

Curriculum Policy – Senior School

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1. Aims

The curriculum provided by the School aims to offer a broad education to ensure that students leave Nottingham High School as well-educated citizens, aware of their social responsibilities and with an appreciation of the heritage, traditions and development of nature of the society that they are part of. It aims to balance the need to educate students to take their place in society. Specifically, the curriculum aims:

- a) To provide an all-round education and to give students the maximum opportunity to fulfil their academic potential.
- b) To provide for students' personal and social development through the GEP [PSHE] provision and through subject delivery.
- c) To ensure that all students acquire and develop academic skills and knowledge appropriate to their age, develop physical skills and develop aptitude in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy.
 - Aesthetic and creative (including Art, Drama and Music, and the EPQ/HPQ project)
 - Human and Social (including Economics, Geography, History, Philosophy, Politics and Religious Studies, and the HPQ and EPQ as part of Independent Study)
 - Linguistic (including Classics, English and Modern Foreign Languages and World Languages as part of Independent Study)
 - Mathematical
 - Physical (including PE and Games, and through an extensive Co-Curricular programme)
 - Scientific (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)
 - Technological (including Art and Design, Design Technology, Food and Nutrition and Computing and as part of the STEM project through Independent Study).
- d) To provide courses that are relevant to the needs of students, provide continuity and progression of learning, have intrinsic merit, are sufficiently flexible to allow for future modification and foster the ability to develop and communicate independent thought and ideas. The Curriculum aims to enable students to study a wide range of different subjects up to 16+ as the best possible foundation for Sixth Form study and, where possible, to select subjects they wish to study in the Sixth Form from those subjects they have already studied to 16+, with the addition of certain subjects not offered before.
- e) To reinforce the following features of the School: the vibrant atmosphere within the School as a whole, the support given to students inside and outside the classroom by highly qualified, committed and talented staff and the positive benefits of wide social access and diversity within the School community.

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- f) Alongside the commitment to academic excellence, the curriculum should also help to: promote respect and tolerance for the individual and individuality, encourage the development of individual passions and enthusiasms (both curricular and co-curricular), develop the capacity for independent thinking and learning, develop the qualities of leadership, creativity, appropriate risk-taking and responsiveness in order that each student is prepared for the obligations, challenges and also the opportunities of adult life.

The curriculum does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

2. Curriculum Management

Curriculum content and delivery is led by the Deputy Head [Academic] with the Assistant Head [Teaching and Learning] and Assistant Head [Director of Studies]. The Academic Group, chaired by the Deputy Head [Academic], discusses current academic themes and may recommend items for discussion at Heads of Department meetings. Within this structure the responsibility of devising Schemes of Work and delivering the curriculum lies with the Heads of Department. Department Handbooks describe the emphasis in each year group and schemes of work guide the day-to-day work of colleagues. The work of Heads of Department is line managed by the Deputy Head [Academic], the Assistant Head [Teaching and Learning] and Assistant Head [Director of Studies].

3. Programmes of Study

Year 7:

The Year 7 curriculum includes seventeen subjects and provides a broad and balanced curriculum from the outset. In many subjects the emphasis is placed upon the development and honing of particular subject-specific skills. All students study: English, Mathematics, two MFL from French, German and Spanish, Geography, History, RS, Art, Drama, Music, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Design Technology, ICT, Food and Nutrition, PE and Swimming, Games. All students follow both an Independent Study programme and the General Education Programme (GEP/PSHE).

Years 8 and 9:

In Year 8 and Year 9 the curriculum aims to build a foundation for further academic study and also develop each subject's unique way of looking at the world, which students can then take forward into their adult life.

Year 8:

All students study: English, Mathematics two MFL (same as Year 7) from French, German and Spanish, Geography, History, RS, Art, Drama, Food and Nutrition, Music, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Design Technology, Computing. PE and Swimming, Games. All students follow both an Independent Study programme and the General Education Programme (GEP/PSHE).

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Year 9:

All students study: English, Mathematics, Geography, History, RS, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, PE or Swimming, Games. In addition, all students choose any **four** options to include at least one from Art, Music, Drama, DT, Computing, Food and Nutrition, Latin, French, German or Spanish. All students follow both an Independent Study programme and the General Education Programme (GEP/PSHE).
Years 10 and 11:

In Years 10 and 11 the Curriculum remains balanced with a substantial element of compulsory breadth. The Curriculum is designed to allow focus on subject areas, to reflect developing personal interest, whilst protecting against early specialisation and narrowing of future study and career options. It is possible that, by allowing choice, some students might not engage implicitly with aesthetic and creative options, although the increasing range of creative options and wide-ranging extra-curricular provision in these areas reduces the number of students not participating in this type of activity.

The vast majority of students study 10 GCSE subjects. Students study includes English and English Literature, Mathematics, at least two sciences chosen from Biology, Chemistry and Physics, and at least one Modern Language chosen from French, German and Spanish. In addition, all students take a balanced programme of four options chosen from: Art, Drama, Food and Nutrition, Computing, Music, Geography, History, RS, French, German, Latin, Spanish, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Design Technology and Computer Science. GCSE Ancient Greek is available as an off-curriculum option for students studying GCSE Latin. All students take Games and PE and Swimming. Some students complete a programme leading to an additional Maths qualification in Year 11, the OCR free standing Maths Qualification (FSMQ). All students undertake a High Project Qualification during their Independent Study or General Education Programme (GEP/PSHE) in Year 10.

In some cases, such as long term absence, it is possible for a student not to follow the full subject programme in Year 11 to the end of the academic year or in Year 13 to the end of the academic year. Where arrangements can be made, and are in the best interests of students, the School will enter students for additional examinations which may be in courses studied outside of School. Where students wish to request to drop a subject, procedures are in place to respond to requests from individual students or from individual Heads of Department. Where a request to drop a subject is made, the Deputy Head [Academic] or Assistant Head [Director of Studies] obtains reviews from subject teachers, Head of Department, Tutor, the Learning Support Co-ordinator if the student is on the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)/LDD (Learning Difficulties and Disabilities) Register and the Careers Co-ordinator or Director of Higher Education Applications if there are any Higher Education or Career implications. Following consultation with the parents and the Tutor, the Deputy Head [Academic] or Assistant Head [Director of Studies] recommends the final decision to the Headmaster. The Deputy Head [Academic] or Assistant Head [Director of Studies] sees the student concerned and discusses the whole picture. Once students have discontinued a subject, they do not

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continue to attend lessons for that course but may be given designated study periods in the library or other suitable locations.

Courses on offer up to the end of Year 11 lead to GCSE, IGCSE or iGCSE/Level 2 Certificate qualifications. The school maintains a record of the exam boards that each subject follows and this is available to parents.

Sixth Form:

The core Sixth Form Curriculum allows students to choose three subjects (plus Further Maths) in Year 12 and an Extended Project Qualification, leading to three subjects (four if the student studies Further Maths) at A2 level. The Extended Project Qualification encourages students to develop independent study skills and a breadth in their A-Level study. The curriculum for students in the Sixth Form seeks to prepare them for the opportunities and experiences of higher education, the world of work and adult life.

There are no external AS exams (except Geography) taken in Year 12. Students study three full A-Levels ('A2s') in Year 13, and take part in a lecture/GEP programme that occupies at least a further two hour long periods. This leads to four full A-Levels with an EPQ for those who take A-Level Further Mathematics, and three full A-Levels with an EPQ for others.

The A-Level subjects currently available in the Sixth Form are: Art, Biology, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Design Technology, Economics, English Literature, English Language, French, Geography, German, History, Latin, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Music, Music Technology, RS & Philosophy, Physics, Physical Education, Politics, Psychology, Spanish and Drama. Further Mathematics is available as an additional fourth A-Level for students who are suitably qualified. A-Level Ancient Greek may be available as an off-curriculum option for students of A-Level Latin. Students and staff are advised that current availability does not guarantee that the same pattern of courses will be available, and options are subject to change.

All students work towards the completion of an Extended Project Qualification in their Independent Study or General Education Programme (GEP/PSHE) In Year 12.

4. Personal, Social, Health, Economic, Careers and Citizenship Education

The General Education Programme [GEP]:

The School is fully committed to providing a comprehensive programme of PSHE for all its students, which is appropriate to their age and needs. Responsibility for developing and implementing this programme rests with the Assistant Head [Pastoral], and the GEP Co-ordinator, working with Heads of Year. PSHE is delivered through a General Education Programme [GEP] and also through work within taught subjects. GEP covers Social Issues, Personal Health, Personal and Economic Wellbeing and Financial Capability through a range of topics in different years. Sexual Health and Drug Awareness

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are covered in Years 10 to 13. Careers sessions are partially delivered through the GEP programme in Years 10, 12 and 13.

Topics within GEP aid progression of key themes, as shown in the detailed scheme of work maps. A change in focus in each year group supports further engagement of students. Citizenship themes are developed within the curriculum across the school. Students are encouraged to take an interest in topical and controversial issues and learn about their rights and responsibilities. As active and global citizens, students are given the opportunity to take a role in the life of the School and to be prepared to take a role in wider society.

A variety of styles are used, including ICT, varied media and mixed lesson methods. Some topics are delivered to half-form groups, some are taught by specialist staff and some presentations are given by invited speakers.

Skills (social, personal, presentation, debate) and topics (environmental issues, law, drug awareness, sexual reproduction, healthy diet, safe use of ICT and cyber bullying) are, in addition, covered within the taught curriculum of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English, Geography, History, DT and ICT and through Independent Study.

Careers Education:

Advice is provided to support students in making decisions at key stages in their school career (GCSE options, AS/A2 options, university/college or career options). Although the Co-ordinator of Careers Advice and Deputy Head of Sixth Form work jointly, the Co-ordinator of Careers Advice takes the lead in Years 9 to 11; the Deputy Head of Sixth Form and Head of Sixth Form takes the lead in Years 12 and 13.

Students are encouraged to assess their own strengths, weaknesses and personal aims and to apply this understanding to their choices of higher education and future career. Individual guidance is provided by Inspiring Futures advisors with whom students have a one-to-one meeting, in-house Careers Advisors and by Tutors. Students are encouraged to become well-informed and to explore as wide a range of options as possible to consider the implications of their decisions and the practicalities of achieving their objectives. The values of the student are key, and consultations focus on the agenda being set by the student.

Through the Pastoral Team [Tutors and Assistant Tutors and Heads and Assistant Heads of Year], additional bespoke advice is given to students and, where relevant, their parents in respect of the following: GCSE courses, AS/A Level courses, university/college courses and career options.

The Programme of Careers Education is as follows:

Year 9	Autumn	Students are given support to consider possible GCSE options. External careers advisors are available for parents and students at parents' evening. They are introduced to Springboard Careers websites.
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	Spring	Questionnaires are completed [with parents] about possible options. Individual guidance interviews are conducted either by in-house careers advisors or by external advisors from Inspiring futures for those students who choose to have an interview. Notes are copied to Tutors to support decision making.
Year 10	Autumn	Students are profiled using on-line psychometric tests. These generate an individual profile which is then emailed to students, parents and tutors. A one-to-one interview to discuss the profile then follows with an independent careers advisor. A summary of the meeting and an action plan to implement is email to students, parents and Tutors.
	Summer	Business Dynamics Conference activities day
Year 11		<p>Students are given support to consider possible AS and A2 options. A questionnaire is completed by all students. Optional one to one interviews with an external careers advisor are available to all students from Inspiring Futures using their career profiles as a starting point but primarily focussing on choices at A level. A summary of the meeting is copied to students and Tutors to support decision making.</p> <p>External careers advisors are available to parents and students at parents evening.</p> <p>To introduce different careers and opportunities, there are two Careers Evenings with external speakers to introduce the world of work and career paths.</p>
Year 12	Autumn	<p>Students new to the school are given the opportunity to be profiled using on-line psychometric tests. Follow up one to one guidance interviews are then conducted by external careers advisors from Inspiring Futures. Feedback from this process is emailed to students and parents.</p> <p>Briefing on relevant work experience.</p>
	Spring	Individual guidance is provided through optional interviews with the Careers Adviser team. Briefings for students considering medical and Oxbridge applications are provided. General guidance on organisation of relevant work experience placements is provided.
	Summer	Students are given support and advice to consider possible university courses. Parents' information evening also takes place.
Year 13		<p>Optional meetings with Careers Advisers on university entrance and careers beyond school.</p> <p>Students given mock interviews in preparation for university interviews.</p>

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5. Homework

Purposeful and challenging homework is used to help raise academic achievement. By reinforcing work undertaken in the classroom, a sense of responsibility, student ownership of learning and development of skills for more independent learning are developed. Teaching staff set regular homework, check that it has been done and assess it critically to direct students towards making further progress. Homework encourages parental interest and involvement in supporting learning although assignments should always be student work. Students are responsible for completing set homework on time and to the standard of achievement expected, for them, by their subject teacher. Staff will set all homework on the 'Show My Homework site' (SMHW).

Subject teachers set a designated amount of homework in accordance with the current school homework schedule, offering appropriate guidance on how to tackle work and ensuring that students understand the standard of achievement expected. Students must have more than one day to complete homework, encouraging them to plan their time. They aim to ensure time between completion of work and feedback, providing guidance to improve learning, is as short as possible. Subject teachers keep a record of the homework, its standard and the date of completion and apply appropriate sanctions if any homework is not completed and inform the Tutor of non-completion by an electronic 'ticket'. Heads of Department offer guidance on the nature of tasks to be set to different year groups and monitor on a regular basis the amount, quality and standard of homework set by members of their department. They encourage the sharing of good practice within the department related to homework.

Tutors monitor the homework set and completed by individual students and encourage the use of Show My Homework (SMHW) as a homework organiser on a weekly basis. In the Sixth Form, the Assistant Head (Head of Sixth Form), Heads of Year 12 and 13 and the Deputy Head of Sixth Form in addition help students to review their homework (also set on SMHW), Heads of Year monitor the amount of homework set within a year group and communicate the School's homework policy to students in the year group. They encourage students to use the Senior Library or ICT Centres to do homework during the lunch break or after school. Some students have directed library time as part of the timetable.

Parents are encouraged to monitor the homework set on SMHW with their own log-in details out of school and communicate with the Tutor regarding homework issues.

Subject teachers consider the following points when setting homework:

1. Homework should be challenging, purposeful and useful to the student's academic development.
2. Some students tend to spend longer on homework than others, so the motivation of the individual should be recognised along with the actual time spent on an assignment.
3. Homework should ideally promote independence of learning and this should be reflected in the tasks set, although this should be in the context of appropriate support and guidance.

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4. All homework tasks should be posted on SMHW, written on the board or on a hand-out (as well as given verbally) and students may take note of this during lesson time; this may include taking a photo of the board. Guidance of how to tackle complicated homework tasks should be offered, and reinforced on SMHW, students should be clear on the standard of achievement required.
5. Homework may consolidate work done in the class or may prepare for a future lesson.
6. Numerical marks and grades alone do not improve learning, subject teachers attempt to offer advice in their comments on work which give guidance as to how students may improve. Students may respond to these comments.
7. In the event of staff absence homework may still be set in accordance with the homework timetable just as work is set for that lesson. This can be seen on SMHW by all students.

Homework (Years 7 to 11):

Homework is set regularly on the days specified in the homework timetable. Students are permitted to do part of their homework at School during the lunch break, although it is generally better for them to be engaged in other school activities at that time. Teaching staff aim to estimate the time required for homework carefully to prevent one subject encroaching on the time of others and in Years 10 to 11 homework may extend, with clear stages, for more than one evening. Every effort is made to establish the homework routine during the first week of term, except for Year 7 students who start homework at the start of the second full week of term following a period of settling-in time. Tutors can monitor homework through SMHW and through the rewards and sanctions systems on iSAMS and discuss this with their tutees on a regular basis.

Homework in Year 7 and 8 per fortnight: (Guidance)

English and Maths 2 x 30 minutes, Biology, Chemistry and Physics 1 x 30 minutes, French, Spanish, German, 1 x 30 minutes and 1 x 15 minutes. History, Geography, RS, Drama, Food and Nutrition, Music, Art, DT, ICT 1 x 45 minutes

Homework in Year 9 per fortnight: (Guidance)

2 * 35 minutes per subject: except English (4 *35 minutes) and Maths (4 *35minutes).

Homework in Years 10 and 11 per fortnight: (Guidance)

2 *45 minutes per subject except English (4 *35 minutes) and Maths (4 *35minutes).

Homework in the Sixth Form: (Guidance)

Sixth Formers are set work to support progress in each subject. This may include further reading and independent work as well as set tasks. Though Sixth Formers are expected increasingly to manage their own time, deadlines are set and are expected to be met. The time allowed for a piece of work should be proportionate to its scale; if a long essay is the only private work set in a subject for a week, a full week's notice of the deadline should be given. Especially in Year 12, students are helped by regular checking that a long piece of work is under effective control and moving through its stages towards completion.

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6. Monitoring Progress, Issues with Academic Work and Homework

Monitoring Progress in Years 7 to 11:

It would be unsatisfactory if the low standard of a student's work is not discovered until the summer exam or public exam results are known, hence regular assessment is essential. Teaching staff aim to sort out all poor, late or missing work in each subject with the student concerned as soon as possible. If a student misses a deadline that student will attend the lunchtime detention at the earliest opportunity to complete the work unless there is a valid reason. Teaching staff use the notification and sanction system, which involves the Tutor, to support the monitoring of progress which the student is making.

Interim, short and full written reports are reviewed by Heads of Year, by Tutors and a member of the SMT. Students identified as underperforming (including against baseline measures) or in the bottom decile discuss their reports with their HoY or a member of the SMT. Students who are performing in the top decile or performing well in relation to baseline data are also seen by the HoY or SMT in a group situation. Parents are kept informed in all cases. This review and copy of agreed targets is provided for Tutors who monitor progress. In addition, for students named in the SEND/LDD Register, the Learning Support Co-ordinator reviews grades and monitors progress.

Monitoring Progress in the Sixth Form

To aid the transition towards self-directed study at university, students are expected to spend some time during breaks or non-taught periods working quietly in the library or more informally in the Sixth Form Centre where work tables are provided. The senior library is reserved for self-directed study during all lesson times. Supervised self-access language courses are available in E2 at all times to Sixth Formers.

Some students in Years 12 and 13 who have shown that they need a disciplined framework for their private study periods may also be required to work under supervision either in the Library or in the Sixth Form Centre. Teaching staff use the notification system, which involves the Assistant Head (Head of Sixth Form) and Heads of Year 12 or 13 and Tutor, to support the monitoring of progress which the student is making. If an issue is not resolved or, after two notifications to parents, subsequent work deadlines are missed teaching staff notify the Assistant Head (Head of Sixth Form) and Tutor again. The Assistant Head (Head of Sixth Form) and Heads of Year 12 or 13 and Tutor will work with the student to help the student to establish a structured approach to work before the matter is referred to the Deputy Head [Academic]. Directed meetings with members of the Sixth Form Management Team may also be necessary to aid progress on a weekly basis.

Interim, short and full Sixth Form written reports are reviewed by Tutors, the HoY and members of the SMT. Students identified as underperforming [including against baseline measures] discuss their reports with their Tutors and HoY. Students who are performing in the top decile or performing especially well in relation to baseline data are also seen by the HoY or SMT. In addition, for students

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named in the SEND/LDD Register, the Learning Support Co-ordinator reviews grades and monitors progress.

Coursework and controlled assessments

Departments devise coursework assignments to fit within their allocation of lesson and homework time. At any stage where a programme of assessable coursework is being undertaken in homework time, an essential timetable of what must be done by which date is prepared, making sure that no student falls behind and build up an insurmountable backlog. This is particularly important in Year 11, where students may be trying to juggle a heavy load spread across three or four subjects. They often need a good deal of advice and consideration. Tutors and parents are informed if a student fails to meet submission deadlines for coursework. Heads of Department ensure consistency of approach to coursework in their departments. Appropriate checks are made on coursework, bearing in mind that Examination Boards place the onus on schools to ensure that the work is the student's own.

7. Special Educational Needs/Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

The School provides for those students with special education needs [SEN] and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities [LDD], referred to as SEND. The School's provision in this respect is coordinated by the Learning Support Co-ordinator in the Senior School who works closely with the Deputy Head [Academic]. A separate policy 'Support for Learning – Senior School' is available.

Where a student has an Educational Health Care Plan (EHC Plan) [statutory assessment], the Learning Support Co-ordinator will liaise with teachers to ensure that the education received fulfils its requirements. Though it is not the responsibility of the School to review EHC plans annually, the Learning Support Co-ordinator will endeavour to ensure that, for any student with a EHC, their Local Authority has conducted a review. It is the policy of the School that where a student has a recognised learning difficulty or disability, the Learning Support Team will include the student's name in the SEND/LDD Register and provides copies of individual student learning support records for subject teachers.

A student is not regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which they are or will be taught. As our students have been assessed in English as part of the School's selection processes, no additional provision is made for teaching 'English as an Additional Language', however students may receive additional support outside of lesson time in this area. Should this need arise, we would discuss with parents the best way forward. In all three sections of the School, all external candidates are spoken with as part of the assessment process so that we can be sure that they are able to speak English to a sufficiently high standard to be able to access lessons.

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8. Gifted and Talented – Departments and the 1513 Society

The school encourages all students to excel. The 1513 Society is for students who show academic ability at the very top of their year group. This is observed through baseline data, regular reports and end-of-year exams. Students meet as Year 7, and then paired year groups above this. Students must continue to perform at the highest level to maintain in the Society. Reviews of the students involved are carried out regularly.

The Society meets each half term to look at progressing skills beyond the current academic offering in the classroom. This is not subject based but much broader looking at analysis, hypothesis and then looking at communication and presentation skills. The ability to question others also forms a large part of the programme, encouraging debate.

In lessons, all departments encourage students to extend their knowledge. Each department will differentiate their lessons and stretch all students to their potential. In addition, they will encourage students to enter competitions, these may be team based or individual essays. Departments also have individual programmes to support the highest level of Oxbridge application.