



St Edward's Oxford Curriculum Policy

Overview

St Edward's, Oxford aims to provide a broad and stimulating curriculum for pupils at every stage of their education at the school.

The informing principles of curriculum planning at St Edward's can be summarised as follows:

- To instil high academic expectations and standards, and to develop self-motivated, independent learners;
- To ensure that pupils develop the skills essential to academic progress, in as broad a range of subjects as possible;
- To encourage curiosity and creativity as part of a commitment to learning which will last a lifetime;
- To foster each individual pupil's understanding of his or her learning style and skills and to differentiate teaching methods and materials to suit pupils' different needs;
- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils so that they can take their place as fully-rounded members of a tolerant society.

Recent changes to the curriculum reflect our commitment to these principles, such as the enhanced timetable space for creative and performing arts subjects in the Shell year (Y9) as well as an enhanced programme for able linguists and mathematicians, an additional GCSE choice for all pupils and in the Sixth Form the option to take the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme as an alternative to A levels.

Equal Opportunities

St Edward's is committed to making the curriculum accessible to all its pupils as far as is reasonably practical. Entry to the school is by the Common Entrance examination or our own assessment, regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief. Details of specific learning difficulties or other disabilities are taken into account, and all reasonable adjustment is made. For those requiring specialist support either with English as an additional or second language, with literacy or numeracy, one or more lessons each week is offered. Up until Year 12 these lessons are likely to take the place of an academic lesson. As of this year no separate charge is made for Learning Support or EAL/ESL lessons.

Differentiation

Considerable emphasis is placed on different learning and teaching styles and methods. In addition, special provision is made for those with specific learning difficulties (above) and for those identified as gifted and talented. In the Lower School (Years 9 – 11), those with academic awards and other interested pupils attend a fortnightly programme of curriculum enhancement called OX2. In the Upper School (Years 12 – 13) the equivalent programme is called the Woodstock Group. In some subjects, differentiation is achieved by entering pupils for public examinations early (see below), although our policy overall is to differentiate by enhancing syllabus content rather than through early presentation. The Sixth Form timetable has recently been adapted to enable Upper Sixth pupils to study an AS subject as part of a Lower Sixth class. This allows the ablest to extend the range of their learning, including the taking of an additional A level in one year, and supports those who will benefit from an additional year's study towards the AS qualification.

Independent study

Prep activities are an important element in the development of independent learners, and as the pupils go up the school the expectation of work being completed in time additional to the time formally allocated to prep increases. Formal prep time is 90 minutes each day, Monday to Friday, with 60 minutes on Saturdays, but by the Fourth Form work set will not always fit into this time. In the Sixth Form pupils are expected to spend as much time studying independently as they do in the classroom, for each subject. This time is available through a combination of prep time, study periods within the timetabled day, and other periods of free time which will vary from pupil to pupil. There are systems both to reward to good work completed outside the classroom and to sanction those who do not complete work that has been set.

Curriculum by year

Shell year (Year 9)

Pupils study a core curriculum of 17 subjects. This includes two foreign languages: French, together with any one of German, Ancient Greek and Spanish which can be studied either *ab initio* or with prior experience. Those who are identified at entry as being gifted in the learning of languages study two of these three optional languages, therefore three languages overall. Learning Support or EAL/ESL lessons may take the place of one of these languages as appropriate. Pupils also choose between Latin and Classical Studies. Outside the timetable the curriculum includes a circus of activities, which features a course for all pupils in touch typing. The delivery of ICT in this year is otherwise devolved to the departments, who teach skills appropriate to their subject area according to a programme devised by the Head of IT in conjunction with the academic departments. Pupils experience careers education in this year as a day's off-timetable activities: the Real Game. PSHE is delivered partly within the timetable and partly through a free-standing programme of activities.

Pupils are taught in forms for all subjects other than Mathematics and Languages, where they are setted. The forms are in two bands, with two in the upper band and four in the lower. Within the bands the forms are of mixed ability.

Subjects taught within the timetable:

Art, Biology, Chemistry, Classical Studies, Design & Technology, Drama, English, French, Geography, German, Greek, History, Latin, Mathematics, Music, Physics, Physical Education, PSHCE, Religious Education, Spanish.

Fourth and Fifth Form (Years 10 & 11)

In May of the Shell year, pupils make a choice of five optional subjects to study to GCSE. As with all subject choices, parents are closely involved and care is taken to ensure that the right choices are made for each individual, bearing in mind their strengths and weaknesses as well as their aspirations and ambitions. Exceptionally, a case is made for a pupil to study only four of the five possible optional subjects, where it is felt that additional space for learning or language support is more valuable to that pupil's progress. Again, exceptionally, pupils may study an additional GCSE off-timetable, but the move to five optional subjects was made partly to make this unnecessary, given the busy life of pupils and staff at the school beyond timetabled lessons.

All GCSE subjects are taken at the end of the Fifth Form, with the exception of French and Spanish, where the top set(s) will take the exams at the end of the Fourth Form and embark on a programme of extension material in that language during the Fifth Form. In some cases this may include the taking of an AS module. If any pupil takes two languages early, s/he is given the opportunity where appropriate to take up an additional GCSE in the place of one of these languages in the Fifth Form. Able mathematicians take Additional Maths AS in the Fifth Form at the same time as the GCSE. Pupils take all papers for any GCSE subjects within a single examination session; in other words, we take a linear rather than a modular approach to GCSE examinations.

Outside the timetable a programme of sports and activities continues during these two years, as does the careers programme, which includes the Morrisby Test in the Fourth Form and work experience and other careers advice in the Fifth Form. PSHCE is delivered as a free-standing programme, although the Political Literacy element of citizenship is taught as part of the core non-examined curriculum. In this year only, ICT is taught as a discrete subject within the timetable.

Core examined subjects taught within the timetable:

English, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics (to Double Award) and one modern foreign language.

Core non-examined subjects taught within the timetable:

English Literature, ICT, Religious Education and Ethics, Political Literacy

Optional GCSE subjects:

f	g	h	j	k
French Geography History	German Spanish Geography History	Classical Civilisation Geography History Music Latin	Art Ceramics Design & Technology Drama Geography Greek Music Physical Education Religious Studies Spanish	Art Ceramics Design & Technology Drama History Music Physical Education Religious Studies

Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13)

Pupils in our Fifth Form proceed automatically to the Sixth Form provided that they pass a minimum of five GCSEs at grade C and above, with at least a B in any subject they wish to study at AS. Entry for those joining the school at this stage is by examination and is competitive.

There are two programmes of study open to pupils entering the Sixth Form: A level and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. For all pupils there is a core non-examined course of lectures and other curriculum enhancement (Forum), together with PSHCE, which includes training as prefects for all pupils. Careers and Higher Education advice is intrinsic to the tutorial programme for these two years.

A level

Pupils choose four or five AS subjects (exceptionally, three), and most but not all will reduce their programme of study by one subject on entering the Upper Sixth. Our policy is to encourage pupils as appropriate to continue with all their subjects, in the interests of sustained breadth. It is our policy to minimise the number of public examination sessions in which Sixth Form pupils are entered. IB students take all their exams at the end of the Upper Sixth and it is our intention for A level pupils to do the same.

a	b	c	d	e
English Literature Geography Maths Maths for Scientists Physical Education Politics Religious Studies	Art Biology Economics English Literature Geography Latin Physical Education Physics Theatre Studies	Art Classical Civilisation Chemistry D&T Economics Geography German Greek History of Art Philosophy Spanish	Chemistry Economics French History Physics Politics Religious Studies Theatre Studies	Art Biology Further Maths History Italian (GCSE) Music Physics

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

Pupils chose one subject from each of the six groups, but may if they wish choose an additional subject from Groups 3, 4 or 5 in place of a choice from Group 6. Three subjects are studied at Higher Level, three at Standard Level. In addition, all pupils complete an extended essay and a course on the Theory of Knowledge as two elements of the core programme. A programme of Creativity, Action and Service activities completes the core.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
GROUP 1 Language A1		ENGLISH English	English			
GROUP 2 Language B or ab initio	SPANISH Spanish			FRENCH CLASSICAL GREEK French Classical Greek	GERMAN LATIN German Latin	French Italian ab initio Spanish
GROUP 3 Individuals and Societies	ECONOMICS Economics			GEOGRAPHY PHILOSOPHY Geography Philosophy	HISTORY History	History Environmental Systems and Societies
GROUP 4 Experimental Sciences	BIOLOGY Design			PHYSICS Chemistry	CHEMISTRY Physics	Biology Environmental Systems and Societies
GROUP 5 Mathematics		MATHS	Maths SL Maths Studies			
GROUP 6 Arts	VISUAL ARTS Visual Arts			MUSIC Music	VISUAL ARTS THEATRE ARTS MUSIC Visual Arts Theatre Arts Music	Visual Arts Music

Director of Studies
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