

Policy: Curriculum Policy

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1. Purpose of the School's Curriculum Policy

- to define the school's curricular aims
- to define structures for achieving those aims.

2. Curricular Aims

Students need a wide range of attitudes, values, knowledge, attributes, processes and skills. The curriculum will emphasise the importance of:

- preparing students for the challenges of adult life, through a range of curriculum pathways
- the core skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT
- the lifelong learning skills
- the ability to acquire and apply knowledge
- the promotion of self-confidence and self esteem
- an appreciation of the need for adaptability and self – reliance
- the promotion of creativity
- the encouragement of tolerance.

3. Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum considers the end points that each qualification builds towards and considers what students need to know and be able to do and departmental curriculum planning is sequenced to allow the necessary knowledge to be acquired and built upon. The curriculum in every subject is designed to be more challenging than the national curriculum. This can be seen in subject curriculum maps and knowledge and skills tracker documents that evidence end points, and the skills and knowledge that students need to acquire, develop and demonstrate in order to be successful.

Our curriculum offers breadth and balance through all key stages. All students until the end of Year 9 study a broad curriculum that encompasses the arts, computing and technology, humanities and languages, alongside the core of English, mathematics and science. It is also broad in that students have a wide range of subjects to access within these umbrella areas – for example, within languages, they may study French, German, Spanish and/or Mandarin up until the end of Year 9.

In Years 10-13 our curriculum is broad in that it allows students to access a wide range of subjects, both academic and vocational. It takes notice of our local context and considers the needs of pupils. Examples of this would be the introduction of BTEC qualifications in Health & Social Care, a growth area for employment both locally and nationally, and BTEC Sport, as an alternative pathway to those that want a more vocational route to local colleges that offer a range of sports-related qualifications. All students in Years 10 and 11 are able to study a strong core of subjects, such as those offered by the EBacc and it is compulsory at GCSE to study Geography, History, Computing or a language (and it is possible to study for more than one of these subjects).

All students across all year groups also experience age-appropriate PSCHEE which includes religious education, and relationship and sex education. Through both the taught curriculum and our assembly and tutorial programme, we seek to educate our students to become educated citizens, to introduce them to inspirational thinkers and to help them appreciate the human creativity and achievement of others.

All students receive homework on a weekly basis in line with our school homework policy, Homework aims to increase rates of student progress and improve student attainment whilst developing independent learning skills and promoting responsibility for personal learning. It also aims to deepen student knowledge and help to develop mastery of knowledge, skills or understanding.

4. Curriculum Structure

Breadth and Balance

The school will achieve breadth and balance through:

- the core and foundation subjects of the National Curriculum
- a wide range of optional subjects at Key Stages 4 and 5, including those offered via technical and vocational qualifications
- the provision of a range of experiences beyond the classroom
- a variety of styles and approaches within each curriculum area
- enhancing the provision for all student groups, including for the most able and talented students, disadvantaged students and students with special educational needs and disabilities.

5. Relevance

In order to meet students' present and prospective needs, the curriculum will:

- develop and support appropriate learning pathways, including the further development of appropriate vocational pathways
- use teaching methods that allow all students to make progress and achieve success
- take account of students' special physical and/or learning needs
- build on experiences encountered by young people at home, the community and workplace
- be flexible, allowing it to address contemporary issues.

6. Coherence and Progression

The school will ensure that coherence and progression are met through:

- an agreed set of learning objectives or the understanding of a 'key question' for each lesson
- co-ordination of the skills and knowledge acquired, so that they are reinforced rather than repeated or contradicted
- careful transition between key stages, which is supported by assessment and reporting processes within the school
- encouraging continued education and training beyond Key Stage 4/5 with access to full and fair information, advice and guidance on career choices and further education.

7. Assessment

Assessment will:

- assist students through formative and summative feedback and the setting of personalised targets
- assist teachers in planning for and evaluating student progress
- provide information to parents and employers.

In support of these objectives the marking of work will:

- be frequent and regular, in accordance with the school's assessment policy (which includes marking and feedback)
- be positive and encouraging where possible, recognising personal achievement and excellence
- indicate how work can be improved
- use a consistent grading system which has been explained to students and parents.

and formal reports to parents will:

- be in accordance with legal requirements
- be issued regularly according to a published timetable
- Inform parents of progress being made towards targets, in addition to other relevant student performance indicators.

8. Teaching and Learning Styles

The school believes that varied teaching styles encourage effective learning.

Schemes of learning and/or other department documentation will be consistent between departments and will include the following:

- subject content
- teaching and learning methods
- resources and materials
- assessment opportunities
- examples of differentiated questions
- homework activities and tasks
- cross-curricular links
- special educational needs and disabilities
- the provision for the higher prior attaining students and for those that are disadvantaged.

9. Homework

Homework has a number of different purposes and refers to tasks given to students by their teachers to be completed outside of usual lesson time to:

- increase rates of student progress and improve student attainment
- develop independent learning skills and promote responsibility for learning with each student
- provide training for students in planning and organising time
- prepare students for new learning which has not yet been taught
- instil the importance of life-long learning and scholarly attitudes
- deepen student knowledge and help to develop mastery of knowledge, skills or understanding
- promote reflection on learning within lessons.

Homework will:

- be purposeful and support the curriculum taught in the classroom
- be creative and offer opportunities for extended learning outside the taught curriculum
- be devised to engage students in the lifelong learning process

- enable all students to gain recognition and reward for engaging in learning outside the classroom
- develop students' independent learning skills
- be differentiated to enable all students to achieve and develop their learning.

These steps will ensure that the impact of homework on learning is consistently positive, leading to additional progress.

10. Equality and Diversity

The curriculum will promote understanding and good will between people of all cultures, race, genders and religions and actively discourage all forms of prejudice.

The school will:

- develop and maintain links with young people and organisations in other countries.

Departments will ensure that:

- syllabuses include consideration of other cultures
- resources present a balanced racial and cultural perspective.

11. Management and Monitoring of the Curriculum

The Governors, Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department have specific responsibilities (as defined in the Governors' Committees and Delegated Powers Policy and the 'SLT Responsibilities' document) in the design, implementation and monitoring of the curriculum.

The intent, implementation and impact of departmental curricula, which are reviewed regularly by SLT, are found:

- i. in the subject curriculum maps
- ii. in the subject knowledge and skills tracker
- iii. through data and records collected from lesson visits and recorded on SISRA Observe
- iv. by regularly reviewing departmental meeting minutes which are stored centrally
- v. School Improvement Partner visit reports
- vi. in department and key student group Quality Assurance reports.