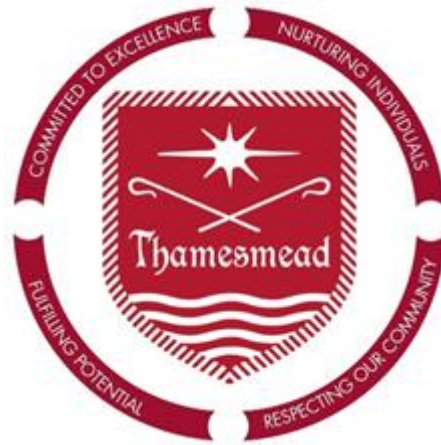


# THAMESMEAD SCHOOL



## CURRICULUM POLICY

Person responsible	Helen Eley
Governors sub-committee	Curriculum, Learning and Standards
Review period	Annually
Review	Summer 2023
Date of next review	Summer 2024

*'The curriculum is a framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage (intent); for translating that framework over time into a structure and narrative, within an institutional context (implementation) and for evaluating what knowledge and understanding pupils have gained against expectations (impact).'*

**(Ofsted, Curriculum: intent, implementation and impact.  
Development work for the new inspection framework 2017)**

# CURRICULUM POLICY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The curriculum can be defined as ‘the totality of the lived experiences a student receives as they move through the school’. This policy aims to outline how the curriculum is organised at Thamesmead School to ensure that all students gain the knowledge, skills and understanding required to be successful against both local and national expectations, as well as adult life. The policy encompasses:

- **Intent** – the rationale, purpose and design of the curriculum as a whole;
- **Implementation** – how the curriculum is organised and delivered in our specific context;
- **Impact** – how improvements in student knowledge, skills and understanding are measured.

Fundamentally this policy seeks to explain how Thamesmead has aligned its curriculum to meet the expectations of national policy objectives while also providing guidance for how subject leaders and classroom teachers should align their curriculum to meet whole-school expectations.

## 2. WHOLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM INTENT

Thamesmead School aims to provide our students with an innovative, creative, personalised and specified curriculum that offers a wide range of subject specific knowledge, conceptual knowledge and skills to enable them to make progress in the formal curriculum and beyond. Our curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and rigorous and is accessible to all regardless of age or ability. Our curriculum prepares students for the next stage of their education or training through academic, pastoral and enrichment routes and also provides opportunities for them to develop personal and social skills to enable them to become active and effective citizens in a 21st century global community.

At the core of our curriculum is the school vision which underpin all aspects of Thamesmead School, a commitment to excellence, the nurturing of all individuals, a respect for the school, local national and global communities, and opportunities for all learners to fulfil their potential now and in the future.

## 3. PRINCIPLES

The intent, implementation, and review of the curriculum at Thamesmead School is founded on the following principles.

That our curriculum:

- is innovative and well-considered
- provides breadth and depth of knowledge and experience
- is based on our shared values as a school community
- is reflexive and responsive to the needs of our students
- is aware of and works within established guidelines such as the National Curriculum (2014), but also places teachers as agents over curriculum design in their role as subject specialists
- lends equal weight to the importance of knowledge, skills and concepts
- is underpinned by a fundamental understanding of the importance of spoken and written language
- is relevant and engaging and is founded on notions of excellence
- makes effective use of appropriate and well considered assessment practice
- is accessible to all
- is constructed in discussion with leaders, teachers and learners
- places equal importance on both the pastoral curriculum and the formal academic curriculum
- provides students with the care, guidance and support to achieve their potential
- is representative and inclusive

- provides the knowledge, skills, and personal development to enable learners to move from and move to the next stage of their education and training

Within the school curriculum, the National Curriculum secures for all students, irrespective of social background, culture, race, gender, differences in ability and disabilities, an entitlement to a number of areas of learning, and to develop knowledge, understanding, skills, mastery and attitudes necessary for their self-fulfilment and development as active and responsible citizens in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

As an Academy we have the flexibility to adapt and extend the curriculum to ensure it best fits the needs of our students. At Thamesmead teachers have due regard to developing a more inclusive curriculum by setting suitable learning challenges; responding to students' diverse learning needs; and overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students.

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

#### **4. CURRICULUM INTENT**

The School Curriculum seeks to ensure outstanding academic and personal development by supporting and instilling the values of Thamesmead, distilled down into the mnemonic AIR:

##### **Ambition**

- Motivate students towards achieving ambitious personal and academic targets
- Develop an aspirational attitude towards learning and making excellent progress
- Challenge students to acquire the key knowledge, skills and understanding required for current and future success, as well as providing the basis for subsequent learning and behaviours to be successful in later life
- Build cumulatively deeper understanding and the capacity for skilful performance
- Provide a strong academic core through English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subject areas while giving equal value to STEM, Physical Education and the Arts
- Develop ambitious plans for the future through high quality, age-appropriate Careers Information Advice and Educational Guidance (CIAEG) to support future choices
- Promote high future aspirations with regards to future studies at university

##### **Inclusivity**

- Ensure students experience success across a broad and balanced curriculum
- Ensure students are able to access all aspects of our curriculum regardless of their starting points or context
- Ensure students receive an appropriate curriculum for their needs, including life skills, amended curriculum provision or alternative curriculum provision where appropriate
- Ensure students can use literacy and numeracy skills across a range of contexts
- Ensure high levels of student progress and achievement against national benchmarks
- Enable students to acquire a range of nationally recognised qualifications which hold currency for future career and education pathways
- Provide opportunities for students to develop their metacognition skills
- Build cumulatively the capacity for independent performance

##### **Rigour**

- Supported by the consistently applied Teaching and Learning policy
- Ensure all components are intentionally aligned, with learning outcomes clear and planned for
- Implementation is regularly reviewed and adapted as necessary
- Impact is judiciously reviewed through formative and summative assessments
- Cross-curricular concept links are recognised and unfailingly made explicit

## 5. CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION – WHOLE SCHOOL LEVEL

- All students will receive a broad and balanced three-year curriculum at Key Stage 3 by ensuring full coverage of National Curriculum subjects and entitlement areas
- Students will be taught a full range of subjects for as long as possible, ‘specialising’ only when necessary
- Through the use of a spiral curriculum, continuity and progression within the school and between phases of education will be ensured
- All students will receive a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 4 by offering a wide range of GCSE subjects and vocational equivalent qualifications. It will be the expectation that students will receive at least 9 qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4.
- GCSE subjects and non-GCSE equivalents at Key Stage 4 will be recognised in the performance tables in the year of examination
- All students will receive formal and regular Personal Development education through a rotation of collapsed lessons, which will include Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), Health Education and Online safety
- All students receive specialised Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE) education during Key Stage 3 and 4, with all students having the opportunity to undertake a GCSE in Religious Studies at the end of Year 10

### Curriculum at Key Stage 3

This is designed to provide a broad, balanced and comprehensive curriculum that provides a clear transition between primary and secondary school. Departments seek to work with primary partner schools to ensure that the transition is smooth and ensures continued success through Key Stage 3. The curriculum ensures that students experience a range of subject areas to inform and inspire their learning. Students cover a broad and balanced curriculum. There is a core programme of English, Maths, Science, Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE), Art, Computer Science, Dance (within the PE curriculum), Design Technology, Drama, Food and Nutrition, French or Spanish, Geography, History, Music and PE. There is a programme of Careers education that is threaded through the key stage. All students study age-appropriate Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) as part of the Personal Development programme in accordance with our policy in this area. The Personal Development provision also includes Health and Wellbeing and Living in the wider world topics. In Year 9, students start their GCSE RPE course to enable them to sit the exam in Year 10 in order to give them the best chance of success. Additionally, students have access to a rich and broad range of wider curricular opportunities, specific focus days and academic/pastoral support.

### Curriculum at Key Stage 4

It is important that all our students continue with a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 4 and in designing the Key Stage 4 curriculum we aim to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and also provide an inclusive curriculum for our students. Thamesmead expects students to study 9 GCSE courses.

#### Core offer

- English Language and English Literature
- Maths
- Science (Combined Trilogy or Triple)
- Religion, Philosophy & Ethics
- 3 x options

The options will, usually, reflect a broad and balanced curriculum. The only requirement in place is that students must study one of the English Baccalaureate subjects from Computer Science, French, Geography, History, Spanish or Triple Science. In so doing, students will meet all of the requirements for Progress 8. We recognise the English Baccalaureate measure of achievement will be important for some of our students and encourage them to take this into account when they select their option subjects for GCSE. We highly recommend that students take a language due to the transferable skills that this will enable them to develop but we recognise that for some students this is not in their best interest. Students continue to study Personal Development and PE in addition to subjects for which

they will be entered for GCSE examinations. The KS4 Personal Development provision includes Relationships and Sex Education, Carers, Study skills, Health & Wellbeing and Living in the Wider World topics.

### **Vocational courses**

In addition to the traditional GCSE options Thamesmead also offers some vocational courses. The school commits to ensuring that any such course has formal accreditation and that they are GCSE equivalent qualifications. The vocational courses currently being offered are Business and Enterprise and BTEC Sports Studies.

### **Subjects linked to the Thamesmead Admissions criteria**

Students who gain a place at Thamesmead under the Drama and Music admissions criteria are expected to take that subject at GCSE level.

### **Additional MFL provision**

Any student who is either bi-lingual or has English as an additional language and who wishes to gain a GCSE qualification in their home language, is able to do so at Thamesmead, subject to the qualification being available. We also give students the opportunity to study French or Spanish as a Twilight option.

### **Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)**

All students study age-appropriate Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) as part of the Personal Development programme in accordance with our policy in this area. Additionally, students have access to a rich and broad range of wider curricular opportunities and academic/pastoral support.

### **Support for KS4 SEND students**

Where there are Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and/or exceptional medical reasons, students may not do all 9 GCSEs. In such cases, students are likely to follow our SEND pathway and sit 8 GCSEs. The SEND pathway offers the student more 1:1 support, time to focus on literacy and numeracy, time to catch up work, engage with independent study or support with Home Learning. In the most exceptional of circumstances, and by agreement with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), students may stop studying a subject mid-way through a course. Such decisions will be based on any special educational needs and/or medical and a review of the student's data (progress, attainment, attendance, and approach to learning and so on). Explanations such as a student needing to study for their other subjects or because they no longer enjoy a subject are not considered reasonable. Any decision to be withdrawn from a subject will only be confirmed by the Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum).

### **Twilight subjects**

Students may study for an additional GCSE in Additional Maths or follow a Music Production course in order to gain an additional qualification. Both of these are run as twilight courses and are not considered to be part of the core offer of 9 GCSEs.

### **The Options programme**

The school has in place a very comprehensive Options Programme to guide students as they make their option choices. Assemblies are delivered by the Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum) and an external Careers Advisor, information evenings are run for parents, an Options booklet is made available and individual meetings are held with a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team to help students select the right courses for them. Every effort is made to accommodate students' wishes. However, due to timetabling restrictions their choices cannot be guaranteed.

The subjects followed by each year group and the hours allocated are detailed below:

	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Art &amp; Design</b>	2	2	2	6	7
<b>Business &amp; Enterprise</b>	-	-	-	-	7
<b>BTEC First Award in Sport</b>	-	-	-	6	7
<b>Design &amp; Technology</b>	3	3	3	6	7
<b>Drama</b>	2	2	2	6	7
<b>English</b>	8	8	8	9	8
<b>Geography</b>	3	3	3	6	7
<b>History</b>	3	3	3	6	7
<b>Computer Science</b>	2	2	2	6	7
<b>Mathematics</b>	8	8	8	7	9
<b>Modern Foreign Languages</b>	5	5	5	6	7
<b>Music</b>	2	2	2	6	7
<b>Physical Education (core)</b>	4	4	3	2	2
<b>GCSE PE</b>	-	-	-	6	7
<b>RPE</b>	2	2	4	4	-
<b>Science</b>	6	6	5	10	10
<b>Triple Science</b>	-	-	-	6	7

- Personal Development is taught across the school through a series of 20 x 1 hour lessons which are evenly distributed throughout the year and delivered by the form tutor

Curriculum Maps/ Learning Journeys clearly set out the content being delivered in each subject and an example of this can be found in Appendix A.

### **Cross-curricular links**

At Thamesmead we recognise that learning within a subject does not take place in isolation and that the curriculum is very much interlinked. Curriculum maps/Learning Journeys aim to show where links to other subjects can be found and it is the responsibility of each member of staff to highlight these links through their classroom delivery.

### **SMSC development**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted throughout school life, both in the curriculum and in the wider curriculum provision. Promoting personal, social, health and economic education along with racial and cultural diversity, are all seen as an integral part of our work. Our policy is that these should be delivered through the formal subject areas as well as through assemblies, the tutorial system and through the Personal Development programme. Focus days may be arranged to supplement this provision in exciting and challenging ways.

### **Religious Education (RPE)**

At Key Stage 3 the school follows the locally agreed syllabus (SACRE), which reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. A GCSE syllabus is followed for the exam that students will sit in Year 10. In Year 11 Religion Education is delivered through assemblies and tutor period activities.

### **Careers Education**

Thamesmead has a robust Careers Education programme securely in place to ensure that the requirements of the Gatsby Benchmarks are being met. Each subject ensures that links to careers are made known when appropriate and each year group is given the opportunity to take part in the annual Careers Fair. Outside speakers are also invited in to take assemblies e.g. representatives from 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges and to lead careers focus day such as the Enterprise day for year 7 and the Sea Cadets day for Year 9. Students also get the opportunity to experience life in the workplace through visits to businesses and organisations and through remote events.

## **6. CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION – SUBJECT LEVEL**

- Curriculum Leaders (CL) and Subject Leaders (SL) will ensure clear curriculum plans are available and disseminated to all staff delivering their subject areas
- Curriculum plans should be the product of clear research and communication of the sequence of content necessary for students to make progress
- Schemes of work will ensure personalisation to meet the needs of all students
- Cross-curricular links will be clearly identified and understood by all staff
- Using National Curriculum and/or qualification specifications, each subject area should identify and communicate subject Assessment Objectives (AOs) in each phase of education to assess, monitor and track student progress.
- In addition to the formal subject curriculum, subjects will provide a range of wider curricular opportunities for students to experience where available.
- In the majority, the curriculum will be delivered in mixed ability settings, with CL/SL only making amendments as agreed with Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum)
- Opportunities for teaching literacy (including Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary) and use of numeracy should be integral to all curriculum plans.
- Opportunities to develop SMSC, PSHE and RSE education of students in should be included in curriculum planning wherever appropriate.
- As far as practicably possible, all subjects will be delivered by subject specialists in rooms that are specialised for the delivery of that subject
- Curriculum/Subject leaders, including Senior Leaders, will monitor the quality of education provided
- Option subjects, through the use of the Options booklet and narrated presentations, will ensure that all students and parents have a clear understanding of the subject content and method of assessment to enable informed choices to be made

## **7. CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION – CLASSROOM LEVEL (Underpinned by the Teaching and Learning policy)**

- Teachers should follow the agreed Curriculum Plan in their subject area and any deviation or amendment must be communicated to their CL/SL
- Teaching should build cumulatively deeper understanding through a well-planned sequence of learning. This should ultimately build the capacity for skilful performance against each Assessment Objective area in each phase of learning
- Teachers should fully exploit opportunities to develop students' understanding of how their subject links to other subjects
- Teachers should use Assessment for Learning techniques to identify the needs of students and plan learning using the principle of: Assess – Review and Plan – Teach.
- Teachers should make best use of educational research in pedagogy and instructional practice, including cognitive load theory to appropriately chunk learning for students.
- Concepts such as retrieval practice and regular assessment should be applied to ensure students have retained key knowledge, skills and understanding at each phase
- Teachers should identify and exploit opportunities to develop student literacy and use of numeracy wherever possible, also working collaboratively with Teaching Assistants where available to improve rates of progress
- Teachers should identify and exploit opportunities to develop SMSC, PHSE and RSE education wherever possible including challenging extreme or anti-social opinions
- For option subject, teachers will be expected to explain the GCSE content to their classes and explain any questions that students may have

## **8. IMPACT**

- The curriculum should make a significantly positive contribution to the Personal Development of all students
- In Key Stage 3, attainment and progress will be measured using subject-specific Assessment Objectives against Key Stage 2 starting points
- The acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding in each subject will be measured using formative and summative teacher assessment (See Teaching & Learning Policy)
- In Key Stage 3, performance in all subjects will be assessed using internally collected attainment data and Attitude to Learning data.
- In non-core subjects, the impact of the Key Stage 3 will also be assessed using Key Stage 4 uptake data.
- Fluency and comprehension in reading will be measured using NGRT Reading Age Tests.
- In Key stage 4, attainment and progress in each subject will be measured by GCSE outcomes against ALPS KS4 benchmarks
- The overall effectiveness of the implementation of the school curriculum will be measured using the school performance measures outlined in the DfE Statement of Intent.
- The success of careers information, education and guidance will be indicated using post-16 destination data
- The quality of Curriculum leadership and management, as well as the quality of education provided by the curriculum area will be measured using student progress data and the completion of the SEF and SEF meeting

## **9. RELATED POLICIES**

Teaching and Learning Policy  
Home Learning Policy  
Special Educational Needs Policy  
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy  
Personal Development Policy  
Careers Policy  
Assessment and Feedback Policy  
Literacy Policy  
Numeracy Policy  
Admission policy



# Appendix A: Example of a Curriculum Area Learning Journey

## Art & Design Learning Journey

