

Curriculum Statement

November 2009 – 2010

The curriculum offered by St. George's provides a balance between academic and non-academic subjects. We cover linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. At all levels in all year groups the basic skills of listening, literacy and numeracy are paramount. As the children progress through the school, the balance shifts towards academic, but of the important non-academic side we never lose sight. ICT is a key tool in the teaching and learning process. All rooms have overhead projectors and there are six senior school computer rooms. Teachers are expected to keep at the forefront of modern educational thinking and are strongly supported in doing so through our CPD. Over twenty staff have passed or are studying for an MA in Education.

This document contains five sections

- **Junior Schools**
- **Key Stage Three**
- **Key Stage Four**
- **Sixth Form**
- **Learning Support**
- **Future plans**

Junior Schools

This forms part of our Teaching and Learning Policy. It refers to the content, skills and concepts of the curriculum we teach our pupils. It considers both the individual subject areas of the curriculum as well as the links which exist between these subjects, and which are made accessible to the children through a cross-curricular, themed approach in our teaching.

At our Junior Schools we use the curriculum to:

- Raise awareness of and curiosity for a wide range of subjects.
- Build on knowledge and skills both within and across the subject areas.
- Encourage a questioning approach to learning.
- Nurture and celebrate creativity.
- Develop skills of communication and cooperation.
- Provide enjoyable learning experiences from which children can derive pleasure and satisfaction. (Make learning fun).
- Evaluate the merits of each subject.
- Set problem solving opportunities within and across subject areas.
- Enable the application of a range of skills and techniques.

As a school we:

- Shadow the National Curriculum in England, but aim to adapt and enrich it wherever and whenever appropriate, within an International context.
- Are conscious of the need to make the curriculum accessible to all our pupils and fully recognize their unique cultural and linguistic diversity and wide range of learning aptitudes.
- Encourage cross-curricular links in learning, whilst also valuing the rigor of specialist teaching. A proportion of our curriculum is taught by specialist teachers so that pupils can receive the robust knowledge which they can provide.
- Deliver the curriculum through various topics and themes to encourage our pupils to make links in their learning.
- Weave the strands of '21st Century Skills'* and Assessment for Learning throughout our lessons in order to encourage our pupils to become creative, flexible thinkers.
- Provide opportunities for learning, both inside and outside the classroom, within the timetable and off timetable and by tapping into the expertise of our parent body and visiting speakers.
- Integrate ICT into the curriculum as a tool for learning as well as teaching it as a discrete subject.

- Ensure high expectations, consistent approaches and good progression throughout the school.

A selection of 21st Century Skills we aim to provide:

- Myself as a Learner: Thinking Skills
- Philosophy for Children (P4C)
- In the News
- Citizenship
- Touch typing
- Current Issues & Dilemmas e.g. Fair Trade; Animal Rights; Global Warming.

Key Stage Three – Years 7, 8 and 9 – No public examinations

All pupils study this number of lessons per cycle¹ in

- **6:** English, Mathematics, Science
- **4:** Italian, Physical Education (PE)
- **3:** One language from Latin, Spanish or French²
- **2:** Art, Design & Technology, Drama, Information Technology (ICT), Music
- **2/3:** Geography, History (the third lesson is shared across years 7,8 and 9)
- **1:** Citizenship, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE)
- **1:** Assembly, Tutorial

Mathematics is the only subject that sets by ability and this is only a top set and then three parallel others. This is done mainly to prepare the top set who, in Year 11, take *Further Maths IGCSE* as well as the normal IGCSE.

Mainstream or “A” English is not setted but an English B group, for pupils who cannot access the A course, is available.

The PSHE programme is a wide ranging discussion-based curriculum involving Emotional Health, Friendships and Families, Sex education, Careers, and much more, all appropriate to the year group.

Although we are guided by the UK National Curriculum, we believe our pupils are capable of far more and so we extend and enhance it and occasionally adapt areas that are inappropriate to our international setting.

¹ The school runs a 6 day cycle of 8 lessons per day. The cycle means that no subject gains or loses when public holidays or other events disrupt the normal pattern. It also ensures that the same lessons are not always on Friday afternoons!

² This is being phased in and is currently in Year 7 only. The Year 8/9 pupils choose between Latin and French only.

Key Stage Four – Years 10 and 11 – (I)GCSE³ public examinations

Normally, pupils take ten IGCSE subjects. Six are compulsory, listed below with numbers indicating the number of lessons per cycle¹

- **6**: Mathematics (Top set take *IGCSE Further Maths* as well)
- **6**: English (Most pupils sit both English Language and English Literature)
- **4**: Biology⁴, Chemistry, Physics

The pupils then choose **four** other (I)GCSE subjects from below

- **4**: at least one language from French, Spanish, Italian and Latin
- **4**: at least one humanity from Geography or History
- **4**: ICT, Art, Music, Drama and DT

These courses are compulsory, but not examined

- PSHE(**1 lesson**), Citizenship(**1**) and Physical Education(**4**)
- Plus Assembly(**1**) and Tutorial(**1**)

Although ten or eleven (I)GCSEs is the norm, it is possible to do fewer particularly if there are any barriers to learning; most commonly, EAL. For example, English Literature is sometimes inaccessible. The average is above ten.

Heads of Department review the courses every year and choose between GCSE and IGCSE on educational grounds.

The PSHE programme is a wide ranging discussion-based curriculum involving Relationships, How to be a good citizen in the 21st Century, Internationalism, Careers, and much more, all appropriate to the year group. Whilst the PSHE programme looks at the “good citizen”, the citizenship programme focuses on the “critical citizen”.

Mathematics sets by ability; a top set and then three parallel others. This is done mainly to prepare the top set who, in Year 11, take *Further Maths IGCSE* as well as the normal IGCSE. Science “broad-sets”, splitting the yeargroup into two halves, to allow for better differentiated teaching. Double award Science is being phased out (Year 11 is the final year).

See the GCSE Guide for more details

³ (I)GCSE : International General Certificate of Secondary Education

⁴ All but the top set of Year 11 are still following the old double award science. Y10 and all subsequent years will do single sciences.

Sixth Form – The International Baccalaureate

All pupils embark on the full IB diploma. In rare circumstances, a student may drop to the certificate course at the end of year 12. Most pupils choose three subjects at Higher Level and three at Standard Level⁵. In addition, they study Theory of Knowledge, write an Extended Essay, and participate in the Creative, Action and Service (CAS) programme and do PSHE. PE is a compulsory course in Year 12 and optional in Year 13. Below are the subjects available, some at SL only as indicated.

Group 1 Language A1 (best language)

English and/or Italian. This involves the study of literature including selections from World Literature.

Group 2 Languages:

Students must choose between Language B (second language, English, Spanish, Italian and French are offered) and Ab Initio (currently only in Italian). Language B provides a foreign language course for students with previous experience of learning the language. Ab Initio is a foreign language course offered at Standard Level only for students who have no previous experience of learning the target language.

Group 3 Individuals and Societies

History, Geography, Economics, Business and Management and Art History (SL).

Group 4 Experimental Sciences

Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

Group 5 Mathematics

Mathematics (HL), Mathematics Standard (SL), Mathematical Studies (SL).

Group 6 Arts and Electives

Visual Arts, Music, Theatre Arts or selected other subjects from Groups 1 to 4.

PSHE is a wide-ranging course encompassing a major section on Careers and University Application. Many outside speakers from Universities and Industry give talks and seminars. Other sections include Sex Education, Learning Styles, Study Skills and MUN-style debating.

The **CAS programme** is a required element of the IB. Students must complete a minimum of 150 course in total divided equally between the three components. Activities include services to community such as volunteering at the Soup Kitchen, Environmental activities, and supporting/organising fund- and awareness-raising for a number of charities.

Theory of Knowledge is a critical thinking course culminating in a major group presentation and an externally moderated essay.

Extended Essay is a 4000-word independently researched project in an area of interest to the student.

See the IB Guide for more details

A note on Learners with difficulties and disabilities.

The school welcomes children who might have a barrier to learning. We have two dedicated departments aimed at helping such children. Firstly, although we have no pupils with UK Statements, the SEN Department helps pupils both in and out of the classroom and, secondly, the EAL Department helps children access the curriculum that their lack of English would normally prevent. Both departments are in regular contact with teachers and provide training. See the two handbooks here (SEN and EAL)

⁵ It is possible to vary this in exceptional circumstances. Some pupils do 4HL and 2SL for example. Some pupils do a seventh subject as an extra certificate outside the diploma.

Future Plans

Where viable, the school will look at adding more choices to the IB, GCSE and KS3 programmes. The most recent addition is KS3 Spanish. IB Computer Science was offered for the last two years but insufficient numbers chose it. Citizenship has been rebranded and improved in KS3.

A survey was done of Junior School parents asking what Language they would like to see in Year 7 (in addition to Latin, English, Italian and French). Mandarin, Arabic, German and many others were offered but it was clear that Spanish would be the only viable option. We understand that we offer purely romance languages but, in an international environment, pupils here have the chance at becoming tri- or quadra-lingual through this route and many do.

New possible IB choices include Environment Systems and Societies, D&T, Sports and Exercise Science, Psychology and a new Ab Initio Language. These are being presently debated.

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| <p><i>This policy will be updated every year (minimum) by the Senior Deputy Head. The next time this must be done is April 2010.</i></p> |
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