

# Kings Langley School



## Curriculum Policy

REVIEW DATE: MARCH 2018

## **A Policy Title: Curriculum Policy**

### **B Rationale**

This policy exists to provide a framework for supporting our stated aim of "ensuring the happiness of every individual in our community" and to promote a climate which enables all students to flourish, regardless of ability or special needs, and supports the desired outcomes of "Every Child Matters".

- The curriculum must be designed to operate within the context of the school ethos, fostering the values that we hold to be important. It is essential that we empower every student to achieve his or her full potential, from whatever starting point. We believe that there should be progression from a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 3 (KS3) to a more specialised programme for students aged 14 - 19. Continuity and progression are fundamental.
- We value diversity, meeting the needs of every individual. Our curriculum must reflect the fully comprehensive nature of our intake. We recognise that success can be achieved in many ways and that our curriculum needs to accommodate the different strengths and abilities of every individual.
- We must also ensure that we provide opportunities for the students to develop physically, morally, spiritually, socially and culturally as well as academically.
- We also aim to inculcate a culture of learning in all our students, encouraging life-long learning for all.

### **C Purpose**

The school recognises in its mission statement and ethos: -

- That at the deepest level all children have the need for affirmation, acceptance, love and security - and the ability to make and learn from mistakes made in a safe environment
- That achievement depends upon students' understanding that learning is an active process - something you do, not something that happens to you - and therefore that students should be encouraged, as far as possible, to take responsibility for their own performance and progress.

### **D Guidelines**

The Headteacher and governors will ensure that the curriculum: -

- Aims to enable all students to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens
- Focuses on attitudes & attributes such as determination, confidence and risk taking; skills such as literacy, numeracy, ICT, Personal Learning and Thinking Skills; and knowledge & understanding e.g. big ideas that shape the world
- Although not required to, meets the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements (see Education Act 1996, The Importance of Teaching; School's White Paper 2010)

- Is broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated, incorporating whole curriculum dimensions such as cultural diversity, enterprise and healthy lifestyles
- Is sufficiently flexible to respond to changes over time and take into account the differing learning styles of individual students.
- Is pragmatic and is able to be provided within financial and timetable constraints
- Is enriched through out of hours learning and offsite visits (always bearing in mind the need to balance the benefits of extra curricular activities with the impact of loss of learning of other students whose teachers are absent from the classroom).

The school recognises that suitable differentiation in terms of provision and access to the curriculum is vital. Consequently, the following guidelines are always applied: -

- That students should be taught in mixed ability groupings, so far as this is consistent with successful learning. It is accepted that in some subjects and at different stages, it is appropriate for students to be grouped in terms of ability and/or aptitude (for example, in mathematics from year 7 and modern languages in year 8).
- On other occasions, analysis of available data and objective evidence might suggest that students are placed in different sets and learning groups - for example, male and female teaching sets for English examination preparation at GCSE.
- When students are grouped by ability there should be an equitable allocation of resources to all groups according to identified need. Parity of esteem for all students regardless of ability and aptitude is vital in ensuring successful development.
- That all courses should provide suitable challenges and opportunities for success, with short-term objectives set and achievement recognised and affirmed.
- In the upper school (KS4 and KS5), students are placed on appropriate "learning pathways" that match their ability and aptitude. Students are placed on these pathways using a range of input criteria, including prior attainment in the previous key stage, school progress reports and identified pastoral and other "specific" needs.
- Pathways 2 and 3 at KS4 are designed to ensure maximum flexibility so that students can choose routes that best match their interests and learning preferences through offering a variety of GCSEs. It should be noted that the school works hard to ensure suitable "cross over points" between pathways.
- The school provides an individualised learning programme for Pathway 1 at KS4. This programme includes work-based learning through work placement and access to college courses that offer a greater range of opportunities

than the school is able to deliver (for example, Construction and Hairdressing courses)

- At KS5, membership of the Dacorum Learning Partnership enables the school to offer an extended range of level 2 and level 3 opportunities, always ensuring that progression is obvious and accessible. There are 3 "Pathways" at KS5 that build on the principles founded in KS4.
- Also, as part of the partnership, an agreement to and monitoring of QA (quality assurance) at partner schools, where students travel to for their courses.
- Subject choices at differing stages in a student's career together with carefully tailored and appropriate independent guidance is an integral part of our curriculum offer. It is imperative that informed discussions take place with both parents and student at key transitional stages in the latter's development.

### **Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Curriculum**

It will be the responsibility of pastoral leaders, subject and learning area leaders and members of the senior leadership team (SLT) to monitor the operation of curriculum delivery and the stated aims of this policy. There is separate information available specifying the full range of the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures.

However, the major vehicles for doing this are itemised below: -

- Reviews provide a detailed analysis of standards and provision in all areas of the school's curriculum - including information on leadership, achievement and attainment and student well-being and attitudes.
- Implementing the school's policies on performance management and staff development and ensuring that all staff development and professional needs are related to the requirements of the school improvement plan and other subject improvement plans that might apply.
- Lesson observations - either via formal performance management procedures or more casual "drop in observations" (see lesson observation protocols).
- Work scrutiny - will be carried out regularly by staff accountable for student learning and progression. Work scrutiny will focus on students' general progress against national standards and prior attainment predicted performance. Marking and assessment feedback will always be checked carefully.
- Examination performance analysis - all learning leaders are required to provide a detailed analysis of examination performance (see separate guidance and documentation). Analysis of progress made in public examinations will have a direct impact on curriculum review and provision, that is, searching questions would always be asked regarding course provision that is not delivering appropriate success for students.

- Monitoring will take account of both student and parent feedback. This feedback is provided in a variety of formats including, parent consultation evenings, student interviews with learning mentors, questionnaires and consultation forums with parents.
- The Headteacher will provide the governors' curriculum committee with a full analysis of the school's performance in public examinations. The analysis will provide details of how the school's results (and those of individual subjects) compare with national attainment standards and how progress in achievement compares with similar schools (contextual valued added performance - CVA). This report would normally coincide with the publication of the DfE Raise on-line statistical data and related analysis. In addition, this committee will be provided with reports and presentations on progress from learning area leaders on a regular basis (see examples). Similarly, the Headteacher will provide the governors with reports on: -
  - standards achieved at the end of each key stage by gender and ethnicity, by ability groupings and other vulnerable groups such as pupil premium, compared with national and "similar school" benchmarks.
  - standards achieved by students with special educational needs
  - the number of students for whom the curriculum was disapplied, the subsequent arrangements which were made, how students and parents were informed, how progress was monitored and the progress made by these pupils
  - the evidence of the impact of national strategies on standards
  - the views of staff about the action required to improve standards (much of this will be evidenced in subject and learning area action plans and related self-evaluation)
- The Headteacher and members of the SLT will share with the governors detailed reports on the efficient employment of the school' resources to deliver the published curriculum. For example, reports indicating the cost effectiveness of sixth form provision - taking into account suitable "benchmarking" information with both local schools and nationally available data.
- Parents will have access to a range of published data - including the School Profile and statutory league tables. Similarly, parents are provided with regular updates on their children's progress (periodic assessments, written reports and consultation evenings).

## **Attachments**

- This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's teaching and learning policy, behaviour policy, Special Needs Policy and Home School Partnership Policy.
- See curriculum statement for Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form Information for Key Stage 5 detailed provision and balance. A full explanation of "pathways" in Key Stages 4 and 5 is also available separately. Similarly, available analysis from timetable reports will show the disposition of staff, related contact time and other information, including "student teacher ratios".