



ST JOHN'S SCHOOL
SIDMOUTH, UNITED KINGDOM

St John's School

Curriculum Policy

Reviewed June 2025

The School Curriculum at SJS is underpinned by the National Curriculum, the SJS CLAVIS Key Stage 3 programme, IGCSE, GCSE and International Studies Programmes (Pathway).

We endeavour to create a broad and balanced curriculum through our dynamic programmes of study. In addition, we aim to stimulate the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical opportunities of our children with a view to preparing them for a fulfilling and rewarding adult life as citizens of a global world.

Our School Endeavours to:

- Ensure that our children develop the essential literacy and numeracy skills.
- Provide children with a full and balanced entitlement to learning.
- Foster children's creativity and develop essential skills (including learning skills).
- Ensure that children are happy in their learning.
- Promote a healthy lifestyle.
- Inspire our children towards life-long learning.
- Promote high standards in all teaching and learning.
- Ensure that all children have access and opportunity to make progress.
- Provide education in accordance with the principles of 'Every Child Matters'.

St John's School Curriculum spans from EYFS through to Key Stage 4 and our Pathway International Programme. An outline of each can be found below.

EYFS IN THE NURSERY AND RECEPTION CLASS

In the Nursery and Reception Class we follow the Early Years Foundation Framework. Staff plan for and monitor the children under the following three Prime and four Specific 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

Loose parts play a big focus within St John's. The children are the creators of their own learning throughout the environment provided. As practitioners we are always there to extend, inspire and support as they explore and play.

At St John's we plan the environment through the eyes of the child. What sparks them, what are their next steps? From this we can plan activities to extend their prior knowledge.

We love to really get into a story and talk more deeply about what is happening and the language being used. By the end of the week we can hopefully recall the story! This forms the beginning of the learning journey to becoming an enthusiastic reader.

Where appropriate, we use 'in the moment' planning to capture teachable moments while the children are accessing our provision. We use these moments to model language, promote positive relationships and ignite a love of learning in our children. Our team is then able to plan next steps and further learning opportunities that are in line with the children's interests, fascinations and developmental stage.

At St John's we pride ourselves in each and every child being part of the creation of the learning environment. Through their love of learning we aim to inspire their young minds to become enthusiastic learners. However, the four walls do not restrict us as the natural world beyond it gives us endless opportunities too.

We believe that children learn best when their learning experiences are not restricted to a classroom environment alone. Outdoor learning is extremely important to us and we carefully plan for outdoor provision as much as we do for our indoor provision. We take advantage of our school grounds regularly including the sports fields, swimming pool, tennis courts and Forest School. We encourage our children to play, explore, enquire and most importantly have fun!

Where appropriate, children may take part in trips away from the school site to enhance their experiences in the early years. Again, where appropriate, visits to the nursery will be organised with suitable outside organisations and individuals. The children in nursery will also be welcome to join in whole school activities and visits where appropriate, e.g., Sports Day, Father Christmas etc.

When planning and implementing the curriculum for the children in our care, we consider the following principles:

- Every child is a unique individual
- All children have skills and abilities that they bring with them and we can build on
- Children have a right to develop physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually and morally to their full potential.

- Children learn through first-hand experience, using their senses to develop an understanding of the world
- Learning is holistic for young children
- Children need opportunity and space to explore their environment
- Play is central to the child's learning process
- Shared information between family, other settings and outside agencies and our setting is crucial
- Creating an enabling environment is key to successful learning.

In the EYFS, phonics teaching and letter formation activities will take place where appropriate following Read, Write, Inc. and the whole school handwriting and presentation policy.

Reception

Assembly with the whole Junior School twice a week, lasting 30 minutes.

Currently Reception students have the following number of periods per subject per week:

Subject	No 60 min Lessons / wk	Notes
Class Time	21	Includes Enquiry, Maths and English, PSHE
PE	2	
Spanish	1	
Music	1	
Singing	½	Whole Junior School

The Junior School Curriculum

At St John's we follow the EYFS and the National Curriculum combined with our own enquiry-led teaching model. This is for all students from Nursery age to the end of Year 6. It is delivered by class teachers, in collaboration with specialist teachers.

Mathematics

Mathematics is structured using the White Rose scheme which is also used to develop problem solving and application to real life. Mathematics is taught in relevant, realistic ways since it will be used in real-life situations. It is important that learners acquire mathematical understanding by constructing their own meaning through ever-increasing levels of abstraction, starting with exploring their own personal experiences, understandings and knowledge.

English and Languages

English as a first and second language is taught as part of our curriculum. The Junior School delivers the primary curriculum using the Collins Treasure House Scheme which is preceded by Read, Write, Inc. in the early years and KS1. The scheme incorporates all aspects of English including reading, writing, speaking and listening, handwriting and spelling. Where appropriate, the English Units are organised around class enquiries to provide cross-curricular links. All pupils in the Junior School and Nursery are taught Spanish as a second language.

In addition, pupils from Years 5 and upwards are given the opportunity to take part in our Exchange programmes to visit our sister schools. In the Junior school this normally entails a short exchange to either SEK Levante (Valencia), SEK Eires (La Coruña) or IES Udine (Italy).

Year 1 – 6 Students

Assembly with the whole Junior School twice a week for 30 minutes.

Students in years 1-6 follow a similar timetable based on the following number of periods per subject per week. However, each individual year group has a modified timetable (see Curriculum Plan by Year for full details).

Subject	No 60 min Lessons / wk	Notes
Class Time	18	Includes Enquiry, Maths and English, PSHE
PE	4	
Spanish	1	
Music	1	
Art	1	
Science	1	
Singing	½	Whole Junior School

Key Stage 3

The Key Stage 3 curriculum for years 7, 8 & 9 has been designed to foster a bridge between the curriculum in the Junior School and the IGCSE and GCSE Programmes in the Senior School, called our CLAVIS programme. Key stage 3 is divided into 3 year groups, with class sizes being no more than 20.

International students receive extra EAL lessons during MFL and English lessons.

Each year group has a separate Form Tutor who acts as their Pastoral and Academic Tutor.

Key Stage 3 Teaching and Ethos

The Core subjects (Mathematics, Science and English as a First Language) follow a traditional syllabus based either on the Cambridge Secondary 1 or National Curriculum.

Non-core subjects follow the SJS self-developed CLAVIS program. This is a broad introductory curriculum, which incorporates key competency skills and an annual project or Presentation evening - drawing on the principles of the IB program. Details on each subject taught in each of the KS3 years can be found in the Long Term Planning Document.

Both the core subjects, as well as the non-core subjects, trialled a theme-based period of teaching in term 2 of academic year 2018-2019 based on 'diversity'. Staff liaised in their planning on which topics would be suitable to be taught around this topic and amended their planning to make sure of a more subject-integrated teaching. The results of this interdisciplinary collaboration was shared with parents in an exhibition, coordinated and directed by pupils. Pupils were given the opportunity to share their experiences with family and friends. Following the success of this exhibition, it has been decided to continue this collaborative teaching in Term 3 as an annual event.

Pupils in the CLAVIS programme are actively encouraged to participate in our annual exchange programmes to visit our sister schools. Exchanges on offer include visits to either SEK Levante (Valencia) or SEK Eires (La Coruna), IES Udine (Italy) and an annual mini-Olympiad at one of our SEK schools. These opportunities enrich our pupils with a global awareness and understanding that only immersion in an International setting can bring.

Currently Key Stage 3 students (The "CLAVIS" programme) have the following number of periods per subject per week:

Subject	No 60 min Lessons / wk	Groups
English	4	
EAL	7	
Mathematics	3	

Science	3	
French	1	
Spanish	1	
PE	4	
PSHCE	1	
Careers Guidance	½	
Geography	2	
History	1	
RPE	1	
Drama	1	
DT	1	
Food & Nutrition	1.5	Split within year groups
Art	1	
Music	1	
ICT and/or Coding	1	
Swimming	1	

Year 9 pupils will cover fundamental IGCSE/GCSE skills from the Spring Term onwards.

Key Stage 4

Our general (mainstream) Key Stage 4 Programme has three distinct parts:

- Compulsory School Curriculum, centred around PSHCE, Careers, PE & Games, Assemblies and Tutor-led activities
- Compulsory Examination Subjects: Mathematics, Science (single or double), English (or English as a Second Language) plus English Literature for non-EAL pupils.
- Optional Exam Subjects chosen from four option blocks which changes each year based on pupil demand. These could include;- Art & Design, Business Studies, ICT, Computer Science, Geography, History, French, Food & Nutrition, PE, Music and Speech & Drama.

The SJS curriculum for GCSE-age students is broad and balanced with strong international links and opportunities for students to develop all aspects of themselves in preparation for their final two years of study in the Sixth Form.

Year 11 is taught in ability groups in Mathematics and Science. RS is offered as an extension half GCSE.

An example Option List for Year 10 is as follows:-

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5
Geography	Spanish French EAL	Exam PE History	Business Studies Art	Drama Short Course RS

Areas of Experience

Linguistics

English as a first and second language is taught as part of the curriculum in the Junior School and by specialised teachers in the Secondary curriculum. The units of enquiry form the basis for English and communication skills in the Junior School programme and are taught predominantly by the class teacher.

Pupils in years 8-9 study English or EAL for a minimum of 4 x 60 mins lessons per week. English is taught using a combination of Prose, Creative Writing, Poetry Exploration, Reading Skills and Independent Projects.

Key stage 3 pupils take the PTE GL assessments as part of their progress monitoring.

Students In years 10 and 11 study both the Cambridge IGCSE English Language (or English as a Second language) and English Literature for non EAL students. Second language students have the opportunity in KS4 to take an additional English qualification such as Academic IELTS or FCE/CAE (Cambridge English Language Assessments). These lessons are taught with a minimum of 4 lessons per week.

EAL students are assessed by the EAL Coordinator on their arrival to the school and are then set into the appropriate EAL or mainstream English classes.

In addition to English SJS offers Spanish as its core second Language for non-EAL students. This is taught throughout the school by specialised teachers from Nursery upwards. Other languages are offered including French and Home Language (including Chinese)

The department encourages different forms of English and pupils annually take part in the BBC School Report journalist day as well as poetry and prose competitions.

Mathematics

In the Senior School the programmes of study incorporate the National Curriculum and the Framework for Secondary Mathematics. The GCSE curriculum ensures coverage across KS3 and 4. The full syllabus is covered in a long term plan that is the correct fit for the pupils. The Students are introduced to concepts of metacognition in year 10 with the use of revision guides and RAG sheets so they can begin to take ownership of their learning in preparation for GCSE revision.

Coverage is planned to include elements from each of the relevant strands of learning every year as these vary slightly between the key stages. Complete coverage of all components, with appropriate re-visiting of concepts, is planned over a one or two year cycle depending on the topic. Work is planned for year groups in the following way (with appropriate adjustments and differentiation according to the needs of pupils in the class):

Key Stage 3 Maths Frameworking Textbook Scheme

Key Stage 4 Edexcel GCSE (Foundation and Higher)

Maths enrichment can include students participating in the UKMT Maths Challenge when appropriate. Further details are covered in the Mathematics Policy Document.

Scientific

Science is taught as a Specialist subject in the Primary school alongside class teachers when it forms part of their enquiries. To provide a more fluent transition from Primary into Secondary School, both year 5 and 6 pupils are taught Science weekly with a senior school science teacher.

The Senior Science curriculum continues the journey from the Primary Years Program and provides a solid foundation for the IGCSE Science course on offer (IGCSE Coordinated Science).

Cambridge IGCSE (9-1) scheme of work is followed. This is presented in four content areas: Scientific enquiry, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Scientific enquiry is about considering ideas, evaluating evidence, planning investigative work and recording and analysing data. The Scientific enquiry objectives underpin Biology, Chemistry and Physics, which are focused on developing confidence and interest in scientific knowledge.

In Key Stage 3 Science has followed the Oxford University Press, Activate schemes of work. This thoroughly prepares students for the rigours of the Coordinated Science programme that is taught in Key Stage 4.

Years 7, 8 and 9 are taught separately on a 7 term rolling programme. Year 9 will have finished the KS3 curriculum at the start of term 2. All years will be assessed using a computerised 'Progress in Science' test, provided by GL Assessments in September. The outcome will enable the department to gain valuable analysis and feedback against a much larger national cohort of pupils. Independent Project work is encouraged as part of the Clavis Programme.

We believe that at Key Stage 4 all three science disciplines at a GCSE level provides the best foundation for any science/maths course at sixth form level and also ensures a solid scientific understanding for life. Taking all these matters into consideration, we offer the following science course at IGCSE level.

IGCSE Coordinated Science – This is a double award (2 IGCSEs). All three science disciplines are taught, as well as problem solving, experimental skills and investigations.

Technological

Students from Reception upwards have access to a variety of technology including tablets and PCs. The Junior school link their ICT content with the current enquiry that the students are following. iPads and the IT suite are used to allow for collaborative learning and project work.

At Key Stage 3 the Framework is designed round giving students a taste of emerging technology as well as preparing students for an IGCSE in either ICT or Computer Science. With an emphasis on coding in different disciplines each KS3 pupil has one hour of coding/IT a week.

An important element of all ICT lessons is e-safety. Cyber Bullying and E-Safety are taught as part of the KS3 curriculum and is supported by E-Safety focus days, as well as through the PSHCE programme JIGSAW.

In addition students read and sign an "Acceptable User Policy" before they are allowed access to the SJS computer system. This is found in their in their School Diary / Planner.

Human and Social

Geography, History, RS and Global Studies form an essential element of enquiries in the Primary School. These are led by class teachers with additional support from specialised teachers as required.

In the Senior School Humanities (Geography, History, and RS) are taught as discrete subjects as part of the CLAVIS Key Stage 3 Programme of Study and are available throughout Key Stages 4 and 5.

CLAVIS lessons taught in KS3 encourage students to be aware of global issues and offers opportunities to explore possible solutions through research, cooperation and collaboration. In addition these lessons are used to explore life skills such as presenting, Public Speaking, Critical Thinking and Revision Techniques. Each year this culminates in either a collaborative exhibition or presentation evening in Term 2.

Every other year there is an opportunity to attend the Cultural InterSEK event, where students complete a number of challenges and meet students from over 25 other IES/SEK schools. These events expand students' awareness of global issues and encourage lifelong friendships. This biannually has a focus on cultural issues.

Physical

All pupils at the school have the opportunity to study and participate in a well-rounded and broad Physical Education programme. As well as have the opportunity to compete against local schools in the traditional competitive sports (from Year 4 upwards)

Students from Nursery participate in both weekly PE and swimming.

The first aim in sport at St John's is to involve all the children in a wide selection of sports and generate an enthusiasm for taking part and being active. In games lessons the standard set allows children of all abilities to participate and gain enjoyment from taking part.

The PE department is aware of pupils who are particularly talented in the different sports and are progressed accordingly through representing the school, entry into relevant EDSSA fixtures, directed towards local clubs, etc. Similarly, the staff are aware of children on the SEN register and EAL register and will provide any necessary provisions for them.

The enrichment programme offers pupils opportunities to play additional sport such as golf and mixed gender sport.

Every other year there is the opportunity to attend the biennial Sporting InterSEK event where students participate in various sporting activities, giving them the opportunity to try sports that are not available at St John's. It also encourages team building and intercultural communication.

Aesthetic and Creativity

Students as young as two participate in Music, Art and creative exploration as part of the EYFS and Junior Programmes. In the Junior curriculum Art, DT, Drama, Music and Singing are timetabled as individual lessons and are taught by specialised teachers in addition to their class teachers as part of the units of enquiry.

Creative lessons are planned to enable pupils to experience a wide range of media and to develop a broad appreciation of visual and auditory stimulation. Displays around the school are used to enhance learning and to visually stimulate the environment around the entire school.

The international nature of the school allows and encourages inter school competition, In the past this has included Sonnet competitions, art projects, interactive science and video diaries.

Students throughout the school are encouraged to perform in school productions from Nativity plays, Key Stage 2 drama productions and whole school Drama/ Musical productions. The EAL department produces an Annual Pantomime with the EAL students.

Recent Productions have included:-

- Alice In Wonderland (Senior School)
- Pirates and Mermaids (Years 3 & 4)
- Toad of Toad Hall (Years 3 & 4)
- The Rocky Monster Show (Year 5 & 6)
- Yee Ha (Year 5 & 6)
- Duologues (CLAVIS)
- Canterbury Tales (CLAVIS)
- Comedy of Errors (Years 5 & 6)

Music plays an important role within the school and students attend weekly singing and music lessons through all years. A summer concert is organised at the end of the summer term and students of all ages and abilities are encouraged to perform. The Musical Director encourages compositions using a range of instruments which are hired each term. These have included ukuleles, Brass Instruments and drum kits.

In addition pupils are encouraged to attend a variety of performances and workshops, including the BSO at Powderham Castle, Guildhall School of Music.

Next Steps

Careers and University advice is delivered as part of the CAS/PSHCE programmes of study. All year 11 students undergo a period of Work Experience. Students prepare their CV, letter of application and interview practice with their Tutor or PSHCE teacher. Year 10 and 11 pupils actively engage with Unifrog...<https://www.unifrog.org/>

In addition Next Steps advice is enriched by a series of workshops, guest speakers and educational visits and deep learning days. In the last 12 months this has included:-

- UCAS Convention
- Careers South West
- Parliamentary Workshop (Key Stage 4-5) on-site
- Guest lecturer:-in association with, Exeter University
- National Space Center workshop – Whole school (Differentiated by age)

- Build IT- Architecture workshop (Junior school)
- Print and Broadcast Journalism
- Business and Management

Preparation for Life in British Society

Please see the PSHCE and CG Programme of Study which covers key stages 3 and 4. Key themes include:-

Enjoy and Achieve, Being Healthy , Relationships, Staying Safe, Emotional Health and making Positive Contributions which are the key themes throughout this programme. This incorporates: Democracy; The Rule of Law; Individual Liberty and Mutual Respect for and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs or those without faith.

British Values and Traditions are also observed during our Deep Learning programme.

In addition all students benefit from a rich provision of values gained from participating in Drama productions, Sporting activities, Assemblies and the wider SMSC programme.

International Study Programmes

International students, who are part of our Pathway course, follow an intensive one-year programme towards IGCSE, GCSE and appropriate EAL qualifications. This programme provides rigour and challenge for students. Support is provided in small, specialised classes and through the Head of EAL's team.

St John's School prides itself on its ability to integrate students from many cultures and countries together. In the Autumn Term in particular, pupils from our sister schools join St John's and bring a quality and value to the school that is uniquely international.

Monitoring and Assessment

Please see the Internal Assessment Policy.

EHC (Education, Health and Care plans)

Pupils identified with a wave 2 and above SEND need, according to the whole school provision map, will have an IEP. These are available to all relevant staff.

In addition the school matron holds a Pupil Medical Care plan, for students with chronic medical conditions or are on medication. These are held in Matrons Office in the confidential "Student Medical Record" file.

Equal Opportunities in the Curriculum

Delivery and enjoyment of the Curriculum at St John's is always supplied regardless of sex, race, language, culture, disability, religion or belief.

Whole School Chapel

During the school year, each form leads an assembly, usually in Chapel, but not exclusively. These assemblies are designed to encourage pupils to perform, to broaden their experiences and enable them to explore moral themes and values from a pupil perspective. The subject of form Chapel services is usually a moral subject, developed through speech, acting, artwork and costume. Normally the form tutor does not participate in performance, but guides and rehearses the pupils, scripting the occasion where necessary.

Hymn practices are designed to extend the range of hymns/songs that the pupils can sing. They are led by the Director of Music and may include some guidance on moral issues that rise from the hymns/songs. A wide variety of music is rehearsed, from medieval hymns to twenty-first century songs. Pupils are encouraged to sing with enthusiasm and reasonable technique. They are also rewarded through the school's star system for volume/quality of singing.

Secular Assemblies

Secular assemblies also take place. The purpose of these assemblies is to issue notices, give match reports, award certificates, celebrate birthdays and attend to general school business.

Sex Education

The School provides sex education in the Curriculum, in which children are encouraged and guided by moral principles.

In accordance with the law, the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all children, but parents may withdraw their children from any part of the sex education provided without stating their reasons. Full details can be found in the Jigsaw PSHCE & RSE Policy.

Political Education

The promotion of political views in the teaching of any subject in the school is forbidden by law. Political issues are often introduced in a number of lessons and are presented in an objective and balanced way.

Extra Curricular Enrichment Activities

The School offers a wide and varied programme of sporting, artistic, musical and other activities that take place outside the normal Curriculum three days a week between 4 and 5pm. All children are encouraged to take part in these programmes.

Typically this programme includes: Sport, Art & Crafts, STEM, Gardening, Forest School, Debating, Woman's Studies, Coding, Lego, Maths Enrichment, Drama, Yoga & mindfulness, Portuguese, Trampoline, Chess and Public Speaking.

The School is committed to Deep Learning days that support the curriculum and the holistic pupil. These include:

- Careers Day
- Welfare and Mindfulness awareness

- British Values and Traditions
- Science Festival week
- Maths Day

Prep (Homework)

It is school policy that from Year 7 all pupils have regular prep set each week. Teachers of pupils in Year 6 or below may give pupils work to be carried out at home (e.g. reading/spellings etc.) or tasks that may assist future lessons (e.g. collection of items from home).

As far as possible, each academic subject will have at least one 30 minute session of homework a week which increases in Key Stage 4.

Pupils from Year 7 to Year 10 have a prep timetable to help them manage their work.

Further details of the School Prep (Homework) Policy can be found in the Staff Handbook.

Learning Support (SEND)

The School has a SEND Policy which outlines the provision made where appropriate for children with particular needs. The School determines strategies in consultation with children, staff and parents. Please see the SEND Policy.

Gifted and Talented

A Gifted and Talented programme operates to provide an opportunity for extension work for children deemed as able and talented in a variety of areas.

Further details can be found in the “Gifted and Talented” policy.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Head.

The Head will report to the Board of Directors on the progress of the policy and will recommend any amendments.