

THORPE HALL SCHOOL

Curriculum Policy

Curriculum aims

Thorpe Hall School is a non-selective day school. Our curriculum is designed to ensure all students make individual progress across the curriculum. Our Curriculum is designed to reflect our ethos and the expectations outlined in the Education Act 1996 which highlights the importance of students experiencing high-quality experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.

Our curriculum aims/intends to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all students that's coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment
- Enable students to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations including (but not limited to) speaking, listening, literacy, and numeracy skills
- Support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development – refer to our Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy
- Support students' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active as per our Personal, Social Health and Relationships Policy and our Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning in line with our School's ethos
- Ensure equal access to learning for all students, with high expectations for every student and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Have a high academic/vocational/technical ambition for all students
- Equip students with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in British society
- Provide subject choices that support students' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals
- Develop students' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment
- Provides impartial, up-to-date careers advice so that students reach their full potential
- Promote the learning and development of our youngest children and ensure they are ready for Key Stage 1

Legislation and guidance

As an independent School, this policy respects the scope and organisation of the National Curriculum programmes of study; however, our broad and balanced curriculum often exceeds this guidance. This policy also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational

Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010. In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework – details of which can be found in the School's EYFS Curriculum Policy.

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board

The Governing Board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Governing Board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided for students that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs, are approved by the secretary of state
- The School implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Students are provided with careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- The School's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The Governing Board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The Governing Board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for students with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

Other staff

- Other staff will ensure that the School's curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

Organisation and planning

See our EYFS policy for information on how our EYFS curriculum is delivered.

In all areas of the School relevant and appropriately challenging home learning (which often includes project based learning) will be provided. Appropriate time will be provided for students to complete the tasks set.

Students who enter the School at below average levels of attainment will be supported to ‘narrow the gap’, so they can access, and be successful in, our curriculum.

Pastoral curriculum: this is delivered through tutor times, form assemblies, drop down days and whole school assemblies. Such events reflect our ethos while at the same time encouraging respect for our community paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act and our PSHE Policy.

Extended curriculum: there are a wide range of opportunities within and beyond the timetabled curriculum. The School’s curriculum, coupled with opportunities provided by the School’s many strong partnerships, provides highly positive, memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high quality learning. These are provided through extensive extra-curricular opportunities and through a wide range of events, trips and visits to local, national and international destinations.

Promoting British values: the School pays careful attention towards promoting students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a wide variety of activities; students thrive in the supportive, highly cohesive, inclusive learning community. The School promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance throughout the curriculum and pastoral time, including assemblies and school trips and visits.

Relationships and Health Education (Prep School) and Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (Senior School) is taught in PSHE and other appropriate subject areas.

Class groupings: Classes are taught in mixed ability teaching or ability grouping depending on need and circumstance. Some subjects are taught in tutor groups. These are mixed ability groups that have been put together with the aim of producing a balance of gender, ethnicity, ability, students with statements and students from different entry points.

Organisation and planning in Prep

In the Preparatory School and in EYFS, the Thorpe Hall School curriculum map benchmarks progression throughout the school. Each academic year, students have the opportunity to experience a range of subjects which surpasses the requirements of the National Curriculum. The Thorpe Hall School curriculum is designed to meet the needs of its community; encouraging students to develop independence and curiosity as well as ensuring that essential core skills are developed. When appropriate, a meaningful, creative and cross curricular approach to learning is fostered - inspiring children to apply skills in a variety of ways, this ensures that Thorpe Hall students are prepared for their future lives – we refer to this as being ‘future ready.’

Medium term or topic plans are written to ensure coverage of the foundation subjects. They include learning intentions and activities with differentiation identified. Our short-term plans are those that

our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning intentions for each session and to identify what resources and activities staff will use in the lesson.

The School provides Subject Leaders with non-contact time, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role. Each Subject Leader keeps up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level. They review the way the subject is taught across the School and plan for improvement. Each Subject Leader reviews the curriculum plans for their subject, ensuring that there is full coverage of the agreed curriculum map. Subject Leaders also ensure that learning intentions are clear, and that knowledge and skill progression is planned into schemes of work and seen within books.

All Subject Leaders work hard to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the needs of all learners including those with special educational needs.

Subject Allocation

Thorpe Hall School's Prep curriculum is comprised of the following subjects:

Core Subjects

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) / Computer Science

Foundation Subjects

- Art
- Design & Technology
- Drama / Performing Arts
- French
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Forest School
- Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHEE)
- Religious Education
- Physical Education (including swimming until end of Year 2)
- Food Technology (Year 5 and Year 6)
- Textiles (Year 5 and Year 6)
- Graphics (Year 5 and Year 6)

- Media (Year 5 and Year 6)
- Languages: French, Spanish, Mandarin and Italian (Year 5 & 6)
- Humanities (Year 5 & 6)
- Future Ready (Year 5 & 6)

When subjects are taught by Class Teachers, they ensure that differentiated ability groups are established within each class to support individual learning needs. In addition, setting across entire year groups takes place in English and Mathematics, enabling pupils to be appropriately challenged and stretched.

The following subjects are taught across the whole of Prep by subject-specialist teachers:

- Music
- Physical Education
- French,
- Drama / Performing Arts
- Media
- Graphics
- Design and Technology
- Forest School

In the following year groups, Prep pupils are taught by teachers with subject specialisms:

- ICT (Year 4 and above)
- Textiles (KS2)
- Food Technology (Year 5 & 6)
- Spanish & Italian (Year 5 & 6)
- Mandarin (Year 6)

Subject-specialist teaching takes place in all subjects in Years 5 and Year 6. This allows a more in-depth knowledge and understanding of each subject to be shared with pupils, thereby raising attainment. The model also prepares the children for their transition to senior education.

In the Senior School each department must have schemes of learning related, where appropriate, to the National Curriculum and to examination board requirements. Schemes of learning must be followed by all departmental staff and monitored by Heads of Department. Schemes of learning must establish how the course content is structured, so that students' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed progressively.

Our teachers will have a detailed understanding of the curriculum structure and sequence, recognising how each lesson's learning fits into the students' broader development within the

subject. Teachers will know what skills students are expected to have gained at each stage of the curriculum and how these cumulatively prepare students for the rigours of the GCSE exams in their subject.

Key Stage 3 offers a rich and varied curriculum designed to prepare students for the 'step up' to Key Stage 4 and to develop key skills across all subjects. There is a strong focus on breadth of curriculum, with students studying a full range curricular range in addition to the core subjects. As a result, students are able to experience all subjects in order to develop their individual areas of interest and to make informed choices when deciding upon GCSE options subjects in Y9. For those SEND students who cannot access the KS3 curriculum, a bespoke alternative provision is offered to cater for their learning needs.

Students are well supported in choosing their individual curriculum pathway and parents are involved throughout this process. In addition to the core subjects, the majority of students select four option subjects.

Key Stage 4 focuses on depth of learning, with students guided to develop their knowledge of key concepts and to understand the underlying links between different subjects and ideas. There is a clear emphasis on the in-depth development of the key skills and knowledge required for exams, whilst still ensuring subjects are engaging and enjoyable for students. Again, there is an alternative curriculum offer for those SEND students who are unable to access GCSE courses.

Careers education: the school aims to ensure that students receive impartial careers guidance from Year 7 to Year 11.

Curriculum Content

In the senior school, the curriculum is designed from Year 7 so that students are able to experience a broad, but balanced, range of subjects. This develops the skills required for academic success and enables them to make informed choices regarding GCSE options. Alongside this, the curriculum is complemented by a programme designed to nurture the spiritual, social, moral, cultural, physical and creative development of our students.

Our curriculum is comprised of the following subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science (triple Science in KS4)
- Computer Science
- Art
- Design & Technology
- Graphic Communication
- Performing Arts (Yr 7)
- Textiles (Years 7 & 8)
- Photography

- Food Technology
- Drama
- French and Spanish
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHEE)
- Relationship & Sex Education
- Physical Education
- Future Ready Education
- Religious Studies (option in KS4)
- Business Studies (option in KS4)
- Psychology (option in KS4)

Most subjects are taught in mixed ability groups. Setting occurs in Mathematics, English and Science from Year 7.

Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for every student. They plan challenging work for students whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard. They have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for students who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.

The curriculum in our School is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so in consultation with the child's parents.

If a child has an EHCP Plan, special educational need or disability, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. Our provision complies with the requirements set out in the SEND Code of Practice (2015). In most instances, if a concern arises suggesting that a child may have special educational needs, the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet these needs within the normal class organisation.

The role of the Subject Leader/ Head of Department is to:

- provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject;
- support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject;
- monitor student progress in that subject area;
- provide efficient resource management for the subject.

As per our EAL Policy, teachers will also take account of the needs of students whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help students to develop their English, and to support students to take part in all subjects.

Monitoring arrangements

Planning is monitored by the Leadership Team and Subject Leaders/Heads of Departments to ensure that it is current and used as a working document. Book looks and work scrutiny are also carried out to ensure that clear progression is evident. These practices also ensure that clear learning intentions are identified in plans and that children receive consistent, developmental feedback on their work in line with the School's Marking and Feedback Guidance. The Leadership Team and Subject Leaders/Heads of Departments also conduct learning walks throughout the year to ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum is being delivered.

Subject Leaders/Heads of Departments also monitor how resources are stored and managed. The SLT and Subject Leaders/Heads of Departments provide feedback to year groups or individuals about their monitoring so that strengths can be shared among staff and development points can be acted upon.

Links with other policies

This policy links to numerous other whole school policies, including but not limited to:

- EYFS Curriculum Policy
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy
- Personal, Social Health and Relationships Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- SEND and Disability Policy
- EAL Policy
- Equal Opportunities for Students Policy

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