



The Priory School

Educating Students for Success in Life

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|---|--------------------------------|
| Name of policy | Curriculum |
| Statutory | No |
| Date policy was updated | Autumn 2023 |
| Date of next review | Autumn 2024 |
| 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. 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 a blended learning approach to learning through the use of Chromebooks and Google classroom, to enhance the learning experience for students
- Provide an understanding of different ethnic groups, to promote tolerance and equality.
- Support of our Equality and Diversity policy to promote racial harmony through understanding and acceptance of everyone in our school community

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. Timing for each subject are benchmarked annually against other schools using analysis from Herts for Learning to ensure that hours allocated to each subject are in line with the majority of other schools.

- 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 in Year 7 with the exception of Maths. Science and English are set 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, RSHE and diversity 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.
- 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. This is overseen by the Learning Support Department.
- RSHE is delivered through a lesson once per fortnight which moves through the timetable so as not to reduce teaching times of other subjects. RSHE delivery is mapped to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are delivered. Further details of RSHE delivery can be found in our RSHE policy.
- Students in Year 7 have a reading assessment to identify if interventions are required to support them. The learning support department identifies the appropriate intervention for each student.
- Oracy is a thread through all areas of the curriculum in all Key Stages. It is modelled by staff and developed by students, so that they are given the tools to become excellent communicators. Students are taught about the importance of the non-verbal features of language. Speaking using standard English, using stress, rhythm, and intonation (prosodic features) as well as an appropriate speed and volume are all important features of oracy that we encourage our students to use across the curriculum.

Curriculum menu for KS3 2023 - 2024

| 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) | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Maths | 7 | 6 | 6 |
| Science | 6 | 6 | 7 |
| MFL | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Tech | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| History | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Geography | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| P&E | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Music | 2 | 2 | 2 |

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|-----------|---|--------------------|---|
| Art | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| PE | 5 | 4 + 1hr TPS Award* | 4 |
| Computing | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Drama | 1 | 1 | 1 |

*TPS Award is a precursor for the Duke of Edinburg award. All students participate in this programme which involves first Aid, outdoor education, volunteering, skill acquisition and physical activity

1.2 Key Stage 4 (September 2023)

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. Students on this pathway still have access to the subjects in the learning pathways but may attend college for one of their option subjects. In Year 10 there are no students on pathway 1 attending college (Sept 2023).

All KS4 students follow specifications from the exam boards which adhere to the National Curriculum. For subjects computing and citizenship, whole school audits are carried out to ensure all aspects of the National Curriculum are still delivered, for example mapping computing across other subjects or cross checking the citizenship delivery meets the NC requirements. In some instances these are delivered as cross curricular themes.

RSHE is delivered following the same model as KS3 with lessons rotating through the timetable.

For the academic year 2023 – 2024, RE at KS4 will be delivered through off timetables days rather than taught lessons. This will be reviewed for the following academic year. We follow the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus, produced by SACRE to ensure we fully deliver the required curriculum

Students in Year 10 have a further reading assessment with interventions overseen by the learning Support department for students identified as having a need.

Allocation of learning pathways

Using prior attainment data (KS2/3), CATs data, 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.
- Taster sessions and a subject market place

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. The school actively promotes MFL study to students, in a drive to move towards meeting the DfE EBacc target, however, we do not have a policy where all students are required to study a language. Students are encouraged to study subjects they will enjoy and achieve well at to improve their life chances. Our high expectations of students' means that all subjects are available to all students, with support and guidance in place to ensure students choose the courses for which they are best suited.

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. There are currently no students on this pathway in Year 10.

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 Respect and Responsibility 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 Respect and Responsibility 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 Respect and Responsibility 2 additional subjects |

KS4 curriculum menu 2023 – 2025

| Learning Pathway 1 | Year 10 allocation of hours (Sept 2023) | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| English Language and Literature (GCSE) | 7 | |
| Maths (GCSE) | 7 | |
| Science (GCSE) | 10 | |
| Humanity (Geography or History) GCSE | 6 | |
| Core PE | 5 | |
| Up to 3 additional subjects | | |
| College | Enterprise BTEC | Music Practice BTEC |
| Art GCSE | Film Studies GCSE | OCR National in Sport Studies |
| Core support 1 * additional English and Maths (Allocated by the school) | Health & Social Care BTEC | Performing Arts BTEC |
| Creative Media (Computing department) BTEC | Media Studies GCSE | Philosophy and Ethics GCSE |
| Design and Technology and Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE | Music * GCSE | |
| | | 3 x 5 |

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|--|-----------|
| Enterprise BTEC | | | |
| Total | | | 50 |

| Learning Pathway 2 | | | Year 10 allocation of hours (Sept 2023) |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| English Language and Literature (GCSE) | | | 7 |
| Maths (GCSE) | | | 7 |
| Science (GCSE) | | | 10 |
| Humanity (Geography or History) GCSE | | | 6 |
| Core PE | | | 5 |
| 3 additional subjects | | | 3 x 5 |
| Art GCSE | Health & Social Care BTEC | Psychology* GCSE | |
| Business Studies GCSE | History GCSE | Sociology* GCSE | |
| Computer Science* GCSE | Media Studies GCSE | Spanish GCSE | |
| Creative Media (Computing department) BTEC | Music* GCSE | Sport Studies OCR National | |
| Design and Technology and Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE | Music Practice BTEC | | |
| Enterprise BTEC | PE GCSE* | | |
| Film Studies GCSE | Performing Arts BTEC | | |
| French GCSE | Philosophy & Ethics GCSE | | |
| Total | | | 50 |

| Learning Pathway 3 (EBacc) | | | Year 10 allocation of hours (Sept 2023) |
|---|----------------------|----------------------------|---|
| English Language and Literature (GCSE) | | | 7 |
| Maths (GCSE) | | | 7 |
| Science (GCSE) | | | 10 |
| Humanity (Geography or History) (GCSE) | | | 6 |
| Language (French or Spanish) (GCSE) | | | 5 |
| Core PE | | | 5 |
| 2 additional subjects | | | 2 x 5 |
| Art GCSE | Health & Social Care | Performing Arts BTEC | |
| Business Studies GCSE | History GCSE | Psychology* GCSE | |
| Computer Science* GCSE | Media Studies GCSE | Sociology* GCSE | |
| Creative Media (Computing Department) BTEC | Music* GCSE | Sport Studies OCR National | |
| Design and Technology and Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE | Music Practice BTEC | | |
| Enterprise BTEC | PE GCSE* | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| Film Studies GCSE | Philosophy & Ethics GCSE | | |
| 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 Services for Young People. The advice given to students is broad and balanced and takes into account the requirements of the Baker clause. The school has been successful in its application to deliver T levels from September 2024 in Health Science. RSHE is delivered in line with the whole school programme, with lessons once per fortnight.

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** – LR2 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.

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|-------------------------|----------------------------|--|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 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 | Philosophy and Ethics |
| | | Biology | Food and nutrition | Product Design |
| | | Business | Further Maths | Psychology |
| | | Business and Economics | Geography | Sociology |
| | | Chemistry | German | Spanish |
| | | Classical Civilisation | Greek | BTEC ICT/Cambridge Technical in IT |
| | | Computer studies | Government and Politics | BTEC Music Tec |
| | | Criminology WJEC | History | BTEC Sport |
| | | Product Design | Latin | BTEC Investigative Science |
| | | Drama | Maths | BTEC Health and Social |
| | | Economics | Media Studies | BTEC Performing Arts |
| | | English Language | Music | BTEC Sound Engineering |
| | | English Literature | Physics | BTEC Travel and Tourism |
| | | English lang/lit | PE | BTEC Digital Media |

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.

Departmental Deep Dives

- This process will include a meeting with the HOD, learning walks, work scrutinies and meetings with students.

Lesson observation

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

Raising Standards Meetings

- HODs will meet with the KS4 or KS5 Raising Standards Leader twice a year to look at student progress and interventions

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 on Google Classroom

- 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 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 primary school meets the needs of our learners, whilst at the same time ensuring that the school meets the expectations of the Performance Tables.

Governor link visits

- Governors will visit departments to gain a better understating of the functioning of the school and review progress against the SIP.

Associated policies

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Teaching and Learning | Behaviour for Learning | Equality and Diversity |
| SEND | Assessment | Raising Aspirations |
| RSHE | Exams Policy | BTEC policy |
| Visiting Speaker | Teaching and Learning | Online Learning |