



Curriculum Policy

Academic Year 2023-24

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THE STRUCTURE OF THE COLLEGE

The College is divided into five schools, each with its own Head. From Year 7 onwards there are also Year Heads, who work under the Head of each School and manage the team of Form Tutors in that year group. In addition there is a Deputy Head of Middle School and Deputy Head of Upper School that supports both Head of School and Tutors in those areas of the school.

The five schools are as follows:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| DUCKS | 0-3 years (Kindergarten) |
| | Nursery Class - Year 2 (Infant School) |
| The Junior School | Years 3 to 6 |
| The Lower School | Years 7 and 8 |
| The Middle School | Years 9 to 11 |
| The Upper School | Years 12 and 13 (called the Remove and Upper Sixth) |

INTRODUCTION TO THE CURRICULUM

Dulwich offers many opportunities for pupils to learn; this document describes only those that are timetabled. The basic aim of our timetable is to develop pupils' knowledge, skills, understanding of ideas, attitudes and confidence. We seek to provide a secure yet challenging environment, which encourages participation, curiosity and enquiry. In designing this curriculum there are five governing principles:

Breadth, so that pupils are exposed to the full spectrum of areas of learning (linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, creative, literary, spiritual, moral, physical, cultural and social);

Balance, so that pupils develop appropriately in each of these areas;

Relevance, so that pupils see the reasons for learning;

Flexibility, so that at the highest levels of the College, where they must eventually specialise, pupils can choose a combination of subjects that suits their personal interests and capabilities;

Resourcing, so that pupils are taught in groups of a suitable size in appropriate accommodation, by well-qualified teachers supplied with all the necessary technology and equipment;

While we attach much importance to a pupil's intellectual development, we are no less concerned with his personal qualities, which we seek to develop through every facet of his life at the College. An impression of the scope of our non-timetabled curriculum can be gained from the main prospectus or the College website.

To supplement and develop their timetabled learning, all pupils are set homework on each of the five school days. For the youngest pupils the homework is about 30 minutes, increasing to an hour in Year 7 and one and a half hours in Year 9. At GCSE the expectation increases to up to 2 hours per evening and at A level we expect pupils to do at between 2 and 3 hours work each day.

A note on Free Learning

What is distinctive about learning at Dulwich? Like all good schools, we ensure that our pupils are prepared well for public examinations – results do matter – but we do not believe that “teaching to the test” should define a Dulwich education.

We believe that there are ideas to interrogate and knowledge to be found beyond the syllabus to which our pupils should be introduced, early and often; these will serve to enhance and complement the formal curriculum and provide a path to enjoyable lifelong learning.

So what is Free Learning? It is learning that extends beyond and is free from a syllabus and free from examination, and that challenges pupils to think for themselves. It is fed by intellectual curiosity, building on the interest and enthusiasm of teachers and other pupils.

Free learning is often interdisciplinary in nature; it breaks through the compartmentalisation of learning that subject syllabuses can impose. It allows the possibility of failure, from which pupils can learn important lessons. It is about making connections, challenging what we know and about learning how to avoid following the herd in an unquestioning and accepting way.

Free learning takes place both in the classroom and beyond, with a rich programme of clubs and societies, talks, competitions and other events, sometimes linked to key dates in the academic calendar and often in collaboration with pupils from other schools.

THE COLLEGE DAY

The College runs a two-week timetable. There are 5 x 55minute periods every day, Monday to Friday, with a five minute break between consecutive lessons. The timings are as follows in the Upper, Middle and Lower Schools:

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Registration | 0835 – 0850 |
| Period 1 | 0850 - 0945 |
| Period 2 | 0950 - 1045 |
| Break | 1050 – 1120 |
| Period 3 | 1120 – 1215 |
| Period 4 | 1220 – 1315 |
| Lunch | 1315 – 1435 |
| Period 5 | 1440 – 1545 |

There are the following Assemblies and Form Tutor periods (during Period 1 except where stated otherwise):

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Upper School | Form Tutor period / Assembly (Period 1) | | | | |
| Middle School | Assembly / Form Tutor period (Period 1) | 1 additional Form period in Year 9 (per fortnight) on Wednesday Week B. | | | |
| Lower School | Assembly/Form Tutor period (Period 1) | | Great Hall Assembly (per fortnight Period 1) | | |
| Junior School | Whole School Assembly | Whole School Assembly (Chaplain / Hymn Practice | House Meeting / Year Group meeting / Form Period /Music Assembly | Form Assembly (either upper or lower KS2) | Whole School Celebration Assembly |

THE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Period allocation

There are three Forms in each of Years 3 to 6. The table below shows the time allocation for each subject. We strive to have a weekly timetable, but as the Senior School operate on a 2-week timetable, some may be taught on a Week A/Week B basis. For clarity 0.5 refers to one of the 25 minute periods per day. These are named 5A on the timetable.

| | ENGLISH | MATHS | WELLBEING | FRENCH | HISTORY | GEOGRAPHY | COMPUTING | SCIENCE | ART | D.T. | GAMES | P.E. | R.S.PHILOSOPHY | STRINGS/BRASS | DRAMA | DANCE | HANDWRITING | FORM PERIOD/LIBRARY | MUSIC/ SINGING |
|----|---------|-------|-----------|--------|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----|------|-------|------|----------------|---------------|-------|-------|-------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Y3 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.2 | 2 | 1.5 |
| Y4 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.2 | 2 | 1.5 |
| Y5 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| Y6 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |

Carousels

- Year 3 & 4 R.S./Philosophy, Drama/Dance, and the strings and brass lessons are taught in a carousel during two timetabled periods throughout the year. Year 3/4 Drama/ Dance is taught on a half-termly carousel.
- Drama and Dance are taught in half termly blocks to ensure equal coverage.
- Form Periods allow Form Teachers to manage the wellbeing of the class.
- Each class in Y3 & 4 has a whole lesson in the library each week. In Y5 & 6 they have a 30minute session, once a week.

Year 6

In the Lent Term, Year 6 take on the Great Exhibition – a cross curricular project based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This project is delivered through History/Geography/RS curriculum time. The students undertake a research project, collaborate with Year 12 mentors and present their learning through an exhibition evening.

The Junior School day

The Junior School Day is different to that of Years 7 to 13, with lunch happening when Period 4 happens in the senior School at 12:05pm. The school then has a shared clubs time from 13:40 – 14:20pm.

The Junior School then has an extra half lesson (Period 5A) from 14:25 – 14:50, in which Wellbeing, Philosophy, guided reading will take place.

The Junior School Day

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Registration | 0825 – 0835 |
| Assembly | 0835 – 0855 |
| Period 1 | 0855 - 0950 |
| Period 2 | 0950 - 1045 |
| Break | 1045 – 1110 |
| Period 3 | 1110 - 1205 |
| Lunch | 1205 – 1235 |
| Period 4 | 1240 - 1335 |
| Clubs | 1340 - 1420 |
| Registration | 1420 – 1425 |
| Period 5A | 1425 - 1450 |
| Period 5 | 1450 – 1545 |

THE LOWER SCHOOL

Period allocations per fortnight are as below:

| | EN | FR/SP | LA | HI | GG | RP | MA | SC | AR | DT | MU | DR | IT | CN | Wb | PE |
|-------------|----|-------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Yr 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

| | EN | FR/SP | LA/CN/ GM | HI | GG | RP | MA | SC | AR | DT | MU | DR | IT | Wb | PE |
|-------------|----|-------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Yr 8 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

The remaining periods are devoted to:

- (a) four periods of Games a fortnight
- (b) Great Hall assembly (Wednesday period 1 every other week)
- (c) EAT assembly/Form Tutor period (Monday period 1 each week)

Year 7 forms are created on the basis of choice of foreign language. Typically, there are three Forms of each language. Mathematics is the only subject in which pupils are set by ability. It is expected that the language chosen at this stage will be taken through to (I)GCSE.

Pupils normally remain in the same Form from Year 7 through to Year 8.

In March, pupils in Year 7 are asked to select which language they want to focus on continuing into Year 8. They will all have to continue to study French or Spanish, however they will have the choice of continuing with either Latin, Chinese or starting learning German. By selecting one of these options pupils will be given double the teaching time during Year 8 in these subjects compared to the time in Year 7.

In March, pupils in Year 8 are asked to select the *second* Modern Language (one of French, Spanish, Latin, German, and Chinese) which they wish to study in Year 9 in addition to the Modern Language they chose in Year 7. Latin is a continuation course, but German, Chinese, French and Spanish are beginners' courses. The section of this Guide devoted to GCSE subject options describes the implications of this choice.

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Year 9

Year 9 sees 120 or so of our Year 8 pupils join with around 90 pupils from the 13+ process. The forms in Year 9 are designed to aid a smooth transition into the Middle School. We mix the Year 8 pupils and the 13+ pupils as much as possible. The maximum size of a Form is 24 and the minimum usually around 21; there are 11 forms in total. The pupils will be with their Form Tutor for one year, before moving to another Form Tutor for the two-year GCSE cycle. The Head of Year remains with the pupils throughout their time in the Middle School. Wherever possible, the Form Tutor will teach the form, either in a subject lesson or in Wellbeing.

Pupils take a second Language option (one of Latin, German, French, Spanish, Chinese – see previous section) in the “LANG” periods shown in the following table. Otherwise pupils in Year 9 follow a common curriculum:

| EN | FR/SP | HI | GG | RP | MA | PH | CH | BI | IT | AR | DT | LANG | PE | MU | DR | WB |
|----|-------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|----|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

The remaining five periods are devoted to Games (two period a fortnight) and assemblies/Form Tutor periods (three periods a fortnight).

The Choice of GCSE Subjects

In March, pupils in Year 9 are asked to choose the option subjects which they will take to GCSE.

In Years 10 and 11 all pupils study core subjects:

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| English (Lit. & Lang.) | Mathematics | French / Spanish |
| Physics | Chemistry | Biology |

The choice of French or Spanish will already be determined as the language studied since Year 7.

In addition to these *core* subjects, pupils choose ONE subject from each of the following three groups:

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | History | Geography | Religion & Philosophy |
| 2 | Classics (see note b) Geography Religion & Philosophy Drama | German (see note b) Art Design & Technology Computing | Spanish (see note b) Chinese (see note b) French (see note b) Music |
| 3 | Geography Music Religion & Philosophy | Art Ancient Greek (see note c) Computer Science | Design & Technology PE Drama |

Notes

- (a) The first subject may not, of course, be selected from more than one group.
- (b) A language may be selected from Group 2 only if it has been studied in Year 9 as a second language.
- (c) The Ancient Greek option in Group 3 is for pupils wishing to start this subject in Year 10 and thereby include three Languages among their GCSE subjects. This option is available only to pupils whom we consider to have a particular aptitude for languages.

Science

All pupils study the three sciences as separate subjects throughout the Middle School up to IGCSE. They will be entered for either Double Award (that is, pupils take examinations which yield *two* IGCSEs) or for Separate Sciences (that is, pupils take examinations which yield *three* IGCSEs). The decision is made after Year 11 mocks in January, following recommendations by teachers and the analysis of examination results. The actual entry ratio varies from year to year, according to the perceived abilities of the pupils.

A pupil who has taken the Double Award course is just as eligible for Science courses at A level as a pupil who has taken IGCSE in Separate Sciences - providing, of course, in every case, appropriate grades have been obtained. Thus, access to, and eligibility for, Advanced Level Science courses is affected by the *quality of the IGCSE grades* a pupil achieves, and not by whether he takes Double Award or Separate Sciences.

Modern Languages

All pupils sit IGCSE French or Spanish at the end of Year 11. Pupils may also choose to study a second Modern Language to GCSE from the following options: French, Spanish, Chinese and German.

Within this scheme, no pupil will be awarded fewer than nine GCSEs, made up as follows:

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| English Language | French or Spanish | Double Award or Separate Sciences |
| English Literature | Mathematics | Three option subjects |

Year 10

Pupils are allocated to forms based on our knowledge of them from their time in Year 9. We are lucky to be working within a narrow band of abilities (top 13% nationwide) and so teach pupils in mixed ability forms. Some subjects are taught as sets (Mathematics, Languages and some optional subjects). As with Year 9, the maximum Form size is 24 and the average is around 21. The form tutor in Year 10, wherever possible, will stay with the form for the next two years, to help provide pastoral stability for the pupils.

The period allocation per fortnight in Year 10 is:

| EN | LAN G | MA | PH | CH | BI | WB | P E | Group 1 option | Group 2 option | Group 3 option |
|----|----------|----|----|----|----|----|--------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 7 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 5 |

Those pupils that make good progress through the IGCSE syllabus in Maths will be given the opportunity to study the Add Maths course.

There are two periods per fortnight of Games, and two assemblies/Form Tutor periods.

Year 11

The Form structure continues with that established in Year 10.

There are two periods of Games, and two assemblies/Form Tutor periods.

The Choice of A Level Subject

In February of Year 11, pupils are required to submit their choices of A Level subjects to be studied in the Upper School.

Pupils in Year 12 (Remove) embark on **three** chosen subjects at A level (unless they take Further Mathematics then they will take **four A levels comprising Mathematics, Further Mathematics and two other A levels**), along with our A level Plus courses and Liberal Studies programme. In a handful of cases, pupils are able to pick a fourth A level that is not Further Mathematics, which they are taught in an 'express' format in small groups with approximately half the normal timetabled periods.

In their second year in the Upper School (Upper Sixth), all pupils continue with their three (or four, in the case of pupils taking Further Mathematics) A levels and a non-examined Liberal Studies course which takes place once per week.

Full details appear in the "Upper School Curriculum" booklet published annually. The list of A level courses is as follows:

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Art | Geography | Music |
| Biology | German | Philosophy |
| Chemistry | Classical Greek | Physical Education |
| Classical Civilisation | History | Physics |
| Computing | History of Art | Politics |
| Design & Technology | Italian | Psychology |
| Economics | Latin | Religious Studies |
| English | Mathematics | Spanish |
| French | Further Mathematics | Theatre Studies |

Pupils can select Philosophy **or** Religious Studies, but **not both** courses.

Please note:

We invite Year 11 pupils to make their choices: we then create a timetable to incorporate them. The availability of any subject at A level depends on there being sufficient demand for it. We cannot guarantee that every *combination* of subjects will be available.

THE UPPER SCHOOL

Pupils in the Upper School are placed in tutor groups of 10-12 pupils and take A level courses. For a list of courses available, see the previous page.

In addition, all pupils follow the extension programme as follows:

- Liberal Studies in the Upper Sixth
- Advanced Electives in the Remove

Some pupils also study the OCR Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in the Remove. This is a formal qualification worth half an A level and awarded a grade which can count towards university offers.

The period allocation per fortnight is as follows:

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Remove | A level option 1 10 | A level option 2 10 | A level option 3 10 | Further Maths 5 | Wellbeing 2 | Advanced Electives (afternoon) 2 | Games (afternoon) 2 | Private Study 7 (FM) 12 |
| Sixth | A level option 1 11 | A level option 2 11 | A level option 3 11 | Further Maths 5 | Wellbeing 2 | Liberal Studies (afternoon) 2 | Games (afternoon) 2 | Private Study 4 (FM) 9 |

The remaining two periods a fortnight comprise time with Form Tutors and/or in assembly and Wellbeing.

There are also departmental Oxbridge preparation classes, where appropriate. Most of these take place off-timetable.

Advanced Electives in the Remove

We believe that there is much beyond their A level syllabuses that pupils should learn and understand. Therefore, in addition to their chosen subjects, all pupils will follow an Advanced Electives programme in the Remove. The pupils will choose two courses over one year that provide an opportunity for them to fire their enthusiasm, and become experts in areas that lie just beyond the reach of the normal curriculum. Most often, pupils will take courses that complement their existing choices and deepen their knowledge, often to near-undergraduate level. Frequently, courses are designed to introduce pupils to the subjects that they want to study at university and the professions they might pursue afterwards, providing the opportunity for pupils to see how their chosen subject relates to the world at large. We appreciate the intellectual excitement that takes place where the traditional subjects overlap. Therefore, many courses are also interdisciplinary in nature, involving, for example, art, literature, music and history being studied in unison and will be team taught. All courses will explore an area of study in more depth than standard A level courses and will provide opportunities for pupils to participate in competitions, such as the Weizmann Safecracking Competition in the Engineering course.

In the Remove, pupils will have one period of Advanced Electives per week, on a Thursday afternoon, across two 'semesters' of the year (the first semester being the Michaelmas Term, and the second being the Lent Term and first half of the Summer Term). This will run in partnership with James Allen's Girls' School.

Liberal Studies in the Upper Sixth

Upper Sixth pupils have a period of Liberal Studies on Monday afternoons in the Michaelmas and Lent terms. The courses - of approximately 10 weeks in length - are, as in the Advanced Electives programme in the Remove, run in conjunction with James Allen's Girls' School, and the courses offered are different from those in the Remove, but similarly broad in scope.

EPQ (Extended Project Qualification)

In the Remove year, pupils are invited to apply for a place in the Extended Project Qualification, an independent research project culminating in a 5000-word dissertation or an artefact. The EPQ is an excellent way for Upper School pupils to develop skills in project management, research methodologies and the construction of long-form analytical writing, with the bulk of the marks being awarded for the quality of their process: their demonstration of problem-solving, of independent decision-making, of intelligent and focused research and thoughtful, honest self-evaluation. The project spans the period from October to June, with pupils delivering formal presentations to mentors and peers at its end, explaining both their dissertations or artefacts and the journey they have undergone. Each pupil is guided by a staff mentor through the process, who – through asking probing questions to help the pupil to overcome hurdles for themselves – encourages independent drive and reflective, meta-cognitive skills.

It is not just a project for the most academically successful, but for pupils with a real passion for a topic area and a desire to explore it in a focused, determined way. Those who thrive in the qualification will be the most organized, flexible, reflective and self-motivated, and universities are increasingly enthusiastic about the EPQ's potential to demonstrate not only deep interest in academic subjects beyond A level, but the practical and knowledge-based skills required to succeed in 21st-century higher education and beyond.

The Dulwich Diploma

The Dulwich Diploma, introduced in the Upper School in 2010, articulates the holistic education that we offer to all pupils. While this booklet focuses on the timetabled curriculum, it is important to understand that we expect pupils to take part in the wide range of other opportunities provided for them at the College, such as in the co-curricular sphere, in service and through our Careers Department. There is also an extensive academic programme beyond the classroom to complement and extend the curriculum described here, and we encourage pupils not only to be involved in this, but to lead it as well.

There are three component areas of the Dulwich Diploma:

- Academic Study
- Engagement beyond the classroom
- Preparation for life after Dulwich

The Diploma looks to offer the best of A level (depth of study) with the breadth and commitment to the learning beyond the classroom of the International Baccalaureate. All candidates will have achieved GCSE English and Mathematics (or equivalents). All candidates will be introduced to the concept of intellectual integrity and understand the importance of avoiding plagiarism and of referencing their work. All candidates should have a GCSE or equivalent in a foreign language before embarking on the course, or will be assisted in gaining an EAL qualification while undertaking the Diploma programme.

Diploma certificates are awarded to pupils who have completed every element when they leave the College at the end of the Upper Sixth Year.

Academic Study

Core Curriculum: The Diploma requires the study of at least three A levels. All candidates will be encouraged to take the most challenging programme possible, with a view to gaining a place at a leading university at home or abroad. Candidates will also take Advanced Electives in The Remove and Liberal Studies courses in the Upper Sixth; these unexamined courses, designed and delivered by our teachers (and by colleagues at JAGS and Sydenham High School), add academic depth and breadth and fire our pupils' intellectual curiosity.

Diploma candidates will also complete either an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) or a 2000-word Extended Essay. They will be introduced to rigorous research methods and guided in how to use the Wodehouse Library and Archives to best effect.

Beyond the Classroom

Dulwich College is committed to providing a holistic education. The Diploma therefore complements the system of College Half Colours and Full Colours in requiring, and recognising, pupils' contributions in three areas:

Activity and Creativity: The Diploma requires candidates to contribute actively to the sporting and/or cultural life of the College.

Service: Giving something back is an important element of the Diploma. The Diploma requires candidates to offer one service activity within the College and its wider community: for example, through Junior Prefect duties, mentoring, Community Service, CCF, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, the Scouts, City Heights Academy, or as part of the Southwark Schools' Learning Partnership.

Engagement: Diploma candidates are strongly encouraged to make an active contribution to the Union, such as through membership or leadership of a society, or through journalism or creative writing for The Alleynian or other publications. They are also encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities that studying in London provides.

Preparation for life after Dulwich

All candidates will have taken part in the Careers education programme in Year 11, including Morrisby Profile, advice on subject choice at A level and an external Careers interview. During their time in the Upper School, pupils will be encouraged to visit the Careers team for one-to-one individual guidance sessions with a careers advisor and shown ways to research their potential interests, identifying relevant information and subsequently securing insight opportunities within the sector or subject area of interest. These opportunities could comprise work placements, voluntary work, insight visits for discussions and tours, attendance at conferences and lectures, or meeting with professionals at a networking event.

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