral curriculum with each year group looking at the same theme each half-term; these help cover most of the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum.

### **Key Stage I:**

In Key Stage I, PSHE and Citizenship is delivered in a weekly lesson. PSHE and Citizenship is a cross-curricular subject, where many links are made to other subjects. The specific topics that are covered in Key Stage I are:

- New Beginnings
- Getting On And Falling Out
- Keeping The Body Healthy
- Taking Part
- Going For Goals
- Good To Be Me
- Making Choices For A Healthy Life
- Relationships
- Change
- Special People And People Who Help Us
- Living In A Diverse World
- Animals And Us

## **Key Stage II:**

In Key Stage II, PSHE and Citizenship is delivered by building on and reinforcing prior learning. There continues to be a weekly PSHE lesson. The new topics that are specific to Key Stage II are:

- Eating Healthily
- Living In A Diverse World
- Respect For Property
- Risk Taking
- Choices
- Developing Our School Grounds
- In The Media
- Children's Rights
- Support Networks
- How Do Rules And Laws Affect Me?
- How The Body Works?
- Local Democracy For Young Citizens
- Building Knowledge – Drugs

## **ART**

Pupils' creative development is an important part of life at Abbey School and the imaginative and attractive displays in classrooms and throughout the school demonstrate the importance and value given to each child's work. The classroom curriculum is extended by opportunities to visit museums and galleries, and children study the work of famous artists in Key Stage I and Key Stage II.

### **Key Stage I**

In Key Stage I Art is integrated into the whole curriculum and children are encouraged to develop their confidence and self-expression through stimulating topic-based activities such as Traditional Tales in English and Materials in Science. Alongside the development of their basic skills, pupils in Key Stage I have the opportunity to make 3D models and sculptures, as well as to experiment with a wide variety of materials.

### **Key Stage II**

In Key Stage II pupils have the opportunity to experience an increasing variety of materials and techniques. Children are encouraged to explore ideas about Line, Tone, Colour, Pattern, Texture, Composition, Shape, Form and Space. As with Key Stage I, Art naturally forms strong cross-curricular links with topic-based projects on the Romans, Ancient Greece, Egyptians, Tudors, and Aboriginal Studies, to name but a few. Pupils are also involved in set and prop design for year group productions.

## Spanish

Pupils begin to learn Spanish in Year 1. From the outset we focus on practical communication reinforced with clear explanations and practice of the grammar of the language. The lessons are pacy and dynamic. Pupils are encouraged to see learning languages as an enjoyable activity and look forward to their Spanish lessons.

From the word go all pupils are taught Spanish by a specialist teacher who is able to bring a depth and richness of experience to lessons, a real love and enthusiasm for their subject, and an authentic accent!

By the end of Year 6, as pupils move into the secondary school, they are confident in both Spanish.

## Music

### Key Stage I and II

Music is an important part of the curriculum. From Reception children are taught singing and they also begin to learn to read and clap simple rhythms from musical notation. Pupils explore a wide variety of topics which investigate the elements of music, and musical forms and styles. Children work on group arrangements and compositions using their voices, classroom percussion as well as tuned instruments and also other instruments, which they are learning individually.

There are a number of performance opportunities throughout the year. There is a Nativity for KS1, and a service of carols and lessons for KS2. In the Spring term we have an annual Eisteddfod in which every child in the school participates and external adjudicators are invited to select winners from each category and age. This is followed by a charity concert which varies from year to year. An end of year play or concert is enjoyed by all of KS2. Music plays an important part in the life of the school: all KS2 pupils combine to form a choir and a ukulele orchestra.

### Instrumental Lessons

#### Beginning Instrumental Tuition

KS1 and KS2 pupils are given the opportunity to take up an instrument. Instruments available at this stage are those suited to the younger child. Most parents opt for a shared lesson at this level (in pairs). In early September we have a Music Taster afternoon where instrumental teachers demonstrate their instruments and are available for parents to speak to at the end of the day. These lessons are arranged on a rota basis during school hours. The options available are:

Voice, Flute, Piano, Violin, Recorder, Oboe, Clarinet, Saxophone, Guitar

A wide range of musical instruments are played by children in the Junior Department. These can be taken up when pupils are the appropriate age. For more information contact the school office. Music lessons are arranged on a rota basis during school hours.