



## CURRICULUM POLICY

### 0. Introduction

- a. At Prior's Field, the curriculum comprises all that contributes to the successful learning of the individual, including both formal academic opportunities and those offered through subject-related co-curricular activities.
- b. The curriculum gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. Students are required to follow the set curriculum throughout Lower School (see 1.c) unless their SEND profile and supporting documentation indicates a clear reason otherwise. In addition, it is designed to enable the development of personal and social skills, competence in communication, literacy, ICT and numeracy through all areas and across the whole school.
- c. Our aims are underpinned by, and reflected in, a curriculum that is based on equality of opportunity, where everyone is valued and where enthusiasm for learning is encouraged so that all pupils make progress and gain a sense of achievement from the learning process. The curriculum also includes activities to promote the social, moral, spiritual, cultural [SMSC] development of all its pupils and to support the aims of the PSHE programme.
- d. We aim to deliver our curriculum in a stimulating and challenging way that teaches self-discipline and a sense of responsibility, and which promotes independent learning and the value of collaboration and teamwork. Links with the local community and beyond are fostered to widen horizons and demonstrate the relevance of the curriculum to everyday life.
- e. Religious Studies is available to all pupils. Prior's Field is non-denominational and the diversity of pupils and staff of all beliefs or none, is respected and celebrated through assemblies and cultural events.
- f. At Prior's Field, all students are entitled to a curriculum which is characterised by ten key strands.

### 1. Breadth

- a. Pupils are selected based on an entrance examination, school report and reference. Though we are selective, we are willing to accept any student who we feel would thrive in our environment both academically and personally, and all students are encouraged to be aspirational.
- b. Our curriculum incorporates and enriches the National Curriculum KS3 to KS4. It is flexible, and we respond to changes in Government Policy related to curriculum issues. There are opportunities to study two Modern Foreign Languages, engage in a wide range of sporting, artistic, creative and performative activities, and to learn musical instruments. ICT is taught discretely and used extensively throughout the curriculum both by teaching staff and through the school's BYOD strategy, which embeds IT use into lessons where beneficial to learning.
- c. At KS3, all pupils follow a broad programme of study: English, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, one or two Languages (French, Spanish or Latin), History, Geography, Religious Studies, Physical Education, Drama, Art, Music, Design Technology, Textiles, Food Technology and Information Technology are taught in every year. Mindful Education is taught in First and Second Form to develop pupils' understanding of themselves – their thoughts, feelings and emotions – and the impact these have on their physiology,

psychology and studies. In addition, all pupils have careers education as part of a wider PSHE provision.

- d. At KS4, in addition to core subjects (English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Dual Science), a wide range of optional subjects are also available, in addition to individual and group learning support lessons. Pupils submit 4 free choices (plus one reserve choice) to the school each year from which option blocks are created annually. In addition, a short course option (and reserve). Adjustments to this curriculum may be made to meet individual learning needs and to support Tennis Academy pupils. Optional GCSE subjects include Fine Art, Business, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Design & Technology, Drama, Food & Nutrition, French, Geography, History, Latin, Music, Photography, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Spanish, Textiles and Triple Science. Short course options include HPQ, Politics, Religious Studies, Sports Leaders and World Literature. Subjects in which the uptake at GCSE is very low may not run. English and Maths run on 4 periods per week; dual science runs on 6 periods (2 per subject); main block options run on 3 periods per week; and short course options run on 2 periods per week.
- e. The post-16 Programme of Study includes a core curriculum of Careers Education, Learning for Life, a programme of academic lectures and workshops and citizenship/leadership/community service opportunities. Pupils submit preferences for A level/BTEC/Diploma subjects which are used to generate five option blocks from which pupils confirm their choices. Most pupils study 3 subjects and an EPQ, but decisions are made according to individual needs and abilities. Sixth Form subjects on offer include Fine Art, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Criminology, Drama, Economics, English Literature, Food Science & Nutrition, French, Geography, History, Latin, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Music, Music Technology, Photography, Physical Education, Physics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Spanish and Textiles. Most options run on 6 periods per week, though these may be reduced for subjects with very low numbers.

## **2. Balance**

- a. It is the policy of Prior's Field to offer equality of access to all subjects. We aim to present a curriculum which incorporates the development of knowledge; the understanding of concepts; the acquisition of skills; and the ability to apply these in a variety of circumstances, through the exercise of independent thought and by framing opinions based on evidence and sound judgement.
- b. Students have an open choice from a wide range of subjects in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. Each student is advised when making these choices, ensuring a balanced programme of study suited to their needs, strengths and future aspirations. The timetable is built around their choices to ensure that each pupil can pursue her preferences and develop her aptitudes.
- c. The commitment of the school to offering a tailored approach is demonstrated in the generous staffing allocated to run courses for small numbers of students, though occasionally courses may not run if impractical.
- d. In addition to careers education, pupils and parents are invited to Third Year Options Evenings and Sixth Form Open Evenings. Detailed option information booklets are provided for each pupil and her parents and information evenings for girls and parents are held at the beginning of KS4 and the lower sixth.
- e. We also aim for balance across curricular and co-curricular provision, identifying opportunities for students to understand the relevance of their learning through clubs, activities, day trips, residential trips and competitions. The Co-curricular provision is just

as important to students' personal and academic development and in fulfilling future aspirations as their curriculum lessons.

### **3. Relevance**

We take account of the previous learning of pupils and their readiness for new experiences. As a school, we also ensure that the curriculum plays a significant role in preparing the pupils for the next stage in their education and for life beyond school as students, employees and citizens. As such, subject provision is regularly reviewed to ensure students receive an education appropriate for 21<sup>st</sup>-Century citizens.

### **4. Challenge**

- a. We stimulate and encourage wide-ranging and independent learning to provide a framework of skills for future progress. Use is made of prior achievement, 'value-added' data and professional judgement to ensure that individual needs are met, appropriate challenge provided, and progress tracked.
- b. The school MIS (ISAMS) is the repository for the overview of students' progress. Each department retains more detailed records relevant to their specific departments. CAT4 assessments are sat when students arrive, as part of the GCSE options process and at the start of the Lower Sixth.

### **5. Differentiation**

- a. Differentiation at Prior's Field focuses on providing adapted levels of support for students to have the same opportunities for success as their peers. Setting is used in some subjects to further facilitate this and where setting has proven beneficial to the success of students, as appropriate to the subject and needs of individual year groups. These are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate.
- b. The diversity of learning needs is acknowledged in departmental schemes of work and lesson plans. These are created to present the curriculum through a variety of teaching methods and using a range of resources.
- c. Student Learning Passports are produced by the Learning Development Department. Regular reviews of the schemes of work are carried out to introduce fresh approaches to assessment techniques and to ensure the pursuit of excellence in the delivery of the curriculum, which is reflected in departmental handbooks.
- d. Staff training is also conducted to ensure skills and pedagogy remains current with a focus on practical implementation in classrooms.

### **6. Individual Learning Needs**

- a. The school has a policy of recognising and catering for individual educational needs. It sets out for parents what help the school can offer in addition to the taught curriculum. The Deputy Head Academic, EA Coordinator and Lead Practitioners help to ensure that all teachers are supported in making provision for any exceptionally able pupils. Those attending Prior's Field on academic scholarships are overseen by academic staff and relevant Heads of Department.
- b. In line with the Children and Families Act 2014 and current SEN legislation, including the 2014 Code of Practice, the needs of any pupils with special educational needs, including any with Education, Health and Care plans [EHC plans], are co-ordinated by the Head of Learning Development. Teaching staff are expected to make special provision for these pupils in their lesson planning and to address their needs by using appropriate resources. Detailed records of pupils with special learning difficulties and disabilities are kept and made available centrally to all staff across the school both on the MIS and via the IEPs.
- c. Prior's Field also provides individual and group support for those for whom English is an additional language. All pupils receiving additional leaning support or EAL tuition have

individual educational plans [IEPs, called Passports] which are monitored and evaluated regularly by the Head of Learning Development of Head of EAL in conjunction with the pupils themselves, their parents and teachers. (See also, policies on Learning Support, EAL and Equal Opportunities.)

## **7. Continuity**

- a. Effective continuity between phases of the school is a vital element in curriculum management. Regular consultation between teachers in various key stages and the exchange of up-to-date data ensure that, as they move through the school, pupils meet fresh challenges as they build on their prior attainment and achievements.
- b. There is also a detailed handover between tutors and Year Team Leaders.
- c. Whilst reinforcement is embedded in the schemes of work, unnecessary repetition is avoided through close collaboration and consultation.
- d. Teachers are also encouraged to teach classes across the key stages to ensure detailed understanding of all parts of pupils' learning journeys.

## **8. Prep**

- a. Heads of Department, Form Tutors and Heads of Year monitor prep to ensure that appropriate work is set and marked (where beneficial) to support and reinforce work covered in class, and aid retention. It also provides an opportunity for the development of research and independent learning skills.
- b. There is an expectation that this work is completed in full and on time. Parents can become involved in managing their daughter's progress by overseeing this work and by communicating any difficulties to their daughter's form tutor by email. A variety of assessment methods are regularly used, and a prep timetable for students in Lower School and Upper School is published.
- c. (See also the school's policy on Assessment, Reporting and Marking.)

## **9. Careers**

- a. The careers programme includes opportunities for work-related learning and careers education is featured, as appropriate, within the PSHEE programme. Individual pupil support and guidance is also provided through national schemes, the Careers Department and through tutors. The aim is to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life through education and the broadening of horizons. It is also to ensure that those moving on to Further and Higher Education courses are well informed and well prepared for the next stage.
- b. The Head of Careers plays a key role in advising pupils on option choices, working closely with them, tutors and Heads of Year, in particular the Head of Sixth Form on university applications.
- c. (See also the Work Related Learning Policy.)

## **10. Teaching and Learning**

Prior's Field places emphasis on the notion that teaching and learning processes are as significant as curriculum content in determining student progress and achievement. The School aims to:

- a. promote the view that learning should be experienced as something that is enjoyable, engaging and rewarding;
- b. prepare pupils for the next stages: further education and future careers;
- c. regard monitoring and assessment as an integral and valuable part of the learning process, to diagnose difficulties, chart progress and encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and progress. (See also the Assessment Policy.)

- d. All staff share responsibility for delivering the Curriculum. It is the responsibility of each Head of Department to ensure that programmes of study and schemes of work are produced and regularly updated.

<b>Reviewed by:</b>	<b>Deputy Head Academic</b>
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