



UT VOCE ITA VITA

EXETER CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Prep

Whole School Curriculum Policy (EYFS, Pre-Prep and Prep)

Last review: September 2025

Next review: September 2026

Governor oversight: Academic

Overview

Exeter Cathedral School offers a comprehensive and balanced curriculum that covers all aspects of learning, including linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic, and creative education. The curriculum focuses on developing essential skills in speaking, listening, literacy, and numeracy for all students and is tailored to accommodate the abilities of each child. Personal, social, health, and education (PSHE/RSE/RE) are allocated within the curriculum model and are also integrated into the pastoral care of all pupils via Form Time, assemblies, enrichment talks and trips.

Aims

At Exeter Cathedral School we strive to help our children develop as independent learners, preparing them for the next stage of their development and educational journey.

Our aims can be broken down as follows:

- provide experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical aesthetic and creative education.
- ensure all children acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
- create a happy and secure learning environment where all children are valued.
- enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability and to develop their potential.
- promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning.
- help children develop lively, enquiring minds where they question rather than merely accept.
- help children acquire knowledge and understanding which will equip them for future challenges.
- help children obtain skills that they can transfer to other subjects or situations.
- enable children to be positive citizens in society, have respect for themselves and high self-esteem and be able to live and work cooperatively with others.
- help children understand the importance of truth and fairness so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all.
- teach children to understand right from wrong.
- actively promote and uphold the fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The curriculum will:

- engage, motivate, challenge and sustain the interest of every child whatever their ability and build their confidence and self-esteem.
- offer a broad and balanced curriculum which is tailored to the needs of the children and their future aspirations.
- ensure that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural values are recognised, addressed and developed.
- take into account the ages aptitudes and needs of all children, including those children who have Educational Psychology Report.

The child will:

- develop an investigative spirit, be able to think independently and work creatively towards the solution of problems.
- be able to research, plan and structure his/her ideas.
- be able to apply his/her knowledge and draw conclusions.
- work with others and be respectful of their views.
- be able to present ideas orally to both their peer group and a wider audience.
- develop proficiency in all areas of the curriculum and in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy and Information and Communication Technology, to a level over and above the standard of children nationally.
- recognise that learning takes place outside the classroom as well as within.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage is distinct in its identity. The curriculum is planned by the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers, effective January 2024.

Under the guiding theme of Learning and Development, there are seven clear areas.

The three prime areas are:

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

These prime areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the World.
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Years 1 - 2 Curriculum (Pre-Prep)

The curriculum is organised and planned using a thematic approach through which all subjects are taught. This approach to learning and teaching is designed to support children's natural curiosity and stimulate their creativity. It offers children the opportunity to work in-depth, giving them the time they need to reflect, consolidate, and transfer their learning. There are strong links between subjects and children are encouraged to see their work as being connected, relevant and purposeful.

The curriculum is skills-based, and knowledge supported, making learning motivational and successful. It is at this stage in a child's development that he/she begins to learn how to research independently and, where appropriate, we encourage each child to do so using a range of resources. Children are taught in mixed ability class groups throughout the Pre-Prep.

Years 3 - 8 Curriculum (Prep: Lower – Years 3-5; Senior House – Years 6-8)

The curriculum at the Prep level builds on the foundations laid at the Pre-Prep and aims to strengthen a child's thinking skills so that he/she can develop his/her independence as a learner. Heads of Department prepare schemes of learning that plan for progression according to age and ability. The transition from Year 2 to Year 3 is carefully managed and knowledge of the curriculum on the two sites ensures that each child's needs are catered for.

In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 (Lower Years) all teaching is in mixed ability groups with a designated class teacher who is usually responsible for most taught subjects. Subject specialist teachers are responsible for Music, Art, Games, PE and Languages, and others as required.

In the Senior House curriculum, there is greater flexibility in the curriculum to set pupils according to their abilities, and in line with considerations such as class size and staff capacity. Where setting applies, this can enable differentiated learning and teaching across the ability spectrum, with high-achieving pupils covering work in preparation for their Scholarship Exams and specialist intervention for children in literacy and numeracy.

For all pupils, the curriculum is differentiated according to the specific strengths and weaknesses of each child. When more specialist intervention is required, children are referred to the Learning Support department. Staff have access to all relevant information about a child's learning needs and there is a close relationship between teaching staff and the Learning Support department.

PSED/ PSHE/RSE/RE plays a key part in the curriculum and is included as a timetabled subject.

The key areas covered are:

1. understanding ourselves - personal development and relationships.
2. lifestyles – healthy living and how to keep safe.
3. citizenship – school community and wider community.

PSED / PSHE/RSE/RE in the school reflects the school's aims and ethos as well as encouraging mutual respect and tolerance for each other and for different faiths and beliefs.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development of Children

The School seeks to:

- actively promote the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- ensure that principles are actively promoted which:
- enable children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- enable children to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- encourage children to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely.
- enable children to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England.
- further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling children to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.
- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.
- champion tolerance and diversity, equality and inclusivity.

SMSC development is promoted through assemblies, the School Council and other committees, the PSHE Programme, the enrichment programme; the pastoral programme; and through the curriculum subjects.

Careers and Future Choices

We aim to prepare children to make informed choices about their future.

The **PSED** / PSHE/RSE/RE curriculum addresses different types of work, including employment and voluntary work. The school organises an ECS Futures Week once a year in Pre-Prep and Prep. Over the course of the week, talks take place with external speakers about their chosen careers and career pathways. The week in the Prep culminates with a Senior Schools Evening.

The school also organises scholarship mock interview practice and supports pupils with specific entry requirements. All advice offered is impartial and up to date.

Pupils in Year 8 take part in the School ECS Futures programme, which offers themed weeks (enterprise, adventure, creativity, and moving on) to help pupils prepare for life beyond ECS.

A rich and varied programme of extracurricular activities also develops character attributes such as resilience and determination, which underpin future success and choices.

Enrichment

ECS recognises that all pupils should be encouraged to be ambitious and therefore academic enrichment and extension will come in a variety of forms:

- Differentiation by task and/or outcome within the classroom
- Parent sessions on 'How to support your child's learning at home'
- Explicit teaching of study skills and how we learn/revise for Upper Years pupils
- The school library allows access to a wealth of fiction and non-fiction books and information. The librarian recommends suitable reading material for children and frequently puts together collections of books for class-based research project
- Department extension opportunities are listed in the curriculum engagement booklets for pupils and parents
- After school clubs offer an extensive programme of engaging learning beyond the classroom curriculum.
- Visiting lectures, authors, poets and experts
- Enrichment subjects for Years 7-8 run once every two weeks: Drama, Sport, Music, Art and Performance
- Numerous opportunities for Drama with productions for each year group per year
- Trinity term post exam programme for Year 8
- Opportunities to represent the School in a variety of sports at country and sometimes national level
- Entry to academic competitions and publication of ECS work
- School choirs and a programme of informal and formal concerts at which children of all abilities can perform
- Individual music lessons tuition
- Participation in sport for all
- Increasing attention is being paid to older children working with younger children to support with reading and positive play
- Leadership opportunities, particularly in Year 8
- Pupil responsibility for events such as Anti-Bullying Week and Cultural Diversity

- Learning Support sessions and study skills groups.

Equal Opportunities

At Exeter Cathedral School we value cultural diversity and encourage respect for other people with particular reference to the Equality Act 2010. All teaching and non-teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that all children, irrespective of ability, ethnicity and social circumstances, have access to the whole curriculum and opportunities to make the greatest possible progress in all areas of the curriculum while in our school. Our School is a tolerant and inclusive community, where equality and diversity are championed through the curriculum and all other areas of school life, and where Pupil Voice holds a central importance.

We aim to actively promote and uphold the fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The school takes into account the age, aptitude and needs of all children.

All children have access to Learning Support and those with identified needs, including academic, motor coordination and social communication difficulties are supported in class or may be withdrawn for extra help as appropriate.

Safeguarding

Exeter Cathedral School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of every child at the school and there is a focus on safeguarding throughout the curriculum. We aim to provide an environment in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and are listened to. We recognise the contribution the School can make to safeguard and support the children in its care through:

- Prevention: a positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to children, and providing good adult role models.
- Protection: following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- Support: to children and staff and to children who have concerns or who may have been abused.