



CURRICULUM POLICY

Reviewed: May 2025

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Person responsible for policy: CEM



1. Curriculum aims and vision

At Droitwich Spa High School, we aim to provide a first-class education for young people in a caring yet challenging environment. Our curriculum supports our commitment to high expectations, excellence, and holistic development, ensuring students become confident, well-rounded individuals ready to thrive in a complex world. We value traditional principles of respect, honesty, hard work, and good manners, while also encouraging creativity, boldness, teamwork, and innovation.

The school ensures that all programmes of study meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. We remain responsive to curriculum developments and opportunities as outlined by the Department for Education to ensure that our provision continues to meet the diverse needs of all students.

Our curriculum is designed to:

- Provide a broad, balanced, and ambitious education for all learners.
- Ensure students acquire powerful knowledge, key skills, and the cultural capital necessary for future success.
- Reflect the local context and wider societal needs, preparing students for further study, employment, and citizenship.
- Promote personal development, resilience, and a love of learning.
- Champion inclusion and support success for all learners, particularly SEND, disadvantaged, and EAL students.

2. Curriculum implementation and impact

We deliver our curriculum through:

- Well-sequenced, subject-specific schemes of work aligned with national expectations promoting learning, progress and achievement.
- A focus on literacy, numeracy, digital skills, and oracy across all subjects
- Adaptive teaching to support access and challenge for all.
- Ongoing formative and summative assessment to monitor progress and inform planning.
- Professional development for staff to continually enhance subject knowledge and pedagogy.
- Ability setting and mixed-ability groupings used appropriately to support the best possible progress for all students.

We evaluate our curriculum's effectiveness by:

- Tracking student progress through robust internal assessment and external outcomes.
- Analysing destinations data for KS4 and KS5 leavers.
- Gathering pupil, parent, and staff voice.
- Reviewing curriculum delivery through learning walks, book scrutinies, and lesson observations.
- Annual curriculum review through the School Improvement Group.

3. Key Stage Overviews



Key Stage 3

At Key Stage 3, our curriculum is broad, balanced, and fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is designed to provide all students with a strong foundation for future learning, while also supporting their individual needs and interests.

In some subjects, students are grouped by ability to provide appropriate levels of challenge and support. In others, they are taught in mixed-ability classes to encourage collaboration and inclusivity.

In Year 8, all students study a comprehensive range of subjects, including:

English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, a modern foreign language (French or Spanish), Computer Science and Digital Media, Religious Studies, PSHE, Design and Technology, Food Preparation and Nutrition, Music, Art, and Physical Education.

To support a smooth transition into Key Stage 4, we introduce a **mini options process at the end of Year 8**, which allows students to retain a broad curriculum while beginning to specialise in areas of interest. This ensures that learners remain engaged and motivated as they begin to shape their educational journey.

In Year 9, students continue with their core curriculum and begin studying their chosen option subjects in more depth. This personalised approach supports both academic achievement and individual aspirations.

We are committed to ensuring that all students make progress, regardless of their starting point. Some students follow an **Inclusion Programme** for part of their timetable, and others receive additional support in **Literacy and Numeracy** through small group work, one-to-one tuition, or membership of the **Access Group**, which focuses on strengthening key skills. This provision is further enriched in Year 9 with the introduction of the **Forest School Programme**, which replaces one option subject for selected students. This outdoor, skills-based learning experience promotes confidence, resilience, and engagement, particularly for those who benefit from a more practical approach.

Key Stage 4

Every student's Key Stage 4 programme is personalised, reflecting their interests, strengths, and aspirations. Students can choose from a broad range of subjects—some that continue from Key Stage 3 and others that are introduced for the first time in Year 10. The full list of available options is published on our website:

[Year 9 into Year 10 Options](#)

All students follow a core curriculum, which includes **English, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education (PE), and Philosophy and Ethics*. Most students will select four additional option subjects to complement the core offer. Where appropriate to ability and interest, some students may opt to study Triple Science (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics) as separate GCSEs.

To ensure a balanced academic foundation, all students—except in specific, approved cases—are expected to choose at least one subject from the following group: History, Geography, French, Spanish or German. This is an important requirement, as it contributes to the school's standing in national performance tables. Students then select three additional options, which may include aesthetic, practical, vocational, or work-related learning subjects, ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum.

We offer a combination of GCSEs and equivalent qualifications, such as Cambridge Nationals, which provide a more coursework-based route, with some exam components. This flexibility allows students to follow the most appropriate assessment pathway for them. In subjects like Geography, Maths, and Science, where relevant to the student's needs, some may first be entered for a qualification of a lower value than a GCSE, to support progression.

To support students in making informed choices, we hold a Guided Choices Evening, where families receive advice and information about the curriculum and individual subjects. Further guidance is available through Parent Consultation Evenings throughout the year, and through written reports and discussions with subject staff.



We work hard to accommodate each student's option choices. However, there are rare occasions when this is not possible—due to oversubscription or low uptake of a particular subject. In these cases, we speak directly with the student and provide support in finding an alternative. All option choices are reviewed to ensure that students are following a pathway suited to their needs, interests, and future goals.

Alternative Pathways

For a small number of students, a traditional programme of four full GCSEs or equivalent qualifications may not be accessible. In these cases, we provide alternative, personalised arrangements on a strictly case-by-case basis, which may include:

- Spending time in SEN support in place of one option, enabling students to consolidate learning from other subjects.
- Selecting an in-house option that does not carry a full GCSE equivalence—for example, a course in Animal Care leading to AQA Unit Awards.
- Choosing a combination of GCSE and vocational qualifications, with some students following coursework-focused courses such as Cambridge Nationals, which may better suit their learning style.
- These carefully considered arrangements ensure that all students can access a curriculum that is both appropriate and aspirational, supporting their progress, engagement, and future opportunities.

Key Stage 5

Our Sixth Form curriculum is broad, inclusive, and designed to meet the diverse needs and aspirations of our students. We offer a wide range of post-16 courses to encourage continued participation in education and to provide appropriate progression routes for all learners. Most students study **three subjects** across **Years 12 and 13**, alongside an **enrichment option in Year 12**. However, there is flexibility for some students to study additional subjects where appropriate. The curriculum includes a mix of **A Levels**, **Cambridge Nationals**, and **Level 3 Applied Certificates**, providing both academic and vocational pathways.

Students who have not yet achieved a **grade 4 in GCSE English and/or Mathematics** follow a structured **resit programme** as part of their Sixth Form studies. In addition, we offer a targeted programme to support the development of mathematical skills for those not studying A Level Maths but who are enrolled in courses where numerical proficiency is essential.

Our enrichment and extra-curricular offer is extensive, giving students the opportunity to build confidence, independence, and leadership—skills that are highly valued by universities and employers alike. Throughout their time in Sixth Form, students benefit from **dedicated tutoring** and **focused guidance days** designed to prepare them for life beyond school, whether they choose to pursue **Higher Education, a Gap Year, apprenticeships, or employment**.

Full details of our Key Stage 5 curriculum, including course content and entry requirements, can be found in our **Sixth Form Prospectus**.

4. Inclusion

We are committed to:

- Ensuring all students access the full curriculum regardless of background or ability.
- Personalising support for SEND, disadvantaged, EAL, and high-ability learners.



- Promoting equality and diversity through curriculum content and delivery.
- Monitoring participation in enrichment and ensuring no group is disadvantaged.

5. Extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities

A rich and diverse programme of **extra-curricular opportunities** enhances the curriculum by offering a wide range of **cultural, sporting, musical, and dramatic activities** that are open to all students. These experiences support both academic learning and personal development.

Educational visits—including field trips, cultural exchanges, international partnerships, and visits to **galleries, theatres, museums, universities, conferences**, and other institutions—enrich many areas of study and promote broader social and cultural awareness.

In addition, a strong emphasis on **community involvement** ensures that students benefit from the expertise, support, and resources available within the local area, further strengthening their learning and engagement beyond the classroom.

6. Careers and personal development

- High-quality, impartial Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) across all key stages.
- Alignment with Gatsby Benchmarks and statutory careers guidance.
- PSHE and tutor time programme promoting SMSC, British Values, and personal development.
- Opportunity for personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development*.

* This will occur partly during the tutor programme and partly in PSHE lessons. PSHE is taught through dedicated lessons in Years 8-11.

7. Statutory compliance

Our curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including:

- National Curriculum and exam board specifications.
- Equality Act 2010.
- SEND Code of Practice.
- Statutory guidance on PSHE, RSE, SMSC, and British Values.

8. Parental Involvement

We value partnership with parents and:

- Offer regular communication through consultation evenings and reports.
- Provide opportunities for curriculum discussion and feedback.
- Encourage parental involvement in guided choices and wider school life.



9. Review

The whole school curriculum is reviewed annually and presented to the Full Governing Body.

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<https://website.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk/index.php/communications/information-management-and-data-protection/>

The School's Data Protection Officer is the Head of Governance and Compliance and can be contacted at Droitwich Spa High School and Sixth Form Centre, Briar Mill, Droitwich, WR9 0AA or by email at privacy@droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk