



Wychwood School  
OXFORD

## **CURRICULUM POLICY**

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**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents: Admissions Policy, Marking and Assessment Policy, Disability Inclusion Policy, Special Educational Needs (including Differentiation in Practice), Equal Opportunities, Careers Education and PHSE programme, Relationships and Sex Education and SMSC policies.**

### **Aims**

To promote the aims of the School by providing a high-quality education as outlined in the Mission Statement by providing a curriculum which, through full-time supervised education of pupils of compulsory school age

- fosters a lifelong love of learning and enables pupils to be well-informed, cultured, civilised and equipped with the skills necessary for higher education, the workplace and the challenges of life.
- provides a broad, balanced and relevant education and which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, and creative education.
- gives the pupils the opportunity to acquire numeracy, literacy and linguistic skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) leading to effective communication.
- provides continuity and progression and the ability to manage transitions between stages.
- nurtures individual pupils, from the most academically able and talented to those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including any with an EHC plan, enabling them to achieve at their highest possible level.
- creates an environment in which the whole person can flourish in a balanced way and where their talents will be recognized and valued.
- complies broadly with the requirements of The National Curriculum, while still retaining the maximum possible choice and flexibility so that individual programmes of study may be developed by pupils in consultation with their teachers.
- creates opportunities for self-expression and creativity, both in and outside lessons to build self-confidence, powers of expression and aesthetic appreciation.
- creates an environment in which pupils increasingly develop independence and the ability to take responsibility for their own learning and planning for the future, with levels of supervision and support commensurate with their age and stage.
- provides an atmosphere of mutual respect and support so that all may feel able to voice their opinions, ask questions and critically evaluate arguments, information and outcomes, as well as analyse processes and evaluate academic and personal progress.
- develops common sense and a sense of duty and responsibility to others, both in and outside school.
- provides a range of enrichment and subject-based wider activities to complement the main curriculum subjects.

- helps pupils to be adaptable and to solve problems alone or as a member of a team, using appropriate resources including technology.
- provides a framework for social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and fosters attitudes and beliefs that create good citizens preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of life in British society. (Please refer to the relevant sections in the departmental handbooks and the lists of assemblies and school activities for examples of where this can occur.)
- provides pupils with both intellectual challenge and a sense of achievement;
- enables pupils to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and learning skills which will facilitate further study;
- allows pupils to receive impartial, accurate and up-to-date careers guidance and preparation for university and adult life.
- enables pupils to understand the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

### **Curriculum Characteristics**

We recognise that to facilitate these aims, each student is entitled to a curriculum characterised by breadth and balance, continuity coupled with the opportunity to progress and develop learning, relevance and both curricular and cross-curricular co-ordination and development. Hence, the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities within the range of ability accepted at Wychwood, Oxford. Pupils' progress and achievements are monitored to ensure each has access to the curriculum in accordance with their needs and ambitions and taking into account their prior knowledge and experience. The curriculum for those pupils above the statutory school leaving age is designed to fit them for university, tertiary or other education and, coupled with the increasing responsibility and freedom offered as part of the boarding experience, to offer pupils a progressively independent lifestyle in preparation for life after Wychwood, Oxford. See Appendix A.

### **Supervision**

During lessons, pupils are supervised by a member of staff. They may be permitted to work in the library where there is a part-time librarian or cover staff on duty. During weekday preparation time a member of staff supervises junior and senior prep. During Saturday morning preparation time, girls can always contact a member of staff on duty in the library. At all times pupils are aware that there is a member of staff available in the school office or staff room.

### **Curriculum Review**

It is Wychwood, Oxford's policy to review the whole curriculum regularly by the SLT. Where it is felt to be appropriate, further consultation takes place with the heads of subject and a curriculum review committee investigates new proposals. A whole school curriculum review was carried out in the academic year 2020/2021 which sought to make changes which would allow the current curriculum to best reflect the aims of Wychwood, Oxford. This process of review and evaluation is embedded in the School Development Plan.

### **Differentiation**

A variety of teaching and learning approaches are used in order to suit pupils' different needs and to enable them to achieve their potential. Each teacher should recognise the difference in their learners and plan accordingly. Where specific differentiation is required for students with SEND expert recommendations from the SENCo are set out in students' IEPs. See also individual subject departmental handbooks and the document 'Differentiation in Practice'.

### **Areas of Experience**

We aim to give access to the following areas of experience – aesthetic/creative, human and social, linguistic and literary, mathematical, moral and spiritual, physical, scientific and technological.

Wychwood, Oxford has a very strong aesthetic and creative tradition, and it is school policy to promote subjects reinforcing this within the curriculum and in the extra-curriculum. Drama and Music are emphasised with every child in the school being involved at some stage of their school career both within the curriculum and in the extra-curricular Form Plays, Carol Service and Performing Arts evenings. Within the curriculum art, music, photography, textiles, drama, and the study of English literature in the core curriculum to GCSE are all taught subjects.

The ability of all pupils to communicate in English is assessed on entry and English is part of the core curriculum. Communication and linguistic skills are reinforced by the teaching of drama in the curriculum, the widespread uptake of Speech and Drama, and debating and Model United Nations in the extra-curriculum. Speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in the linguistic and literary areas of experience are further promoted by the presence of French, Spanish, and mother tongue languages. Latin and BSL are also available as extracurricular subjects or clubs. These are further supplemented by extra-curricular clubs, foreign trips and outreach days for local schools, where pupils are encouraged to use their language skills, while developing an appreciation of other cultures. English language is compulsory to GCSE to support our intention to produce literate and articulate users of English, whatever the mother tongue. Mandarin, Cantonese, Portuguese, Hebrew, Russian, Italian, German and Farsi are available where there is request for them as additional extracurricular tuition via external tutors. If a pupil has another mother tongue language, they wish to pursue the school acts to help them obtain such a tutor. EAL is a requirement for those pupils who need it to be successful in their other areas of the curriculum. Students may work towards ESL GCSE or IELTS examinations.

An understanding of mathematics is an essential life skill and so is part of the core curriculum to GCSE. The use of mathematical skills permeates the curriculum – physics, chemistry, biology, geography, computing and psychology use mathematics directly while other opportunities to use number and logic, to understand patterns and spatial dimensions and to develop and deepen mathematical understanding occur in art, textiles, history, music and PE. Pupils in Remove also have a mathematical thinking lesson every week which promotes logic and problem solving. Mathematics curriculum lessons are supplemented by extra-curricular clubs, trips and practical activity days to develop the capacity to think logically, and to understand number, three-dimensional space and other mathematical concepts essential to living in the twenty-first century.

Physical education is essential to a healthy and well-balanced life. PE is an integral and fundamental part of the curriculum for all years and school policy is to develop co-ordination and control skills, and to integrate physical activity into all pupils' lives, so that when they leave Wychwood, Oxford, it has become a necessary and valued part of each girl's lifestyle. PE also plays a vital role in teaching girls to evaluate their own performance with a view to improving it, which is an essential transferrable life skill. To this end, PE is also widespread in the extra-curriculum with sports fixtures and practices. Wychwood, Oxford girls sometimes compete at county level and where a girl shows a particular talent or aptitude then the school will support her in this. If a girl competes at a high level in any sport or activity not offered by the school, then the school will again support her aspirations and achievements in this.

In the scientific area of experience, we aim for all pupils to leave Wychwood, Oxford with the knowledge and understanding required to inform their interaction with an increasingly scientifically-based society while providing a platform for in-depth study of science to those who wish to pursue scientifically-based careers. To support this aim, study of the three main

areas of scientific thought, biology, chemistry and physics is part of the core curriculum to the Shell and pupils' curricular experiences are supported and developed through a wide-ranging extra-curricular programme of activities, both in-house and external, clubs, visits and field trips. Astronomy is often also offered as an additional GCSE subject. Pupils should also have an appreciation of the ethics and morality of scientific issues and be competent to evaluate scientific and pseudo-scientific arguments for themselves. In the technological area of experience, Wychwood, Oxford acknowledges the central role played by ICT today and recognises the need for all twenty-first century pupils to be computer literate. Computing is part of the core curriculum and knowledge, understanding and application of these skills can be developed further optionally thereafter. In remove students have a digital literacy lesson as well as their computing lesson in which they develop the necessary digital skills to become competent in the use of ICT. Following the 2020/2021 curriculum review and insights gained during the pandemic this subject will be added to subsequent years as they move through the school and form part of their timetable.

Pupils begin the formal study skills programme in the Remove (NC year 7). The programme is intended to promote understanding of time management, prioritisation and study methods appropriate to the individual and these skills are developed throughout the Key Stages.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education**

The school's aims, PSHE programme, extra-curricular and cross-curricular programmes combine to produce a universally permeating ethos. The school places an extremely high value on whole school assemblies which take place three times a week. The function of these is to foster a sense of community and to inform pupils on a wide variety of topics, particularly of a religious or moral nature, and to facilitate communication between different members of the school community. The content varies and can include collective worship, possibly including the singing of a hymn, presentations by different forms and by members of staff on topics set out in the "Thought for the week" program as well as worthwhile topical issues.

An appreciation of morality, courtesy and consideration for other people in the closer and wider communities is a fundamental building block in the preparation of all academic lessons and in all aspects of daily life at Wychwood, Oxford. Topical and historical ethical considerations occur naturally in a wide number of academic subjects and ethical debate is actively encouraged. In the curriculum SMSC is reinforced by the teaching of compulsory geography, history and religious studies in the Remove to Lower Transits, the compulsory short-course religious studies GCSE and history of art in the Study. The beautiful environment, history and culture of the city in which we live actively supports the whole ethos.

### **Personal, Social and Health Education**

All girls take personal, social and health education which is taught in the curriculum as timetabled lessons up to the Lower Transits and then as a wide-ranging series of forums and activities based on external speakers from the Upper Transits through the Study during prep time. The programme provides activities that are appropriate to pupils' educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills. This programme supports the school's aim of preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Within the programme, trained PSHE specialists and biologists teach Sex Education. See also the RSE policy which provides further extensive information on this. Please see the separate PSHE schemes of work.

All girls of whatever background and nationality are encouraged to understand the fundamental British values both within the curriculum, for example, in subjects such as business studies and economics, history and geography and outside the curriculum by means such as trips, visits (), Model United Nations, and school assemblies.

All PSHE whether taught as lessons or in the forum programme or as disseminated through other means such as assemblies and form times pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act: these are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

### **Careers Guidance**

Please see the separate Careers Policy.

The careers guidance offered is intended to help the pupils to understand themselves, to know their strengths, weaknesses, interests and aptitudes and how these would relate to the worlds of tertiary education or work. Individual impartial guidance is offered by the Careers Teacher and by the use of Morrisby Fast Tomato in the Shell in preparation for KS5 choices. Pupils are offered individual support from the Careers Consultant, the heads of subject and their teaching staff and each pupil has guidance from an appropriate member of staff during the process of choosing their GCSE subjects. This process is repeated when choosing A level subjects. Pupils are encouraged to study 3 courses in the Study. There is the opportunity to begin Study I studying for four KS 5 courses, and then drop a subject between the first half term and Christmas holiday of Study I. They are supported through application to tertiary education or work as appropriate by the Head of Wychwood Sixth form, the Deputy Heads, the Head of UCAS and extensions and the Careers teacher and this support will continue after the pupil leaves if required. Parents are always required to give permission for any subject choices or changes. As pupils move through their school career, they will be prepared for the future by use of work experience after their GCSE examinations and careers events like the biennial University Fair and the Careers Fair.

### **Learning Support**

Please see the separate SEND policy.

Wychwood, Oxford will ensure that subject matter and teaching methods are relevant and appropriate for pupils of the ages and aptitudes within the school. Pupils at Wychwood, Oxford possess a range of abilities and aptitudes from the academically able to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school would accept a pupil with an EHC plan if, in our judgement, the educational provision at Wychwood, Oxford would be appropriate. All pupils are tested on entry, their needs are assessed, and further action is taken, and information disseminated to staff according to the results of these assessments. See Appendix C.

EAL is provided for those pupils who require it. All pupils who do not speak English as a first language are assessed on entry and offered EAL if required. The school will also ensure that they have access to appropriate dispensations for public examinations. Please see separate EAL policy

Academically able pupils are identified by the academically able co-ordinator and the register is issued to staff annually in the Michaelmas term. See Appendix B

### **Remove to LTs (years 7-9)**

The curriculum is intended to give a broad-based foundation to all pupils as an introduction to the GCSE courses in years 10 and 11. To this end a common content is studied by all. This comprises in hours per week:

	<b>Remove (Year 7)</b>	<b>Inters (year 8)</b>	<b>LTs (Year 9)</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	4	3	3
<b>English</b>	3.5	3.5	4

PE	2.5	2	1.5
Biology	1.5	1.5	1.5
Chemistry	1.5	1.5	1.5
Physics	1.5	1.5	1.5
French	1.5	2	2.5
Spanish	1	2	2
History	1.5	1.5	1.5
Geography	1.5	1.5	1.5
RS	1	1	1
PSHE	0.5	0.5	0.5
Drama	1	1	1
Music	1	1	1
Art	1	1	1
Textiles	1	1	1
Computing	1	1	1
Study Skills	0.5	0.5	
Careers		0.5	0.5
ICT	0.5		

Sex education and careers may be delivered explicitly as part of the PSHE content (lessons, forums and workshops) as well as integrated into subject teaching where appropriate. In addition to this, an example of further careers input is ***The Real Game*** a role-playing life choices activity in careers lessons for Inters (Year 8).

### UTs and Shell (years 10-11)

GCSE courses will be followed in addition to regular PE lessons and PSHE workshops and forums

Following extensive one-to-one discussions with their Progress Tutor or other senior and careers staff, pupils will be encouraged to take a broad range of subjects which will maximize their choices at A-level.

### Core Subjects

All girls will take as core subjects\*:-

- English
- Mathematics
- RS short course GCSE: counts as ½ a GCSE
- A Modern Foreign Language (which may be their first language)
- Science (either Trilogy or three separate sciences)
- An Humanity
- and other subjects as their timetable allows,

Those wishing to study triple award science (separate sciences) must indicate this as one of their choices.

Those intending to study English at A-Level need to be aware that at Wychwood, Oxford this is English Literature and therefore they must opt for English Literature at GCSE in preparation.

There are also timetabled games periods

\* In some exceptional cases where a pupil has particular educational needs, for example a specific learning difficulty, it may be decided that she will be better served by a tailored programme that does not include one or more of our core subjects. Such decisions are made in collaboration with the pupil, their parents or guardians, the SENDCo, the pupil's subject teachers, form and progress teachers, the Head, and Deputy Heads.

### Option Subjects

Geography ) Humanities  
 History ) (at least one)  
 Art  
 Drama\*  
 English Literature  
 French  
 Music  
 Photography  
 P.E.\*  
 Psychology  
 Science (triple award)  
 Spanish  
 Textiles  
 Computing  
 Astronomy (some years only)

\* Dependent on numbers

The blocks are organised differently each year, based on pupil' preferences as indicated in initial interviews with staff. Once these are set it is only possible to change subjects in the context of existing blocks.

Sometimes additional subjects are offered where they would provide the best grounding for a pupil e.g., Pearson's functional skills courses

### **Notes:**

- English, mathematics and option subjects have three hours a week each at GCSE.
- Double Award Science is usually covered on 4.5 hours (1.5 hours per science) a week and triple award on 7.5 hours (2.5 hours per science) at GCSE.
- Short course RS has 1 hour a week.
- Residential Field Work forms an integral part of Key Stage 4 in some subjects, for example, the annual Geography expedition to a Field Work Centre, plus a French Trip and a Spanish Trip. Pupils are expected to attend these if they study these subjects
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award is also available.
- An introduction to an HPQ is offered after GCSE examinations have been taken in the summer term of the Shell year and pupils have the opportunity to go on and complete an HPQ.

### **Post 16**

All students will have the opportunity to follow a broad-based curriculum, according to their choice of KS5 subjects, with a wide range of extra-curricular activities. (See lists of School Activities and Study Extension Programme). All Study I take part in the Wychwood, Enterprise Program. They are also encouraged to make appropriately supervised use of the wide range of cultural and sporting facilities within easy reach in Oxford City and to

undertake voluntary community service. A-Level and other level 3 KS5 qualification subjects are taught on 5 hours a week.

The subjects offered at A-level are:

- Art
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Drama (subject to numbers)
- Economics
- English Literature
- Film Studies
- French
- Geography
- History
- History of Art
- Mathematics
- Further Mathematics
- Music
- Textiles
- PE
- Photography
- Physics
- Politics
- Psychology
- RS (Philosophy and Ethics)
- Sociology
- Spanish
- 
- Textiles
- BTEC Business

Other modern languages may be taken by private arrangement.

All pupils in the study take a compulsory course in Research methods during the first term of Study I. Here they develop research skills which will help their KS5 studies and also allow them to go on and undertake an extended project qualification if they wish to during the remainder of the year.

### **Concerns and Complaints.**

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the pupil's Progress Tutor, and then with the Deputy Head, Academic or the Head.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, on a regular basis. The Head will report to the Governing Body on the progress of the policy and will recommend any changes.



## **APPENDICES**

These appendices are intended to give a brief indication of how Wychwood, Oxford achieves the aims of its curriculum policy.

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **Breadth and Balance**

We present a broad and balanced curriculum at all ages which incorporates these elements of learning:

- the development of knowledge
- the understanding of concepts
- the acquisition of skills
- the ability to apply these elements in a variety of circumstances
- the opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress.

#### **Continuity and Progression**

We will structure the curriculum in such a way as to allow for effective continuity and development through systematic co-ordination of key aspects within each area of study. Schemes of work will acknowledge and develop work covered in previous years. In the Lower Transits and the Shell, the process of choosing GCSE or KS5 level subjects is explained to the whole year group by the Deputy Head, Academic and the Head who also speak to the parents at the annual parents' meeting. Pupils are offered individual support from the careers department and the heads of subject. Each pupil has guidance from an appropriate senior teacher during the process of choosing their GCSE subjects and again when choosing their A level subjects. Extended Project Qualifications are introduced to the whole year group through a set of compulsory lessons in the first term of Study I on research methods. Pupils are then given the opportunity to continue with an individual EPQ project and supported through this by supervision from the Head of UCAS and extension. As pupils approach the end of their school career, they will be prepared for the future. They are supported through application to tertiary education or work as appropriate and this support will continue after the pupil leaves if required. Please see the separate Careers Policy.

#### **Cross-Curricular Co-Ordination and Development**

It is school policy that departments work together to promote the acquisition, development and application of skills and knowledge. These should include skills in speaking, listening, literacy, numeracy and higher order thinking skills such as evaluation and analysis as well as practical, creative and imaginative skills. Where specifications have common or mutually reinforcing material, departments should aim to co-ordinate their teaching so that the overall programme of study for the pupils is coherent and enhanced by the co-operation.

#### **Monitoring**

Monitoring takes place formally by means of marking, assessment and reporting to parents and informally by supervision by progress tutors. Pupils can be placed "on report" if the staff feel this would be helpful in enabling progress. The system of academic alphas and majors provides a powerful motivational tool in encouraging progress

## **Appendix B**

### **SEND and Academically Able**

After the initial assessment, the SENDCo co-ordinates the production of individual summaries of all relevant Educational Psychologist's reports together with recommendations for the teaching and learning for each girl. The SENDCo in conjunction with the pupil and her parents or guardians develops an Individual education plan for that pupil. This information is then disseminated to the teaching staff who implement and support the pupil as advised. All staff are required to read and act on advice provided by the SENDCo. The SENDCo also monitors the progress and development of all pupils on the SEND register and uses the outcomes of this to plan further provision. All learning support is chargeable to parents.

Academically able pupils are identified by the academically able Co-ordinator from a variety of data, including, baseline testing results, school examination results and departmental recommendations. The register is issued to staff annually in the Michaelmas term and staff are expected to review it at these times and to record those pupils in their mark books. In the classroom staff are expected to teach such pupils with due consideration of their needs and outside the classroom, these pupils are supported by the Lee Club and the Acorns Club. Able and talented pupils in areas other than academic work will be supported in the development of their talents both within and outside the classroom, according to their individual needs.

For most subjects the school policy is that subjects are not set. However, English is divided from the UTs dependent on whether the girls are doing English Language and English Literature; mathematics is set by attainment from the Inters (Year 8), and biology, chemistry and physics are taught as separate classes depending on whether a pupil has opted for triple science or trilogy science from the UT onwards. This is done to ensure that all pupils can access the curriculum requirements in these subjects at a level that suits their needs and aptitudes.