



The Priory School

Educating Students for Success in Life

Name of policy	Curriculum
Statutory	Yes
Date policy was updated	Autumn 2020
Date of next review	Autumn 2021
Governors committee	Curriculum and Progress
Member of staff responsible for the policy	Faye Nearney

Curriculum Policy

CURRICULUM INTENT

The curriculum at The Priory School is broad and balanced and designed to enable students of all abilities to succeed. The curriculum is designed, through relevant, engaging and enjoyable activity, to encourage each student to develop her/his intellectual, physical and personal qualities to the full. During the current Coronavirus pandemic, we are still striving to deliver our broad and balanced curriculum to all our students. Schemes of work have been modified to cater for subjects being taught in non-specialist rooms and risk assessments are in place for all practical subjects to ensure the students remain safe during their lessons. We continue to deliver all subjects to all years. The curriculum enables each student to develop as an individual through a focus on our school vision of Resilience, Responsibility and Respect. We believe that students should mature both intellectually and as individuals during their time with us, so they leave the school prepared both academically and personally for the next stage in their lives. To achieve this our curriculum aims to do the following:

- Promote Good and Outstanding teaching
- Have high expectations of all students in all areas of school life in line with their abilities
- Encourage students' resilience, self-esteem and sense of individual purpose
- Value all students as individuals so that they can achieve their full academic and personal potential
- Provide an environment to allow students to develop moral and spiritual values
- Assist students to develop critical abilities, independence of thought and a lifelong enthusiasm for learning
- Establish mutual respect between all members of the school community
- Provide a broad curriculum which values the strengths of each subject/student equally
- Create a positive, secure and purposeful atmosphere
- Recognise that mistakes provide a learning opportunity
- Foster links with parents/carers and the wider community
- Encourage excellence in every area of school life
- Embrace the impact of technology on the lives of students today
- Develop thinking skills through our Thinking Matters programme
- Develop a blended learning approach to learning through the use of Chromebooks and Google classroom, to enhance the learning experience for students

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

1.1 Key Stage 3

The Key Stage 3 curriculum ensures a foundation for a coherent programme of provision that meets the needs of learners and provides a genuine gateway to learning at Post-14 and beyond.

- Where it exists for a department the expectation is that the department will follow the National Curriculum and apply the schools Assessment criteria to judge student progress at KS3 (Life without levels)
- There are two high attaining form groups, one in each half of the year group. The remaining forms are mixed ability although there may be a higher number of DA students or SEND students in a form to allow resources to be allocated more effectively.

- Setting arrangements – each year group is split into two half year bands. All subjects are taught in mixed ability groups with the exception of Maths & Computing, and MFL (from Y7) and Science and English (from Year 8) due to the hierarchical nature of the subject content
- Schemes of learning at KS3 show forward planning for the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Links to Raising Aspirations are explicit as are literacy and intent for DA and SEND students
- Thinking frames are used extensively to help students develop their thinking and processing skills in order to help them to retain knowledge in the long term
- Each department produces a curriculum plan which shows the intent for the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the year, together with planned assessment dates and the analysis of the results. Curriculum plans will be published on the school website from June 2020 to allow parents to follow what their child is learning in school.
- Students in KS3 will have the opportunity to learn one language dependent on which half of the year group they are; French or Spanish.
- The school operates an individualised curriculum for identified students to allow them to ‘catch up’ with their peers. Identified students, in consultation with their parents will be removed from specific subjects to catch up in maths and English.

Curriculum menu for KS3 2020 - 2021

Subject	Year 7 – timing of lessons (hours)	Year 8 – timing of lessons (hours)	Year 9 – timing of lessons (hours)
English (one hour of literacy in year 7)	8	7	8
Maths	6	6	6
Science	6	6	7
MFL	5	5	5
Tech	3	4	3
History	3	3	3
Geography	3	3	3
RE	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2
Art	3	3	3
PE	5	5	4
Computing	3	3	3
Drama	1	1	1

1.2 Key Stage 4 (September 2020)

The Post-14 curriculum at The Priory School provides continuity and progression from the breadth of subjects studied at Key Stage 3. The Post 14 curriculum will allow students to progress onto relevant Post 16 learning pathways whether at The Priory School or with other providers. Students will take at least 5 academic subjects regardless of the learning pathway they are allocated. There are 3 main Learning pathways. For a small number of students an additional pathway will be created based on the specific learning needs of those students. The curriculum ensures a more individualised learning experience where there is equality of opportunity for all to succeed.

Allocation of learning pathways

Using prior attainment data (KS2/3), teacher assessment of suitability and projected GCSE target grades (1-9) students will be allocated a particular learning pathway. Communication with students and parents over the learning pathways will include:

- Familiarisation with subject content through Raising Aspiration lessons and subject taster sessions;
- Y9 Learning pathway evening;
- Y9 parents evening;
- 121 interview with a member of SLT and relevant senior teachers from the Pastoral team to discuss learning pathways.

Subjects within the specific learning pathways will have certain criteria attached to them due to the demands of the course. Due to curriculum constraints some subjects will only operate 1 GCSE group and where there is not enough numbers to deliver an economically viable group a subject will not run. The school will have the final say on the allocation of students to specific courses and learning pathways.

Learning pathway 1

This route offers a maximum of 9 qualifications (including English Language & Literature, Mathematics, double Science and at least one humanity (Geography or History)). Students will have up to 3 additional subjects to take dependent on ability and guidance from the school. Students with predicted GCSE target grades of 4 and below would be placed on this learning pathway. The curriculum is further personalised for a few students to participate in an increased flexibility programme which could include alternative provision, AQA unit awards, outdoor education, college courses and work experience. A few students may not study 8 qualifications on this learning route but we believe this is right for these individual students who have a completely personalised curriculum which allows them to succeed.

Learning pathway 2

This route offers a maximum of 10 qualifications (including English Language & Literature, Mathematics, triple / double Science and at least one humanity (Geography or History)). Students will have three additional subjects to take. Students with predicted GCSE targets grade of 5 and above would be placed on this learning pathway.

Learning pathway 3 (Ebacc)

This route offers a maximum of 10 qualifications (including English Language & Literature, Mathematics, triple / double Science, at least one humanity (Geography or History) and one language (French or Spanish)). Students will have two other subjects to take. Students with predicted GCSE targets of 5 and above would be placed on this learning pathway.

Learning pathway 1	Learning pathway 2	Learning pathway 3 (Ebacc)
Core curriculum to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language English Literature Maths Double Science History and/or Geography Core PE Core Philosophy and Ethics Up to 3 additional subjects 	Core curriculum to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language English Literature Maths Double/Triple Science History and/or Geography Core PE Core Philosophy and Ethics 3 additional subjects 	Core curriculum to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language English Literature Maths Double/Triple Science History and/or Geography French or Spanish Core PE Core Philosophy and Ethics 2 additional subjects

KS4 curriculum menu 2020 – 2022

Learning Pathway 1			Y10 allocation of hours (Sept 2020)
English Language and Literature (GCSE)			7
Maths (GCSE)			6
Science (GCSE)			10
Core Philosophy and Ethics			1
Humanity (Geography or History) GCSE			6
Up to 3 additional subjects			3 x 5
Alternative provision 1 * (Allocated by the school)	Design and Technology GCSE. Timber based materials	Music * GCSE	
Art GCSE	Enterprise BTEC	Music Practice BTEC	
Core support 1 * (Allocated by the school)	Food & Nutrition GCSE	Sport Studies OCR National	
Creative Media Production BTEC	Health & Social Care BTEC	Performing Arts BTEC	
Design and Technology GCSE. Papers and Boards	Interactive Media NCFE		
	Media Studies GCSE		
Core PE			5
Total			50

Learning Pathway 2			Y10 allocation of hours (Sept 2020)
English Language and Literature (GCSE)			7
Maths (GCSE)			7
Science (GCSE)			10
Core Philosophy and Ethics			1
Humanity (Geography or History) GCSE			6
3 additional subjects			3 x 5
Art GCSE	French GCSE	Performing Arts BTEC	
Business Studies GCSE	Health & Social Care BTEC	Philosophy & Ethics GCSE	
Computer Science* GCSE	History GCSE	Psychology* GCSE	

Design and Technology GCSE. Papers and Boards	Interactive Media NCFE	Sociology* GCSE	
Design and Technology GCSE. Timber based materials	Media Studies GCSE	Spanish GCSE	
	Music* GCSE		
Enterprise BTEC	Music Practice BTEC	Sport Studies OCR National	
Food & Nutrition GCSE	PE GCSE*		
PE			4
Total			50

Learning Pathway 3 (EBacc)			Year 10 allocation of hours (Sept 2020)	
English Language and Literature (GCSE)			7	
Maths (GCSE)			7	
Science (GCSE)			10	
Core Philosophy and Ethics			1	
Humanity (Geography or History) (GCSE)			6	
Language (French or Spanish) (GCSE)			5	
2 additional subjects			2 x 5	
Art GCSE	Food and Nutrition GCSE	Performing Arts BTEC		
Business Studies GCSE	Health & Social Care BTEC	Philosophy & Ethics GCSE		
Computer Science* GCSE	History GCSE	Psychology* GCSE		
Creative Computing and Project Management NCFE	Media Studies GCSE	Sociology* GCSE		
Design and Technology GCSE (Papers and boards)	Music* GCSE	Sport Studies OCR National		
Design and Technology GCSE (Timber based materials)	Music Practice BTEC			
Enterprise BTEC	PE GCSE*			
PE				4
Total				50

Subject with additional criteria needed to study them.

Subject	Criteria
Computer Science*	Target grade 5 in Maths
Sociology*	Target grade 4 in English
Psychology*	Target grade 5 in Science
PE GCSE*	Target grade 5 in Science
Music*	Minimum of grade 2 Music

1.3 Post 16

The curriculum at Post-16 enables progression of learning from Key Stage 4. The Priory School is a member of the Hitchin Post 16 consortium which allows a greater range of subject opportunities. Post 16 students have option to be taught across three different sites within Hitchin; The Priory School, Hitchin Boys School and Hitchin Girls School. All students participate in a Raising Aspirations programme and receive specific guidance through the Connexions service. The consortium is currently reviewing which T levels would be appropriate to run as part of our Post 16 provision.

Learning pathways at Post 16

- **Learning pathway 1** – Students undertake a BTEC National in Business at Level 3, equivalent to two A levels and choose one A level subject or BTEC to complement their studies. Work Experience is undertaken in Year 12 as part of the two year course.
- **Learning pathway 2** – is a traditional A level course, studied over a two year period. Students are offered the opportunity of studying the EPQ L3. Most students will study 3 A Levels which will be examined at the end of Year 13.

Learning Route 1	BTEC Level 3	BTEC Business – A two year course equivalent to two A Levels Students can also opt into an A Level course in a chosen subject or an additional BTEC course.		
Learning Route 2	A Level (27 - 30 hours)	Art	French	Sociology
		Biology	Food and nutrition	Psychology
		Business	Geography	Spanish
		Business and Economics	German	BTEC ICT/Cambridge Technical in IT
		Chemistry	Greek	BTEC Music Tec
		Classical Civilisation	Government and Politics	BTEC Sport
		Computer studies	History	BTEC Science
		Criminology	Latin	BTEC Health and Social
		Product Design	Maths	BTEC Performing Arts
		Drama	Media	
		Economics	Music	
		English Language	Physics	
		English Literature	PE	
		English lang/lit	Philosophy and Ethics	

CURRICULUM IMPACT - Monitoring and Evaluation

2.1 Governors' Curriculum and Progress committee review the Curriculum Policy on an annual basis.

2.2 SLT ensure that all curriculum updates are cascaded to colleagues and students and that the learning needs of students take priority through the SEF and SIP.

2.3 Department area review practice and procedures and ensure that the most appropriate specifications are chosen to meet student needs

2.4 SLT and Middle Leaders will monitor the operation of this policy as part of their general monitoring role. The major vehicles for doing so are itemised below.

Lesson observation

- All teaching staff will be monitored in accordance with procedures outlined in the performance appraisal policy

Work Scrutiny

- Work scrutiny will be carried out regularly by SLT and by departments.
- Marking of work in accordance with the school's marking policy and the use of yellow tracking sheets to ensure students are aware of the progress they are making will be checked as part of the scrutiny.

Homework Diary and Show my Homework Checks

- SLT and Heads of Year will monitor use of Google Classroom as part of the quality assurance process.

Exam Performance Analysis

- These will be carried out with the Head and SLT link in September/October.
- A review will also take place following pre-public exam results.
- All teaching staff are expected to be able to use SISRA to analyse the progress of their teaching groups.
- Where there is a concern about the suitability of a course for our students, research will be carried out by the HOD and DHT and suggested alternatives taken to SLT for a decision to be made

SLT Link

- Part of the role of the SLT link meetings is to ensure compliance of the curriculum policy.

Curriculum review

- The curriculum will be reviewed annually to ensure it meets the needs of the students and also any accountability measures.

Performance tables

- Data included in the DfE performance tables changes annually. The curriculum review will ensure that the curriculum at the priory school meets the needs of our learners, whilst at the same time ensuring that the school meets the expectations of the Performance Tables.

Associated policies

Teaching and Learning	Behaviour for Learning	Equality and Diversity
SEND	Assessment, recording and reporting	Raising Aspirations
SRE policy as part of the SMSC	Exams Policy	BTEC policy
Literacy	Teaching and Learning	Social Media