

KING EDWARD VI SCHOOL, SOUTHAMPTON

CURRICULUM POLICY

Introduction

At King Edward's we prize the development of a purposeful and disciplined approach to learning with the focus on excellence and individual achievement. The curriculum encourages a purposeful and disciplined approach to learning based on academic rigour and intellectual challenge. It aims not only to provide students with a secure foundation on which to continue into Higher Education and later into the careers of their choice, but in addition to promote intellectual curiosity and a love of learning which will continue into later life. All subjects are taught in such a way as to ensure proper development of the skills of listening, speaking, literacy and numeracy, and there are detailed schemes of work which develop the level of knowledge, understanding and skills as pupils progress through the School. Teachers will ensure that the content of all lessons (and examination performances in Theatre Studies) will be appropriate for the age group being taught. Where appropriate, lessons will actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these.

The curriculum is subject to regular review, and changes are made when we see opportunities to improve pupils' experience. At the same time we aim to remain true to our traditions of academic and personal challenge, the development of existing and new skills, interests in each individual member of the School. Most changes are made on our own initiative, rather than in response to external influences, as we try to ensure that our curriculum continues to meet the needs of our students and to prepare them not just for the immediate, but also a longer-term future in British society. This is a major advantage of our independent status.

All students up to the end of Fifth Year receive a full-time supervised education intended to provide them with knowledge and experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific and technological areas, to help them discover and develop their creative, physical and social skills and to explore their own spirituality and that of others.

Our expectation is that all pupils participate fully in every aspect of the curriculum.

The curriculum is broad in the first three years and aims to encourage a range of interests. The core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, ICT and Foreign Languages feature strongly, but we expect pupils to expand their horizons through the Humanities, Drama, Art, Design, Music and Sport. At GCSE and Advanced level, a degree of specialisation develops but many prefer to keep their options open and combine a variety of subjects in the Arts and Sciences.

In the Lower School and Upper School pupils have sixty periods over a two-week teaching cycle (six periods per day); in the Sixth Form students have 11 or 12 periods per academic subject, four periods for Games and up to six periods of Foundation Studies and Open Forum.

Lower School

The curriculum in the Lower School (Years 7 to 9, First to Third Year) emphasises breadth of experience, aiming to provide a balanced range of academic, creative and physical activities over the two-week cycle, with all pupils following a common programme of study in the first two years.

There is an element of choice even in the First Year, as pupils opt for one of French, German or Spanish as their first modern language on entry to the School. The Extended Studies programme is a distinctive feature of the First Year curriculum, with Friday afternoons devoted to a range of units involving both on- and off-site activity.

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All pupils have the opportunity to take up a second modern language in the Second Year, but the need to opt for one subject against another is kept to a minimum in the Second and Third Year.

In detail, the curriculum is constructed as follows:

First Year

English	6	Geography	3	IT & Computing	3
Mathematics	6	Religious Studies	3	Physical Education	2
Junior Science	6	Art	3	Games	4
Modern Language 1	5	Drama	2	Extended Study	4
Latin	3	Design Technology	3	Tutorial period	1
History	3	Music	3		

Notes

Pupils choose **one** of French or German or Spanish as their first modern foreign language.

Friday afternoons are devoted to the Extended Study Programme, comprising six different units over the school year.

Second Year

English	6	History	4	Music	3
Mathematics	6	Geography	4	IT & Computing	2
Junior Science	6	Religious Studies	3	Physical Education	2
Modern Language 1	4	Art	3	Games	4
Modern Language 2	4	Drama	2		
Latin or Classical Civilisation	4	Design Technology	3		

Third Year

English	6	Modern Language 1	4	Option subject 1	3
Mathematics	6	MFL2 / Italian / Latin	6	Option subject 2	3
Physics	4	History	4	Option subject 3	3
Chemistry	4	Geography	4	Physical Education	2
Biology	4	Religious Studies	3	Games	4

Notes

MFL2 indicates Modern Language 2.

Pupils study Biology, Physics and Chemistry separately, with 4 periods devoted to each science.

Pupils start a two-year course leading to Religious Studies short course GCSE at the end of the Fourth Year.

Of the three options, at least one must include Art, Music, Design Technology and Theatre Studies.

Fourth and Fifth Years

As pupils enter the Upper School and embark on their IGCSE and GCSE courses, there is a flexible three-subject options system allowing freedom of choice among the options subjects, apart from the requirement to take at least one of the Humanities. The core curriculum is designed to avoid premature over-specialisation and so ensure that all pupils have a broad base to choose from when making Advanced level choices. All students take Biology, Chemistry & Physics as separate IGCSEs. Pupils intending to take only one modern foreign language at IGCSE or GCSE and who have studied a second modern language in both Second and Third Years may choose which of those two languages to study as their core language in the Upper School. All pupils take the short course GCSE in Religious

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Studies at the end of the Fourth Year. Fifth Year pupils have 3 private study periods per fortnight, which helps them develop independent working habits and prepares them for the less prescribed patterns of study in the Sixth Form and beyond.

In detail, the curriculum is constructed as follows:

Fourth Year

English	6	Physics	5	Religious Studies	3
Mathematics	6	Chemistry	5	Physical Education	2
Modern Language 1	6	Biology	5	Games	4

plus 3 of

History, Geography, Economics, Philosophy & Ethics (with additional HPQ), Latin, Classical Civilisation, Modern Language 2 (French or German or Spanish or Italian), Computing, Sports Science, Art, Music, Design Technology, Theatre Studies.

Fifth Year

As the Fourth Year curriculum, except that the 3 periods allocated to Religious Studies now provide students with 3 periods of Private Study, one of which may be used occasionally for ICT, PSHE or study skills. Additional Mathematics is taken as an extra examination by a proportion of the year group (usually two sets).

The Sixth Form

The academic programme followed by the majority of students in the Sixth Form is four A level subjects reducing to three subjects in the Upper Sixth, although those wishing to take all four subjects may do so. Students also have the opportunity to undertake the Extended Project Qualification alongside their other A level subjects. In addition, Wednesday afternoons are given over to a Games programme which offers a varied range of team and individual sports and fitness activities. The Foundation Studies programme and Open Forum, which form part of the Sixth Form experience, offer students the chance to develop important life skills, explore new interests or become involved in service activities in the local community.

Advice is given to all students regarding their Advanced Level choices. Fourth year students have an introduction day to life in the Sixth Form during the summer term, with an evening for their parents as a follow-up. A curriculum booklet and a subject options booklet are provided to help students and their parents to make informed choices, and a Sixth Form Information Evening in the October prior to Sixth Form entry allows them to explore the nature of the different subjects before committing themselves to subject choices.

Details of the subjects currently offered in the Sixth Form are available on the School website. The School is responsive to perceived demand for subjects not already offered and the range of academic choices is kept under review from year to year.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Able, Gifted & Talented

King Edward's aims to provide an education suited to the individual needs of all those students who have secured a place in the School through the admissions procedure. Our approach in these areas are summarised below.

There is a separate policy for Curriculum Support (SEND), which provides details of the School offer made in this area.

Able, Gifted & Talented

King Edward's takes seriously its obligations to stimulate and stretch all students at the School. It is not the policy of the School to differentiate in each subject for those judged to be able, gifted and talented.

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The selective nature of the intake means that such a division of the student body is likely to be artificial and divisive. Provision is made for students with particular talents at the School. For those with special talents in sport, drama, art and music this is varied and extensive. Peripatetic Music and LAMDA lessons are arranged throughout the School day and elite sports students are supported by the Performance and Fitness Co-ordinator. For those with particularly strong academic ability some setting is arranged in certain subjects where this is appropriate. However, for most of the very able students in the School, extension work through mathematics competitions, longer term exchanges for the most linguistically able and creative writing in English is judged to be more effective.

Particular arrangements are also made for students preparing for competitive courses at university. These are co-ordinated by the Academic Tutor. A broader programme of preparation for our most able students is developed by the Co-ordinator for the most able.

SEND

The School's offer to parents has been set out paying due regard to the regulations as defined by the SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014. All children at the School have as a matter of principle equal access to the School's curriculum, notwithstanding any disability or identified learning difficulties. Students who have an Education and Health Care Plan will be provided with an education which matches the requirements of their EHC Plan.

Learning Difficulties

We take into account formally recognised learning difficulties in how we teach and assess. We aim to recognise pupils who need support so that they can derive maximum benefit from the curriculum. One way of doing this is through literacy tests carried out in the First to Third Years, or by referral by subject teachers of individual pupils and pastoral staff to the Curriculum Support team. All members of the teaching staff receive regular updates on those pupils who require support and ways to help them in the classroom. Some extra literacy lessons are provided for those pupils in the Lower School whose performance in diagnostic testing suggests that they would benefit from them. The lessons are usually on a one-to-one basis and by extract from other subject periods on a rota system. A Study Skills course exists for groups of pupils in the Upper School and Sixth Form. Extra mathematics support on a short-term basis is provided for pupils in the Lower and Upper School whose difficulties are with numeracy skills. These lessons take place at lunchtimes; pupils are referred for support by their mathematics teacher, or can drop-in as self-referrals.

Disability

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act (2010) and SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2014 towards pupils who have a disability

English as an Additional Language

Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) have educational needs of a particular kind. Their progress depends on the School clarifying their needs and meeting them. All pupils with EAL are identified through the School's entrance procedures and their proficiency in English is assessed both in the entrance examination and on entry to the School. We have a learning support team which offers advice and help and all pupils' teachers are supported by relevant advice and teaching materials. We use external agencies to support pupils where necessary. The academic achievement and progress of all pupils is monitored by ethnic group and home language, and appropriate strategies and support are provided as necessary. Pupils are encouraged to value their mother tongue and to continue its study. Full details are provided in the related policy.

Personal Social Health and Economic education

The School aims to foster in every pupil a sense of personal worth, to help each achieve his or her potential, promote respect for others and to encourage pupils to become responsible members of society.

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The PSHE is designed to reflect the School's aims and ethos. It encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. First Year pupils have a timetabled PSHE lesson with their group tutor once a fortnight. Time for PSHE is also available during group periods on a Wednesday morning. The curriculum programme is resourced by the Tutor File and is designed to complement the Extended Studies and Junior Science programmes. In the Summer Term there is a PSHE Day where the timetable is collapsed for the First Year so that they can cover topics where specialist knowledge is required.

The Lower School PSHE programme of study is designed to complement the issues and topics covered by those academic subjects studied by all students at KES. Short, 25 minute PSHE lessons are delivered by Tutors during the extended Wednesday morning group period and GCSE Religious Studies. As each Lower School Tutor Group comprises Second and Third Year students a two year programme is in place to avoid repetition. The programme is enhanced by the provision of two collapsed timetable days, one for each year group, as well as whole year group talks on Bullying (Second Year) and SRE (Third Year).

In the Upper School PSHE provision is again designed to complement the issues and topics covered by those academic subjects studied by all students at KES. Guest speakers are invited in to cover specialist issues and these talks are delivered to a whole year group during collapsed timetable sessions. In the Fourth Year there is a PSHE Day in the Spring Term and in the Fifth Year some PSHE sessions are delivered during private study periods.

The Sixth Form offers PSHE through Foundation Studies and Open Forum in the Lower and Upper Sixth and the PSHE co-ordinator liaises closely with the programme co-ordinator to bring in relevant external speakers. Open Forum takes place in the School's theatre and is run as a series of presentations that are mainly delivered by outside speakers who are chosen so that a wide range of topics are covered, including travel, health and social issues. All the presentations are intended to be thought provoking and students are encouraged to see the world through the eyes of others.

In the Lower Sixth all pupils currently spend one period per week attending the Lower Sixth Foundation Studies Programme. This is a combination of presentations and short courses that are intended to provide students with key skills and useful information. Students in the Upper Sixth that are studying three rather than four subjects take part in the Upper Sixth Foundation Studies programme. This runs in the Autumn Term and most of the Spring Term and allows students to try new skills without the need for any assessment. Students choose courses from a range developed to suit all tastes and talents. Some are practical, some more cerebral, but in all courses the emphasis is on having fun through new experiences while enjoying a break from exam driven study.

In addition to the usual Foundation Studies programme, there is a dedicated Lower Sixth PSHE day in the Autumn term which covers issues such as drug and alcohol misuse, higher education planning, and mental health in a context relevant to this age group and the transition to greater independence

The School's PSHE curriculum is further supported by the provision of independently accessed information on leaflets, noticeboards and the School website. There are assemblies for the whole School and for specific year groups on a range of health and social issues. A summer health challenge is organised each year by the nursing staff and run by Lower school tutors during Wednesday group period. Parental support is also provided by the PSHE coordinator, with evening sessions on specific topics, such as internet safety and substance misuse and in the Summer Term, in alternate years, there is either a talk about understanding your child's behaviour or an evening where parents can choose two from a possible four PSHE related workshops.

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The School also has a broad programme of co-curricular opportunities that students can access. Many of these support and develop their personal, social, health and economic development. The co-curricular opportunities available are detailed on the website.

Careers and higher education guidance

Advice on careers and higher education is provided throughout a student's time in the School by the Guidance department, supported by the pastoral system. A comprehensive range of reference materials is available in the department and online, and there are numerous talks and visits as well as opportunities for work experience. Careers guidance is presented in an impartial manner, enabling students to make informed choices about a broad range of career options, and encourages them to fulfil their potential. Students are closely supported through the university application procedure which is overseen by the Deputy Director of Sixth Form (Higher Education and Careers).

Private Study

Fifth Year pupils have three periods of supervised Private Study over the two-week timetable cycle. In the Sixth Form students have a significant number of Private Study periods which varies depending on the number of subjects being studied. In the Lower Sixth each AS subject has one study period per timetable cycle specifically allocated to it. There are study facilities available in the Sixth Form Concourse area in addition to the Library and Resources Centre and the ICT facilities situated throughout the School.

Games

Students throughout the School, including the Sixth Form, have a double period devoted to Games each week. There are extensive facilities, including Sports Hall, fitness suite, dance studio, squash court and other indoor facilities, playing fields, astro surfaces and sailing facilities.

Related policies

Curriculum Support (SEND) Policy

English as an Additional Language Policy

Reviewed: October 2017

Review due: October 2020