



CURRICULUM POLICY

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Within this policy 'we' and 'us' means the College.

1. THE CURRICULUM INTENT

- 1.1. Our curriculum is designed to encourage all students to challenge themselves throughout their five years with us, so that they discover their true potential. They will be taught a broad range of subjects; guided to make ambitious and logical choices; gain many experiences through trips, visits and collaborative learning; and have time to develop their understanding of their place in society, both locally and globally. Our intent is to develop the skills and teach the knowledge that will allow our students, regardless of their prior learning and background, to become well rounded and resilient young people who are well equipped for the world beyond College.

2. ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

2.1. Subject Curriculum

- 2.1.1. All students will be taught a broad range of subjects to enable them to experience a breadth of education that truly prepares them for future opportunities, experiences and responsibilities of later life. The team leader will consider the national curriculum, to devise a curriculum that has been carefully planned to take into account the prior learning of students. The Vice Principal responsible for the academic curriculum will annually review the range of subjects offered, to ensure they remain appropriate. A curriculum booklet will be produced which will outline the course content being offered in each year group. This will be published on our website.
- 2.1.2. Each subject's curriculum will set out the critical knowledge that will be taught for each age group, and the supporting skills that will allow students to demonstrate this knowledge. Thoughtful sequencing and pacing will be woven into the long-term plans for each year group, in order to develop understanding and enable students to connect new knowledge with existing knowledge. The breadth and shape of this content will be well defined by the subject leader and their link Vice Principal to ensure that it reflects both the rigor and coherence of the broader whole-school curriculum. Along with their teams of staff, team leaders will annually review the curriculum on offer as a result of our quality assurance process.
- 2.1.3. Subject specialists will update schemes of work to outline in sufficient detail the course content and resources for teachers to deliver successful lessons. Teachers will adapt these schemes to ensure they best meet the needs of their students in each group they are responsible for. As a minimum, each scheme of work and associated resources will be of sufficient quality that an Early Career Teacher (ECT) could deliver effective lessons. This will require that schemes are clear about what content should be covered, the key activities that will support learners to acquire new knowledge, and the assessments which will be used to check and develop understanding.

2.1.4 Covid Recovery

It is acknowledged that there are some gaps in knowledge and skills as a result of students learning remotely from home during two different lockdown periods. All teams have reviewed their curriculum and identified how they need to re-shape or sequence schemes of work in order to address those areas. This information is available in the subject curriculum adaptations Covid section at the end of our 2020 Transformation Plan. Team leaders continue to monitor how well students are coping with the pace and challenge of the curriculum in light of the fact that the impact of lost learning will not be addressed in one year and that study habits and resilience will take time to re-establish.

2.2. Years 7, 8 and 9

2.2.1. The team leader will maintain a Key Stage 3 curriculum that is distinct to that of Key Stage 4 to ensure that all students benefit from varied and engaging content that does not place too great an emphasis on the content and structures of exam boards. They will review long-term plans to ensure that the knowledge and skills learnt in Years 7, 8 and 9 form a foundation upon which the content of Key Stage 4 specifications will naturally progress.

2.2.2. The subjects available for students are Mathematics, Science, English, Modern Foreign Languages, History, Geography, Design Technology, ICT, Performing Arts, Art and Design, Religious Education, and Physical Education. During Key Stage 3, student performance is reviewed by teachers, parents and students regularly, in line with our Assessment and Reporting Policy.

2.3. Year 9 Options

2.3.1. The Key Stage 3 foundation will be appropriately challenging and seek to promote highly ambitious pathways for all students when they consider GCSE options in Year 9. We will work closely with parents and students to guide them through the choices. Options will include a range of applied courses and study support for students who would benefit from a less academically demanding curriculum. Students who would benefit from this approach, as identified by senior leaders, are able to access further advice from the Special Educational Needs team and careers advisor.

Senior Leaders will ensure that the proportion of students taking the EBacc is both appropriate for the individuals and reflective of Government ambition.

2.3.2. The final decision regarding option choices for individual students will be made by the College and will take into account resource availability, national imperatives, group sizing, and target grades where appropriate, in order to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum.

2.4. Years 10 and 11

2.4.1. The subjects available to students in Years 10 and 11 are outlined in the options booklet supported by individual student interviews and an Options Evening. The

team leader, in consultation with their link Vice Principal, will routinely explore available Key Stage 4 courses to ensure that those our students access are the most suitable.

2.4.2. During Key Stage 4, student performance is reviewed by teachers and students regularly, in line with our Assessment Policy and policies set by the examination board.

2.4.3. It is the responsibility of the team leader to ensure that all schemes of work support high quality teaching, link closely to key assessment points and prepare students well for the next steps in their education. The team leader working with specialist teaching staff should ensure that they are fully aware of any external changes that affect their subjects and discuss resource implications at the earliest opportunity with their link Vice Principal.

2.5. Challenge for all

2.5.1. Within the classroom the needs of each student will be reflected in schemes of work and the lesson plans written by teachers. There is an expectation that teachers will provide adequate scaffolding so that the knowledge and skills within the scheme of work can be fully accessed by SEND students.

2.5.2. In determining the structure of a lesson teachers will consider:

- the scheme of work and whether it needs to be adapted for a particular group of students given their prior knowledge;
- the level of reading material to ensure that texts are accessible to all;
- the use of assessment information to address areas of weakness and to further challenge students;
- how best to offer students advice on how to improve and to ensure there are opportunities for them to put this advice into action;
- specific information about individual students e.g. Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs) and EHC plans;
- the opportunities to develop independence, resilience, teamwork and leadership; and
- the role and expertise of teaching assistants or other support available.

2.6. Setting of students

2.6.1. Whether students should be grouped according to ability or in academically mixed groups will be determined by the link Vice Principal and team leader. Setting of students will only be considered where they would support stronger student progress for all abilities. If a decision to group according to ability is made, the creation of a single low ability group will be avoided. Students will never be grouped according to their behaviour or attitude to learning.

2.6.2. The criteria for placement in a particular group will be clear to staff, students and parents, and should always be based on objective criteria e.g. Key Stage 2 SAT

results, CATs data and/or Key Assessment results. We will usually only move student groups once in an academic year.

2.7. The most able

2.7.1. We are committed to offering a broad and challenging curriculum commensurate with the different talents and abilities of our students so that all can reach their full potential.

2.7.2. For those students who join us with the highest SAT (end of primary school assessment) or CAT (taken at the beginning of Year 7) scores (top 25% nationally) we will monitor their progress and ensure they continue to make strong progress. If students are not making such progress we will give support through our Client Services team, the use of catch-up after College, prep and intervention.

2.7.3. In addition, all students, whatever their prior attainment, can apply to become academic, music, drama or sporting scholars and engage in activities designed to challenge and develop their particular interests further. They will be assessed by teachers to determine their aptitude and commitment to these challenging programmes. The scholars programme includes mentoring, opportunities to access financial assistance to fund or partly fund workshops, extra-curricular activities or any service that we provide in order to extend and further develop students who have successfully applied.

2.8. Special Educational Needs (SEN)

2.8.1 Staff receive advice, training and information on how to support SEND students in accessing the curriculum and supporting progress. Work within lessons is differentiated and teachers will adopt different teaching styles in order to support students. Where appropriate, a teaching assistant may also be deployed to enable the student to access the curriculum and develop strategies for independent learning. Please read our SEN Policy, available from our website, for more information regarding how we support students who need additional help.

2.9. Prep

2.9.1. We value the work students do both in College and at home. Prep provides an opportunity for students to work independently, to research, to carry out specific tasks and to prepare themselves effectively for the next stage in their learning.

2.9.2. Prep may be required for the following day/week/month but students will always be given sufficient time to complete the work set. There are, however, occasions when work will need to be completed before the next stage can be taught, and it will be necessary for students to complete this work on the evening it is set. If parents or students are concerned about the amount of prep being set they should contact the subject teacher directly with their concerns.

2.9.3. As a guide:

- Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8, 9) can expect approximately 30 minutes of prep per subject per week.
- Key Stage 4 (Years 10, 11) can expect at least 1 hour of prep per subject per week.
- Key Stage 4 students will also be expected to do revision in preparation for exams.

2.9.4. To support a smooth transition for Year 7 students in the first term (until the October break), prep will only be set for English, Maths and Science, so that they become used to our Routines for Learning.

2.9.5. There are opportunities for students at the end and beginning of the College day (Mon-Thurs 8am – 5pm; Friday 8am - 4.30pm) to stay and complete work should they wish to do so. If a student fails to complete prep they will be required to attend a 'catch-up session.' If an after-College catch-up is set, 24 hours notification will usually be given; parents are legally obliged to ensure their child attends.

2.10. Literacy and numeracy

2.10.1. We believe that good literacy and numeracy skills are essential for students to achieve their potential and to function effectively as adults, as well as in the world of work. Students should be able to apply their skills both inside and outside of College. Therefore, these key skills need to be supported across the whole of the curriculum.

2.10.2. Teachers need to regularly review, modify and develop their teaching approaches, schemes of work and resources to ensure the resources they use are accessible for students and that technical vocabulary is taught and assessed for understanding.

2.10.3. Where resources allow, we will provide additional literacy and numeracy lessons to support those students who are working below the level that will allow them to successfully access the academic curriculum. These additional lessons may run as an alternative to other curriculum provision with groupings determined by us.

3. ENHANCED CURRICULUM

3.1. Subject offer

3.1.1. All subject areas will offer students a range of additional optional opportunities beyond the core academic curriculum. This will include for each year group a range of trips and visits, clubs and competitions that broaden and compliment the skills and knowledge they are learning. These opportunities will be shared with students at the beginning of each term, or annually for trips and visits, so that parents and students can plan for their involvement. Such opportunities aim to enhance subject knowledge by putting learning into context, creating new

contexts within which a deepening appreciation of subject knowledge can grow, and to enthuse and explore a love of subject among students for its own sake.

3.2. Electives

3.2.1. Outside of a core academic curriculum, we offer students through our electives programme a broad range of cultural, sporting and artistic opportunities that will give them the broader skills they need to be successful in the modern workplace. All students will, over their five years with us, opt for a range of such opportunities through the electives programme. An electives booklet outlining the range of culture, sports and academic-based courses will be published annually, ensuring that all students make informed choices from this compulsory aspect of our curriculum. Students will have some freedom in choosing the courses they wish to access, but must access at least one from each category to ensure a balanced curriculum over the academic year. Students will also access at least one 'compulsory' elective each year which is connected with our tutorial programme to give them an extended period of time with their tutor to look at age-specific issues.

3.3. Optional trips and enrichment

3.3.1. In addition there is an extensive range of optional trips, visits and clubs available for all students to engage with. Opportunities are also plentiful within the performing arts, competitive sport and the Duke of Edinburgh's scheme. Additionally, we promote the National Citizen Service summer programme with our Year 11 students. We invest in these enriching activities because we value the confidence, resilience, teamwork and leadership skills they develop. We are also determined that those students whose cultural experiences outside of College are limited, are not themselves limited by their personal circumstances. We therefore offer the Duke of Edinburgh's Award free to all disadvantaged students. We have a separate policy on trips and visits which should be read in conjunction with this one. Where there is a charge for such opportunities please read our separate Charging and Remissions Policy. Participation of trips and visits is monitored so that we can encourage those who are not fully engaging to do so, thus ensuring that all students have the opportunity to broaden their cultural and social development in this way.

3.4. Work-related learning

3.4.1. We provide students with Work-Related Learning (WRL) and each subject team has a champion who promotes WRL opportunities within the team and schemes of work. Priority is given to ensuring students receive appropriate information, advice and guidance while at College, particularly when they are making the Year 9 options choices and deciding on post-16 pathways.

3.4.2. The Careers Education and Guidance Programme is structured and is delivered in a variety of ways throughout a student's time with us. Aspects are delivered in the daily tutorial sessions and through compulsory electives. In Years 9 and 10, students are prepared to make their options choices with confidence and

prepare them for work experience respectively. Our expectation is that work experience is a compulsory aspect of our curriculum, and all students will take part. Students are encouraged to organise their own placements according to their future interests. Where this does not happen, we will organise work experience which the student will complete. Covid restrictions has meant that external work experience has not been possible for the past 2 years, but other opportunities such as a careers fair and on-line conferences and webinars with industry experts and professionals from a wide range of careers have been provided.

3.4.3. In Year 11, an elective takes place to allow tutors to support students in completing CVs and apprenticeship or post-16 applications. Events are also arranged, including careers fair and visitors from different professions and industries. Students are offered the opportunity of meeting with a senior leader to discuss their post-16 options.

4. PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC (PSHE) and RELATONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) CURRICULUM

For details of our PSHE and RSE curriculum please read our PSHE and Sex and Relationships Education Policy

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM

5.1. The team leader working with a specialist will implement the curriculum in the classroom through high quality teaching. They will:

- Follow schemes of work to ensure that all critical knowledge and skills are taught.
- Present learning with clarity, appropriate detail and sequentially so that all students are able to build on prior knowledge and make progress.
- Check students' understanding in order to address misunderstandings and encourage students to engage in discussion to develop their understanding.
- Ensure that opportunities to revisit learning are threaded through learning phases so that students embed concepts in their long-term memory.
- Set prep that contributes the end points that each scheme of work is working towards.
- Use assessment in line with College policy to determine effective learning and inform teaching.
- Teach subject-specific terminology so that students can write and discuss work in an academically fluent way.
- Demand high quality presentation of work so that students take pride in their work; where students do not meet these expectations teachers will address it.

5.2. Responsibilities for implementation

5.2.1. Vice Principals working with their link team leaders and all teaching staff are responsible for implementing this policy.

5.2.2. The Executive Principal is responsible for strategic decisions to ensure the curriculum is broad and balanced whilst meets the needs of our students. The Executive Principal will ensure an effective programme of quality assurance and development takes place to ensure that governors are confident that the curriculum is implemented successfully and achieves its aims.

6. IMPACT OF THE CURRICULUM

6.1. The senior leadership team will monitor the effectiveness of curriculum implementation through a quality assurance process that interrogates the coherence of delivery across each subject area. They will review the subjects' implementation with the team leader working with a specialist, so that the process supports development of a highly effective curriculum. Where a teacher might be teaching outside their subject specialism, the subject leader and their link Vice Principal will be responsible for addressing any gaps in knowledge that could affect that quality of their teaching.

6.2. In addition, we will use a range of measures to determine the success of our curriculum which are monitored and shared with governors, these include:

- Student attendance. If our curriculum is engaging, broad and balanced students will want to attend College.
- Student behaviour. If the curriculum is right for our students, lessons and other activities will be engaging and rates of reporting of poor behaviour and exclusions will be low.
- The quality of education observed by members of the SLT. If our curriculum is well designed and planned, lessons will be of a high quality and this will be shown through the grades the senior leadership team award for teaching.
- Student engagement in the enhanced curriculum. We will monitor student take up of trips and visits, the performing arts, competitions and clubs, ensuring that all students are involved in a broad mix of activity.
- The proportion of students staying in education, employment or training once they have left us. If students have experienced a curriculum with the College that has allowed them to be successful and enjoy their learning they are more likely to continue in education of some form.
- A strong positive response from our stakeholder surveys. We annually survey staff, students and parents, asking a range of questions about our curriculum.
- Outcomes. If our curriculum is broad and balanced whilst meeting our students' needs then they will be successful as demonstrated by positive Progress 8 and Attainment 8 measures.

6.3 The local governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by regular updates from the senior team and through discrete scrutiny panels to explore a particular aspect in greater depth.