



**North Leamington  
School**

# **CURRICULUM POLICY**

2017

## Policy Name: Curriculum Policy

### Policy Details

**Date of Policy: January 2017**

**Date of next Review: January 2018**

### Background:

We are always evaluating our curriculum to ensure that it meets the changing needs of our students and reflects our CORE principles as a school. This year, because of significant reform to the content, rigour and style of GCSE and A level examinations we have reviewed our curriculum to reflect these changes. In terms of our CORE purpose, our curriculum policy reflects our approach in the following ways:

Commitment: We are committed to providing a relevant, broad, balanced, exciting curriculum that reflects the needs of all our learners, reflects national agendas and equips all learners through appropriate progression routes into full time employment and long term success in an ever changing world.

Opportunity: Through our curriculum we seek to provide as many opportunities as possible for students to develop their skills and talents. We constantly review the opportunities we provide to ensure that it reinforces our principle of 'everyone matters equally'.

Respect: We explicitly seek to develop the principle of respect throughout our curriculum. One way this is done is through choosing curriculum content and specific areas of study that teach students about the concept. This is through subject based lessons and also our VT curriculum. We aim to ensure that all of our students develop into respectful citizens capable of displaying empathy and understanding with the world around them.

Excellence: We provide a curriculum that enables students to develop excellence in a wide range of areas. This can be through examination success, performances and sporting achievements for example. It is important that everyone has the opportunity to achieve excellence and to be proud of their achievements. Through our curriculum provision we seek to remove as many barriers to learning as possible so that all can achieve their 'personal bests'

## 1. General Principles

The school follows the Curriculum purposes, values and aims laid down in the National Curriculum (DfE 2014). In summary:

### Purposes

To provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum that:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of learners at the school and within society
- prepares learners at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

### Values

Education should reflect the enduring values that contribute to personal development and equality of opportunity for all, a healthy and just democracy, a productive economy and sustainable development. These include values relating to: the self, relationships, our society, the environment.

### Aims

The national curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said; and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

### Our ambition is to:

- Offer students clear curriculum pathways from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 5 to meet their educational and career aspirations
- Offer students the opportunity to study a second Modern Foreign Language as part of the normal school day
- Maintain the number of opportunities for students to specialise in the Arts and Performing Arts subjects
- Continue to give students the opportunity to develop key Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills across all subject areas

In order to organise and deliver teaching and learning of the National Curriculum effectively within the school, our teachers work in Faculty Teams, according to their subject specialism. All teachers appointed to NLS must be able to teach throughout the secondary age and ability range. Each Faculty Team is led by the Faculty Leader who is responsible to the Headteacher and Governors for the quality of teaching and learning throughout the whole Years 7-13 age range in all the subject areas within the Faculty.

Each Faculty's classrooms and related teaching and learning spaces are situated in close proximity to each other as a suite of rooms, thus enhancing the Team approach to each area of the curriculum. We strongly believe that this combination of individual staff expertise with Faculty leadership and teamwork is critical to the school's success in public examinations, and we are confident that this enables us to offer every student a quality curriculum and quality teaching and learning at NLS.

## 2. The Faculty Teams

### **Faculty of Communications**

English  
MFL  
Media  
ICT  
Computing

### **Faculty of STEM**

Mathematics  
Science  
Biology  
Chemistry  
Physics  
Food and Nutrition  
Product Design  
Textiles

### **Faculty of Performance**

Art  
Dance  
Drama  
Music  
Photography  
Physical Education

### **Faculty of Humanities**

Business Studies  
Citizenship  
Geography  
Health and Social Care  
History  
Psychology  
Religious Education  
Sociology

### **Special Educational Needs (SEND)**

Nurture  
Learning Support  
Work focus  
English as an additional language

### 3. Key Stage 3

Students will study the Key Stage 3 Curriculum in Year 7 and Year 8

The following subjects will be taught to all our students in Key Stage 3:

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| English            | Geography  |
| Mathematics        | History  |
| Science            | Religious Education / Citizenship / PSHE / Careers |
| Art                | A Modern Foreign Language (French or German)       |
| Dance              | Information Technology                             |
| Drama              | Design & Technology                                |
| Music              |  |
| Physical Education |  |

In Year 7 and 8 Dance will be taught as part of the Girls PE curriculum

### 6. Key Stage 4

Students will study the Key Stage 4 Curriculum in Years 9, 10 and 11

NLS governors and staff are committed to providing a broad range of courses and qualifications at Key Stage 4, appropriate **both** to the differing abilities and interests of students **and** to their future career needs.

All NLS Y9 to Y11 students follow 'Core' courses, taking up 60% of their time, and they then make a 'guided choice' of 4 further 'Options', taking up the remaining 40% of their time.

#### 'Core' Curriculum

English and English Literature, Mathematics, Combined Science (2xGCSE), Religious Education/Citizenship, Physical Education/Games.

#### 'Options'

GCSE courses: Art, Drama, Music, Geography, History, P.E., French, German, Spanish, Food and Nutrition, Resistant Materials, Textiles, Biology, Triple Science, Business, Media

BTEC Courses: Dance, Health & Social Care, Music, ICT, Sports Studies.

In line with the Department for Education's ambition for the majority of students to study the full English Baccalaureate (EBacc) suite of subjects; students are strongly encouraged to choose options that will lead to them acquiring this qualification. However we recognise that there are other positive options choices that will provide suitable and aspirational pathways for students. Therefore students can choose other options which offer suitable progression pathways. These must be justified when completing the options form and supported by parents. SLT will decide if the pathway is appropriate. Alternative pathways for SEND students will also be considered in consultation with parents.

## 7. Key Stage 5

Students will choose 3 subjects to study in the Sixth Form. The subjects offered and entry requirements are published in the Sixth Form Prospectus each year. In some cases students may be able to study for a fourth GCE A level qualification.

All Sixth Form students are allocated to a tutor group. In tutor sessions students follow a curriculum that covers PSHE and Study Support. Enrichment activities also take place on Wednesday afternoons.

## 8. Wider Learning Across the Curriculum

Other important aspects and themes of the National Curriculum are delivered in a variety of ways across the school. These include:

- Careers Education & Work-Related Learning
- Business & Enterprise Education
- Citizenship
- Health Education
- Sex & Relationships Education
- Student Personal Development
- Skills beyond School (SBS)

## 9. Religious Education at NLS

Religious Education is taught throughout Years 7-13, in accordance with both the National Curriculum and the Agreed Syllabus of Warwickshire County Council. Varied teaching and learning methods are used, and students are encouraged to think for themselves, exploring religious beliefs and practices in order to gain understanding of both their own cultural heritage and of the variety of traditions that are influential in the modern world. All NLS students follow an R.E. / Citizenship course in Years 9 to 11 and sit GCSE RE.

In addition to the formal Religious Education Programme of Study for all NLS students, College and Year Assemblies take place regularly. The assemblies aim to:

- keep students informed about what is going on in school
- celebrate success for individuals and groups
- encourage students to address their peers
- encourage students to take an interest in affairs beyond the school
- demonstrate the place of spiritual, moral, social and cultural values in our lives
- assist in delivering the Student Personal Development Programme of the school
- provide an opportunity for reflection time

Parents/Carers who wish their children to be excused from the religious part of any assembly may make a request in writing to this effect to the Headteacher. A similar arrangement can be made for R.E. lessons. NLS assemblies and R.E. lessons are unequivocally 'multi-cultural' and 'multi-faith' by nature, however: our professional aim is to prepare students for adulthood in a pluralistic society, a society in which positive citizens respect each other's fundamental beliefs and values.

## 10. Special Educational Needs (SEND) and Gifted & Talented Provision

All students), from the 'less able' to the 'more able', have individual learning needs, and one of the main tasks of NLS teachers is to try to differentiate between the needs of individual students and to try to respond appropriately as a teacher to each student. 'Personalising' learning in this way demands much time, effort and resourcing on the teacher's part, so additional classroom support is provided by Teaching Assistants, who work closely with the Teacher to meet student needs. Priority for such support is given to those students on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Register of the school. All our Teaching Assistants receive In-Service Training to enable them to support the specific needs of our students.

Our IEN faculty has recently been restructured and the main aspects of its work centre on; Nurture, Learning Support, Work Focus, and English as an Additional Language. This is designed to enhance and personalise our provision even more.

By negotiation with parents/carers, some students will be withdrawn from class to work in the Learning Support Centre, where they will be supported individually or in a small group. Alongside the support given in class and in the Learning Support Centre, students may be invited to take part in our Numeracy and Literacy Intervention Programmes, including 1-to-1 tuition, which run throughout the School Year. Staff in the Learning Support Centre also support students who have other needs such as mobility/health problems, and the school has ready access to the Local Authority's Early Intervention Service (EIS) for further assistance and specialist back-up.

Based on information received from Primary colleagues, previous data and staff expertise, the school establishes a full register of all students considered to be 'Talented, Able and Gifted'. These students are then placed on the TAG (Talented, Able and Gifted) register. North Leamington School then maintains this register continuously, amending it as appropriate, and coordinates an extensive range of activities for TAG students throughout their NLS careers. All Subject Departments have extension activities included in their Schemes of Learning (replace with Scheme of Learning) and offer a wide range of enrichment activities for more able students throughout the year.

All students are grouped by ability in English and Maths from the start of Year 7, and specialist Literacy and Numeracy Teaching Assistants operate full-time in the English and Maths Departments.

## 11. Reporting to Parents at NLS

We value the partnership between the school and the home very highly, and the NLS Reporting System is designed to strengthen this partnership by giving parents/carers as much regular information on their child's progress as possible so that we can act together on that information. Parents/carers who wish to discuss their child's progress at any time during the school year are invited to contact the Learning Mentor or College Leader and an appointment is then made with the relevant staff.

Students are assessed every six weeks against Prior Attainment Band, GCSE BTEC or GCE target grade, as appropriate, in every subject/course studied. These half-termly assessments are used by Learning Mentors to track the academic progress of all the individual students in their Mentoring Groups and to identify support strategies to extend achievement, as appropriate.

These assessment levels/grades are recorded in full and made available to parents/carers by means of the school's INSIGHT system which is accessed via the website. This enables parents / carers to keep up to date with their child's progress and attainment. Paper copies of the half-termly levels/grades can also be made available on request.

In addition to the grade assessments, a full written report is provided each year for every student; this report describes the academic progress made in every subject/course, identifies areas for improvement and recommends strategies to enable the student to achieve further improvement.

## 12. The NLS Charging Policy

### **Educational Trips and Visits**

NLS offers a full programme of both curricular and extra-curricular visits, whether educational or recreational. All charges for those activities taking place during school hours must be of a voluntary nature. The school, however, would be unable to run many such visits if these voluntary contributions were not forthcoming. Students whose parents/carers are unable to pay are not prevented from taking part: if parents/carers are in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit, then the school may be able to offer help with costs.

In cases where a curriculum 'field trip' is residential, for instance in connection with the Biology or Geography A-level courses, the school would charge for all associated board and lodging costs, since these are clearly 'out of school hours', but not for tuition. In the case of recreational school trips, such as our Skiing and Watersports holidays, these are clearly optional, taking place completely outside school hours, and we would charge the full cost to participants.

### **Instrumental Music Tuition**

NLS provides students with the opportunity to begin or continue learning to play a wide range of musical instruments. We cannot provide instruments, but tuition is provided by specialist instrumental teachers. The Arts Faculty, will provide written advice on the cost of such tuition and how to apply.

### **Ingredients and Materials**

At NLS, we have traditionally asked parents/carers to contribute in various ways towards the cost of ingredients and materials in such subjects as Art and Design & Technology. This has enabled school to provide a wide variety of practical work, using good quality materials bought at cost price; the resulting 'products' then become the property of students. The Education Reform Act states that this is a voluntary contribution, however, we encourage parents/carers to continue to support us in this way in order that we can retain our present standards in such practical work. Again, if parents/carers are in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit then the school may be able to offer help with costs.

## **Supplementary Learning Materials**

Voluntary purchases of materials helpful to study can often be made through the school at advantageous prices, e.g. calculators, revision guides; each Subject Department concerned is responsible for purchasing and for providing appropriate guidance to parents/carers and students. 'Out of school' materials which support curriculum-related study, e.g. magazines, cannot be paid for by the school; many such support materials are, however, provided within the school Resource Centre.

### **Approval and Review**

**Effective from:** January 2017

**Approved by:** Steve Aspinall (Teaching and Learning Committee)

**Review date:** January 2018

**Review leader:** Steve Aspinall (Teaching and Learning Committee)