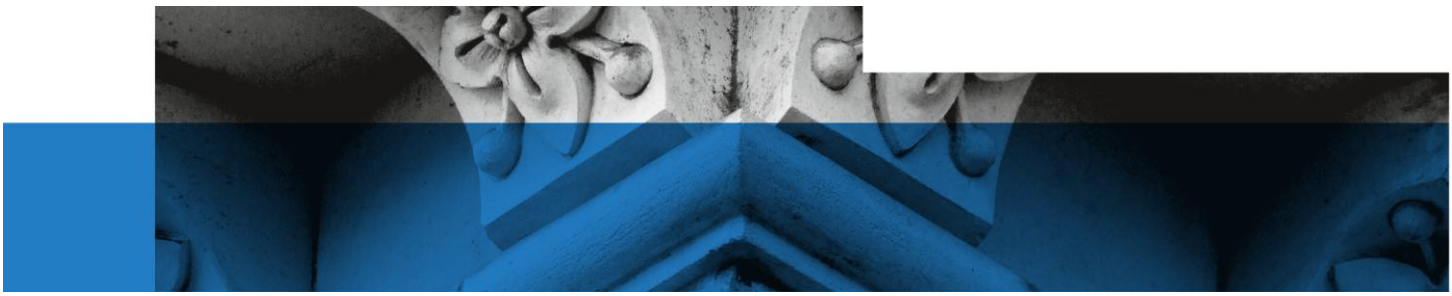
DULWICH COLLEGE
FOUNDED 1619



Curriculum Policy

Academic Year 2026-27

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THE STRUCTURE OF THE COLLEGE

The College is divided into five schools, each with its own Head. The Deputy Master Academic together with the Director of Studies and Assistant Head Academic, manage the Heads of Subject to deliver the curriculum.

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.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

Academic Enrichment lies at the heart of our curriculum, fostering curiosity, creativity and intellectual challenge. It encourages pupils to look beyond the prescribed curriculum, think critically, make connections across disciplines and engage with complex ideas and big questions. Academic enrichment is interdisciplinary in nature and takes place both within and beyond the classroom.

Pupils are provided with a rich programme of enrichment opportunities, including clubs and societies, guest speakers, competitions, educational visits and independent study. Many of these activities are linked to key dates within the academic calendar and often involve collaboration with pupils from other schools, broadening perspectives and encouraging meaningful engagement with the wider community.

To ensure that all pupils benefit from these opportunities, each School hosts a dedicated academic enrichment event during the academic year, providing a focal point for intellectual exploration, collaboration and the celebration of learning.

THE COLLEGE DAY

The College runs a two-week timetable. There are 5 x 55-minute periods every day, Monday to Friday, with a five-minute break between consecutive lessons.

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

Junior School

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 - 1415
Registration	1415 – 1425
Period 5A	1425 - 1450
Period 5	1450 – 1545

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

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Upper School	Assembly/FT				
Middle School	Assembly/FT	*1 additional Form period in Year 9 (per fortnight) on Thursday Week B*			
Lower School	Assembly/FT	*1 additional Form period (per fortnight) on Thursday Week B*			
Junior School	Whole School Assembly	Whole School Assembly (Chaplain/ Hymn Practice	House 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 lessons may be taught on a Week A/Week B basis. 0.5 refers to one of the 25-minute periods per day. These are named 5A on the Junior School timetable.

Subject	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5 & 6
English	5	5	5
Maths	5	5	5
Wellbeing	1	1	1
French	1	1	1
History	1	1	1
Geography	1	1	1
Computing	1	1	1
Science	1.5	1.5	2
Art	1	1	1
DT	1	1	1
Games	1	1.5	2.5
PE/Swimming	2	2	1
RE&P	0.7	0.7	1
Strings/Brass	0.7	0.7	0
Drama	0.35	0.35	0.5
Dance	0.35	0.35	0.5
Music/Singing	1.5	1.5	1.5
Library/Guided Reading	1	1	0.5
Form Period	1.5	1.5	1

Notes

- Years 3 and 4 Religion and Philosophy, Drama/Dance, and the strings/brass lessons are taught in a carousel during two timetabled periods.
- Drama and Dance are taught in half termly blocks or on a Week A/B split to ensure equal coverage.
- Form Periods allow Form Teachers to manage the wellbeing of the class.
- Each class in Years 3 and 4 have a whole lesson in the library each week. In Years 5 and 6 they have a 30-minute lesson once a week.
- 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/RE&P/Computing curriculum time. The pupils 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 at 12:05pm (during Senior School period 4). The school then has a shared clubs time from 13:40 – 14:15pm.

The Junior School then has an extra half lesson (Period 5A) from 14:25 – 14:50 after a ten-minute registration period. There is time for additional reading, wellbeing, visits to the library, singing and some lessons such as Science utilise this time too.

Timings: 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 - 1415
Registration	1415 – 1425
Period 5A	1425 - 1450
Period 5	1450 – 1545

THE LOWER SCHOOL

Period allocations per fortnight are as below:

Year 7

Subject	Periods
English	7
French/Spanish	5
Classics	4
History, Geography, RP, Art, DT, Computing, Chinese, Drama	2
Science	4
Maths	5
Wellbeing	1
PE, Music	1
Games	4

Year 8

Subject	Periods
English	6
French/Spanish	4
Classics/Chinese/German	4
History, Geography, RP	3
Art, DT, Drama	2
Computing, Music	1
Science	5
Maths	5
Wellbeing	1
PE	1
Games	4

The remaining periods are devoted to:

(a) Great Hall Assembly (Thursday 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. It is expected that the language chosen at this stage will be taken through to 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 into Year 8. They will all have to continue to study French or Spanish, however they will have the choice of continuing with either Classics/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* 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 normally 10 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 Lower School section) in the "language" periods shown in the following table. Otherwise, pupils in Year 9 follow a common curriculum:

Year 9

Subject	Periods
English	5
French/Spanish	4
Latin/French/Spanish/Chinese/German	5
History, Geography, RP	3
Physics, Chemistry, Biology	3
Maths	6
Computer Science, DT, Art, Drama, PE, Music	1
PE	1
Wellbeing	1
Games	2

The remaining three periods are devoted to 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:

Group 1:	Group 2:	Group 3:
Geography History Religious Studies	Art Chinese Computer Science Drama DT (Electronics) DT (Resistant Materials) French Geography German (Started in Year 8) German (Started in Year 9) Latin Music Religious Studies Spanish	Art Computer Science Drama DT (Electronics) DT (Resistant Materials) Geography Greek Music Physical Education Religious Studies

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:

Subject	Periods
English	7
Language	5
Maths	5
Physics	4
Chemistry	4
Biology	4
Wellbeing	1
PE	1
Group 1	5
Group 2	5
Group 3	5
Games	2

Those pupils that make good progress through the IGCSE syllabus in Maths will be given the opportunity to study the Additional Maths course alongside their Maths IGCSE. Selection for whether pupils will study this course happens at the end of Year 9 based on their performance throughout the year. Pupils who are selected will sit both Additional Maths and IGCSE Maths at the end of Year 11 resulting in 2 qualifications. Students not automatically selected for Additional Maths may still study the qualification in a bespoke off-timetable class

There are two periods per fortnight of 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 Advanced Electives 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	Physical Education
Biology	German	Physics
Chemistry	Classical Greek	Politics
Classical Civilisation	History	Psychology
Computing	Latin	Religious Studies
Design & Technology	Mathematics	Spanish
Economics	Further Mathematics	Theatre Studies
English	Music	
French	Philosophy	

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:

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

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 for both Remove and Sixth is as follows:

Subject	Periods
Subject 1	11
Subject 2	11
Subject 3	11
Wellbeing	1
Advanced Electives/Liberal Studies	2
Games	2
Private Study	10

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

There are also departmental university preparation classes, where appropriate; most of these take place off-timetable, from January in Year 12 onwards. Preparation for university assessment tests is also provided. Students who take Further Maths or an accelerate 4th A Level will have a reduced number of private study periods. An accelerated 4th A Level in Maths and some languages is also run based on individual demand and varies from year to year.

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. But we also appreciate the intellectual excitement that takes place where the traditional subjects overlap and therefore many courses are also interdisciplinary in nature, involving, for example, art, literature, music and history being studied in unison. 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 the Michaelmas and Lent terms. This will run in partnership with James Allen's Girls' School and Sydenham High 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 to undertake an 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. The bulk of the marks are 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 encourages independent drive and reflective, meta-cognitive skills through asking probing questions to help the pupil to overcome hurdles for themselves.

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 celebrates the holistic education that we offer at the College. There are three key components:

1. Academic Study
2. Engagement beyond the classroom
3. Preparation for life after Dulwich

Diploma certificates are awarded to pupils who have completed each element by the time they leave the College at the end of the Upper Sixth year.

(1) Academic Study

All candidates are 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.

(2) Beyond the Classroom

The 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 to show breadth

of engagement across the co-curricular life of the school, with involvement in at least two of the following four areas:

- Sport or the Arts
- Service or Mentoring
- Adventurous Activities
- Societies or Supra-curricular

(3) Preparation for life after Dulwich

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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