

## Curriculum Policy

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**WYCHWOOD**

SCHOOL • OXFORD

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:** *Admissions Policy, Marking, Assessment and Feedback 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 of the school

*We aim for academic excellence through creativity of thought by providing education of the highest quality in a well-rounded and happy environment. Our small size and family atmosphere allow us to achieve the best possible outcome working with each individual without intense pressure. We are deeply committed to producing kind young people with integrity, a strong sense of self-worth and independence of thought, able to leave school with the wisdom and courage to find their place and space in the world.*

### **Aims**

To promote the aims of the School as stated above by providing a high-quality 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, prepared and equipped with the skills necessary for higher education, the workplace and the challenges of life.
- provides a broad, balanced and relevant education 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, including the most academically able and 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 skills will be recognised 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.
- 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 pupil 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 School, 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 School, Oxford.

## **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.

## **Supervision**

During lessons, pupils up to year 11 are supervised by a member of staff. In Wychwood Sixth pupils work independently during their study periods but there are members of staff nearby. During preparation time a member of staff supervises prep. 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 School, Oxford's policy to review the whole curriculum regularly by the SMG. 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 major 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 School, Oxford. The next major whole school curriculum review is due to be carried out in 2025/2026.

### **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 and/or EAL, expert recommendations from the SENDCo/i.c.EAL are set out in students' IEPs.

### **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 School, Oxford has a very strong aesthetic and creative tradition, and these subjects are promoted 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, 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. Speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in the linguistic and literary areas of experience are further promoted by the presence of French, Spanish, and Latin (where there is uptake). These are further supplemented by extra-curricular clubs, foreign trips and visiting international groups. English language is compulsory to GCSE to support our intention to produce literate and articulate users of English, whatever the mother tongue. Remove (Year 7) and Inters (Year 8) pupils have a reading lesson every week in order to develop a love for, and confidence in reading.

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. There is an additional cost for external tutors providing language lessons. Pupils with EAL are assessed on entry and provision is as required. Pupils may work towards ESL iGCSE 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 (Year 7) and Inters (Year 8) also have a mathematical thinking lesson every week which promotes logic and problem solving. Mathematics curriculum lessons are supplemented by trips and participation in a STEAM fair in the lower school. Pupils have the opportunity to study for and sit the Pearson Extended mathematics certificate and/or GCSE statistics as part of the elective program. This, together with the UK Maths Trust Maths Challenge work allows for further stretch and challenge in mathematics.

Physical education is essential to a healthy and well-balanced life. PE is an integral and fundamental part of the curriculum for all years. Developing co-ordination and control skills, and integrating physical activity into all pupils' lives is seen as important so that when they leave Wychwood School, Oxford, it has become a necessary and valued part of each pupil's lifestyle. PE also plays a vital role in teaching pupils to evaluate their own performance with a view to improving it, which is an essential transferable life skill. To this end, PE is also widespread in the extra-curriculum with sports fixtures and practices. Wychwood School, Oxford pupils sometimes compete at county level and where a pupil shows a particular talent or aptitude then the school will support them in this. If a pupil competes at a high level in any sport or activity not offered by the school, then the school will again support their aspirations and achievements in this. An elective in functional movement is also available to assist and encourage pupils who find it hard to access PE and need further support and encouragement.

In the scientific area of experience, we aim for all pupils to leave Wychwood School, 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 biology, chemistry and physics is part of the core curriculum to the Shell (Year 11) 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. 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 (Year 7) and Inters (Year 8) pupils 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. Pupils all have access to a 1:1 device and these are used to enhance teaching and learning where appropriate. Pupils have access to a range of digital resources through Microsoft teams.

Pupils begin the formal study skills programme in Remove (Year 7). The programme is intended in the beginning to allow primary pupils to make the transition to the more independent aspects of study required at secondary school. The programme promotes understanding of time management, prioritisation, metacognition, independence and study methods and these skills are developed throughout the key stages.

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

The school's aims, PSHE and RSE programme, extra-curricular and curricular programmes support the delivery of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. 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" programme as well as worthwhile topical issues. Thought for the week co-ordinates themes explored in assemblies with tutor time discussions.

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 School, 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 Lower Transits (Year 7 to 9), and the compulsory short-course religious studies at GCSE.

A programme of compulsory Wigfield Digby Lectures and optional Oxford Pearl Lectures support this aspect of education.

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

All pupils take personal, social and health education which is taught in the curriculum as timetabled lessons. 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. All PSHE whether taught as lessons or as disseminated through other means pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act.

Within the programme, RSE is also taught and this aspect of the curriculum is delivered in the Hilary term as per the curriculum overview for PSHE. See also the PSHE and RSE policy which provides further extensive information on this.

All pupils 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, whole school events and school assemblies.

### **Careers Guidance**

Please see the separate *Careers Policy*.

Careers provision is available to all pupils. Pupils in Inters (Year 8) and Lower Transits (Year 9) receive one Careers lesson every fortnight, but it is also delivered through whole school events, visits and trips.

The careers guidance offered is intended to help 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 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 (Years 12 and 13). There is the opportunity to begin Study I (Year 12) studying for four KS5 courses, and then drop a subject between the first half term and Christmas holiday of Study I (Year 12). They are supported through application to tertiary education or work as appropriate by the Head of Wychwood Sixth, the Deputy Heads, the Stretch and Challenge lead 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.

### **Learning Support**

Please see the separate *SEND Policy*.

Wychwood School, Oxford will ensure that subject matter and teaching methods are relevant and appropriate for pupils of the ages and aptitudes within the school. The school would accept a pupil with an EHC plan if, in our judgement, the educational provision at Wychwood School, 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 A.

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 pupils requiring it, have access to appropriate access arrangements for public examinations if necessary. Please see separate EAL policy.

Scholarly activities and Stretch and Challenge are available to all pupils through standard differentiation in lessons and there are further opportunities available dependent on individual skills and interests.

### **Remove to LTs (Years 7 to 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	4	3.5
<b>English</b>	4	3.5	4
<b>PE</b>	3	3	3
<b>Science</b>	4	4	4.5
<b>French</b>	1.5	1.5	2
<b>Spanish</b>	1.5	1.5	2
<b>History</b>	1.5	1.5	1.5
<b>Geography</b>	1.5	1.5	1.5
<b>RS</b>	1	1	1
<b>PSHE</b>	1	1	0.5
<b>Drama</b>	1	1	1
<b>Music</b>	1	1	1
<b>Art</b>	1	1	1
<b>Textiles</b>	1	1	1
<b>Computing</b>	1	1	1
<b>Study Skills</b>	0.5	0.5	
<b>Careers</b>		0.5	0.5
<b>ICT</b>	0.5	0.5	
<b>Elective</b>	1	1	1

## **UTs and Shell (Years 10-11)**

GCSE courses will be followed in addition to regular PE lessons, and PSHE/RSE lessons

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 maximise their choices at A Level.

### Core Subjects

All pupils will take as core subjects\*:-

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- RS short course GCSE: counts as ½ a GCSE
- Science (either Trilogy or three separate sciences)]
- and other subjects as their timetable allows,

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

\* In some exceptional cases where a pupil has particular educational needs it may be decided that they will be better served by a tailored programme that does not include one or more 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
- History
- Art
- Drama\*
- French
- Music
- Photography
- P.E.\*
- Psychology
- Science (triple award)
- Spanish
- Textiles
- Computing
- Latin

\* All courses are dependent on numbers, but in the courses marked by an asterisk numbers are especially important.

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 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.

### **Electives**

For one lesson a week pupils study elective courses. Each course lasts for one term and is taught in most cases across the age ranges 7-11. Pupils in Shell (Year 11) will not study an elective course in the term before their GCSE examinations to allow for an additional revision period.

Electives differ every term and are designed to allow pupils to broaden their interests, study beyond examination specifications and increase metacognitive skills.

### **Post 16**

All pupils 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. All Study I (Year 12) take part in the Wychwood, Enterprise Programme. 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
- Classical Civilisations
- Drama (subject to numbers)
- Economics
- English Literature
- Film Studies
- French
- Geography
- History
- Mathematics
- Further Mathematics
- Music
- Textiles
- PE
- Photography
- Physics
- 
- Psychology
- RS (Philosophy and Ethics)
- Spanish



- Textiles
- Business

Other modern languages may be taken by private arrangement.

Research methods is available in Study I (Year 12) for pupils wishing to complete an EPQ or simply deepen their understanding of research techniques for their A Level studies.

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 of pupil progress across the curriculum**

*See Marking assessment and feedback policy.*

Monitoring of pupil progress takes place formally by means of marking, assessment, feedback and reporting to parents and by supervision by progress tutors. The system of academic alphas and majors provides a powerful motivational tool in encouraging progress.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Group, on a regular basis.

The Head will report to Board of Directors on the progress of the policy and will recommend any changes.

## **Appendix A**

### **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 pupil. The SENDCo, in conjunction with the pupil and their parents or guardians, develops an Individual Education Plan (IEP) 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.

Academically able pupils are identified from a variety of data, including, baseline testing results, school examination results and departmental recommendations. All pupils however should have access to stretch and challenge commensurate with their age, stage, and levels of attainment.

For most subjects the school policy is that subjects are not set. However, where two parallel classes are in existence it is often the case that one of the two is a smaller group where pupils have access to greater individual teacher help. Pupils will be placed in the class in which they will be best provided for.