

Curriculum Teaching and Learning Policy

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The term curriculum should denote “*all the learning which is planned or guided by the school, whether it is carried out in groups or individually inside or outside the school*” (Kerr 1968). We understand that we cannot really talk about curriculum without talking about pedagogy. “*Knowledge of facts, ideas and concepts are important, but so too are, reflective thinking, values and attitudes and sensitivities and feelings.... The selection of content does not develop the skills and techniques for thinking, change patterns of attitudes and feelings or produce academic or social skills. These objectives only can be achieved by the way in which the learning experiences are planned and conducted in the classroom*” (Taba, 1967)

Similarly, we understand that effective learning is most likely to occur when: “*the learner understands herself as a learner, in other words is aware of her distinctive profile as a learner and is able to engage in metacognition* (John West Burnham)

So, when planning for such a responsibility, the crucial principles by which we are guided include:

Principles

1. The development of **outstanding teaching and learning** and an **outstanding curriculum** are interlinked, mutually supportive of each other and only achievable through collaborative planning
2. The curriculum should remain **broad and balanced** so as to future proof our students and provide them opportunities to develop their interests and strengths
3. The curriculum should be **coherent** allowing students to make connections between experiences and in doing so identify and develop transferrable skills and knowledge
4. The curriculum should ensure **progression**. This should exist within subjects and other experiences and should be vertically sustained
5. The challenge of curriculum experiences should be **appropriate** for all students whatever their ability
6. The curriculum should be **relevant** to all students. How do we connect our intended outcomes to the students in front of us? How do we get students interested in things they never knew they were interested in?
7. The curriculum should be organised and developed so as to deliver **Outstanding outcomes** and experiences for all students
8. The curriculum should take account of the national Curriculum and the reformed GCSEs and A Levels
9. The curriculum should enable the school to maintain outstanding performance in all accountability measures

The Year 7 curriculum is designed in the first instance to develop the basic skills in order to prepare students to make rapid gains in subject learning and understanding from Year 8 to ensure students are “GCSE ready”. The approach to teaching & learning and assessment draw the following curriculum elements together:

- Literacy and Numeracy: English and maths
- Application of literate and numerate skills across the projects
- Knowledge and understanding of key concepts in EBacc subjects
- Competencies including both practical and learning skills
- Ability of the student to articulate their learning experiences and how they have developed as a learner

The Year 9 curriculum is designed to accelerate subject specific learning through the deepening of subject content and understanding of the technical subject specific skills as well as the generic learning skills vital to the success of the student in those subjects. EBacc subjects start their 3-year GCSE course with the view of delivering most of the content and skills in Y9-10 and Y11 on developing ability to apply understanding & skills to more challenging, wider and less familiar contexts, as well as examination technique.

At every stage of curriculum planning, subject leaders and their teams will consider:

- the cognitive skills needed in their subject in order that outstanding learning takes place.
- a concept led approach to promote a coherent and progressive sequence of learning. This also, is integral to our new assessment approach (without levels) – see *assessment policy*.
- other subject disciplines which naturally link with their subject to promote transferrable knowledge, skills and the application of these to a wider context.

The students learn best when they are: interested and motivated; have an understanding of what and how they are learning; given activities which match & extend their ability; challenged & stimulated; happy, confident, feel secure and are aware of boundaries; able to achieve success.

The learning experience will be organised so that our students have the opportunity to: work individually, in groups and as a class; work co-operatively and develop social skills; engage in explorative talk where students make extended, thoughtful contributions; solve problems; be creative, analytical and able to evaluate; develop independence; use initiative; receive support; make decisions; develop their numeracy, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills; develop understanding of the process of learning so that they can confidently say what they need to do to improve.

To ensure that the teaching and learning practice across the school is securely outstanding and that as a professional group we continue to develop and improve, our teachers will:

- undertake a programme of CPDL that is evaluated against student learning outcomes and agreed teacher behaviours focused upon reflective practice and motivation to improve.
- fine tune resources, including the use of teaching assistants, and adapt teaching approaches to suit the individual needs of each student. This means a holistic approach to inclusion.
- plan learning to make the most of subject content but also to gain skills at the same time. This means merging the craft of teaching - pedagogic approach with curriculum development.
- share the very best examples of teaching in oracy, literacy and numeracy to develop deep subject conceptual understanding.