

CURRICULUM

“The school’s curriculum is successful in giving a broad and balanced education and students develop skills they need in their future lives.” **OFSTED December 2014**

GUIDELINES

We ensure that the curriculum: -

- 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.
- Meets the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements.
- Is broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated, incorporating whole curriculum dimensions such as cultural diversity, enterprise and healthy lifestyles (satisfying the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002).
- 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.
- 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 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.
- The pathways are designed to ensure maximum flexibility so that students can choose routes that best match their interests and learning preferences, and include a variety of GCSEs and vocational courses.
- The school provides an individualised learning programme for Pathway 1. This programme includes work-based learning through work placement and access to college courses that provide 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.

CONTENT

Key Stage 3

Students follow a course of study in the National Curriculum subjects which include:

- Maths, English, Science
- Either French or Spanish
- Art, Drama, Music, PE
- History, Geography, RE
- PSHE and Penn Resilience

Key Stage 4

Each student studies a National Curriculum Core Programme in:

- English
- Maths
- Science

Plus the Foundation Programme which consists of Careers and Personal and Social Education (CPSE), Physical Education (PE) and Religious Education (RE).

Learning Pathways

Pathway 3 students

Students following this pathway will study a Modern Language and Design and Technology **plus** a choice of two courses from the free option block.

Pathway 2 students

Students following this pathway will follow a GCSE in Geography or History, Design and Technology **plus** a choice of two courses from the free option block.

Pathway 1 students

These students will follow a flexible learning programme giving them the opportunity to follow a range of vocational Level 1 and Level 2 courses offered by West Herts College or attend weekly work experience whilst studying and developing character employability skills. Students will also have a choice of two courses from the free option block.

Free Option Block

The subjects available to students in this area include:

- Art and Design
- Business and Communication Systems
- Computer Science (available for students who achieved at least a 5C in Maths and Science)
- Drama
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physical Education
- Triple Science – available for students who have achieved at least Level 6B at Key Stage 3

For further information please refer to the School Prospectus and individual learning areas on the school website.

“The school’s curriculum is successful in giving a broad and balanced education and students develop the skills they will need in their future lives. For example, all students study design and technology, exercising creative, visual and practical skills. They also improve their literacy skills through a particularly effective programme that is delivered not just through English, but every subject. The acquisition of good communication skills forms an important part of students’ social development; they learn to be confident speakers in class, in assemblies, in performances and in competitions and presentations beyond the school. Students watch the news and discuss current affairs in tutor periods, learning about the diversity of cultures and faiths in modern Britain as well as through their lessons in religious education. Students’ future destinations are considered from the start, with careers and further education advice beginning in Year 7.”

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