



Plymouth College

Curriculum Policy

The curriculum policy is founded on the educational aims of Plymouth College.

Last updated: September 2017

Next update due: September 2018

Responsibility: J Hayward (Deputy Head)

1. Educational Aims:

To help all pupils at Plymouth College to:

- (i) develop into personable, understanding, self-confident, knowledgeable and articulate young adults.
- (ii) develop a love of learning, develop the skills of independent learning and appreciate the importance of lifelong learning.
- (iii) develop a thinking, inquisitive nature and appreciate the intrinsic value of learning.
- (iv) achieve good academic qualifications, be well prepared for the next stages of educational and career, and be able to take their place as full, active, well informed members of society
- (v) maximise their full potential in all areas, achieve and appreciate success.
- (vi) develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- (vii) prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society

2. Principles:

We aim to meet the educational aims by constructing a curricular structure and extra-curricular programme based on the principles below:

- (i) We provide a broad and balanced, well planned academic curriculum which gives pupils experience of all of the elements of learning (knowledge, understanding of concepts, skills and attitudes) and the areas of learning experience (aesthetic/creative, human and social, linguistic and literary, mathematical, moral, physical, scientific, spiritual and technological).
- (ii) We respond to the broad expectations of the National Curriculum but are not bound by its every detail.
- (iii) We believe strongly that our curriculum should suit the needs of the individual. We design and adapt curriculum structures meet individual need, we provide additional support in many areas and wherever possible we provide opportunities to help pupils achieve their aspirations.
- (iv) We value greatly the extra-curricular and activities programme, we offer a broad range of activities and encourage all pupils to participate fully. We feel that this plays an essential part in developing self confidence, teamwork and leadership qualities.
- (v) We aim to provide a learning environment where pupils are happy, they respect and care for one another and at the same time are offered and respond to challenge.

3. Practice

(a) Education for Pupils of Compulsory School Age.

At KS3 and KS4 pupils are taught for the full 40 lessons of 40 minutes a week (26.7 hrs). A few individual pupils may have a personalised programme with a few private study periods. At such times these pupils are supervised in the school library, or in the Study Centre with Learning Support teachers. The areas of the curriculum are covered as below:

KS3

Area	Main Subjects in which this area is covered.
Linguistic	All pupils study English. In year 7, pupils study French, Spanish, German and Latin. In year 8, pupils may also opt for two of French, Spanish or German; all study Latin. In year 9, pupils continue to opt for two of French, Spanish or German, and they can also opt to study Latin.
Mathematical	All pupils study Mathematics.
Scientific	All pupils study Biology, Chemistry and Physics
Technological	All pupils study ICT All year 7 and 8 pupils study DT Resistant materials, DT graphics. Some study DT Textiles. Pupils may opt for DT in year 9.
Human and Social	All pupils study Geography, History and RE. In year 9 all students study Business Studies.
Physical	All pupils have lessons in PE and Games.
Aesthetic and Creative	Literature is studied as a part of English. All year 7 and 8 pupils study Drama, Music and Art and pupils may opt for Drama and/or Art and/or Music in year 9.

KS4

Area	Main Subjects in which this area is covered.
Linguistic	The majority of pupils study English and English Literature to GCSE or IGCSE/GCSE. A small number of pupils may sit English Language or English as a Second Language only depending on ability. Pupils may study a modern foreign language (French, German or Spanish) as part of the core curriculum. Latin is available as a GCSE option and Ancient Greek is an off-timetable option.
Mathematical	All pupils study Mathematics to GCSE or IGCSE
Scientific	All pupils study Biology, Chemistry and Physics: these subjects are taken either as three separate IGCSE qualifications or they are examined in Core Science and Additional Science GCSEs.
Technological	All pupils may opt to study for GCSE qualifications in: Product Design or Computing.
Human and Social	All pupils may opt to study for GCSE qualifications in Business Studies, Geography, History and RE. Pupils are strongly advised to follow at least one such subject.
Physical	All pupils have games lessons. Pupils may opt to study GCSE PE.
Aesthetic and Creative	All pupils may opt to study Music, Art or Drama to GCSE. Literature is studied as a part of English.

Year 11, one year GCSE course for International Student

Students study English Language, a further language, Mathematics, the three sciences and Geography or History. They may opt to study a Technological or Aesthetical creative subject. They participate in games.

(b) Subject Matter

The subject matter covered at KS3 is based upon the national curriculum but the school is not bound by its precise requirements.

The subject matter as KS4 and KS5 is based on the requirements of the GCSE and GCE examinations.

A student's individual programme will be tailored by placing them in appropriate classes and classes to ensure that the material covered is appropriate to age and ability.

Provision for any pupils with a statement is dealt with in part (e) below.

(c) Speaking and Listening, Literacy and Numeracy

Pupils will acquire and develop their skills of speaking, listening and literacy in every subject and in lessons in English in particular. Numeracy skills are developed in Mathematics; other areas such as the sciences, Geography, Business Studies and Psychology will make a particular contribution but applications of number, perhaps in simple form, will be encountered across the curriculum.

(d) Language of Instruction

The language of instruction is English. Modern foreign languages will often be taught with great use of the target language.

(e) EHC Statements

Plymouth College occasionally admits a pupil with an EHC statement of educational need. Such pupils are only admitted where it is felt that, with appropriate support, they will benefit from the general education provided. The Head of Learning Support, in consultation with the local authority and others, will construct an individual education plan for any such pupil. The main aims of this plan are to ensure that the specific needs of the pupil and the requirements of the statement are met, and the subject matter covered is appropriate to the age and aptitude of the pupil. The provision made and the progress of each student is reviewed annually with the local authority.

(f) Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) Policy

Plymouth College provides a diverse and enriching education that promotes self-discipline, motivation and excellence. High standards of moral and social behaviour are expected and this is underpinned by a belief in the importance of respecting ourselves and one another; of appreciating individual differences and in encouraging and supporting each other.

Workshops

There are a minimum of six part-day workshops throughout the year – usually three in the autumn term, two in the spring term and one in the first half of the summer term. In each session the pupils work through a range of theme-based activities within their age group. Form tutors, staff with specialist knowledge and external speakers are responsible for leading PSHEE sessions. The school nurses are vital members of the PSHEE team and all external speakers are appropriately vetted.

Assemblies and Tutor Time

Assemblies in all age groups deal with moral and political issues, inspirational people and events, charity organisations and current affairs, so encouraging personal

enquiry and development and positive contribution. Tutor time is also given to discussing these issues.

Academic Curriculum and Extra-Curricular Activities

Aspects of the curriculum in most subjects have relevance to moral, political and social issues. Some academic disciplines will engage more directly in this area, for example History, Geography, RE, Economics and Biology. Many extra-curricular opportunities and activities add to the provision of PSHEE.

The PSHEE timetable is drawn together by the PSHEE co-ordinator with the assistance of the school nurses and specialist teachers. Training for tutors and specialist teachers is provided as appropriate during the INSET programmes.

Further details are given in the PSHEE policy

(g) Promoting fundamental British values

Fundamental British values are defined by the DfE as:

- (a) Democracy: Respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process
- (b) The rule of law: Respect for the basis on which the law is made and applies in England
- (c) Individual liberty: Support and respect for the liberties of all within the law
- (d) Mutual respect and tolerance: Support for equality of opportunity for all and respect and tolerance of different faiths and religious and other beliefs

Plymouth College seeks to produce happy, knowledgeable, confident and caring young adults who strive to reach their full potential. We seek to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life and wish to see them become independent and self-sufficient citizens who will succeed and contribute responsibly as members of the global community.

All staff and students at Plymouth College are expected to behave with integrity, tolerance and compassion in their dealings with one another. We provide opportunities for all pupils not only to explore their own cultures but also to understand how these align with British values and how we can work together as a community for the greater good. Every member of the community has a part to play in enshrining the core values and beliefs so as to build a strong, united and democratic school. Where unfairness or bullying is found to exist it will be routed out, and democracy and the rights of individuals will take centre stage.

Examples of opportunities and activities to promote British Values at Plymouth College include:

- (a) Speakers include local MPs, journalists, lawyers, war veterans and prison workers: all of whom provide alternative views on British Values and encourage pupils to take an open and interested approach to the world around them.
- (b) In lessons all students are encouraged to debate and discuss ideas, sharing and defending their beliefs in a way that is collaborative and supportive.
- (c) Teachers model positive behaviour and democratic values in their interactions with colleagues and students.
- (d) Assemblies are frequently used as vehicles through which tutors and tutor groups present to the wider community, examples of key moments, people or ideas from British history.
- (e) Lessons are exploited when appropriate to provide forums in which students can learn more about and question the notions of liberty, justice, democracy, law, governance, faith and belief systems. As a multicultural school we take care to ensure that all students feel safe, secure and able to celebrate their own and each other's' backgrounds, beliefs and cultural practices.

Further details are given in the Promoting Fundamental British Values Policy

(h) Careers Education and Guidance

The aims of our Careers programme is:

- (i) To provide careers education and guidance for every pupil in the school at appropriate times and in a suitable manner, so that they:
 - investigate a broad range of careers and opportunities
 - understand and develop their own capabilities, recognizing their strengths and limitations and develop outcomes for their learning
 - record and implement their career action-plans including updating information and modifying ideas and aspirations.
- (ii) To run and maintain a Careers Library containing, as far as possible, resources no more than three years old and to make as much information as possible available via the College intranet.
- (iii) To utilise the expertise of outside agencies such as UCAS, Morrisby Organisation (Fast Tomato and full psychometric profiles), YINI and Armed Forces Careers Officers.
- (iv) To facilitate work experience and to support placements during holidays for all pupils.
- (v) To support all preparations for post-18.

Many of these issues are addressed on the collapsed timetable afternoons with the PSHE programme.

(i) Pupils above compulsory school age: The Sixth Form Curriculum

To enter the sixth form pupils must achieve a sufficient standard at GCSE (or equivalent for international students). This standard is defined in the sixth form entry policy. The policy is applied flexibly in the case of students who have narrowly failed to meet the entry requirements

Three programmes are available in the Sixth Form: (i) A level, (ii) The International Baccalaureate, (iii) BTEC Extended Diploma in Sport (Outdoor Adventure). All students follow games, and attend PSHE sessions which cover a wide range of areas including PSHE, careers education and the UCAS system.

A Level

Following A-Level reform, we will now be following a linear system from September 2017, with the large majority of pupils taking three subjects on a 2-year course. Some pupils may take four subjects at the discretion of the Deputy Head.

The A-Level subjects offered are: Art (Fine Art, Photography or Graphic Design), Biology, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Drama, Design Technology (Resistant Materials, Graphic Products or Textiles), Economics, English Literature, English Language, French, German, Geography, History, Latin, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Music, PE, Physics, Psychology, RE. The running of all of these subjects is dependent on numbers, and therefore, not all subjects will run every year.

In addition to the A level subjects in the Sixth Form, pupils have the opportunity of taking academic extension qualifications including the Extended Project Qualification

(EPQ), the Certificate in Financial Studies and AS Maths. They also take part in the enrichment programme which includes options such as: Critical Thinking, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Sports Leaders Award and CCF.

IB

Students follow six subjects, three at higher level and three at standard level, in accordance with the requirements of the IBO. The subjects offered are:

Languages: English (A1 and A2), German (A and B), Spanish (ab initio and B), French (ab initio and B)

Humanities: History, Geography, Economics, Philosophy, Psychology

Science: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Design Technology

Mathematics

Arts: Visual Arts, Theatre Arts

IB students also follow courses in the Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) and undertake an extended essay.

Please note that, as a school, the IB programme was discontinued in September 2016. Therefore, we presently only have pupils in the third year of study following the World Academy of Sport programme.

BTEC

Pupils follow a two year course built around the BTEC Extended Diploma in Sport (Outdoor Adventure). In addition, qualifications obtained include First Aid at Work, Pool Lifeguard and/or Beach Lifeguard, Fitness Instructor Award, Child Protection Training and the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. Pupils also take part in the enrichment programme described above.

(i) Opportunity for All Pupils to Learn and make progress:

The central aim of Plymouth College is to provide all of our pupils with educational experiences and opportunities which will enable them to discover and fulfil their own potential. All programmes of work will have opportunities for enrichment and extension activities.

Option systems

The option systems in years 10 and 11 and the sixth form blocking are not fixed but designed each year to accommodate pupils' choices as far as possible. Pupils' preferred choices are collected by February each year. The option system is then designed to maximise pupil choice whilst bearing in mind scheduling feasibility. Pupils are then offered a final choice from the designed structure. Lower Sixth students are not required to finalise their A-Level choices until the GCSE results are published, although options may then be restricted due to class size.

The Individual

A number of structures are planned into the curriculum to assist pupils with particular need. Examples of this include extra lessons for Maths and English in Years 8 and 9, which may be continued into Year 10 and 11, the design of the option systems and the support lessons in the Upper Sixth. The curriculum is also applied flexibly to students who have needs that go beyond this. For example, elite athletes may work to an individualised timetable. International students may also start with a individually tailored programme; some students may achieve success at A level following a 3 year programme with courses chosen across years and a number of special arrangements are made to suit students with learning problems. Where possible, extra subjects may be offered on a tutorial basis.

A study support programme is provided by the Study Support Coordinator, who assists students with their study skills and exam preparation during their private study periods in the library.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The Learning Differences and Disabilities department supports pupils with particular learning needs. Pupils are identified by studying the skills profile on baseline tests such as MidYIS and may be referred by teachers or parents. An initial assessment of the needs of each individual is carried out by the LDD (SEND) department; referrals are made to an educational psychologist where needed. An Individual Education Plan is constructed for each pupil on the main register and these are readily available to all teaching staff on SIMS and teachers note the key requirements in markbooks.

These pupils are supported by a variety of strategies. Some pupils attend regular one to one or small group sessions with a teacher from the SEND department and some pupils are aided on a drop in basis.

Further details are given in the Learning Support policy and department handbook

Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language.

Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language are accepted to the school if, on assessment, their level of understanding in English is sufficient for them to learn here. Such students are supported by the EAL department, their academic programme and level of support will depend upon their ability in English.

Typically in Years 10 and 11 such pupils will study English as a Second Language in place of GCSE English and also study EAL in the Languages block although this is dependent on the individual pupils' needs.

In the Sixth Form, international students generally follow a course in EAL, although this will not be required by all students. The EAL course continues into the upper sixth and leads to the academic IELTS exam.

The EAL department also provides individual support to a number of student according to need and advises all teachers how their teaching can best help EAL students.

Further details are given in the EAL policy and department handbook

The most able pupils

It is critical to recognise the existence of all round exceptional ability, but we also recognise that some pupils are gifted in specific subjects and that some pupils are talented in sport or the creative arts. There is flexible provision for pupils requiring enrichment and support in order to achieve their full potential and raise their aspirations and attainment by developing their:

- Ability to learn
- Range of knowledge
- Core skills such as problem solving
- Creativity
- Intellectual curiosity
- Specific talents

A variety of processes will enable Gifted and Talented pupils to be identified.

Gifted pupils are defined as having a particular academic ability in one or more subjects in the statutory school curriculum other than art, music, drama and PE. Talented pupils will have aptitude in arts or sports. 'All rounders' will have a range of academic ability and talents. All pupils who have the potential to achieve, but are not demonstrating regularly high achievement need to be included.

A variety of methods will be employed to provide identification data, which will include:

- Quantitative data including MidYis, Yellis and ALIS, public examinations and music, art, sporting and scholarship assessments.
- Qualitative information, including teacher assessment and nomination, nomination by parents and referral by outside agencies via the Gifted & Talented Nomination Form.

Curriculum:

Differentiation is built into our curriculum planning. There is a commitment to developing extension and enrichment activities both within lessons and through societies, trips and events. Differentiated homework is made available when appropriate, including open ended tasks or suggestions for extension work.

Pastoral:

Gifted and Talented pupils need to be encouraged to integrate as fully as possible into the life of the School. Support structures are necessary which recognise their need to work with others of the same ability at times.

Further details are given in the Gifted and Talented Policy

(k) Preparation for Adult Life in British Society

A number of opportunities are present to help pupils prepare for adult life in British Society, some occur during the scheduled timetable and some outside of this: Examples of such activities include:

- The CCF
- Duke of Edinburgh award scheme
- Junior Sports Leader Award
- Community service volunteers
- Young Enterprise
- International Computer Driving Licence
- Certificate in Financial Studies
- The School Council
- The Prefect Body
- Cookery skills activity
- Entrepreneurial Society
- Drake Society

(l) Review procedure

Director of Studies reviews procedure and makes amendments every two years.