

# NOTRE DAME SENIOR SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

NOTRE  
DAME  
SCHOOL



## **Aims**

In line with the mission statement of the school all pupils are given a full-time, supervised, broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of our pupils, to prepare them for their futures and the next stage of education and for the world of work.

Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities that seek to identify and develop talents in artistic, cultural and sporting pursuits as well as the academic. Opportunities for personal and social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are an integral part of the curriculum and feature where possible in all lessons and emphasised particularly through the PSHEE programme. Pupils are supported to develop self-confidence and self-esteem through the teaching and learning, and support from staff.

Staff are prohibited from promoting partisan political views and are required to ensure that political issues are presented with a balance of opposing views in school, on trips or at extra-curricular events.

### **The school, in line with its mission, will:**

- cater for the needs of individual pupils from all ethnic and social groups, including the most able and those who are experiencing learning difficulties;
- cater for those pupils who have an Educational Health and Care Plan agreed by the LEA;
- provide lessons in written and spoken English for those for whom English is an additional language;
- facilitate pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills and qualities which will help them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, spiritually, morally and aesthetically, so that they may become independent, responsible, useful, thoughtful, confident and considerate members of the community;
- develop an understanding of citizenship, rights and responsibilities, a respect for criminal and civil law, an understanding of the role of public institutions and services in England;
- encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- prepare pupils for life in British society;
- encourage respect for other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:
  - a) age
  - b) disability
  - c) gender reassignment
  - d) marriage and civil partnership
  - e) pregnancy and maternity
  - f) race
  - g) religion or belief
  - h) sex
  - i) sexual orientation;
- promote a culture of respect, tolerance and diversity;
- create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment;
- ensure that each pupil's education has continuity and progression;
- ensure that there is a match between the pupil and the tasks she is asked to perform;
- ensure that all pupils will have equal access to the curriculum in such a way that enables them to learn and make progress;
- recognise the crucial role which parents play in their children's education and make every effort to encourage parental involvement in the educational process;

- recognise the role of the Company of Mary Our Lady in supporting the educational philosophy of the school as stated in the mission statement.

**Through the curriculum pupils should:**

- learn how to learn and enjoy learning;
- develop communication skills;
- be able to listen and read to gain information and for pleasure, and be able to convey their meaning accurately and appropriately through speech and writing for a variety of purposes;
- know how to think and solve problems mathematically in a variety of situations, appreciating and understanding relationships and patterns in number, algebra and shape;
- be aware of the aesthetic and creative aspect of mathematics and be able to use skills of numeracy necessary for functioning in modern society;
- be able to read, speak, write and understand to a basic extent in either French, Spanish or German or Latin;
- be developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry, increasing their knowledge, and understanding of nature, materials and forces;
- develop their skills in the use of information and communication technology per se as well as to support the curriculum and to extend their knowledge through internet research;
- know how to use a library to support research;
- develop knowledge and understanding of the constituents of food and skills in its preparation as well as the importance of a healthy diet;
- know basic principles of health, hygiene and safety;
- develop knowledge of a range of processes involved in the creation of products using textile materials and be able to evaluate the processes and products;
- know about how geographical, historical and social aspects of the environment influence events and conditions now, and how human action and natural occurrences in the past have resonance in the present;
- acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health and develop coordination, tactical skills and control through taking part in a variety of physical pursuits and team sports;
- be given appropriate careers guidance as they move to the next key stage so that they can make an informed choice of what subjects to study;
- develop their aesthetic, creative and cultural awareness through the study of art, music and drama;
- develop their skills of studying so that they are 'learning how to learn';
- be able to study independently, think and learn for themselves;
- have knowledge and understanding of the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church together with other Christians and world religions;
- have a general knowledge of public institutions and services in England;
- have a general knowledge of economic well-being and financial capability, including personal finance, work-related learning and careers.

**Careers Education**

Careers education begins in Year 7 through PSHEE. It is presented throughout the school in an impartial manner, and is designed to allow pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and to understand and fulfil their potential. Pupils and parents are offered advice regarding GCSE and A Level optional subjects during the Autumn Term of Years 9 and 11.

Written information is provided giving general advice as well as subject specific advice in the Year 9 Options Booklet and Sixth Form prospectus. Presentations from the Assistant Head (Curriculum) as well as the relevant Heads of Year and Careers Coordinator support and elaborate on the written

information provided. In Year 10, individual strengths and aptitudes are explored and in Year 11 further insight into likely careers is achieved through psychometric testing and feedback interviews.

In the Sixth Form students are encouraged and supported in exploring the most suitable University courses.

### **The Curriculum**

The taught academic curriculum is broadly covered in the following way:

#### **Years 7, 8, 9**

At Key Stage 3, pupils study a wide range of subjects. These include:

- Religious Education (Theology)
- English
- Mathematics
- Sciences
- History
- Geography
- French, German, Spanish
- Latin
- Music
- Textiles
- Food and Nutrition
- Computer Science
- Physical Education and Swimming (in Years 7 and 8 only)
- Drama
- Art

In addition, there is a weekly Personal, Social and Health and Economics Education (PSHEE) lesson.

#### **Setting**

At the beginning of Year 7 mixed ability teaching groups are formed, and there is setting in Mathematics at half term in October.

At the beginning of Year 8 there is also independent setting for MFL and English. In addition, the setting in Mathematics governs sets in Science.

From Year 9, setting in Science is independent of Mathematics. In Years 10 and 11, the setting in English governs sets in Religious Education.

#### **Languages**

In Years 7 and 8, pupils are taught French, Spanish and Latin.

In Year 9, pupils continue with their main language from Year 8, (French or Spanish) plus a second language chosen from French, Spanish German or Latin. Special provision can be made for pupils who wish to learn Latin as well as two modern languages.

#### **Years 10 & 11**

Pupils study between 9 - 11 GCSE subjects. The compulsory subjects include:

Religious Education, English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, Sciences, a Modern Foreign Language

Pupils can choose up to three further subjects which ideally should include:

- a humanities subject and

- an artistic or practical subject

Occasionally, on the recommendation of the Learning Support department, a pupil with particular learning difficulties may opt not to take a Modern Foreign Language at GCSE.

In addition, all pupils continue to have lessons in Physical Education and PSHEE.

### **Years 12 & 13**

Most students study four subjects to AS Level in the Lower Sixth and three subjects to A Level in the Upper Sixth. For those who wish to, there is an option to take the Extended Project Qualification.

The curriculum is expanded to include several subjects not previously offered, including: Business Studies, Economics, Classical Civilisation, Psychology, Sociology and History of Art.

All continue to have PE lessons as well as a programme of Religious and General Studies. Each week a lesson is set aside for activities. A separate Sixth Form prospectus is available on request.

### **Learning Support**

Individual lessons may be provided, on the recommendation of the Learning Support department, for pupils with particular learning difficulties or those who speak English as an additional language and need support to access the curriculum. In these cases, pupils study one modern language instead of two and will have some supervised study in place of those lessons.

### **Subject Policies**

Each subject has a policy of its own, setting out how it meets the aims of the curriculum stated above, including detailed schemes of work. Online curriculum documents for parents are available on Firefly.

There are other general whole school policies relating to the curriculum that include:

- Teaching and Learning
- Homework
- Assessment
- Tracking and Progress
- Very Able Students (above and beyond the curriculum)
- LDD-SEND
- EAL
- Trips and Visits
- PSHEE
- Careers
- SMSC

There is a range of extra-curricular activities that can be pursued in the lunch hour, after school, in the weekly activity time or, in the case of private lessons for drama or musical instruments, during lesson time. Only KS3 pupils are withdrawn from lessons. This is done on a rotating basis so that the same lesson is not missed every week. No pupil is allowed to take more than two such private lessons. Teachers must be sympathetic when a lesson has been missed and make every reasonable effort to assist the pupil but it is ultimately the responsibility of the pupil to make up work that has been missed.

There is a separate list of extra-curricular activities which include team sports, aerobics, swimming, badminton, fitness, yoga, dance, choir, various orchestral groups, Duke of Edinburgh award scheme,

drama, Young Enterprise Scheme, community service, languages, Crest Awards, creative writing and computer programming.

Reviewed and updated September 2022