

Sydenham School

Quality of Education Policy



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Curriculum

Curriculum Intent

We are incredibly proud of being a successful, diverse and inclusive girls' community school with a co-educational sixth form. Our motto 'Aim High' is achieved through instilling the Sydenham Characteristics of **Ambition, Determination and Respect** in all of our students and by our deliberate planning of all aspects of our curriculum, from lessons to homework, enrichment and our careers offer.

- **Ambition**
We expect that every classroom is an 'Ambitious Classroom', and to reflect that, our curriculum spans and goes beyond the requirements of the national curriculum.
- **Determination**
As an inclusive school, we are proud of the results of all our students and believe that every student can achieve highly regardless of their starting points and, as such, we teach in mixed attainment groups across Key Stage 3 and most of Key Stage 4, with extra support provided for the pupils that need it.
- **Respect**
We teach our students respect for themselves, each other, their community and their environment through our lessons, our PSHE and pastoral programme, and through all of our interactions with them.

Our ambitious, inclusive curriculum is under constant review, and is owned and shaped by all of our staff and students.

See our Curriculum Maps here: *(insert link to Curriculum Maps on website)*

PSHE Provision

Our PSHE curriculum aims to develop our students personally and socially and tackles many of the moral, social and cultural issues that they face growing up. It is a discrete subject and taught in timetabled lessons during Years 7 and 8, 10 and 11 and through carefully planned 'drop down' lessons in Year 9. Students develop an understanding of the importance of relationships, health, wellbeing and their place in the wider world and consider the impact this has on their everyday lives.

Reading

To ensure that every student leaves us having encountered a broad and rich range of texts, we read to all students in Years 7-10 in tutor time. We have carefully chosen a set of texts that reflect our diverse community and their experiences, while offering them a window onto the wider world.

Alongside this, we regularly assess student reading age and share this powerful information with teachers and parents.

Wider Curriculum

We believe that experiences beyond the classroom should not be an 'add on' but should be deliberately planned and sequenced for every child. We are passionate about every child's interests and engagement beyond the curriculum, and we recognise the tremendous impact that these extra- and co-curricular activities can have upon a young person's development. Our wider curriculum is planned to instil the Sydenham Characteristics of **Ambition, Determination** and **Respect** and adheres to the following principles:

- Every student in Year 7 and 8 will achieve at least Bronze on the Sydenham Charter, a journey of 75 activities that develops the Sydenham Characteristics in sport, the arts, outdoor education and the wider community.
- We will provide the Sydenham Entitlement for every child, a core offer that incorporates participating in a performance, attending a residential trip, visiting the theatre, and art gallery and a museum and playing sport.
- Alongside this, we offer an exceptional range of clubs, trips and activities from the Duke of Edinburgh Award to Astronomy Club to Battle of the Bands.

Careers

- We provide a carefully sequenced careers programme from Year 7 to 13. This includes information about career pathways through the pastoral and PSHE programme.
- We evaluate our careers programme against the Gatsby Benchmarks
- We hold careers events, such as Employability Day at KS4 and Futures Week at KS5. We are holding a careers fair for KS3.
- All students undertake a work experience placement in Year 10 and Year 12.
- We have extensive links with external organisations and professionals, bringing speakers into the school and taking students on trips.
- At KS5 we have specific programmes to support careers in a broad range of subjects including law, medicine and creative industries.

Key Stage 3

We are incredibly proud of our broad, rich and challenging curriculum at Key Stage 3, which spans and goes beyond the national curriculum, and is guided by the following principles:

- All students study French, Spanish or German.
All students study geography and history.
All students study art, PE, dance and music.
- All students study food and nutrition, textiles and product design on rotation.
- All students are taught in mixed attainment groups across the curriculum, with extra support given to students in English and maths who are 'not secondary ready' (NSR).
- All students study Religious Studies from Year 7 and, in Year 9, all students start their Religious Studies GCSE course to be completed in Year 10.

Through Year 9, we run a comprehensive GCSE Options process to support students in choosing the right GCSE courses.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, the majority of our students study a language and a humanities subject. We also offer a selection of vocational courses to ensure sufficient breadth in the curriculum for all learners is maintained. Students continue to be taught in mixed attainment classes apart from in science and maths, where students follow the foundation or higher curriculum route.

Students can choose to study:

Art, business studies, child development, citizenship, computer science, dance, drama, food and nutrition, further maths, health and social care, media studies, music, PE, product design, sociology, textiles

We provide a Period 7 for all students in all subjects in Year 11. This is our 'intervention' model, and again reflects our deliberate approach to developing ambition in every student.

Key Stage 5

Our Key Stage 5 curriculum is offered in partnership with Forest Hill School, enabling an unusually broad curriculum comprising a wide range of A Level subjects, Level 3 BTEC courses and a small number of Level 2 courses alongside excellent pastoral support and enrichment opportunities.

The study programme for each student provides a structured and challenging learning programme that supports their development and progression in line with their career plans. At SFH6, we plan the study programme carefully with each student to ensure that they are tailored to their needs but they typically include the following:

1. Substantial qualifications that stretch students and prepare them for education at the next level or for employment. All students at SFH6 are enrolled on a full time course which is typically 3 A Levels or the equivalent.
2. English and mathematics GCSE where students have not yet achieved a GCSE grade 4.
3. Work experience to give students the opportunity to develop their career choices and to apply their skills in real working conditions.
4. A PSHE, careers and enrichment programme to develop students' character, broader skills, attitudes and confidence, and to support progression. We provide knowledge and skills to support them to become active citizens and confident young adults ready to move on to the next stage in their lives.

Teaching and Learning

The Ambitious Classroom

Our teaching and learning expectations are centred around the idea of **The Ambitious Classroom**, where all students are challenged to achieve their very best.

Student Expectations

We ask all students to do three things:

Respect - Arrive on time, ready to learn and follow instructions first time

Determination - Actively participate and act on feedback to improve

Ambition - Try your best and take pride in your work

Staff Expectations:

We ask all staff to have:

- High expectations and challenge
- Clear routines
- High Participation and Think Ratio
- Set and check regular, structured homework
- Provide praise and celebrate success

Staff ensure excellent **Conditions for Learning** through:

- High expectations
- 100% compliance
- Microscripts for consistency
- Focus on the 95%
- Deliberate botheredness

The Sydenham Lesson Cycle

Staff use the **The Sydenham Lesson Cycle** to plan cycles of learning. This is a flexible, adaptable approach which staff use as a planning guide and is centred around three central parts:

Explain

- Do it now – retrieval practice
- Link to previous and future learning
- Introduce key tier 2 and 3 vocabulary
- Provide clear resources to avoid student copying eg. knowledge organisers
- Model the task in chunks

Practise

- Plan a task which allows breadth, depth and accuracy
- Give clear instructions and time
- Provide appropriate scaffolding
- Students work independently in silence or, in practical subjects, with clear roles
- Pastore's Perch – 3, 30, 3 (including live marking)

Assess

- Check understanding
- Think, Pair, Share
- Targeted, no hands up questioning
- Provide regular verbal and written feedback
- Check students know what they need to do to improve

Adaptive Teaching

Our classrooms are inclusive, and we adapt our teaching to meet the needs of all our students. Students may require adaptations to lessons due to a range of SEND needs. Our inclusion department share learning passports with teaching staff to ensure that we are aware of the best strategies to support individual learners within lessons, and these passports are reviewed annually with the student. Quality first teaching is developed through effective CPD and informs our approach to lesson planning and delivery. As well as our focus on quality first teaching, we also provide in-class support for some students as well as a range of targeted interventions to address any areas of difficulty for students and to support their success in lessons.

Link to SEND Policy: [SEND Policy](#)

Homework

At Sydenham School, we carefully plan the homework that students need to complete to help them make the best possible progress.

Frequency and Duration

Key Stage 3: Students are set one task per subject per week in core subjects and one task per fortnight in practical subjects.

Key Stage 4: One task per week in all subjects.

Key Stage 5: At least one task per fortnight, alongside independent learning

Year Group	Time spent per subject per week
7 + 8	Approximately 30 minutes
9	Approximately 40 minutes
10 +11	Approximately 50 minutes
12 +13	Approximately 5 hours

- Details of homework tasks will be shared with students during their lessons and posted on Bromcom with a brief description and deadline.
- Students should record homework in their planners.
- Teacher will provide comment on homework as per our feedback policy. This may include verbal commentary, peer and self-marking in class, guided corrections or teacher annotations.

Types of Homework

At Sydenham School, these are the types of homework that staff set:

1. Retrieval Practice – commit knowledge to long term memory. For example:

- In Geography, low stakes quizzes focussed on recalling the facts of a topic
- In English, learning mnemonics to give structure to extended writing

2. Deliberate Practice – improve in a specific skill. For example:

- In Maths, a set of closely related questions or problems to solve
- In Art, an exercise to focus on the use of shading to create depth
- In Dance, repeated pirouettes aiming for increased control and number of rotations

Any task will have a definite goal, a degree of challenge, repeated (but slightly varying) practice of the skill and an opportunity for feedback

3. Academic Literacy – develop understanding or expand vocabulary. For example:

- In Science, reading a specific article from New Scientist and answering follow up comprehension questions
- In History, translating into modern vocabulary a piece of primary source material
- In Drama, creating a script guided by specific parameters

Assessment

Feedback

Our approach to feedback is guided by the Education Endowment Foundation's Guidance Report 'Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning'.

Our staff:

1. Lay the foundations for effective feedback, with high quality initial teaching that includes careful formative assessment
2. Deliver appropriately timed feedback, that focuses on moving learning forward
3. Plan for how pupils will receive and use feedback using strategies to ensure that pupils will act on the feedback offered

This will include:

- Written feedback – including code marking and target banks where appropriate – frequency specified below
- Verbal feedback in class, including 'Live marking' – responding to student work as they are working and giving immediate feedback including marking for literacy
- Guided peer assessment
- Self-assessment
- Whole class feedback

Each faculty will have a set of agreed strategies for feedback, and Curriculum Maps will specify the written feedback that staff will give.

Feedback at Key Stage 3

- In **core subjects**, students will receive written feedback at least twice a half term.
- In **non-core subjects**, students will receive written feedback at least once a half term.
- In **practical subjects**, students will receive feedback on a piece of work at least once a half term.

Feedback at Key Stage 4

- In **core subjects**, students will receive written feedback at least three times a half term.
- In **non-core subjects**, students will receive written feedback at least twice a half term.
- In practical subjects, students will receive feedback on a significant piece of work at least twice a half term.

Feedback at Key Stage 5

- Students will receive written feedback on a significant piece of work or homework at least once every two weeks.

Assessment and Reporting

At Sydenham School, we have two Progress Points each year where students sit an assessment in each of their subjects. This information is shared with students and families in a Progress Point Report.

Key Stage 3 Assessment

Based on their prior assessment data (from Key Stage 2), students are linked to one of the four Sydenham Threads:

Mastering	Securing	Developing	Emerging
Working well above age related expectations. Currently on track to achieve excellent grades at GCSE (Grade 7 and up) in several subjects.	Confidently working at age related expectations. Currently on track to achieve 'good Pass' grades at GCSE (Grade 5 and up) in a range of subjects.	Working towards age related expectations. Currently on track to achieve grades 4 and up at GCSE in several subjects.	Not yet working at age related expectations. Not yet on track to achieve pass grades (4 and above) in key subjects.

- In Year 7, a student's thread will be based on their Key Stage 2 scaled score and they will be in the same thread for all subjects.
- In Year 8, a student's thread will be dependent on their attainment in Year 7 in each subject and may be different for each subject.
- Students can move up threads, but they cannot move down threads.
- Students will be given a percentage in each of their subjects. In order to help students and parents make useful comparisons, they will be able to compare this to the average percentage for other students in the same thread.
- The report will also share attendance, punctuality, behaviour points and Attitude to Learning for each subject.

Key Stage 4 Assessment

Key Stage 4 students are assessed on the GCSE scale with both a Currently Working at Grade (CWAG) and a Forecast Grade.

Currently Working at Grade (CWAG) - the grade that a student would attain should they sit their GCSE at that point in time

Forecast Grade - is a teacher estimate of the grade a student will attain at the end of Key Stage 4, if they continue working with the same level of effort

'Fine' grades are used for both CWAGs and Forecasts to give a more precise indication of a student's attainment, for example:

- 5+ implies **completely secure** at grade 5
- 5= **secure** at this grade 5
- 5- **borderline, not safe, will require intervention to secure the grade 5**

Formal summative assessments use a range of GCSE style exam questions and materials to ensure that tests reflect the expectations of the GCSE specification.

Key Stage 5 Assessment

Key Stage 5 students are assessed using the A level or BTEC scale appropriate for their courses with both a Currently Working at Grade (CWAG) and a Forecast Grade. The former is an indication of the grade that a student would attain should they sit their final exams at that point in time. The forecast grade is a teacher estimate of the grade a student will attain at the end of Key Stage 5.

'Fine' grades are used for both CWAGs and Forecasts to give a more precise indication of a student's attainment, for example:

- A+ implies **completely secure** at grade A
- A= **secure** at this grade A
- A- **borderline, not safe, will require intervention to secure the grade A**

Formal summative assessments use a range of exam questions and materials to ensure that tests reflect the expectations of the relevant specification.

See link to Exams Policies : [Exam Policies](#)

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Review (MER) Cycle is used to evaluate the strengths and areas for development across the school and within faculty areas, and to inform CPD.

There are three cycles across the year, comprised of:

1. Learning walks
2. Staff Voice
3. Student Voice
4. Peer Observations

The MER Cycle sits separately to the appraisal cycle.

