

# Curriculum Policy

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St John's College, Cardiff

## CURRICULUM POLICY

**This policy applies to all sections of the School:**

Sixth Form, Senior School, Junior School,  
Infant School & Nursery.

***Version: September 2023***

## **Rationale**

The curriculum is designed to reflect the aims of the school's Mission Statement. We aim to help students develop their gifts and talents: spiritual and social; intellectual and emotional; aesthetic and physical, through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, which is responsive to, and supportive of, their needs and aspirations, fosters intellectual curiosity and academic achievement, and motivates them to grow to their full potential.

## **Aims of the Curriculum**

- To be compatible with the requirements of the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) and the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1 to 3, but enhanced. To meet the requirements of the GCSE and A-Level syllabi;
- To be broad and balanced throughout each Key Stage;
- To allow progression between and through the Key Stages;
- To offer flexibility at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, by allowing for the needs of the individual to be met, as far as is reasonably possible, in terms of courses on offer and number of subjects;
- To provide for the personal, social, health and citizenship education of students including the preparation of students for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life;
- To provide appropriate careers education and guidance and the opportunity for students to keep career pathways open;
- To enable all students to learn and make progress;
- To provide a programme of activities appropriate to the needs of students.

## **Responsibilities**

Job Descriptions outline the roles of key post holders:

- **Headteacher (Shaun Moody)**
- **Deputy Headteacher (Jo Gordon-Smith)**
- **Head of Junior School (Laura Taylor)**
- **Heads of Nursery and Infants (Alison Banks & Emma Drain)**
- **Director of Academic Studies (Melissa Owen)**
- **Heads of Department in the Senior School**
- **Subject Co-ordinators (Juniors)**
- **Subject/Class teachers**
- **Assistant Head, Pastoral & PSE Co-ordinator (Emma Jones)**
- **Assistant Head, Admissions & Co-Curriculum (Francis Taylor)**
- **Heads of Lower and Upper Sixth (Ellen John and Nick Cooper)**

## Implementation

Each Key Stage has a curriculum plan, which outlines:

- the curriculum followed;
- the lesson allocation;
- the organisation, including number of teaching groups, and arrangements for making choices (where applicable) and the flexibility available;
- arrangements for students with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and/or English as an Additional Language (EAL).

The curriculum plans are contained in the following Appendices:

**Appendix 1** Infant and Nursery (Nursery, R5 - R7)

**Appendix 2** Junior School (R8 - R11)

**Appendix 3** Senior School Key Stage 3 (R12 - R13)

**Appendix 4** Senior School Key Stage 4 (R14 - R16)

**Appendix 5** Senior School Key Stage 5 (Sixth Form, Years 12 and 13)

- Staffing and resources are deployed effectively to meet the aims of the curriculum.
- Schemes of work exist which provide subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of students, including those with additional learning needs, and so enable all students to have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- The Annual School Improvement Plan includes targets which support curriculum aims.

## Monitoring

- The policy is monitored by the Director of Academic Studies. In the Nursery, Infant and Junior School, this is through liaison with the Heads of Nursery/Infants and the Heads of Junior School, who evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in their respective sections. In the Senior School, monitoring is through discussion with Heads of Department, the PSE co-ordinator, lesson observations and sampling of students' work. There is also liaison with the Assistant Head, Pastoral regarding pastoral matters, which supports academic achievement and promotes the personal and social development of students.
- Heads of Department and Subject Co-ordinators monitor policies relating to the curriculum within their subject.
- The progress of students is monitored by subject teachers, Heads of Department, Heads of Year, the Director of Academic Studies and Deputy Head (also the Head of Nursery/Infants and the Heads of Junior School for children in those sections).

**Further details relating to the curriculum are published in the following:**

- Parents' Information Handbook.
- Nursery and Infant Handbook; Junior School Parent Information Handbook.
- Key Stage 3 Handbook; GCSE Handbook; Sixth Form Handbook.

## Appendix 1

### **Nursery and Infants Department**

- In the Nursery and Infants, the children follow a weekly timetable which is displayed on the classroom noticeboard. Parents also receive a weekly summary of the topics and activities, so that they may join in with the discussion. There is a daily emphasis on numeracy and literacy with all of the other areas of learning being covered during the week. Children are set individual reading tasks. They also have a weekly computing lesson and a lesson with a Welsh specialist. The Infant children have two PE lessons with PE specialists and in R7, the children also learn to swim. Nursery children have one lesson with a PE specialist and one with Nursery staff.
- The curriculum broadly follows the guidance outlined in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Phase and the Welsh curriculum for the Primary Phase. The guidance divides children's learning and development into key areas. In the early years, much of the learning that takes place is cross curricular and interactive. In R6 and R7, the planning of lessons is based on the National Curriculum.

The areas of learning are:

#### **R6 and R7**

Mathematics, Languages and Literacy, Science, Computing, Geography, History, PE, Creative (Art/DT), Music, Welsh, PHME, RE.

#### **Nursery and R5**

Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Creative Development (Art, Dt, Music), Knowledge and understanding of the World (Geography, History, Science), Physical Development, RE, Welsh.

The Curriculum for Wales 2015 sets out the range of experiences and skills each child is expected to achieve as he or she progresses from Nursery to Year 2 (R7).

- Curriculum enrichment is also provided by the provision of Drama for every year group and Italian in R6 and R7.
- Planning of the curriculum is based upon these long term and short term goals, with clear learning intentions in each of the areas of learning. The curriculum is holistic and balanced. There is a degree of flexibility to pursue items which capture the children's imagination and for the children to share their experiences.
- Infant and Nursery staff plan for the needs of their own classes. Younger children have 'I can' statements which set out their personal targets. Pupils in R6 and R7 have individual targets. Pupils are informally assessed in all aspects of learning and they undertake formal assessments in literacy and numeracy skills. Progress is monitored through Baseline assessments in Nursery and R5, PiRA and PUMA standardised assessments in R5-R7, and teacher observations and judgements. All data is uploaded to a class spreadsheet to track progress across each academic year and across a pupils' time with us.

- There is currently one class in each age group. The class teacher plans the activities which are delivered by the teacher and the team of assistant teachers and highly trained teaching assistants. The teacher meets with parents each term and reports are written twice a year; an interim report in January and a full report in the summer.
  
- Activities are tailored to the individual child to allow for extension material to enhance creativity, problem-solving and critical thinking.
  
- The children are assessed during activities and progress is monitored by the class teacher. The children's development is matched to the Literacy and Numeracy Framework for Wales. Support is provided for children with additional learning needs.
  
- Care is available for the children from 8:00am with all children to be in school by 8:40am for registration and assembly. The day ends at 3:40pm. Children may also attend after school care until 6:00pm subject to an additional payment. A light tea is provided.
  
- Details of the curriculum and child development are published to parents in the Parents' Information Handbook.

## Appendix 2

### Junior School (R8 - R11) Curriculum Plan

- The Junior School follows a two-week timetable. There are 70 lessons across the two weeks, and lesson length is usually 45 minutes.
- The Junior School curriculum is bespoke' however, it builds on the foundations of the National Curriculum for Wales and the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework. The Junior School curriculum is broader by the addition of MFL and is designed to meet the needs and abilities of our pupils.

The following subjects are taught:

|                    |           |                                    |            |
|--------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>English</b>     | French    | Music                              | PSE        |
| <b>Mathematics</b> | Geography | PE & Games<br>(Including swimming) | Enrichment |
| <b>Science</b>     | History   | Religious Education                | Spanish    |
| Art                | IT        | Welsh                              |            |

- All Junior School schemes of work show progression from one year to the next and include differentiation with appropriate provision for ALN and MAT pupils.
- Routine assessment and tracking is used to monitor the progress of pupils.
- Pupils with specific learning difficulties are offered the opportunity for specialist tuition, generally timetabled during an MFL lesson. These pupils will also receive some in-class support where it is deemed necessary. Some pupils will have a CSP.
- Pupils in R11 (and some in R8 - R10) are taught by experienced English, Mathematics, Science, MFL, Music, PE, RE, Art and DT teachers. Some of these teachers are Senior School trained and have either taught in the Senior School or are currently teaching in the Senior School. This promotes continuity and progression with the Senior School.
- There is one class for R8 and R9 and there are usually two classes for R10 and R11. All classes in the Junior School are mixed ability. However, pupils are in ability sets for Mathematics from R8. These sets are revisited at the end of each academic year.
- An overview of the term's curriculum is provided to parents at the start of the term in a document entitled 'What Will my Child Learn at School This Term?'
- At the start of each term, an activities programme is published to pupils and parents.
- The personal and social development of pupils is the responsibility of all staff. However, the PSE programme is delivered predominantly by the Form Tutor, through the Jigsaw scheme. The PSE programme is designed to reflect the School's aims and ethos.

## Lesson Allocation

- The Deputy Head formulates the timetable for each Year group based on the subject allocations detailed below:

|                   | <b>R8 (Year 3)</b> | <b>R9 (Year 4)</b> | <b>R10 (Year 5)</b> | <b>R11 (Year 6)</b> |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| English           | 11                 | 11                 | 11                  | 11                  |
| Maths             | 11                 | 11                 | 11                  | 11                  |
| Science           | 6                  | 6                  | 7                   | 7                   |
| Art/DT            | 4                  | 4                  | 4                   | 4                   |
| French            | 1                  | 1                  | 1                   | 1                   |
| Geography         | 4                  | 4                  | 4                   | 4                   |
| History           | 4                  | 4                  | 4                   | 4                   |
| IT                | 2                  | 2                  | 2                   | 2                   |
| Music             | 4                  | 4                  | 3                   | 3                   |
| PE/Games*         | 4                  | 4                  | 5                   | 5                   |
| RE                | 4                  | 4                  | 3                   | 3                   |
| Spanish           | 1                  | 1                  | 1                   | 1                   |
| Welsh             | 2                  | 2                  | 2                   | 2                   |
| PSE/Assembly      | 4                  | 4                  | 4                   | 4                   |
| Enrichment        | 2                  | 2                  | 2                   | 2                   |
| Junior Singing    | 2                  | 2                  | 2                   | 2                   |
| Library           | 2                  | 2                  | 2                   | 2                   |
| Mental Arithmetic | 2                  | 2                  | 2                   | 2                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>70</b>          | <b>70</b>          | <b>70</b>           | <b>70</b>           |

All Junior classes will have a short form period daily, after morning break.

\*Every class will have swimming for a block of two weeks, taken during other subject time.

### Appendix 3

#### Senior School Key Stage 3 (R12 - R13) Curriculum Plan

The Senior School (R12 - R16) follows a two-week timetable. There are 70 lessons across the two weeks, each of 45 minute's duration.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum is organised as follows:

#### Key Stage 3 Curriculum 2023-2024

| Subject                    | KS3<br>No of lessons<br>per fortnight |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| English                    | 10                                    |
| Mathematics                | 10                                    |
| Biology                    | 3                                     |
| Chemistry                  | 3                                     |
| Physics                    | 3                                     |
| Religious Studies          | 3                                     |
| Welsh                      | 3                                     |
| History                    | 3                                     |
| Geography                  | 3                                     |
| Latin                      | 2                                     |
| Art                        | 3                                     |
| Games/PE                   | 6                                     |
| Lang Option 1 (French)     | 3                                     |
| Lang Option 2<br>(Spanish) | 3                                     |
| Music                      | 3                                     |
| Design & Technology        | 3                                     |
| PSE                        | 2                                     |
| Computing                  | 3                                     |
| Form Period                | 1                                     |
| Total                      | <b><u>70</u></b>                      |

- There are usually four teaching groups in R12 - R13.
- Grouping in all other subjects is by form group. Where pupils are set, these are reviewed regularly, and parents are notified of any set changes.
- Students in R12 and R13 are issued with a Key Stage 3 Handbook in September. Included in this booklet is information regarding the subjects taught in the Key Stage 3 curriculum.
- At the start of each term the co-curricular programme is published to students and parents.
- Details of the Key Stage 3 curriculum are published annually in the Parents' Information Handbook.



## **Additional points:**

### **Specialist tuition for students with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

- Students who have ALN may be offered specialist tuition with a qualified teacher.
- Students who have ALN can receive additional Literacy and Numeracy support in place of a Modern Foreign Language.
- Students study four languages from Welsh, French, Spanish and Latin unless they are in Learning Support classes.

### **Key Stage 3 Science**

- All pupils study three lessons of Biology, Chemistry and Physics per fortnight. Pupils start their GCSE in Science in R14, to allow three years to complete the curriculum.

### **Personal and Social Education**

- The personal and social development of students is the responsibility of all staff. However, the PSE programme is delivered by a team of PSE staff, supported by the Head of Year, Assistant Head, Pastoral and a programme of visiting speakers. Students have a timetabled PSE lesson once per week. The PSE programme is designed to reflect the School's aims and ethos.

### **Careers Education and Guidance**

- This is incorporated into the PSE programme.

## Appendix 4

### Senior School Key Stage 4 (R14 - R16) Curriculum Plan

All students follow a core of subjects and up to four additional option subjects. Core subjects are: English; Mathematics; Religious Studies (short course); Science; Games and Physical Education (non-GCSE); PSE (non-GCSE).

Core subjects are generally taught in four teaching groups in each year. (The number of teaching groups depends upon the size of the cohort and the staffing available.) In English, Mathematics and Science, students are set by ability. Other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups.

#### ***Procedure for making GCSE subject choices***

Students choose **ONE** subject from each of the blocks shown.

#### **R14 (2023-2024)**

| <b>A</b> | <b>B</b>         | <b>C</b>         | <b>D</b>  |
|----------|------------------|------------------|-----------|
| Music    | DT               | French           | Business  |
| DT       | PE               | History          | Geography |
| Business | History          | Computer Science | PE        |
| Spanish  | Geography        | Business         | Art       |
| History  | Latin            | Welsh            | Music     |
|          | Computer Science |                  |           |

#### **R15 (2023-2024)**

| <b>A</b>  | <b>B</b>         | <b>C</b>         | <b>D</b> |
|-----------|------------------|------------------|----------|
| Music     | Computer Science | Art              | Business |
| Business  | DT               | Geography        | History  |
| History   | PE               | Spanish          | Spanish  |
| Geography | Welsh            | Computer Science | DT       |
| French    | History          | PE               |          |
|           |                  | Latin            |          |

#### **R16 (2023-2024)**

| <b>A</b>           | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b>         | <b>D</b>  |
|--------------------|----------|------------------|-----------|
| Business           | Business | Computer Science | Art       |
| Computer Science   | DT       | DT               | Business  |
| Digital Technology | Latin    | Geography        | French    |
| French             | Music    | History          | Geography |
| History            | PE       | Welsh            | History   |
|                    | Spanish  |                  | PE        |
|                    |          |                  |           |

Each student is asked to make his/her GCSE option subjects preferences two weeks after the R13 Taster Day, from which option blocks are formed. Once the blocks are formed, students are asked to make their final choices. A student may change their option choices after this date, providing there is capacity within the group and their combination of subjects can be accommodated by the blocks. Any changes must be requested as soon as possible to the Deputy Head. Changes must be made by half term in the Advent Term in R14 at the very latest.

Students normally take nine or ten GCSE subjects. There is, however, flexibility to take fewer subjects for those students whom nine or ten subjects is not appropriate.

### **Personal and Social Education**

- The personal and social development of students is the responsibility of all staff. However, the PSE programme is delivered predominantly by the Form Tutor, supported by the Head of Year and Assistant Head, Pastoral and a programme of visiting speakers. PSE is taught in a timetabled weekly lesson.

### **Careers Education and Guidance**

- This is incorporated into the PSE programme. In R15 and R16, students receive additional input from external agencies and in R15, students undertake a week of planned work experience.
- Students are given the opportunity to engage with an online careers guidance tool (Morrisby testing) in R13 and R15.

### **Lesson allocation at Key stage 4**

| <b>Subject</b>  | <b>No of lessons per fortnight</b> |
|---|------------------------------------|
| English Language (with English Literature or English Language only) | 10                                 |
| Mathematics   | 10                                 |
| PE and Games  | 4                                  |
| Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)                            | 18                                 |
| Option subjects block 1   | 6                                  |
| Option subjects block 2   | 6                                  |
| Option subjects block 3   | 6                                  |
| Option subjects block 4   | 6                                  |
| PSE   | 2                                  |
| Religious Studies   | 2                                  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>70</b>                          |

## Appendix 5

### **Sixth Form Key Stage 5 (Sixth Form, Years 12 and 13) Curriculum Plan**

#### **Subject Choices**

The subjects listed below are offered:

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| Art                     |
| Biology                 |
| Business                |
| Chemistry               |
| Chinese                 |
| Design and Technology   |
| Economics               |
| English Literature      |
| EPQ                     |
| French                  |
| Further Mathematics     |
| Geography               |
| Government and Politics |
| History                 |
| IELTS                   |
| Latin                   |
| Mathematics             |
| Music                   |
| Physical Education      |
| Philosophy              |
| Physics                 |
| Psychology              |
| Religious Studies       |
| Spanish                 |
| Welsh                   |

- Modular/Unitised A levels have external examinations at the end of Year 12 and 13. Linear A-levels only have external examinations at the end of Year 13.
- Most students study four A level subjects at the start of Year 12 and drop to three subjects in Year 13 (obtaining 3 A Levels and 1 AS Level qualification).
- The above model is not compulsory; guidance is given to students as to the most appropriate number and combination of subjects, by the Assistant Head Academic and the Head of Year 12. Reference is made to the student's GCSE results and career aspirations (as well as the results of the ALIS testing when available).
- A-Level teaching continues in Year 12 once all modular examinations have been sat. Students must attend all classes in Year 12, including subjects that have had an AS examination.
- A-Level subjects normally have six lessons, of 45 minutes' duration, per week. In the Sixth Form, period 8 may be used to accommodate lessons in subjects that are over-subscribed.

## Procedures for making A Level subject choices

- A Sixth Form booklet is published to R16 students and their parents in the Advent Term; a Sixth Form Information Evening is also held in October.
- 'Subject Preference' forms are issued in October to R16 students. Students are asked to make provisional choices regarding subjects to study. The Heads of R16 and Lower Sixth, Deputy Head, Director of Academic Studies, and R16 tutors provide support for students as they make these decisions.
- Option blocks are formulated based on the information contained on the 'Subject Preference' forms. The option blocks are designed to accommodate the widest possible choice of combinations of subjects. **Students are informed that there is no guarantee that all combinations will be possible, but we will do our best to satisfy provisional choices.**
- Option blocks are produced and students then choose their combination of subjects. Students may, at a later stage, change their choice within a block, or from a different block, providing no more than one subject is chosen in each block.
- Students are informed that, if a subject does not have a sufficient number opting to provide a viable course, it may be withdrawn from the programme; however, we will keep them informed of developments and advise them, where possible, of alternatives.
- Students are asked to make subject choices by two weeks after the publication of the option blocks, usually in February.
- A level blocks in Year 13 may change slightly from the Year 12 blocks. This is because some subjects, where there is more than one group, may have to be combined in Year 13 if numbers in the individual groups are very small, because of students not continuing in the subject.

## Sixth Form Co-Curricular Provision

Sixth Form students regularly attend talks given by a range of outside speakers, including former pupils, on subjects such as post-18 student life (personal finance, time management, revision skills etc.), charity work and voluntary organisations. They also receive employment and university application advice through visits from Future Success Careers, UCAS and other external agencies as well as having the opportunity to attend university open days and careers fairs.

Individual subject departments organise visits to lectures, exhibitions, plays and workshops.

IELTS (International English Language Test System) provision is available to all ESOL students who need it and individual support is provided for any students who are struggling in a particular subject.

A range of co-curricular activities is available too, including Young Enterprise, CREST, Debating Society, Drama Club, Music (choirs and orchestras) as well as a timetabled enrichment programme for students which comprises a variety of activities for a full afternoon per fortnight. This encourages students to try new experiences, build their resilience, develop new skills and gain qualifications, improving teamwork and friendships amongst the sixth form cohort. It includes activities such as: cooking; golf; climbing; water activities; local walks; trampolining; finance; TEFL and more.

Students are also encouraged to take part in supporting the learning of younger pupils by spending time engaging with lower-school classroom support or helping pupils with revision (as Learning Leaders) and by playing a key role in the School Council.