



ST. EDWARD'S OXFORD

Curriculum Policy

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| Related external documents: | |

Purpose of this document

This Policy describes the principles of curriculum design and implementation at St Edward's. The specifics of courses and exam syllabuses and subjects offered will change from year to year, depending on demand, market developments and our professional judgement as to which courses are most appropriate for our pupils. All courses offered will meet the principles described here.

Roles and Responsibilities

The **Sub-Warden Academic** defines and manages the implementation of the curriculum. They are responsible for monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum (both in design and in how it is delivered) and managing a process of continuous improvement through the middle leadership team of the academic **Heads of Departments**. Specific priorities and actions are defined annually in the school strategy and action point documents. Heads of Department make the decision as to which exam board and syllabus they follow, in conjunction with the Sub-Warden Academic.

The Sub-Warden Academic provides formal reports to the **Education Sub-Committee of the Governing Body** every term.

The Education Sub-Committee of the Governing Body are responsible for approving the Curriculum Policy and scrutinising progress against the school strategy and action point documents as reported by the Sub-Warden Academic.

Overview

We offer an academically rigorous curriculum which prepares pupils to access courses at leading Universities. Our curriculum is designed to be broad and stimulating, challenging all pupils at a level appropriate to the stage of their education.

The informing principles of curriculum planning at St Edward's are set out in the Aims and Values of the School. In addition to these, the following principles are followed:

- To instil high academic expectations and standards;
- To equip pupils with learning skills essential to making academic progress;
- To engender in pupils a desire to seek, reflect on and use feedback so to strengthen areas of weakness and regulate learning and decision making;
- To encourage curiosity and creativity as part of a commitment to learning which will last a lifetime;
- To provide opportunities for all pupils to understand and practice leadership and service;
- To promote spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development so that our pupils can take their place as fully-rounded members of a tolerant society.

The Curriculum by Year

Shell (Year 9)

Pupils study a broad core curriculum. All pupils study Mathematics; English; Biology; Chemistry; Physics; Classics; Geography; History; Theology, Philosophy and Ethics; Physical Education; Music; Wellbeing, which incorporates PSHE and RSE.

All pupils experience Classical Studies through a wide-ranging course that encompasses both language work and civilisation topics. It is the School's expectation that everyone who has

experience of Latin will continue it during their first year and those without experience of Latin will have the opportunity to study it for the first time.

Pupils then choose five of the following: French; German; Spanish; Art and Ceramics; Classical Greek; Computer Science; Design Technology; Drama. At least one of these choices must be a modern foreign language. German and Spanish can be studied *ab initio* or with prior experience; French can only be studied with prior experience.

Pupils are taught in mixed-ability classes, which vary by subject. In Maths, the three Sciences, Classics, Modern Foreign Languages and Greek pupils are placed in sets dependent on their prior experience and ability.

Fourth and Fifth Form (Years 10 and 11)

Pupils in the Fourth and Fifth Form study ten subjects. All pupils take a core programme of (I)GCSEs in Mathematics, English Language, English Literature (except in exceptional circumstances) and either Double Award or Triple Award Science. All pupils take at least one modern foreign language GCSE. Very able mathematicians will take GCSE Further Mathematics as an additional qualification, taught within the timetable allocation for Maths.

Pupils then choose four additional options, which include GCSEs and Pathways and Perspectives courses (St Edward's School Certificate). Pupils may take a maximum of two Pathways and Perspectives.

Pathways and Perspectives courses are designed to provide greater stretch and challenge and to develop a wider set of essential skills than the GCSE equivalent. A range of assessment strategies are explicitly built into a framework of continuous assessment.

The details of the courses available are in the course guide, *Choosing your Middle School Programme*, which is updated every year.

All pupils have timetabled Wellbeing lessons, which incorporate PSHE and RSE, as well as a structured programme of talks and workshops. All pupils begin to engage with thoughts about careers and Higher Education options through 1:1 meetings with the Head of Careers and Employability in the Fifth Form.

Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13)

Pupils in the Sixth Form choose to study A Levels or the International Baccalaureate Diploma.

Pupils are required to achieve a grade 7 or A at GCSE or the equivalent in any subject they wish to study at Higher Level or at A Level. Exceptions to this requirement are at the discretion of the Warden.

The entry requirements for those joining the School for Sixth Form are detailed in the Admissions Policy and the Admissions Process published on the School website.

Pupils taking A Levels choose three subjects. Pupils may take four subjects by agreement with the Sub-Warden Academic. All pupils taking three subjects additionally take the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), and those taking four subjects may opt to complete an EPQ.

The details of possible subject combinations within each programme are given in the IB and A Level Course Guides, which are updated each year.

All Sixth Form pupils have timetabled Wellbeing lessons, which incorporate PSHE and RSE, as well as a structured programme of talks and workshops, including training for all pupils on being prefects.

Careers and Higher Education advice continues, linked closely to tutoring. All pupils receive further 1:1 interviews with the Head of Careers and Employability, and there is an extensive programme of outside speakers.

All Lower Sixth pupils have timetabled Service in the form of the Teddies Collaborates programme. This begins with a programme of induction followed by a local placement until the end of the school year. This culminates in a presentation evening where pupils reflect on their personal experiences. Teddies Collaborates also fulfils the Service requirement of the IB Diploma Programme.

Equal opportunities and differentiation

St Edward's is committed to making the curriculum accessible to all of its pupils as far as is reasonably practical. Entry to the school is defined in our Admissions Policy, which is applied in accordance with our Equality Policy.

Teachers plan lessons with due consideration of the needs of every child in the class, so that all can make progress and enjoy learning in the classroom and in the wider curriculum.

Further details of the support we offer to those with specific learning needs can be found in the SEND Policy. Support for those for whom English is not their first language is detailed in the English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy.

Tutoring

Every pupil has a Tutor who helps them to reflect on their progress in all areas of School life and to work towards effective outcomes. Tutors use information provided by subject teachers to guide coaching conversations and assist in improving decision-making inside and outside the classroom. A key aim is to provide pupils with a sense of ownership for their outcomes. Full details can be found in the Tutoring Policy.

Independent Study

School structures support pupils to continue their academic work outside the classroom, through dedicated prep time every evening; but we fully expect that pupils will need to find other times in which to work as well. Our aim is to ensure that pupils learn to manage themselves. Tutors support pupils to develop the skills needed to manage their workload. Support is also available through the work of the Head of Pupil Progress. We encourage all pupils to make use of the facilities in the Christie Centre for independent study.

On the rare occasions when they do not have a timetabled lesson in a given period, pupils in the Middle School are placed in Supervised Study.

Developing IT Skills in the Curriculum

The School's policy is that IT skills are best delivered within the context of normal learning.

In the Shell, Fourth and Fifth Form, all pupils have a school-issued and school-managed Microsoft Surface Pro device which they keep. This standard device includes management software to allow the devices to be controlled and monitored and is a standard setup to allow teachers to support pupils to maximise the benefit of having a device.

In the Autumn Term, Shell pupils take a Digital Literacy induction programme to introduce them to the core functions of their devices that they will require as part of the curriculum.

Devices are used in many lessons, but not all, and departments make a decision annually for each course that they offer as to whether they use exclusively devices in lessons, they use the device as a reference tool but all notes are on paper, or the device is not used at all.

All teachers are also issued with a Microsoft Surface Pro device. Regular training is provided for teachers to make full use of them in their teaching. Every teacher must be able to teach basic classroom IT skills.

The Wider Curriculum

The wider curriculum is as important as lessons in the classroom and we provide an extensive range of opportunities for all pupils, appropriate to their age.

Outdoor opportunities leading to formal qualifications include CCF and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Music, dance and co-curricular drama are a real strength of the School with external exams available to the highest levels.

The super-curricular, co-curricular and service programmes change every term, providing opportunities for every pupil, whatever their interests and aptitudes, to pursue a passion or discover a new one. Tutors support pupils in choosing an appropriate programme for them, and help them to reflect on what they have learnt from that activity. All of the opportunities we provide contribute to our overarching educational objectives. All pupils formally evaluate their participation in the wider curriculum twice per year.

The Super-Curriculum

A wide range of academic societies, talks and workshops are on offer to all pupils to enrich, extend and support wider learning, managed by the Head of Super-Curriculum. There is a rich programme of talks by outside speakers and members of staff. All pupils undertake extended project work, both individually and in groups, as part of the taught curriculum.

Monitoring, Tracking and Reporting Progress

The School provides regular information to parents through grade cards and reports which are published on the parent portal.

All teachers use a wide range of formative and summative assessments so that we have as full a picture as possible of the academic progress being made by each pupil. More detail on our approach to assessment can be found in the Assessment Policy and within each department's marking and feedback policy.

Regular grade cards provide information on progress. Each subject teacher gives a projected grade and an approach to learning grade and a short comment.

Teachers produce fuller written reports according to the Assessment Schedule, which is updated every year. Virtual Parents Meetings take place once per year for every year group from Shell to Lower Sixth and twice in the Upper Sixth. All parents have an opportunity to meet their child's tutor in person at the beginning of each academic year.

Tutors discuss the content of grade cards and reports with their tutees and write a tutor comment on most grade cards and all full reports.

Tutors are supported by the Academic Team in monitoring and tracking progress and the Head of Pupil Progress making appropriate interventions where necessary.