

Curriculum Policy

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The Head, staff and governors of Sir William Perkins's School are committed to promoting a broad and balanced curriculum. The School aims to nurture courage, ambition and generosity in our students within a caring, innovative and happy environment. The Head, staff and governors work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that each student is given the best chance to achieve their full academic potential: success in this area enables our students to progress to the next stages of education or employment.
- 1.2. Sir William Perkins's School is an independent day school which provides full-time, supervised education for students of compulsory school age (as construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996). The curriculum provision provides students with access to subjects set out in the national curriculum in England. Key stages 3 and 4 framework document (December 2014), in which citizenship is not taught as a discrete subject but within the wider curriculum and within PSHCE. This ensures a broad curriculum for Years 7-9 with GCSE options taking place in Year 9 for Years 10 and 11, and in Year 11 for the Sixth Form. Further flexibility and depth are enabled, as is expected in the spirit and legal status of independent schools, for all students where possible and, in particular, for students requiring alternative models for reasons set out in [Appendix 3](#) - Students with Alternative Curriculum Arrangements.
- 1.3. The School is also committed to instilling in its students through its curriculum the key values of the school, in particular, that all students should feel valued and recognised and that the views of others should be respected. Our curriculum provision, therefore, supports Fundamental British Values and precludes the teaching of any partisan political views in any curriculum subject. Where political issues are brought to the attention of students they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. This is detailed in the Teaching and Learning Policy.
- 1.4. The School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of the Curriculum Policy is non-discriminatory, in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Full details are available in the school's Equal Opportunities Policy document.
- 1.5. This document should be read in conjunction with examination board specifications, course outlines, schemes of work, curriculum maps, the school calendar, and other school policies including:
 - Careers Education and Guidance Policy
 - Educational Visits Policy
 - E-safety Policy
 - More Able Students Policy
 - PSHCE Policy
 - Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy
 - Students with SEND Policy
 - Students with EAL Policy
 - School Library Policy
 - Teaching and Learning Policy

2. The Curriculum

- 2.1. The total school teaching week, for all year groups, is twenty-five hours and forty minutes; this is divided into forty-four thirty-five minute lessons (four nine lesson days with a shorter, eight lesson day on Fridays). Years 7 to 11 are timetabled for all of these lessons; the Sixth Form have independent study periods outside of their taught A level lessons.
- 2.2. Details of the content and delivery of the curriculum can be found in the Teaching and Learning Policy.
- 2.3. All students, from years 7 to 11, will experience teaching and make progress in the following areas:
 - **Linguistic** through the compulsory English curriculum, culminating in GCSEs in both English language and English literature. Students may also study a modern foreign language to GCSE; All students study modern foreign languages in years 7 to 9 alongside Latin. All teachers will teach and enable linguistic progress, as appropriate within their subject areas (e.g. subject-specific discourse, including terminology). Linguistic progress also enables the development of the related skill of oracy.
 - **Mathematical** through the compulsory mathematics curriculum, culminating in mathematics GCSE. Where appropriate, teachers across the curriculum will teach and enable mathematical progress within their subject areas.
 - **Scientific and technological** through the compulsory science curriculum, culminating in two or three separate sciences or double award. Computer science and design and technology are taught to all in the first three years and are GCSE options.
 - **Human and social** through the compulsory study of English language and literature from years 7 to 11 and the study of geography, history and religious studies. The latter is compulsory throughout years 7 to 9 and students are encouraged to opt for at least one for GCSE. Additionally, the PSHCE and RSE curriculum addresses wider topics and issues, complemented by assemblies and tutor periods (see the PSHCE and RSE policies for details).
 - **Physical** through compulsory PE lessons and the option to take GCSE PE.
 - **Aesthetic** and creative education through the compulsory English literature curriculum (see above) and the art, music and drama lessons taken by all from years 7 to 9 and the option to take these at GCSE. DT also facilitates development in this area.
- 2.4. The content of the curriculum at the School is in line with the National Curriculum but departments are encouraged to expand and tailor the content to suit the needs of our students. GCSE options are in line with national expectations of students of our ability and all have to take GCSEs in English language, English literature, mathematics and science. The curriculum plan is found in [Appendix 1](#) - Curriculum Plan and its structure and content, at all stages is reviewed regularly.
- 2.5. There are some exceptions made for some students, notably SEND students, elite athletes or musicians, or those who require a high degree of pastoral or medical support, for whom an adjustment to the curriculum provision above may be necessary: see [Appendix 3](#) -Students with Alternative Curriculum Arrangements.
- 2.6. The classroom curriculum is complemented by a strong co-curricular programme with almost 150 clubs and activities offered by departments and individual staff. The School believes in learning for enjoyment and activities are grouped into three key strands: *Inquiring Minds*, *Creative & Expressive*, and *Action for Change*. The co-curricular offering also includes a range of sporting activities. All students are encouraged to engage in the

co-curricular programme as the School believes such participation is an important way to develop a student's individual interests and support their general wellbeing.

- 2.7. Students acquire and develop their speaking (oracy), listening, literacy & numeracy skills across the curriculum. English and mathematics explicitly focus on the development of these skills and student progress in these subjects enables access to the whole curriculum. Additionally, subjects develop a range of specific skills, from essay writing to debating (e.g. history, classics and religious studies) and from the application of mathematical concepts (e.g. science and geography) to the skills required to learn languages (e.g. Latin and French) which depend on and develop wider linguistic skills. All subjects are expected to contribute to the students' use and development of Standard English: see [Appendix 2](#) - Use of Language across the Curriculum.
- 2.8. Religious education is available to all students of compulsory school age. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from religious education if they make a formal request to the Head.
- 2.9. All students are invited to take part in collective worship. The school has a programme of collective worship involving some whole-school assemblies, Lower School (Years 7 to 9), Upper School and Sixth Form (Years 10 to 13) and House assemblies.
- 2.10. Relationships, Sex and Health education is provided for all students: the biological aspects of human reproduction are taught and students are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. See the PSHCE and Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policies for further information.
- 2.11. Fundamental British values are inscribed in the content and delivery of the curriculum.

3. Sixth Form

- 3.1. Sixth Form options enable specialisation through A level options, a process in which students are supported at every stage by the pastoral, academic and careers education guidance staff. Most students will take three A levels, with some exceptions opting to take more or being allowed to take fewer as need arises.
- 3.2. A levels are complemented by PE and an enrichment programme (including lectures and PSHCE/Life Skills). Additionally, students are encouraged to take the EPQ option; this provides an opportunity to extend their academic skills and interests and to prepare them for the independent working and project management skills required in the worlds of employment and tertiary education. Other supercurricular options that complement a SWPS Sixth Form programme of study include the ESB Grade 8 Oracy qualification.

4. Student groups

4.1 SEND students

Where additional or specific support is required in relation to a student's special educational need or disability, a range of strategies can be put in place, depending on the individual need. Lesson plans and schemes of work will acknowledge this for subject teaching and the Students with SEND Policy details the school's provision in this area for all students.

4.2. EAL students

Where additional or specific support is required in relation to a student whose home language is not English, a range of strategies can be put in place, depending on the individual need. Lesson plans and schemes of work will acknowledge this for subject teaching and the Students with EAL Policy details the school's provision in this area for all students.

4.3. More Able students

Lesson plans and schemes of work will acknowledge the strategies in place for more able students for subject teaching and, in some cases, alternative provision will be required (see Appendix 3 -Students with Alternative Curriculum Arrangements) The School's provision for more able students is detailed in the More Able Policy.

5. **Teaching environment**

Sir William Perkins's School is committed to delivering the curriculum within a stimulating, safe and supportive context, the details of which can be found in the Teaching and Learning Policy and should be read in conjunction with relevant risk assessments and the Health and Safety Policy.

6. **Application of skills and careers**

The broad and balanced curriculum from years 7 to 9 enables students to establish a firm foundation of knowledge, understanding and skills within a variety of subjects in order to provide them with access to the widest possible option choices at GCSE and A level. The Careers Education and Guidance Policy and supporting documentation details the ways in which the school is committed to accurate, appropriate and supportive guidance. This supports our students when making choices within full-time education which impact pathways and choices beyond their time at Sir William Perkins's School.

7. **Academic standards**

The School strives to enable all students to achieve their highest academic potential. Academic selection pre-registration ensures that the Sir William Perkins's School student population is above the national average and baseline assessment results (MidYIS, Yellis and ALIS) support this. The Assessment Policy details the way in which student progress is tracked and monitored to ensure all students make progress.

8. **Monitoring and review**

The governing body is ultimately responsible for the effective oversight, review and amendment of this policy and understands its legal obligation to do so.

This document is reviewed and updated annually by the Deputy Head Academic, with the input of the Assistant Head T&L, or as events or legislation requires.

Next scheduled review date: June 2025
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Last reviewed: September 2024

Key updates in this version:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minor changes format and branding• Minor changes to content to aid clarity and reflect new areas of emphasis (e.g., oracy)• Update of job titles and policy references• Removal of out-of-date statements• Amendments to the appendix, Students with Alternative Curriculum Arrangements.• Updates to Options Process and the Sixth Form offering |
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- Addition of the Higher and Foundation Project Qualifications and Photography A level in Appendix 1

APPENDIX 1 - Curriculum Plan

1. Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education

A programme is followed for one lesson per week for all seven years of the school. In the Sixth Form, PSHCE lessons are called 'Life Skills'. The details of this are to be found in the PSHCE Policy and schemes of work.

Physical education is also compulsory for all students with each student having a weekly allocation of PE.

2. Curriculum Stages

This section should also be read in conjunction with Appendix 4 – SWPS Curriculum Map 2024 onwards which details the curriculum provision for years 7 to 11.

2.1 Key Stage 3

The curriculum is compulsory for Years 7 – 9, with a wide range of subjects to provide breadth and balance and a good base to make option choices for GCSE.

During the summer term of Year 7, students choose which two MFL subjects to continue through to Year 8.

During the spring term of Year 9, GCSE choices are made after consultation between students, parents/carers and staff (see the school calendar).

In the Summer Term of Year 8, pupils are invited to undertake a Higher or Foundation Project Qualifications. These Level 2 qualifications comprise a 1,000 or 2,000 word essay or artefact with an accompanying academic write-up, a verbal presentation and a reflective Production Log. Topics are of the students' choosing and the qualification is worth the equivalent of half a GCSE (HPQ).

2.2 Key Stage 4

The GCSEs on offer provide an academic education with sufficient flexibility to form a good basis for subsequent study.

During the spring term of Year 11, A level choices are made after consultation between students, parents/carers and staff.

All students choose nine or ten GCSE subjects as follows:

The core curriculum:

- English language and literature
- Mathematics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics

The three sciences can be studied either as three separate GCSEs or as the Double Award. Further mathematics is also available for our most able mathematicians.

In addition, three other choices (if separate sciences are taken) or four other choices (if Double Award science is chosen) are made from a wide selection of subjects:

1. Art
2. Classical civilisation
3. Computer science
4. Drama
5. Design technology
6. French
7. Geography
8. German
9. History
10. Latin
11. Music
12. Religious studies
13. Spanish
14. Physical education
15. Textiles

Although there is a free choice of subjects, students are encouraged to take a broad range of subjects that include a humanities subject and an MFL subject. Timetable and staffing issues have also to be taken into account and may necessitate the use of students' reserve subject choices.

Further Maths GCSE is an extra subject that top set maths students can choose in addition to the 9 GCSE subjects outlined above. Further Maths GCSE is taught in their normal Maths lessons and is not timetabled as a separate subject.

2.3 Sixth Form - Key Stage 5

The curriculum and activities in the Sixth Form are appropriate for the needs of Sir William Perkins's School students, combining both academic rigour and an extensive range of co-curricular activities.

Students take three or four A level subjects from the following list:

1. Art
2. Biology
3. Business studies
4. Chemistry
5. Classical civilisation
6. Design and technology
7. Economics
8. English literature
9. Further mathematics
10. French
11. Geography
12. German
13. History
14. Latin
15. Mathematics
16. Music
17. Physical education
18. Photography
19. Physics
20. Politics
21. Psychology
22. Religious studies

- 23. Spanish
- 24. Textiles
- 25. Theatre studies

Although there is a free choice of subjects, timetable and staffing issues have to be taken into account and may necessitate the use of students' reserve subject choices. Additionally, students are carefully advised about their suitability for A level courses based on their previous academic attainment.

There is also an option for students to take Classical Greek GCSE in a two-year course.

The Extended Project Qualification, which is worth half an A level, is available to all students and students are actively encouraged to opt for this highly regarded qualification. It provides an opportunity to carry out a research project, in an area of their choice, under the support and guidance of a supervising member of staff; the end result is a piece of work comparable to university style learning. The Extended Project Qualification is completed in the autumn term of Year 13.

APPENDIX 2: Use of Language across the Curriculum

In all subjects, students are taught to express themselves precisely and appropriately and to read accurately and with understanding. Since Standard English, spoken and written, is the predominant language in which knowledge and skills are taught and learnt, students are taught to recognise and use Standard English.

Writing

In writing, students are taught to use correct spelling and punctuation and follow grammatical conventions. They are also be taught to organise their writing in logical and coherent forms.

Speaking (oracy)

In speaking, students are taught to use language precisely and cogently in a range of contexts. The development of oracy or verbal communication skills is nurtured across the curriculum.

Listening

Students are taught to listen to others and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

Reading

In reading, students are taught strategies to help them read with understanding; to locate and use information; to follow a process or argument; summarise, synthesise and adapt what they learn from their reading.

Students are taught the spellings and definitions of subject-specific technical and specialist vocabulary and how to use it. They are also taught to use subject-specific styles and genres of language usage in order to understand and express themselves in different contexts.

Students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities, or for whom English is an Additional Language, are given additional support as necessary, as documented in the Students with SEND and Students with EAL Policy.

Appendix 3: Students with Alternative Curriculum Arrangements.

The School can, and does, make arrangements for students if an alternative curriculum is required. This is defined as extra or fewer subjects studied than the standard timetable allocation for any year group.

Students for whom alternative arrangements will be made will usually fall into one (or more) of three categories:

1. Students with SEND issues which make accessing the full curriculum difficult, and for whom a reduced timetable will directly enable a positive impact on their emotional wellbeing and/or academic progress.
2. More able students who are engaged in demanding extra-curricular activities in which they are elite participants; e.g., sport or music.
3. Students who join the school after the majority Year 7 entry date and who have not followed a curriculum which matches that of SWPS; e.g. have experienced schools' differing language provision.

Protocol for making alternative curriculum arrangements

Action 1: Expression of concern

The student, their parents/carers or a member of staff should express concerns about the student's ability to access the curriculum or its suitability for their needs. This can initially be done verbally but should always be put in writing for the attention of the relevant Heads of Year, Heads of Department and the Deputy Head Academic.

Action 2: Initial Evidence

Within 48 hours, the Head of Year should interview the student to ascertain their attitude to all issues and, where appropriate, get a written record of extra-curricular commitments or issues.

Additionally, the Head of Year should contact the parents/carers of the student to ascertain the issues. During the phone call/meeting, the Head of Year should explain that the Deputy Head Academic will oversee the process and explain whether the school agrees to an alternative curriculum or not and what the terms will be.

Action 3: Detailed Evidence

The Head of Year should request written feedback within a week of Action 2 on the following:

- The student's academic attainment, progress and attitude to learning in all subjects from all subject staff; the student's wellbeing, attitude to learning and relationships with peers/staff from the tutor;
- SEND feedback, where appropriate, from the Head of Personalised Learning;
- Specialist feedback, where appropriate, from staff who can comment on whether a student is operating at elite level in their chosen field.

Action 4: Judgement

The findings from above should be submitted to the Deputy Head Academic within three working days after the detailed evidence is received, with any recommendations or concerns the pastoral team and subject staff may have.

The Deputy Head Academic should consider all of above in order to form a judgement. The student and their parents/carers should be informed of the judgement by either the Deputy Head Academic within 48 hours or the Deputy Head Academic should inform the Head of Year and instruct them to contact the student and their parents/carers.

Action 5: Communication

Where the need for an alternative curriculum is judged to be appropriate, the Deputy Head Academic should instruct the timetable team and all relevant staff of the new arrangements within 24 hours of the parents/carers being informed. The student's timetable will be altered accordingly so that they register with either the librarian for study periods in the library or with a member of the Personalised Learning department in Room 123, or a member of staff who will work with them to support their needs (e.g. SEND, school counsellor, etc.).

If there is disagreement about the recommendation, the Deputy Head Academic should work with all involved to find a resolution.

Action 6: Monitoring

The Head of Year and the Deputy Head Academic will monitor the progress of the student and repeat any of the actions above as required.

In exceptional circumstances, such as a serious medical or pastoral issue which would necessitates an immediate decision, the Deputy Head Academic will review the case with the Deputy Head Pastoral and make a decision, acting in the best interests of the child.

Appendix 4: Curriculum Map September 2023 onwards:

KS3

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Art	2	2	2
Biology	2	2	2
Chemistry	2	2	2
Drama	1.5	1.5	1.5
DT	2	2	2
English	5	5	5
French	2	0	0
German	2	0	0
Geography	2	2	2
History	2	2	2
Computer Science	2	2	2
Latin /Classical Civilisation	2	2	2
Maths	5	5	5
Music	1.5	1.5	1.5
PE	4	4	4
Physics	2	2	2
RS	2	2	2
Spanish	2	0	0
PSHCE	1	1	1
MFL1		3	3
MFL2		3	3
	44	44	44

KS4

KS5

	Year 10	Year 11
English	8	8
Maths	6	6
Dual Award	9	9
Option A	4	4
Option B	4	4
Option C	4	4
Option D	4	4
Games	4	3
PSHCE	1	1
Independent study		1
	44	44

	Year 12 and 13
Option 1	9
Option 2	9
Option 3	9
Option 4	9
Games	3
Extra GCSE or EPQ or Enrichment	3
PSHCE/Life Skills	1