



# Archbishop Tenison's

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

## School Policy 11 – the Curriculum

The Governors' Committee responsible for this is the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee. The person in the school who prepares the text of this policy for Governors and the Headteacher is the Deputy Headteacher (Academic Leadership).

This policy was reviewed in February 2019 and is reviewed annually.

### Introduction

Archbishop Tenison's Church of England High School is an 11 to 18 mixed comprehensive school whose purpose is to provide academic excellence for each person as part of a Christian Community. One of the principal methods by which this aim is achieved is the formal school curriculum.

### Rationale

#### *The Formal Curriculum*

At Key Stage 3 all pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum which includes:

- A focus on the core subjects of English, Maths and Science, each of which has an extra period in one of Years 7, 8 or 9.
- The experience of learning two Modern Foreign Languages.
- Good time given to both main humanities subjects of History and Geography – 2 periods per week throughout.
- 3 periods a week of Physical Education, 1 as a class and 2 as a whole year group
- A wide Religious Education which introduces them to all main religions as well as depth of thought in the context of Christian Theology.
- Building strong, practical foundations in different areas of Technology and Food Technology.
- Reaching a high level of competence in a short time in Computing.
- A particular emphasis on the Arts of Art, Music and Drama, with an additional Arts Option in Year 9 which also includes Photography.
- An introductory course in Year 7 in Latin and also in English Grammar.
- A well planned programme of Personal and Social Development, which is supplemented by occasional whole day events.
- Important, daily time with their Tutor in Form Groups, which includes a Year Assembly and a Whole School Assembly each week and is supported by the involvement of Sixth Form Mentors; this time is overseen by a Head of Year dedicated to this year group of 108 pupils.

At Key Stage 4 pupils have a strongly traditional academic curriculum with appropriate variations on that where needed:

- English and Maths are taught in slightly smaller groups over 4 periods a week, allowing for better support for less able pupils.
- Science is also taught in 5 sets, over 6/30 periods per week, with pupils taking mainly Triple or Double Science, with separate provision for those for whom this is not appropriate. Triple Science is taught to 1 set over 3 years. Core Science is taken by 3 sets in June of Year 10.
- Most pupils also take a Modern Foreign Language to GCSE, with a small number successfully taking two languages.
- A high percentage of pupils take either History or Geography, with some taking both.

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- The PE curriculum is well developed, with the opportunity for many to take a GCSE in PE in core time; a significant number do a Sports Leaders' qualification as an alternative; some simply follow a Core PE programme; all do 1 period of Games per week.
- Religious Studies is a popular, but compulsory subject: most follow a GCSE, with some taking the AS Level or a Welsh Certificate instead.
- The school's GCSE Computing course is well established and pupils respond well to it.
- Technology, and particularly Food Technology, are also very popular and successful subjects, at which pupils from across the ability range succeed to a high level.
- Drama has a high uptake and an excellent track record; Art has become increasingly popular and also a good record of success; Music has been similarly successful over several years – numbers fluctuate more, but it often attracts 20 pupils.
- The Business and Communication course is a popular option in which results are now improving.
- A course in Personal and Social Development is followed by all pupils through both years, with more of a focus on social issues and careers development in Year 10 and on preparation for exams in Year 11.

In the Sixth Form the school offers a very wide range of 30 subjects, mostly at AS and A Level. Take-up is high for Maths, English, the Sciences, History and Social Sciences such as Psychology, Economics or Business Studies. In Year 12 students can take a course which includes a double BTEC and re-taking either GCSE Maths or GCSE English, together with 1 AS Level. Strengths of the Sixth Form curriculum include the well planned Progression Period for all students each week, the focus on Enrichment and the wider opportunities for sporting and other extra-curricular activities. Over 100 students are taking the Extended Project. Others use their time to do the Duke of Edinburgh Award or benefit considerably from the Chartered Management Institute qualification in management.

### **Responsibilities**

- Governors have the responsibility of reviewing the curriculum annually through discussion of the proposed curriculum statement for the next academic year (in the Spring Term), through their visits to the school and their individual links with particular subject areas and through their monitoring of pupil and student progress and evaluation of public examination results.
- The Headteacher oversees the implementation of the curriculum plan and any changes to this in the light of current experience in the school or external requirements. He is responsible for knowing that the school's curriculum contains all that it should and for advising Governors on how best to fulfil their responsibilities for it.
- The Deputy Headteacher works with the Headteacher on the annual curriculum plan and makes sure it is fully staffed and resourced; he writes the curriculum statement and plans the school timetable. He oversees particularly the proper preparation for examinations and is the SLT Link for the three core subjects of English, Maths and Science.
- The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for developing the curriculum leads the work on reviewing the curriculum at Key Stage 3, including the planning, teaching and assessment of all subjects according to the National Curriculum in its latest form.
- The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for reviewing the curriculum has oversight of changes to GCSE and A Level syllabuses and the effect national changes have on school policy and practice – with respect to Progress 8 and other school published data, for example. She

also reviews provision for Disadvantaged pupils and relevant use of the Pupil Premium. She oversees publication of curriculum information for parents, principally on the school website.

- The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for developing learning coordinates the school's work on homework, marking and pupil responses to assessment of their work.
- The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for developing teaching ensures that staff have access to training for new exam courses and oversees the provision made for SEND pupils.
- All Heads of Department are responsible for the curriculum policy, planning and implementation in their own areas of the school.
- All Heads of Year are responsible for monitoring the effect of the "received curriculum" on the pupils and students in their care.
- All subject teachers are accountable for making sure the curriculum is taught to their classes, as set out by the department in which they teach and by the relevant examining body.
- The SEN Curriculum Leader makes provision for the needs of the SEND pupils within the school; the Lead Teacher for Gifted and Talented pupils does the same within her remit.
- Parents and carers are invited to a Year Information Evening at the start of each academic year which includes a briefing on the curriculum for that year; they are also expected to attend Information Evenings in Years 6, 9 and 11 looking ahead to a new Key Stage.
- Pupils and students take increasing responsibility for their choice of subjects on the basis of information and advice provided as they move through the school

## **Principles**

*Organisation:* because pupils develop at different rates and learn in different ways and because some subjects require a more linear approach to learning, both setting by ability and mixed ability teaching are employed at Key Stages 3 and 4. For the same reasons, the curriculum is delivered with a variety of different teaching techniques: whole class teaching, group work, individual research projects, reading, written assignments, oral work and field work. Within this context there is a further need for the work to be differentiated to enable each pupil to undertake achievable but demanding tasks.

*Assessment:* This requirement to meet the learning needs of the individual means that effective assessment is central to all that is undertaken in the delivery of the curriculum. Assessment serves several purposes, amongst which are that it provides feedback to the pupils on their progress; it enables teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching and to determine the further learning needs of their pupils; and it enables the school to report on the progress of pupils. (See also the Assessment and Reporting Policy Statement).

*Homework:* Homework plays an important part in the delivery of the curriculum. Research has shown that a well-constructed programme of homework can, over the five years of Key Stages 3 and 4, add the equivalent of an additional year's learning, thus enabling pupils to cover more and to achieve a higher standard of performance. Homework is also important in helping pupils develop self-discipline and time-management skills. (See also the Homework Policy Statement).

*Beyond the Formal Curriculum:* A school will be judged by the way in which it meets the needs of all its pupils. The formal curriculum and its delivery outlined above are central to the achievement of this aim. Also important are extra-curricular activities such as music, drama, sport, modern language exchanges, debating and fund-raising for charity. With regard to moral and spiritual development, assemblies and school services play a key role. Of equal importance is the hidden curriculum. Pupils

are as much, if not more, influenced by what they observe and experience as by what they are told. Thus it is incumbent upon all involved in the delivery of the curriculum in the widest sense of the word to ensure that they adhere to the aims of the school.

*Equal Opportunities:* Throughout this policy there are references to meeting the needs of the individual pupil and to enabling all pupils to have access to the curriculum. To ensure this happens the school works towards fulfilling the principles in its Equal Opportunities Policy and its aim of academic excellence for each person as part of a Christian Community.

**Review, monitoring and evaluation** occurs through the school's line and performance management processes, annual review of the Development Plan and examination results, as well as through the planning for the next school year prior to writing the curriculum statement and the new timetable. Governors are kept informed by the Headteacher and senior leaders of relevant national and local changes to the requirements of the school for its curriculum. These also inform decisions taken.