



## CURRICULUM POLICY

Reviewed: March 2022

Review date: March 2023

Person responsible for policy: JMB

## 1. Introduction

The school will meet all statutory requirements of the curriculum in its programmes of study to address the needs of all learners. It will respond to changes and opportunities within the curriculum as outlined by the Department for Education.

The curriculum will reflect the vision for the school:

‘At Droitwich Spa High School we aim to provide a first class education for the young people in this area in an environment that is caring yet challenging.

We have high expectations and we value excellence. We want our students to become self confident, rounded individuals, life long learners who will find fulfilment in a complex and demanding world.

We hold to the traditional values of respect, honesty, hard work, determination and good manners, but we also wish to encourage boldness, creativity, team work and innovation.’

## 2. The school will provide:

- Well-planned opportunities to learn, make progress and achieve. This includes learning subject knowledge and cross curricular skills such as literacy, numeracy, communication and ICT.
- Opportunity for personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development\*.
- Equality of opportunity to all students.
- A curriculum for all students which delivers the appropriate National Curriculum Programmes of Study and all of the Core Curriculum.
- A mini option process at the end of Year 9 that retains breadth but also allows students to begin to specialise.
- Option choices at KS4 that ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, including work related learning, the opportunity to study aesthetic, practical and vocational subjects as well as accelerated learning opportunities, extended study outside of timetabled Curriculum time and the opportunity to achieve alternative qualifications to GCSEs and A levels.
- A wide range of Post 16 courses to cater for the needs, as far as practicable, of students entering Year 12 and to encourage further participation in learning
- Alternative qualifications to GCSE and GCE courses where appropriate.
- Entry for nationally recognised qualifications, appropriate to the ability and potential of each child, to support applications for employment, further and higher education and training.
- Careers Education and Information, Advice and Guidance to support student choice.
- Modified Schemes of Work, differentiated materials and appropriate support, where applicable, for students with Special Educational Needs, [including the more able, gifted and talented].
- Teaching groups organised, where practicable and appropriate, according to ability in order to allow differentiated approaches to learning and teaching.
- Rigorous and systematic assessment of students’ work to monitor students’ progress in line with the school Assessment and Marking Policy.
- An ethos and curriculum structure that encourages all stakeholders not view GCSEs and A Levels as a ‘means to an end’ and instead value learning for learning’s sake today and also once they have left us.
- A high quality programme of staff training, based on development needs, to raise standards of teaching across the curriculum.

Responsibility for the curriculum is shared between the Headteacher, the Governing Body and the Department for Education.

\* This will occur partly during the tutor programme and partly in PSHE lessons. PSHE is taught through dedicated lessons in Years 8 and 9. From September 2021, students in Year 10 will use part of the PE lesson allocation to undertake their PSHE curriculum (a large proportion of which would be delivered by a PSHE specialist). Please see the separate PSHE policy for more detail.

### **3. Extra-Curricular Opportunities**

A rich programme of extra-curricular learning opportunities increases the main curriculum by providing a wide range of cultural, sporting, music and drama activities which are open to all students. Field trips, exchanges, international links, visits to galleries, theatres, museums, conferences, universities and alternative curricular experiences enhance many areas of study as well as the personal and social development of students. A broad range of community involvement ensures that students benefit from additional expertise and resources within the local community.

### **4. Gifted and Talented Students**

The inclusive school Gifted and Talented policy aims to give potential benefit across a wide range of students. This includes not only gifted academic learners but also talented learners in vocational areas, sport, music, art design or creative and performing arts. The Gifted and Talented Policy provides more detail. We regularly review our optional courses as well as our methodology for setting in order to ensure that we are stretching our most gifted and talented students.

### **5. Key Stage 3**

Our Key Stage 3 curriculum is broad and balanced, covering the requirements of the National Curriculum. Groups in some subjects are organised by ability, some subjects are taught in mixed ability groups.

Students in Years 8 study English and Drama, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, French, German (some students will study only one language), Computer Science and Digital Media, Religious Studies, PSHE, Design and Technology, Food Preparation and Nutrition, Music, Art and PE. Students in Year 9 will personalise their individual curriculum through some option choices while continuing with their Core curriculum.

Some students will follow an Inclusion programme for part of their Key Stage 3 curriculum and some will have additional support with Literacy and/or Numeracy through small group work, through one to one tuition or by being part of the Access group to boost basic skills. This provision is extended slightly in Year 9 with the inclusion of the Forest School programme in place of one 'regular' option for Year 9 students.

### **6. Key Stage 4**

- a. Every student's Key Stage 4 programme of study is likely to look different and therefore personalised to their preferences. Each student will be able to choose from a wide range of courses, some of which have been studied in Key Stage 3 and some which are new to them. The list of options is published on our website (<https://website.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk/index.php/curriculum/year-9-into-year-10-options/>)

All students will study the core National Curriculum of English, Maths, Science, PE\* and RE\*\* and the majority of students choose 3 additional options. Where appropriate to ability levels, some students may choose to study the three sciences (Biology, Physics and Chemistry) as separate GCSEs through the Specialist Science Pathway.

\* students do not sit public examinations in PE unless they also take it as an option

\*\* from September 2021 students do not sit public examinations in RE unless they also take it as an option.

Students on the Specialist Science Pathway are expected to choose one of History, Geography, French or German as one of their options. With few exceptions (see b below) all other students are required to choose one of History, Geography, French or German. It is important to note that without this insistence, the school's score in publicly published performance tables would reduce considerably. Students then have two 'free' picks.

Wherever possible a student's choices are met and the school works very hard to try to ensure that this happens but it is not always possible. Some groups may be over subscribed and some groups may be so small that they are not viable, however, the vast majority of students do get their choices. If there is a problem, the student will be spoken to. Choices will be monitored and some students may be given further advice to ensure that they are on the most appropriate pathway for them.

Guidance is given to students and their parents at an Options Information Evening. Subject staff can be consulted about progress in the curriculum at Parent Consultation Evenings at several points in the year.

- b. For some students a 'regular diet' of three GCSEs (or equivalents) is not something they can access successfully. Below are some of the alternative arrangements that are made on a strictly case by case basis:
  - a. Spending time in SEN in place of one option. This affords the student the chance to revisit work from other lessons to better consolidate their knowledge.
  - b. Choosing an in-house option that doesn't result in a qualification of equal value to a GCSE. For example, an option column choice in 'Animal Care' may result in a series of AQA unit awards.
  - c. A 'college' course at an external provider, for example in Hair and Beauty. This may also not result in a qualification equal to the value of a GCSE.
  - d. Work experience.
- c. Some students will choose GCSE courses which are assessed by terminal examinations at the end of the course and some will choose courses such as Cambridge Nationals which have more coursework-based assessment, with some examinations. Some students will opt for a mixture of GCSE and GCSE equivalent courses. In English, Maths and Science, where applicable to students' needs they may be entered for a qualification that is of a lower value than a GCSE.

## 7. Key Stage 5

The Sixth Form curriculum is broad and varied, offering a wide choice of courses to students. The majority of students will study 3 subjects in Year 12 and Year 13 plus an enrichment option in Year 12 but some may study more.

The range of courses includes BTEC courses and Applied A levels as well as more 'traditional' subjects and increasingly students mix and match these different courses.

All students who do not achieve a grade 4 at GCSE level in English and /or Maths will engage in a GCSE resit programme in Key Stage 5 and there is a programme available to support the development of mathematical skills for students who do not study A level Maths but who do study subjects where proficiency in mathematical skills is important.

Many additional extra-curricular opportunities allow students to develop their confidence, independence and leadership skills – qualities which are highly valued by universities and employers. Guidance and support is given to students through tutoring and focused days to prepare for Higher Education, Gap Year activities, employment and other Post-18 options.

Information on all aspects of the Key Stage 5 curriculum is contained in the Sixth Form prospectus.

## 8. Parental Involvement

The school invites parents to become fully involved with their child's education. Where there is cause for parental concern, consultation may take place at any time by appointment.

## 9. Review

The whole school curriculum is reviewed annually and presented to the School Improvement Committee of Governors.

Droitwich Spa High School and Sixth Form Centre takes its responsibilities as a data controller and data processor seriously and are committed to using any personal data collected and held in accordance with the law. The schools policies, privacy notices and forms in relation to personal data are available for you to view on our web site at [www.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk](http://www.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk) or by using the <https://website.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk/index.php/communications/information-management-and-data-protection/>

The School's Data Protection Officer is the *Governance Manager* who 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](mailto:privacy@droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk)