

# Curriculum Information

J Group  
Year 1



st Chris  
2024-25



ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL  
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY

# Curriculum Information

## J Group Year 1

The Junior School follows a one-week timetable with a topic-based curriculum. Subject specific learning is, in the main, approached through the lens of the topic.

Below you will find a summary of the main subjects covered in J Group (Year 1) and the amount of time dedicated to them each week. The class teacher is the main lead for the subject except for those subjects which are led by specialist teachers, detailed below.

## Topics covered in J Group

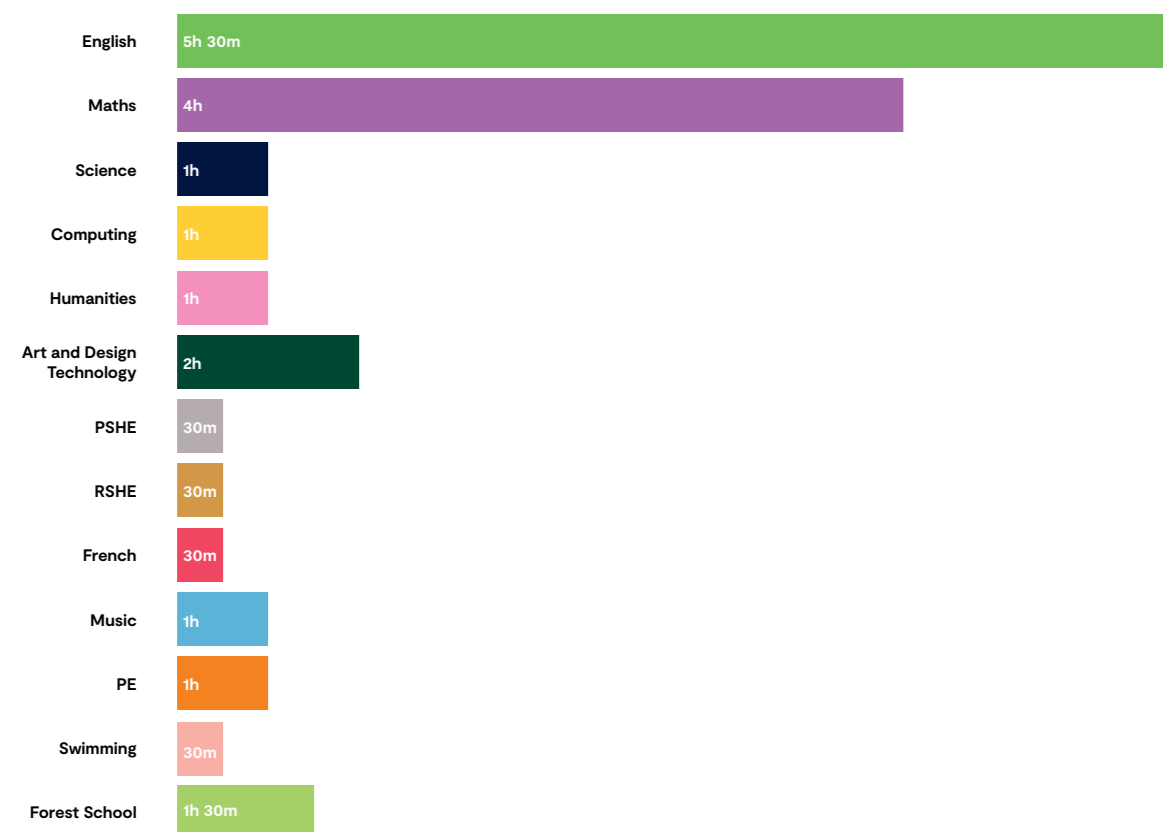
### Autumn Term: Around the World

This topic is a whirlwind tour of world continents and countries! From the icy landscapes of Antarctica to the vibrant streets of Asia, students in J Group learn about each continent's unique blend of food, customs, flags, identities, and religions. Learning focuses on a different country each week, as dictated by the student's interests and family connections.

### Spring Term: Fairy Tales and Castles

In this enchanting topic, we explore popular fairytales such as *Cinderella* and *Snow White*. J Group students also examine castles from a historic and geographic perspective, discovering who built the first castles in the UK and considering why some castles were strategically positioned on hills. As part of this topic, J Group have the exciting opportunity to visit a local castle.

### Subjects over each week



### Topics covered in J Group

#### Summer Term: London and the Great Fire

The initial focus of the topic is London as our vibrant capital city, from the River Thames to iconic landmarks such as Big Ben and Tower Bridge. The class then look at how life in the 17th century was different and the significance of the Great Fire of London and how it changed the capital forever. To bring history to life, we build our own houses from Pudding Lane and re-enact the Great Fire on the playground! To ensure students understand the importance of fire safety, we collaborate with a local Fire Station in an interactive session.



## English

Vicki Watt

5 hours 30 minutes



English covers a different range of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry texts each half term. Phonics is taught daily as an essential building block to reading and writing and key words and sounds are issued as homework to practice. Letter formation is taught and practiced regularly using multisensory techniques. Capital letters, question marks, exclamation marks, and full stops are taught as a first step in understanding punctuation. We aim for students to read daily in class, either as part of a guided reading group, lesson, or 1:1 with an adult.

## Maths

Vicki Watt

4 hours



Using the Power Maths scheme, J Group students cover a range of mathematical concepts through number work and problem solving. Students work on consolidating numbers to 10 in September, and up to 100 by the end of the year. This includes recognising, ordering, adding, and subtracting. Problem-solving includes shape, space, and measures and challenge work is often multi-step, encouraging critical thinking.

## Science

Vicki Watt

1 hour



J Group's study of science covers topics across all three strands: biology (animals including humans and plants); chemistry (materials and their properties); and physics (seasons). Through practical experiments and observations, students develop an understanding of the world around them. Critical thinking and enquiry skills are encouraged as students engage with hands-on scientific principles, fostering a curiosity-driven approach.



## Computing

**Vicki Watt**

**1 hour**



During computing, students in J Group work on core skills, such as using the school computer system and understanding how to use technology. Students also complete projects covered in our scheme of work, Switched on Computing. These projects include using programmable toys, video production, digital art, multimedia publishing, creating sound patterns, using data, and coding.

## Humanities – Geography and History

**Vicki Watt**

**1 hour**



In J Group, we combine history and geography within our overall humanities topic. In history, we use timelines and sources to explore when and why things happened in the past and learn about a range of significant historical figures and events. In geography, students continue to develop a wider geographical and locational understanding, studying human and physical geography, buildings on maps, and fieldwork from the early years.

## Art and Design Technology

**Vicki Watt**

**2 hours**



In J Group, art and design technology work is linked to the overall topic. Students are encouraged to use their imagination and creativity to design and make products using a range of materials. They experiment with colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form, and space to create artwork. The class also explores the work of different artists, craft makers and designers. By studying their work, the students learn about the differences and similarities between various practices and disciplines.



## PSHE

**Vicki Watt**

**30 minutes**



In PSHE (Personal, Social, and Health Education), we address personal well-being, interpersonal relationships, and the importance of physical and mental health. J Group focus on units which include: Media Literacy and Digital Resilience, Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing, and Money and Work.

## RSHE

**Vicki Watt**

**30 minutes**



RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) is an opportunity for students to engage in open conversations and activities. Through RSHE, students develop the skills to make informed decisions, build healthy relationships, and understand the importance of self-care. J Group focus on units including: Friendships, Similarities and Differences, Special People, Different Families, Body Parts, and Changes Since Birth.

## French

**Edel Davies**

**30 minutes**



Through games, songs, mime, dance and play, students learn key French vocabulary, linguistic structures and grammar. Classroom routines help students to consistently revisit and build upon previously learned language. Through a variety of engaging situational topics, students are exposed to grammatical concepts such as indefinite articles to express noun, gender, quantity, adjectival placement, adverbs, and relative clauses. The focus for J Group students is on understanding aural input and oral output.



## Music

**Martin Goodchild**

**1 hour**

In J Group, students explore long and short sounds and high and low sounds. Students in J Group also consider: what different instruments sound like; tempo and dynamics (such as making sounds loud or soft and fast or slow); and thinking about how we combine different sounds and instruments and the effect these combinations have.

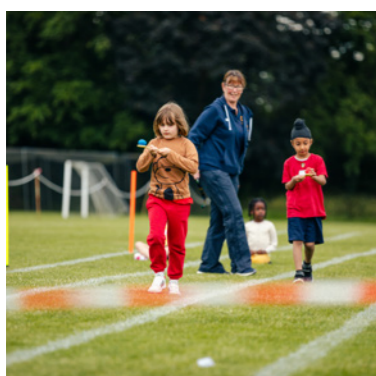


## PE

**Abigail Lester**

**1 hour**

Students in J Group focus on fundamental skill development throughout their PE lessons through fitness, yoga, creative dance, gymnastics, and mini athletics. Students experience simple modified running, jumping, and throwing activities. Throughout the sessions, they familiarise themselves with simple body movements and actions using different parts of their bodies and will express feelings, moods, and ideas in response to different types of music. Students will also explore, replicate, and improve the quality of their actions, body shapes, and balances on the floor and using apparatus.



## Swimming

**Jenny White**

**30 minutes**

In their swimming lessons, J Group students improve their ability to travel unaided through the water. Activities in each session are designed to develop the student's basic techniques for front and back travel (without aids) across a distance of 5m. Specialist swimming teachers work with students to build their confidence in deeper water and help them to jump in unaided. Students partake in an additional 10-minute "Aquafun" session at the end of each lesson. These sessions use a variety of equipment to complete structured games or activities, which enhance aquatic skills.

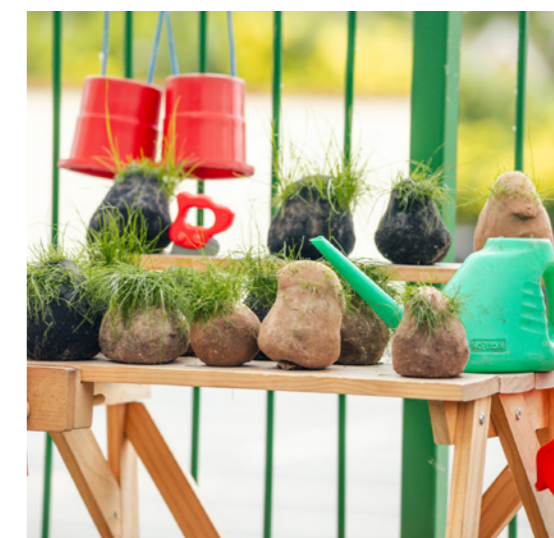


## Forest School

**Lydia Sommerville**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Students in J Group begin to consider the context of their surrounding environment and the great outdoors! The class begin to take a closer look at the environment and take on new challenges while remaining safe. Students undertake matching activities and treasure hunts, learn how to keep safe around sticks and branches, and practice tying a shoe lace knot. Throughout their Forest School lessons, J Group students are encouraged to think introspectively, considering "How do I feel outdoors?". They also build upon their understanding of fire awareness.



## What is *Forest School*?

Forest School at St Chris is a child-centred, inspirational process that gives our young learners opportunities to challenge themselves, develop confidence and increase their self-esteem through hands on learning experiences in a natural environment. Sessions are based on a fundamental respect for students and for their capacity to instigate, explore and maintain curiosity in the world around them. Most importantly, our students develop a deep and meaningful connection to the natural world and understand their place in it.

**St Chris is a progressive school with a sense of equality between staff and children, connection to nature through forest school and animals, small class sizes and individualised approach, lack of uniforms and the importance of prioritising arts as well as academics.**

Current Parents' Survey, 2022