



St George's
School Edgbaston

UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

Revised: July 2021



The Curriculum – Overview and Aims

St George's School provides a broad and balanced curriculum in accordance with the schools' aims; recognising national guidelines and the requirements of the National Curriculum as well as promoting Fundamental British Values. We recognise that students have missed a significant amount of learning time due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and we are determined that this will not affect our students' access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

Considering the nature of the school and the wide ranging abilities of our intake there is an emphasis on giving each of our students the opportunity to strive towards their academic best, securing qualifications that reflect their true potential. It is our intent to lay secure foundations for progression into Further and Higher Education or into the chosen field of an individual's wish. To further enable this, the curriculum can be adapted to make it bespoke to an individual child; taking into account the age, aptitude and needs of a child, including any with an EHC plan; the provision of EAL support; and intervention support for numeracy, literacy, speech & language; thus enabling all our children to learn, develop their understanding and make progress.

We give pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human & social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. We provide for pupils to acquire skills in speaking & listening, literacy and numeracy. We look to promote spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children at the school, whilst preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

In addition to the academic rigour provided by our curriculum, enrichment activities are also provided both within the timetabled day and as part of the extra-curricular offer and are tailored to the needs of our children.

St George's School believes in encouraging pupils to "take ownership" of their own studies wherever possible by following a wide range of learning approaches.

Through the curriculum our children will grow and develop into well-equipped young people, prepared for the next steps in their lives.

Organisation of the Curriculum

Our mainstream curriculum is delivered through a weekly timetable with each day divided into 6 periods of 55 minutes. This provides students with a length of lesson that allows them to fully develop their understanding and thus promote learning. We also value the role of Learning Support Assistants and Learning Mentors in maximising student achievement and development so we strive to ensure that where

possible and appropriate, classes have access to an LSA and students with the requirement have a learning mentor assigned to them.

Key Stage 3 consists of Years 7 and 8 after which the children choose their options and we run a three-year KS4 consisting of Years 9, 10 and 11.

Timing of the School Day

08:25 – 08:50	Morning Registration / Form Time / Assembly
08:50 – 09:45	Period 1
09:45 – 10:40	Period 2
10:40 – 10:55	Break
10:55 – 11:50	Period 3
11:50 – 12:45	Period 4
12:45 – 13:35	Lunch
13:35 – 13:40	Afternoon Registration
13:40 – 14:35	Period 5
14:35 – 15:30	Period 6
15:30 – 15:35	End of the school day

Key Stage 3

A student in KS3 following an unmodified timetable will have the following number of lessons per week:

Subject	Number of Lessons
English	5
Mathematics	5
Science	4
Design Technology / Food Technology / Photography	2
Modern Foreign Languages	1
Physical Education	2
Art	1
Computing	1
Drama	1

Subject	Number of Lessons
Geography	1
History	1
Music	1
PSHE	2
Religious Education	1
Enrichment	2

In light of issues arising from the pandemic, students will receive two PSHE sessions in Key Stage 3. Students will follow the Jigsaw Programme which covers all of the statutory elements of PSHE and RSE. In addition to this, there will also be a bespoke programme covering mental health, healthy lifestyle choices and fitness.

Key Stage 4

Towards the end of Key Stage 3 pupils choose their GCSE subjects. Most pupils select 5 core subjects and 4 options, with the aim that the majority of our students will be entered for 9 or 10 GCSEs. The core consists of Core Science, English, English Literature and Mathematics as well as partaking in PSHE and Physical Education. Triple Science is considered for some pupils. There are up to seventeen optional subjects offered at GCSE level. Carefully guided choice ensures that the courses taken are balanced and appropriate to the needs and capabilities of the student, with the option blocks being constructed around student choice.

Students in KS4 following an unmodified timetable will have the following number of lessons per week:

	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
English	4	4	4
Mathematics	4	4	4
Science	5	6	6
Physical Education	2	1	1
PSHE	1	1	1
Option 1	3	3	3
Option 2	3	3	3
Option 3	3	3	3

Option 4	3	3	3
Enrichment	2	2	2

Students will also receive a programme of additional support after school.

Option subjects at KS4 consist of:

Art	Food Technology	PE
Business Studies	French	PE (BTEC)
Computing	Geography	Photography
Design Technology	History	Psychology
Drama	ICT (BTEC)	RE
	Music	

We also offer a range of BTEC courses where appropriate. These will begin at Entry Level 3 and lead into Level 1 courses.

These include:

Art and Design	Hospitality	Performing Arts
Creative Digital Media	PSD	Sport

In Both Key Stage 3 and 4

- English, Maths and Science are taught in ability sets
- Extra English and Maths intervention is available for those children who require the extra support. There is also provision for EAL, Decoding and Learning Support

Key Stage 5

Students in KS5 have 5 lessons a week in their chosen subjects. At St George's we offer a wide range of subjects at BTEC and A Level in our Sixth Form. Carefully guided choice towards the end of Year 11 ensures that the courses taken are balanced and appropriate to the needs and abilities of the student, with the option blocks again being constructed around student choice. Sixth Formers are encouraged to develop

individual responsibility for their own learning, a skill crucial for those moving on to Higher Education and the world of work.

At least 5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above are normally required for entry into the Sixth Form, although individual student needs are considered.

GCSE grade 6 or above is normally required for acceptance onto an A Level course, although subject teachers may consider individual circumstances, particularly in the case of subjects not studied at GCSE. Some subjects, for instance Maths and Science require a higher minimum entry grade.

If most GCSEs are no higher than a grade 6, students are advised to study along an alternative Sixth Form Progression Pathway. This is something we will discuss with individuals to meet their specific learning needs and aspirations.

Students normally choose up to four areas of study.

Subjects currently offered at A Level include:

Art	Drama	Geography	Photography
Biology	Economics	History	Physics
Chemistry	English Literature	Mathematics	Psychology
Computing	Further Maths	Maths in Context (AS)	RE

The expansion of the current Sixth Form provision has increased the range of KS5 programmes now running at St George's Sixth Form, with plans to further develop these new programmes to allow students to have a coherent progression route from KS4 to KS5 that reflects their aspirations and abilities.

We also run a number of BTEC options including:

ICT – Level 2 and 3	Creative Media
Business Studies Level 3	

The opportunity to resit GCSE English and Maths is also provided.

Transition Curriculum

In addition to the mainstream curriculum, we also provide an alternative provision for selected students with EHCPs. These are students who require a slower transition

from the primary curriculum and, due to their complex needs, alternative certification to GCSE.

Students are taught by a consistent teacher for English, Maths, Humanities, PSHE and RSE, where they receive a highly differentiated curriculum. They access all other subjects and extra-curricular opportunities the school has to offer alongside their peers.

Students KS4 certification and pathways include BTECs, Functional Skills and Entry Levels and, when appropriate, GCSEs.

Schemes of Work and Planning

Within the curriculum the schemes of work should satisfy tests of breadth, coherence, relevance, differentiation and progression thereby providing:

- a) Information which teachers can use in deciding how a child's learning can be taken forward and in giving the children themselves clear and understandable targets and feedback
- b) All staff with the means of identifying the need for further diagnostic assessments for particular children where appropriate to help their educational development
- c) Overall evidence of the achievements of a child and of what he or she knows, understands and can do
- d) Helpful communication with parents about how their child is doing, with Governors and with the wider community about the achievements of the school
- e) A basis for professional development, in that the process of carrying out assessments, moderations, observations and discussions with other staff will be a basis from which staff can evaluate their own work

Schemes of work should take into account the continuous nature of education. They should also encourage self-confidence and self-esteem. This is vital for learning in all children. Activities such as praising and rewarding the children, helping them take part in assemblies, plays, sports and other activities are all part of this. Where a pupil has a Statement of Educational Needs, or other learning difficulty or disability, we will provide education that fulfils the pupils' needs and the Statements' requirements.

Further planning around health and safety practices has been taken into account in light of the current Government guidance with regards to Coronavirus.

Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEND and/or disabilities can study every curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

Setting and Groupings

There will be a mix between mixed ability teaching and ability grouping depending on need and circumstance.

In Year 7 and 8, some subjects will be taught in form groups. These are mixed ability groups that have been put together with the aim of producing a balance of gender, ethnicity, ability, and feeder primary schools.

In all teaching groups teachers will use a range of techniques and resources to differentiate the curriculum to meet the needs of all students.

Students may be allocated into groups other than their form group at every key stage. The reasons will usually be:

- To create ability sets to maximise achievement – this occurs in our core subject areas
- To manage carousels of subject components to make efficient use of resources and staff
- To maximise student choice at KS4 and KS5
- To manage peer dynamics to create the best possible learning environment

- To manage the requirements of students who require additional support

Whenever ability groups are created students will be placed in an appropriate set to enable them to access the curriculum.

Higher ability sets may be larger than lower ability sets to ensure students' needs are met most appropriately.

Other Curriculum Areas

Personal, Social and Health Education

St George's is committed to and fulfils its legal responsibility to promote the personal and social development of each individual pupil. Provision is made for regular PSHE lessons which are delivered by teaching staff and specialist providers. We provide appropriate careers guidance for pupils receiving secondary education. Through our PSHE lessons, Form Time (Collective Worship Programme), assemblies and modelling of behaviour by our staff, we encourage respect for others regardless of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex or sexual orientation.

Our spirit and ethos permeate all aspects of school life, and are of overwhelming importance in influencing the personal and social development of our students. Each day begins with a focus that is relevant and aims to contribute to personal development.

Our PSHE programme also covers the statutory requirements of the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum. More information can be found in related policies.

Fieldwork / Outdoor Education / Wider Curriculum

St George's School is a very keen supporter of outdoor education and strongly believes that it forms an important part of a student's education. All members of Key Stage 3 and 4 also have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of extracurricular activities and trips. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is also offered.

Enrichment activities not only form part of our timetabled curriculum, but they also run throughout all aspects of the school. Opportunities for students to develop personal skills outside of the normal classroom environment are encouraged.

Careers Guidance

All students in Years 7–13 will take part in a series of employment focused opportunities and experiences which will enable them to plan a future career. Lessons

will enable them to develop a series of skills which aid the smooth transition to college, university, apprenticeship or workplace.

At St George's all current and future careers provision will be assessed against The Gatsby benchmarks.

Private Study

Private study plays an important part in encouraging and training students to work independently, and we ask parents to see that priority is given to the completion of schoolwork.

A school planner is given to each of the students in Key Stages 3, 4 & 5 which includes space for a homework timetable and a weekly diary section in which private study work is to be noted when set. Parents are asked to initial the entries at least once a week. Planners are checked by Form Tutors and by senior staff. We encourage pupils to use their planners sensibly and organise their studies in an efficient way. Parents can also use the planner for communication with the school if they choose.

Children's Welfare, Health & Safety

In all areas of the curriculum, due care and attention is paid to all pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school ensures that the correct level of supervision is provided throughout the day. Children are taught how to work and play together, and how to resolve differences amicably, often through Restorative Practice. Bullying is not tolerated and pupils are involved with reviewing the Anti-Bullying Policy through the Student Council on an annual basis. Staff receive collective and individual training to ensure up-to-date knowledge, skills and practice.

Monitoring Arrangements

Heads of Faculty and Subject Leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- planning scrutinies
- learning walks
- book scrutinies
- formal observation
- regular meetings

Heads of Faculty and Subject Leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed. Again, this has been reviewed in line with current Health and Safety Guidance with regards to our response to Coronavirus.

**This policy will be reviewed annually by Head of Teaching and Learning and
the Upper School SLT**

**To be reviewed July 2022
or as and when statutory
guidance / legislation changes**