

LEICESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL TRUST

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Curriculum Policy

This is one of the policies concerned with the curriculum. It should be read in conjunction with the policies on Assessment, Marking & Homework; Examinations; Controlled Assessment; SEND; Safeguarding; and Sex Education. It is also supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work. This policy is implemented by the School's HoDs and its implementation is checked and overseen by the Deputy Head (Academic) and the Director of Studies. The School is committed through the delivery of the curriculum (both within lessons and outside of class time), as in other ways, to upholding the national 'Prevent' strategy.

THE AIMS OF THE CURRICULUM POLICY

The curriculum has been designed in order to reflect the aims of the School, as specified in the School's 'mission statement' which is detailed within the School prospectus:

"The School is a co-educational centre for excellence in academic, musical, sporting and other areas of personal development within a Christian ethos.

The School's aims are:

- To develop the academic potential of the pupil.
- To develop the musical, sporting and other talents of the pupil.
- To develop the moral and spiritual wellbeing of the pupil.
- To develop the individual, in a co-educational school within a Christian ethos."

The curriculum is not just the range of subjects which are offered and the constraints under which they are chosen, but also the way in which they are delivered. It includes any other factors which have a bearing on the academic and personal development of the pupil.

It should be stressed that academic and personal education are not separate, but that both are essential aspects of our teaching. While the curriculum is designed to fulfil the academic potential of each child, it is always remembered that the overall individual personal development of each pupil is paramount.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRICULUM POLICY

LGS aims to encourage both academic breadth and balance, and to produce pupils who embody and benefit from this guiding principle. It also aims to encourage and enable those who wish to study some subjects to a greater depth, by providing curriculum choice at some junctures.

The School aims to provide:

- Breadth** Is achieved by offering a wide range of subjects across several faculties. This allows a range of learning experiences, knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes. Pupils are exposed to subjects covering the aesthetic, creative, human, social, linguistic and literary, mathematical and moral, physical, scientific, spiritual and technological. At each stage, the curriculum is planned as a whole, so that each subject can contribute to pupils' overall progress and achievement rather than appear discrete and unconnected.
- Balance** Is achieved by giving each area appropriate attention within the curriculum as a whole.
- Choice** Is offered at stages in pupils' route through LGS, but is controlled at each stage so that the overall timetable of a pupil is appropriate. The School reserves the right, in individual cases, to add or remove subjects from an individual pupil's curriculum in the overall interest of said pupil. This is only done after consultation between parents, teachers, the Director of Studies, the Deputy Head (Academic) and the Headmaster.

EVALUATION OF THE CURRICULUM

It is recognised that the true value of the curriculum is difficult to establish. However, pass rates at GCSE and A-Level are a convenient and usually very satisfactory way of gauging the success of the curriculum policy, as is uptake of subjects (where subjects are optional). The School supplements the evaluation of its curriculum by carefully considering all feedback from pupils and parents.

HOW THE CURRICULUM IS DELIVERED

Responsibility

The Headmaster controls overall policy. The Deputy Head (Academic) is responsible for the detail and delivery of the curriculum. He is the permanent chair of both the Heads of Department Committee, and of the Curriculum Committee. These two committees each meet on a termly basis to discuss academic matters. The Director of Studies administers the option schemes in Years 8 → 9 (two cycles), 9 → 10 and 11 → 12. He advises the Headmaster and Deputy Head (Academic) on national initiatives, curriculum development, and new qualifications and schemes of assessment.

Setting

Most subjects are taught in forms or option blocks through which any required differentiation occurs within the teaching group. The permanent exceptions to this rule are Mathematics and Modern Languages, where setting is deemed more productive as a way of looking after the interests of individual pupils and is thus used to differentiate according to pupils' needs and so to maximise academic and personal progress. Other exceptions to this rule may occur where timetabling constraints allow and at the discretion of the Head of Department, in consultation with the Director of Studies and Deputy Head (Academic). In both of these subject areas, much thought goes towards the setting of each individual and movement between sets is encouraged when appropriate. Whilst the decision ultimately lies with the Head of Department, it is clearly explained to pupils and any changes involve consultation with pupils and parents. On the rare occasions when there is parental concern at the decision, the matter will be referred to the Deputy Head (Academic) and/or the Headmaster.

Concern about Academic Progress

Academic staff should be mindful of the impact of a pupil's wellbeing on their academic progress. Any concern over the academic progress of a pupil is dealt with, in the first instance, by the member of the academic staff who teaches the pupil in the relevant subject.

Where appropriate, this might then be referred on to:

- the form/personal tutors
- the Head of Department
- the Head of Year
- the Head of Learning Support
- an appropriate member of the Senior Management Team.

The aim is for staff to work with parents and pupils in order to give each child the greatest possible opportunity for academic and personal success.

Assessments and case conferences are used to monitor pupil progress and to provide evidence for feedback in regular written reports and at parents' evenings.

Members of the academic staff are encouraged to use the full range of rewards available to them, including (but not necessarily limited to):

- positive signatures in the student planner
- specific verbal praise
- notes of praise addressed to parents in the planner
- the award of academic commendations.

The Headmaster may see pupils at any time to award praise (in the event of particularly noteworthy work, cards are sent from the Headmaster to deserving pupils) or to discuss work which is giving cause for concern. In the latter instance, this is done to encourage improvement and to generate an amended attitude rather than to condemn.

Definition of Special Education Need and Disability: Learning Support (SEND)

The following paragraphs need to be read and taken in their entirety.

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for additional education provision to be made for them. A child or young person (age 0-25) has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of a similar age in the context of the national norms in this country, rather than the norms of the selective academic cohort of the Grammar School or the Junior School cohort; or

Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in a mainstream school or mainstream post-16 institutions. Under the Equality Act (2010) 'a person is disabled if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities'.

Aims of the Trust's SEND Policy (as it relates to Academic Departments)

- * That all staff will have the highest aspirations for a pupil with additional SEN, a disability, a Statement or an Education Health and Care plan (EHC plan).
- * To enable the Head of Learning Support to lead and support class and subject teachers and pastoral staff in the delivery of the graduated approach to SEND provision, in line with the 2014 SEND Code of Practice and within the context of what is a reasonable adjustment.
- * To support the shared belief of the Trust that every pupil will have access to a broad and balanced education, including the schools' curriculum maps and wider activities.
- * To enable progress tracking for identified groups across the Trust and against a range of indicators, so that decision-making and provision is informed.
- * The Trust accepts and values each pupil and their differences. The Trust will use its 'best endeavours' to ensure that school is accessible and that no pupil is discriminated against.
- * In line with the Trust's safeguarding procedures, to help ensure that all pupils will be protected from harm and neglect.

Commitments made by the Trust (relating to SEND and Academic Departments)

- * Making graduated provision available for all pupils, including identification and assessment for pupils who present with SEND: cognition and learning; communication and interaction; sensory and physical; social, emotional and mental health; and providing appropriate support for pupils for whom English is an Additional Language.
- * Having pupils access the curriculum, by providing quality first teaching for all pupils across the Trust and additional and appropriate support or resources for pupils with SEND or EAL.
- * Empowering all staff to be responsible and accountable for supporting and monitoring the progress and development of the pupils in their class or tutor group, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants and specialist staff.
- * Regularly monitoring and evaluating academic and pastoral provision, so that barriers to effective learning, health and wellbeing are identified and removed.

- * Ensuring that pupils with additional SEN, a disability, a Statement, an EHC plan or pupils with EAL are empowered to be ambassadors for their school in every aspect of school life.
- * Providing support and regular training opportunities to enable staff to fulfil their responsibilities.
- * Ensuring that appropriate exam concessions are available for identified pupils.
- * Ensuring that the unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment of pupils with SEND or EAL is unacceptable.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees have decided that rather than delegate to one member of the Board it will collectively receive an annual report on SEND and EAL provision at the School and at that time review the provision and procedures attached to that policy: admissions, SEND (including EAL provision), expertise and staff training, equipment and facilities.

The Head of Learning Support is responsible for overseeing the Trust's provision for pupils with SEND and EAL and for co-ordinating day-to-day aspects of provision. Working with Heads of Department, this means the Head of Learning Support for example:

- * Enables the identification of SEND across learning and pastoral care
- * Leads and supports all staff in delivery of the graduated approach to SEND
- * Works with all staff (including the School Nurse and the Listener) to assess, plan, implement and review SEND and EAL provision
- * Manages a team of specialist teachers to deliver specialist teaching and support to identified SEND and EAL pupils
- * Is qualified to assess for exam concessions and SPLD: dyslexia
- * Supports staff to track the progress and participation of pupils with SEND (including EAL)
- * Is available at parents' evenings, chairs multi-disciplinary and review meetings for a pupil with SEND and offers individual families appropriate on-going contact with school.

Parents who have a specific concern are encouraged to contact a pupils' class teacher, subject teacher or form tutor in the first instance.

A pupil's SEND records and documents (Pupil Passport) are stored as part of their personal record in the school's data system. Paper records are securely stored in the Learning Support office.

Practical advice on teaching strategies and information/guidance about SEND and EAL is available to staff through staff INSET, as part of the Pupil's record, through on-line resources and individually through the Head of Learning Support.

THE CURRICULUM THROUGH THE SCHOOL

As stated in the original aims of the School, the curriculum is designed to provide breadth and balance, while encouraging and enabling those who wish to study a subject at a greater depth.

Also see – Curriculum Policy Subjects Appendix

GCSE

All pupils study a core of **three** examined subjects, consisting of English (Lang and Lit) and Mathematics. They then choose **seven** optional subjects from those available.

In general, students must include at least one Modern Foreign Language and at least two of Biology, Chemistry and Physics in their selection, unless prior permission to select otherwise is obtained from the School. All pupils also follow non-examined courses in PE, Games and PSD.

(Candidates study for Edexcel International GCSEs in Mathematics, English, English Literature, Biology, Physics and History; and Cambridge IGCSEs in Food Technology, Geography, Music and Physical Education.)

Sixth Form

In the Lower Sixth most pupils select **four** A level subjects, though some might choose just three subjects at A level following consultation between the School, parents and the pupil; some will reduce to **three** subjects in the Upper Sixth having begun with four.

A small number of EAL students follow an ESOL course in the Lower Sixth in place of General Studies or Critical Thinking. PSD (a non-examined course) is followed by the vast majority of Upper Sixth in a timetabled period per week; the Lower Sixth have PSD afternoons off-timetable on an approximately termly basis. Most sixth formers also follow a non-examined course in Games, though some opt for a Community Service option in lieu.

THE WIDER CURRICULUM

Careers

From Year 7 to Year 11, Careers Education is delivered in an integrated manner through PSD/Tutorial. In the Lower Sixth and the Upper Sixth non-contact time is mainly used for provision. Student choices are supported by advice from tutors and Heads of Department and through impartial guidance from professional, qualified practitioners on the school staff. Independent and impartial guidance is available from external sources on occasion. The School offers an externally validated career aptitude service in Year 10 on an opt-in basis. All schemes take into account the age, aptitude and needs of all pupils, as well as including British Values.

PSD

The School is committed to delivering Personal and Social Development (PSD) to all pupils. In the Lower School, a programme is delivered through form tutors and specialist staff. In the GCSE years, it is taught to all pupils as a non-examined course within the curriculum. In the sixth form, a non-examined course is followed by the vast majority of Upper Sixth in a timetabled period per week, whilst the Lower Sixth have PSD afternoons off-timetable on an

approximately termly basis. Topics covered at various times include: health, relationships, citizenship, careers and economic matters, as well as British Values.

Co-curricular Activities

It is recognised that societies, activities and trips make a valuable contribution to the social, personal and academic progress of pupils, and that they add to the pupils' experience and enjoyment of Leicester Grammar School. Some activities are academic in nature and associated with areas of the curriculum, whilst others cross academic disciplines or place emphasis on fields not covered at all within the formal curriculum. It is acknowledged that there is much to be gained from all of these types of activities, including the interaction between pupils of different age groups (which benefits both the younger and older pupils in terms of the development of social skills and a whole school identity); the additional opportunities for social, moral, cultural and personal development; the chance for pupils to explore niche areas not found within the prescribed curriculum; and the extension of understanding and enjoyment of academic topics. Examples of the co-curricular offerings at LGS are Christian Union, participation in chapel services as sacristans or servers, Debating Society, Sixth Form attachment to junior forms, choirs and orchestras, drama groups, The Charity Committee, Young Enterprise, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and numerous house events. All of these, as well as the myriad others on offer, add to the academic development of the pupils, and it is therefore regarded as essential that as many pupils as possible participate in these activities. This is done through encouragement rather than compulsion.

The range of activities is provided during the lunch break and after school. It is intended that these activities reflect both the academic and the leisure interests of the pupils. Some of the activities are targeted towards a certain age range. The Sixth Form is encouraged to develop leadership skills by participating in the organisation of the societies and activities.

In the Sixth Form there is an extensive programme of events specifically linked to the pupils' wider academic development for the sixth form, including regular Friday Lectures for the majority of the Lower Sixth throughout the year and the increasingly popular and thought provoking annual "Question Time" evening (ensuring that sixth form pupils remain aware of current issues regarding politics, culture and citizenship); of course, many of the whole school activities are also enjoyed by members of the Sixth Form.

LGS also runs an extensive range of trips linked to the curriculum, both domestic and foreign, residential and non-residential. These are organised and advertised to pupils and parents on a rolling three-year cycle; amongst the most notable are the biennial Classics Trip to Italy and History Trip to Germany; trips for all Year 9 pupils to one of Spain, France or Germany (depending on their first choice language option for the GCSE years); an Art Trip that varies its destination according to the galleries most relevant for the students' choice of topic; and Biology and Geography field courses. One of the chief considerations when approving all trips is their worth to the pupils' academic development.

Care is taken not to exclude pupils because of gender, academic ability or economic background.

The School Library

It is the School's aim to encourage independent study and learning throughout the School by following this DfE recommendation regarding school libraries, and to this end The Cufflin Library has been developed as a research and resources centre, providing a welcoming environment conducive to study and research at the heart of the School. As well as the many books and periodicals contained therein, this area contains a suite of PCs and an expansive careers section with a reading room stocked with relevant materials forms part of the complex. It is School policy to develop continuously the stock of books and I.C.T. based resources in both quality and quantity to cater for the needs of all students. The teaching of library skills forms part of the planned pastoral programme for Lower School forms. The bank

of PCs within the Library is available both to sixth form students wishing to undertake independent study and to members of the academic staff wishing to take a class to this area for their lessons.

SUBJECT POLICIES

The curriculum at Leicester Grammar School is based on the ethos of the National Curriculum with the addition of the elements of a traditional grammar school education. All academic departments produce, retain and follow a detailed policy pertaining to their discrete subject area and including schemes-of-work and exam specifications. These are updated annually by the relevant HoD, and reviewed annually by the Deputy Head (Academic).