

Reception Curriculum Guide

2025-2026

The logo for James Allen's Junior School, featuring the word "jags" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. A small blue diamond shape is positioned above the letter 'j'.

James Allen's Junior School

INTRODUCTION

Dear Parents,

The girls at the Pre-Prep follow a broad curriculum which consists of Literacy, Maths, Science, French, History, Geography, Music, Art, Design Technology, Computing, Religious Education, Physical Education and Games.

We believe that young children learn best when they feel secure and valued, when they are challenged yet supported, when challenges are closely matched to potential, and when learning is fun.

It is part of our role as educators to foster in our pupils; growing responsibility, caring attitudes, eagerness to learn, physical, mental and emotional fitness and the ability to cope in tomorrow's competitive and changing world.

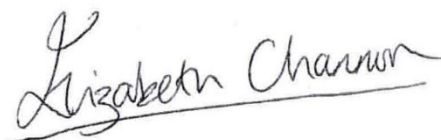
It is for these reasons that the education offered at the Pre-Prep, both within the classroom and beyond, has the following aims:

To encourage all pupils to develop their full potential by stimulating their intellectual curiosity, enthusiasm and imagination.

- To promote excellence in academic, creative and athletic endeavours.
- To teach the value of integrity, morality and a concern for others.
- To enhance pupils' appreciation of their own and other cultures.
- To develop pupils' self-confidence and independence so that they are well-equipped to play an active role in society.
- To create an atmosphere of happiness and warmth in which children are motivated to work and play to the best of their abilities.
- To offer a broad, balanced curriculum, based upon the Foundation Stage and National Curriculum.

This booklet has been produced to give you an overview of the curriculum that your daughter will study this year.

Warm regards,



MRS ELIZABETH CHANNON
HEAD OF PRE-PREP

RECEPTION ORGANISATION

ARRIVING IN THE MORNING

Your daughter should arrive at school, ready for the bell at 8.30am. Please escort your daughter to the playground and say goodbye to her when the bell rings, allowing her to line up with her classmates and teachers and go to the classroom. We encourage the girls to be as independent as possible. The girls will be responsible for putting their School Planner, reading and library books and water bottles in the correct boxes in the classroom. They will also need to put their book bags away. The girls will have the daily routines explained to them fully at the beginning of term and there will always be somebody around to help them if necessary.

SCHOOL PLANNERS

In Reception, we check the School Planners every day. Please use them not only as a record of reading but also to communicate other relevant information eg. after-school collection changes. The phonics and spelling focus for each week will be posted on Seesaw. Should you wish to speak to the Reception staff, we would always encourage you to do so. Please email the school office at pre-prep@jags.org.uk or arrange a mutually convenient time through messaging in the School Planner. You can also email the Class Teachers at jodie.farrar@jags.org.uk or amy.kasoma@jags.org.uk

WATER BOTTLES

Please ensure your daughter brings a water bottle to school, and this is refilled at home and brought to school every day.

LIBRARY

The girls have a library session once a week. Please ensure that the previous week's book is returned so that another can be borrowed.

COMPUTING, COPSE AND SWIMMING

Throughout the year the children use Beebots, iPads and other resources in the classroom. After the Autumn half term holiday, the Reception classes will start visiting the copse area at the Senior School on alternate weeks. During these visits, the girls will participate in a range of Forest School activities. The Reception classes swim in the Summer Term at our pool on the Senior School site.

PE

The girls are expected to come to school in their blue shirt, blue shorts or tracksuit bottoms, red sweatshirt, blue ankle socks and plain white Velcro trainers on the days on which PE is taught. For safety reasons, if your daughter wears earrings, it is strongly recommended that these are removed on days when she has PE or be securely taped, before she arrives at school. PE lessons will take place twice a week.

PARENT ASSEMBLIES

Parents will be invited to one Class Assembly and one French Assembly during the course of the year. All information will be in the weekly Newsflash.

HOUSE POINTS

All girls at the Junior School are divided into Houses. These are Clarke, Desenfans, Holst and Bettany. The Reception girls compete in their Houses in only one annual event, which is Sports Day.

HOME LEARNING AT THE PRE-PREP

The girls in Reception will bring home a reading book twice a week, and a picture story book three times a week, to share with you. Please encourage them to read it to you/with you and discuss the story with them. We aim to instill a love of reading in all girls from an early age, so please continue to read to your daughter, go to the library and share books at home. At the beginning of the year, we will send home the Phase 2 and Phase 3 phonics sounds and the pre-cursive handwriting guide that we use at school. Please keep this card at home to refer to throughout the year. The girls will also receive some High Frequency Words (HFW) to learn by sight recognition as the year progresses. No holiday homework is set at the Pre-Prep.

Parents will receive suggestions of other activities that their daughters can do on a termly basis, related to their Topic, Science, Maths or Literacy. These suggestions will include websites they can access, places to visit and craft activities. Girls (with parental guidance) are free to choose as many or as few of these to do at home. There is no expectation to carry out any of these suggestions – they are optional. The girls may bring anything they have done/made at home into school to share if they wish.

OPTIONAL ONLINE MATHS LEARNING

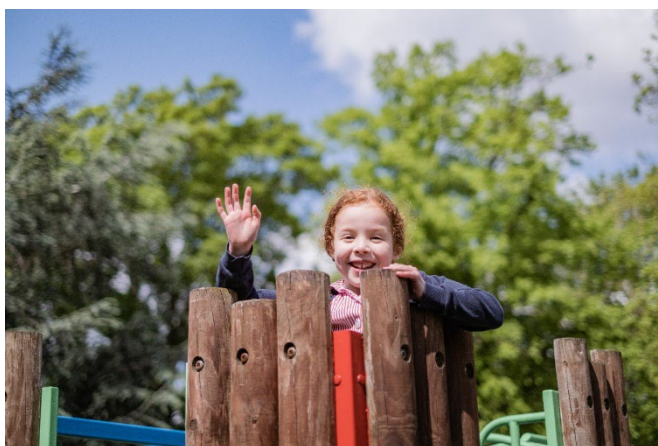
Your daughter will bring home a username label in her Home Planner. This will give her access to the following online learning apps:

1. **DoodleMaths**
DoodleMaths creates a personalised work programme based on your daughter's individual strengths and areas for development. It aims to build confidence and ability in maths through short, regular practice sessions.
2. **NumBots**
NumBots focuses on helping children improve their understanding of number bonds, addition and subtraction — key foundations in maths.

These platforms are designed to support your child's learning in a fun and interactive way. However, **they are not compulsory homework activities** — simply an optional resource to use at home.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY AND DOWNTIME

The girls at the Pre-Prep are still very young and it is important that they are able to continue to develop their creativity and imagination through play. Research shows that children develop so many lifelong skills through play - both on their own and with family, and we firmly believe this at the Pre-Prep. The girls have very long days at school and it is important that they have 'downtime' at home, time to play and that they have a good night's sleep, so as to be refreshed and ready for the new school day.



RECEPTION COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE & LITERACY



HOW TO HELP YOUR DAUGHTER WITH READING

Do talk about the book and read it to your daughter first. Here are a few suggestions for “warming-up” the text:

- Talk about the front cover:
- What do you think it might be about?
- What do you think it might be called?
- What do you think will be in the story?
- What do you think might happen?

Let her look through the book and get a sense of the story through the pictures. Ask her to predict what will happen next before turning the page.

Read the book to your daughter, encouraging active participation through comments and picture study.

Re-read the book suggesting she joins in whenever she wants to.

Encourage her to look at and discuss the pictures, and sometimes stop before a predictable word and ask what it might be.

Encourage your daughter to read some of it independently. Take it in turns to read a page once she is familiar with the text.

Always encourage the use of expression when reading. After reading a book, ask her questions about the story to help develop reading comprehension.

Please do not cover up the pictures; they are very important, especially in the early stages of reading.

LETTERWORK AND WRITING

This is taught as letter, word and sentence based activities. We teach the alphabet as a whole sequence and concentrate on the sounds of the letters while also identifying the letter name.

We also use letter mazes and dotted line patterns to help develop the fine control necessary for writing individual letters. Gross motor development, which is equally important, is facilitated through a range of games and PE activities.

Pencil grip is very important and we encourage the correct holding of pens, pencils and coloured pencils. We have triangular pencils in school to encourage use of the correct grip and occasional use of pencil grips.

We encourage the girls to be independent in their writing and to use their growing phonic knowledge to help them “sound out” words. If they are confident with the sound and image of each letter they are able to write phonetically more successfully. This encouragement to ‘have a go’ continues throughout the year.

As the year progresses and their reading and writing skills develop, we introduce and encourage the correct spelling of a basic range of vocabulary. A list of reading and writing words will be sent home in the Spring Term.

At all times, the girls are encouraged to be aware of and use the vocabulary on display, in books and in the classroom.

As with reading, the more confident a girl feels in her own ability, the more successful she is likely to be. Praise and encouragement at all stages are very important to keep the children motivated.

PHONICS

At the Pre-Prep we use a phonic scheme called Little Wandle. This complete phonics programme draws on the latest research into how children learn best; how to ensure learning stays in children’s long-term memory and how best to enable children to apply their learning to become highly competent readers.

If you would like to find out more about this scheme or how to support your daughter to learn phonics please visit the website www.littlewandle.org.uk . If you click on the ‘for parents’ tab this will give you the opportunity to access helpful video clips, and factsheets

HANDWRITING

The Pre-Prep uses the Hemispheres Think Write scheme to teach handwriting. The girls in Reception will be taught how to form letters using the pre-cursive method (e.g. all the letters start in the same place) and the girls will then be taught to join the letters together. The scheme teaches children the cognitive, motor and visual skills that support the distinct qualities of handwriting:

- legibility,
- form (cursive) size,
- spatial placement,
- directionality.

Beginning with the 'Getting Ready for Writing' stage (focusing on linking groups of letters to animals), movement and games establish the necessary cognitive framework, building the eye hand co-ordination and pre writing skills. From there, letter formation is the focus before moving on to building the knowledge for joining letters together to establish automatic writing and to be able to write with fluency and speed.

During the school year there is also the opportunity for parents to attend parent's evenings. Parents then have the opportunity to meet their child's subject and Form teachers and to discuss your daughter's progress and attainment in greater depth.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics in Reception is based on developing a strong foundation of mathematical language, skills and concepts on which the girls can build as they get older.

We concentrate on developing the basic concepts and use a wide range of practical and more formal activities to introduce and reinforce work on numbers, focusing on 1-10 in depth and then on to 20, colours, shapes, patterning, sorting, matching, sequencing and estimation, addition and subtraction and the beginning of multiplication and division.

The focus is on observation, questioning, problem solving, independent recording and learning through games and creative activities. In Year One we build on the knowledge the girls have gained in Reception and our emphasis is on applying this knowledge. We do this through practical activities and games, in addition to more formal methods. The girls often work in pairs and in groups. Each Maths lesson starts with a mental maths session and ends with a review of the work covered.

How to help your daughter with mathematics:

- Counting songs, poems and story books
- Compare sizes of everyday objects i.e. shoes, clothes, toys.
- Look at shapes in the environment i.e. 2D, 3D, squares, triangles, rectangles and circles.

Encourage your daughter to recognise them in buildings and in everyday items.

- Count with your daughter – stairs, toys, household items – cutlery, crockery, odd socks!
- Use the number card in the book bags to reinforce the correct concept and sequence.
- Play board games and simple card games ie. Snap, Uno, Snakes and Ladders
- Please encourage the correct formation of numbers at all times.

LEARNING ENRICHMENT

Learning Enrichment is given on the recommendation of the Class Teachers, and in liaison with parents, for girls requiring individual work. This may involve specific support or extension activities for the girls. The basic curriculum areas covered are Reading, Writing, Spelling, Maths and ML sessions for girls who are multi-lingual and where spoken English may not be their first language at home. The sessions are specific to their needs, multi-sensory so that the girls are able to use a combination of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches to reinforce their learning.

The Learning Enrichment Department ('LED') can provide short bursts or longer periods of assistance, either within class or, where necessary, the girls can receive strategies outside the classroom in groups or individually.

The staff are available to advise on the different activities and to discuss the progress of the girls. The staff are also available on Parents' Evening.

MULTILINGUAL PROFICIENCIES ('ML')

In addition to our comprehensive French teaching programme at the Pre-Prep, we actively celebrate the ethnic diversity and other additional languages spoken by our pupils and their families.

A form for girls new to the school is given to parents, so that you can let us know whether your daughter has access to a language other than English in your family. We encourage parents to fully develop their daughter's ability in their home language both as a lifelong skill and to support acquisition of English. We also provide opportunities for pupils to share their experiences of world cultures and their additional language skills.

The Pre-Prep has a specialist support for our multilingual girls who are developing their English as an additional language for learning. This may take place in the classroom or in a small group environment. Class teachers, together with the LED, identify pupils for whom this is appropriate. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you may have with class teachers, the French teachers or the LED teachers.



RECEPTION PLAN

AUTUMN TERM

TOPIC: Here I Am

A science and language-based topic where we shall be examining:

- our bodies and senses
- feelings
- families
- home
- being healthy

It will also involve planning, preparing and organising a picnic for all families to attend.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Autumn 1: Special People. What makes people special?

Christianity, Islam and Judaism

Autumn 2: Christmas. What is Christmas?

Christianity

PE: (1 & 2)

Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS)

Across the year the children will be challenged with a range of games and activities that primarily are fun and engaging hence developing positive associations with PE and full participation from all students. The activities will focus on age appropriate physical development, fundamental movement skills and perceptual gross motor skills under the theoretical umbrella of physical literacy. Lessons will be theme based, e.g. jungle book, Harry Potter, space invaders, Christopher Robin and will include a mix of locomotor, manipulate and stability exercises and will be mainly based in the Discovery and Developing Phases.

The key fundamental skills can be grouped into three main areas, stability, locomotor and manipulative.

Through structured planning we will use these three development areas to target and develop the following based on the EYFs curriculum outcomes) as well as teamwork and communication skills.

Communication and language:

- Listening
- Following instructions
- Developing confidence in expressing themselves

Personal, social, and emotional development:

- Be able to work and respect others
- Developing social skills in group situations
- Developing a positive sense of themselves
- Developing confidence in their own abilities

Locomotion: moving safely, body control, moves freely with confidence and experiments different ways of moving (slithering, shuffling, rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding and hopping), travel over and through equipment, adjusting speed and direction to avoid obstacles.

Stability: (body rolling, dodging, balancing, bending, stretching, twisting, turning, swinging, stopping, rocking, push, pull, rise/stretch, collapse, sway, spin, shake), squats with steadiness to rest/listen and rises to feet without using hands, climbs confidently on equipment, mounts a step using alternate feet, stands momentarily on one foot when shown, jumps off an object and lands appropriately.

Manipulation: Manipulative skills (underarm send, overarm send, catching a large ball, stopping, kicking a large ball, striking, punting, dribble with feet, dribble with hands, volleying), shows preference for a dominant hand, uses equipment with one hand, control when pushing, patting, throwing, throwing, catching and kicking a ball/object.

Introduction to Gymnastics:

Pupils will be introduced to basic gymnastics shapes and movements which will build on the FMS:

- Balancing skills, body shapes, travelling actions, confidence building activities & other gymnastic elements.
- Understand and perform gymnastics related warm up.

Cool Down activities:

- Calming, quietening and relaxing activities.
- Lying quietly, gradually contracting & relaxing muscles, 'Sleeping Lions'.
- Yoga, guided meditation

FRENCH (all terms)

French is taught 'in immersion' from Reception. All girls have three 35-minute lessons per week: French groups, French singing and French games. The focus is on developing speaking, listening and comprehension skills.

In groups, new language is introduced using pictures, mimes, games, role-plays, puppets, toys or books. In addition, the girls also learn a variety of fun topic songs and traditional nursery rhymes during singing lessons. Finally, French games are an opportunity to learn a range of physical activities and PE style games which support their understanding of the language and ability to follow instructions. During the Spring Term, each Reception class will present a French assembly.

The Reception topics are: greetings, colours, parts of the body, animals, food, numbers to 30, classroom instructions and days of the week.

MUSIC (all terms)

Music is delivered through half class curriculum lessons and whole class singing lessons. In Reception, the girls begin the development of basic musical skills, which will continue throughout the Foundation stage and beyond. The Music curriculum is closely linked to other curriculum areas, with whole class singing repertoire based upon the topics the pupils are learning about each term. The girls will build up a repertoire of songs, listen to a variety of music and respond to it through movement and discussion. They will also learn how to play different percussion instruments and explore ways of playing them in relation to the elements of music. The girls will improvise and compose in response

to a variety of stimuli such as stories, poems or pictures where they are encouraged to represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through music.

In the Autumn Term, activities include a Nativity performance and participation in the Carol Service, to which all parents are welcome. Later in the year, music performances centre around Easter celebrations and Founder's Day.

AUTUMN EVENTS

PICNIC	2.00-3.00pm Monday 15 September
PARENTS' EVENING	4.00 – 6.00pm Tuesday 30 September
	5.00 – 7.00pm Wednesday 8 October
MATHS WEEK	13 - 17 October
NATIVITY PLAY	9.15am Tuesday 9 December
	9.15am Wednesday 10 December
CAROL CONCERT	2.00-3.00pm TBC Vaughan Williams Auditorium



SPRING TERM

TOPIC: Walking in the Jungle

A science and creativity based topic involving jungles and woodlands for investigation into plants and wildlife. It will also be the theme for creative story writing, art and music activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Spring 1: Celebrations. How do people celebrate?

Islam and Judaism

Spring 2: Easter. What is Easter?

Christianity

PE: (1 & 2)

Fundamental Movement Skills Continued:

Continuation of the development of the FMS and lessons will still be theme based and cover a wide range of skills. This term these skills will start to be consolidated.

Introduction to Gymnastics Continued and an Introduction to Movement to Music:

Pupils will continue developing their basic gymnastics shapes and movements and begin to apply to short routines while continuing with the British Gymnastics Award Scheme Level 7&8. They will also begin exploring movements to music.

Swimming: Girls will be invited to visit the pool at JAGS to meet their swimming teachers and to see where their swimming lessons will take place and familiarise themselves with the routines for lessons. Through structured planning we will use these three development areas to target and develop the following based on the EYFs curriculum outcomes, as well as teamwork and communication skills.

SPRING EVENTS

BOOK WEEK

Week beginning 2 March

PARENTS' EVENING

A week of in-school literacy events

4.00 - 6.00pm Tuesday 10 March

5.00 – 7.00pm Wednesday 18 March

SUMMER TERM

TOPIC: Under the sea and the seaside

This term we shall follow the Foundation Stage specific area 'Understanding of the World, which includes History, Geography, Science and Technology. We will look at holidays and travel through children's literature and creative activities, including music and art. We will look at beach and under the sea habitats and the creatures that live in them.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Summer 1: Story Time. What can we learn from stories?

Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism.

Summer 2: Special Places. What makes places special?

Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

PE: (1&2)

This term, pupils will continue to consolidate and refine their skills and begin to apply to modified summer games and begin to introduce the concept of winning and losing and the importance of taking part. They will also take part in a range of athletics activities which will prepare them for Sports Day.

Fundamental Athletics Skills:

- Throwing
- Running
- Jumping
- Preparation for Sports Day

Object Manipulation through Summer Games (tennis, cricket / rounders):

- Introducing object handling skills to move a ball over an obstacle (net) / make contact with a static / moving ball

Swimming: The girls start swimming lessons in the Summer Term. The most successful way for children to learn to swim is through fun and games, as they are an ideal way for children to develop and help to combine skills.

SUMMER EVENTS

FRENCH WEEK
CHARITY DAY
SPORTS DAY
FOUNDER'S DAY

Week beginning 18 May
TBC
TBC - Pre-Prep Garden
10.00am-3.00pm Saturday 27 June
(compulsory day for all pupils)



James Allen's Girls' School

Ages 4-18

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