



Curriculum Strategy

June 2019

1 Rationale

- 1.1 This Strategy should be read in conjunction with the values articulated in our Vision Statement and in our aims. It is also linked explicitly to various curriculum policies and implicitly to many other policies.

2 Objectives

- 2.1 The overall aim of the curriculum at Priestlands School is to promote each individual student's academic and intellectual progress and their personal growth and development to enable them to make the most of the opportunities offered in their lives.
- 2.2 The curriculum will promote sustained academic and intellectual progress, including:
- progression in understanding, knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and employment in a changing world
 - moving students forward rapidly relative to their prior attainment
 - developing high levels of literacy, numeracy and competence in the use of ICT
 - providing breadth, balance, and relevance to all students
 - ensure students encounter a variety of teaching and learning styles, and have their individual learning needs met
 - the opportunity for students to specialise in areas of strength and improve areas of weakness
- 2.3 The curriculum will foster students' personal growth and development, including:
- an ability to listen, absorb and evaluate knowledge
 - respect for the knowledge of others
 - a sense of enquiry, the ability to question, solve problems and argue rationally
 - a willingness to apply themselves and an aptitude for learning
 - their creativity, critical awareness, empathy and sensitivity
 - a recognition of their own and others' achievements, in school and beyond
 - their self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence and their ability to recognise and appraise their own strengths and weaknesses
 - the skills of working as an individual and as a member of a group or team
 - appropriate moral and spiritual values and tolerance of others, to value each individual and to learn to live together in an atmosphere of mutual respect
 - an awareness of the student's place in the community and opportunities for service to each other and to the community
- 2.4 The curriculum will meet the demands of the National Curriculum and take into account other statutory requirements and local and national guidance.

3 The Timetable

- 3.1 The school will operate a 30-period week. There will be 6 periods per day (4 in the morning; 2 in the afternoon), each of which will last for 50 minutes, with the exception of one day per week when the 4 morning periods will last 45 minutes to accommodate a 40-minute PSHCE period.
- 3.2 The overall timetable allocation is shown in Appendix 1. Any changes to this structure will be approved by the Board of Governors.

4 Key Stage 3: Years 7 and 8

- 4.1 All students will follow a common curriculum comprising:

- English and English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science
- Art
- Drama
- French or Spanish
- Geography
- History
- Information & Communication Technology and Computing
- Lifeskills
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Technology

5 Key Stage 4: Years 9, 10 and 11

- 5.1 At Key Stage 4, students will follow a common core and also have a number of choices from a range of subjects.
- 5.2 The core curriculum will consist of:
- English (all students will take both English and English Literature)
 - Life Skills programme (which includes Health, Sex & Relationships, Careers and Enterprise)
 - Mathematics
 - Physical Education
 - Philosophy and Ethics
 - Science (GCSEs in the three separate sciences or GCSE combined science dual award)
- 5.3 In Year 9, students will continue to study a modern language (French or Spanish) and will also have the opportunity to make choices as follows:
- Humanities (Geography or History)
 - Five further choices: Art, Dance, Design Technology, Drama, Computing Science, Food & Nutrition, French (beginners) Geography, German, History, ICT, Music, PE (additional), Religious Studies or Spanish (beginners)
- 5.4 The Y9 curriculum structure resulting from the annual curriculum choices process will be approved annually by the Board of Governors
- 5.5 In Years 10 and 11, students will have four choices from a broad range of subjects, including:
- Business Studies, Art (3D), Child Development, Design Technology (GCSE or vocational), Drama, Fine Art, Food & Nutrition (GCSE or vocational), French, Geography, German, History, Horticulture and Small Animal Care (non-exam), ICT, Media Studies, Music, Photography, Physical Education (GCSE or vocational), Religious Studies and Spanish
- 5.6 The Y10 curriculum structure resulting from the annual curriculum choices process will be approved annually by the Board of Governors.
- 5.7 In addition, minority subjects unable to recruit a viable class size might be offered as part of the extra-curricular programme.

6 Expectations of staff

- 6.1 All classroom-based staff are expected actively to promote and seek to secure the curriculum aims (above) and, in particular to:

- have high expectations of students
- employ a variety of appropriate teaching and learning methods
- ensure that, wherever possible, students are found means of access to the curriculum and given opportunities to succeed
- deliver programmes of study which build upon students' previous experiences, providing progression and continuity, and which conform to the requirements of the national curriculum
- provide work which meets their students' needs and aspirations, which offers depth and challenge, and which motivates and inspires them
- involve the learner in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular feedback through assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging students to evaluate their own achievements
- develop students' skills to become independent learners
- encourage, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment
- work in partnership with other staff, parents/carers and the wider community to achieve shared goals
- keep parents/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their sons and daughters.
- keep abreast of developments in methods and best practice
- be sensitive to, and use appropriate methods for different learning styles.

7 Tutor groups

- 7.1 On arrival at the school, students will be placed in mixed ability tutor groups In Years 7 and 8. In a "full" year group of 243 students, there will be eight tutor groups of up to 31 students.
- 7.2 The Y10 curriculum structure resulting from the annual curriculum choices process will be approved annually by the Board of Governors.
- 7.3 Within each half year group, there will be four tutor groups, each of which will be allocated to a House (Avon, Forest, Hurst or Solent).

8 Class sizes

- 8.1 In the autumn term of Year 7, to aid the induction process, the usual teaching group will be the tutor group.
- 8.2 In some subjects, for example where there are health and safety issues to consider (as in Technology), smaller groups of up to 23 will be created.
- 8.3 Similarly, in PE or games, where there is a need for some single sex groups, different sized groups will be formed.
- 8.4 In English and Maths, setting will be introduced from the start of Year 7, with a fifth teaching group added to each half year group. This pattern will continue up to and including Year 11.
- 8.5 This pattern will be replicated for Science, Modern Languages and PE from Year 8 and will be extended to the Ethics and Lifeskills carousel from Year 9. In heavily over-subscribed year groups these additional classes will be provided from the beginning of Year 8.
- 8.6 Where setting exists, the norm will be to create smaller groups for lower attaining students, so that more individual attention can be provided.
- 8.7 From Year 9 onwards, once curriculum choices have been introduced, class sizes will vary, usually from around 15 to 28. The minimum class size for an "option" subject to be viable will usually be 15, although smaller classes may operate at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

9. Curriculum choices

- 9.1 The school will endeavour to meet as many first preferences as possible, but because we create a structure around choices (rather than run a system of choices within a structure), not all first choices can be met. The school will adopt a process in which priority is to have the smallest number of disappointed students.

10 Mixed ability teaching, setting and differentiation

- 10.1 Whether students are taught in all mixed ability classes, sets or broad banded groups, there will always be a range of abilities within each class. In addition, individual students have preferred learning styles: some work well in groups while others prefer to work individually; some perform best in long-term projects while others like defined tasks; some respond well to oral work, while others prefer written work; some find written communication difficult but work effectively on a computer.
- 10.2 To take account of these differences and the range of ability in any class, all teachers have a responsibility, when planning work, to meet the needs of all students. This will involve, at different times, adapting tasks, providing different resources, developing extension work, providing a variety of learning styles and environments, setting individual goals, giving different levels of support, and offering a variety of ways to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.

11 The learning environment

- 11.1 The school is aware that a lively, purposeful and structured learning environment is essential in promoting high standards and good working practices. Displays of students' work, stimulus materials and appropriate resources are very important in setting standards and raising expectations. All departments will emphasise good display in their areas and contribute to displays in public areas of the school.
- 11.2 The structure and organisation of the classroom is also an important factor in developing effective working methods and a positive ethos. Whilst this is left to individual teachers and departments, it is expected that classrooms are orderly environments where students can work effectively and in comfort; that adequate resources are provided and are accessible; and that students treat classrooms, workshops, study rooms and the library with respect.

12 Schemes of work and lesson planning

- 12.1 Each subject will have schemes of work for all of its courses/programmes related, where appropriate, to the national curriculum and or examination board requirements. These schemes of work will be followed by all subject teachers and their delivery monitored by Heads of Department. Schemes of work will set out how the content of the course is structured, so that students' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed progressively, and how the teaching is organised. These schemes of work will be supported by assessment strategies and methods for ensuring standardisation of expectation and assessment. Teachers will plan individual lessons, or sequences of lessons, in different ways.
- 12.2 The school does not prescribe a single method for short-term or long-term planning. It simply expects that such planning takes place, in sufficient detail to ensure that students achieve high standards and can achieve their potential. Each subject will have an agreed method for the recording of lessons and homework.

13 Assessment, marking and feedback

- 13.1 Effective feedback takes a variety of forms (written and verbal) depending upon the demands of particular pieces of work and schemes of work over a period of time. The school has agreed

principles to provide general guidance for staff about the marking and feedback of students' work. Each subject area will have more specific guidelines within their Department Handbooks.

13.2 The school has a separate, detailed Policy for Assessment, Marking and Feedback.

14 Reporting student progress to parents

14.1 The school will communicate student progress to parents in a variety of ways each year:

- The school will issue termly reports to parents on the progress of each student; on one report each year, tutors will write a personal comment about each child
- There will be one consultation evening each year at which parents can discuss their children's progress with subject teachers
- Students will receive detailed feedback on at least one piece of work in each subject area every half term; the feedback will be made available to parents.

15 Homework

15.1 Priestlands School recognises the importance and value of homework as an extension of classwork, and a vehicle to practise skills, acquire new ones and develop good study habits.

15.2 The school has a separate, detailed Homework Policy.

16 Special Educational Needs

16.1 The role of the Achievement Support Department is to support the right which all students have to access the curriculum, regardless of their ability. Students, whether or not they have special educational needs, have an equal opportunity to participate in the full curriculum of the school (including the national curriculum) and all activities. Students with special educational needs are encouraged to become independent and take responsibility within the school.

16.2 The school has a separate, detailed Special Educational Needs Policy.

17 Higher-achieving students

17.1 Many of our students display special talents, skills, expertise and understanding in particular areas. These include both high levels of ability in subject disciplines and in activities beyond the curriculum – sporting prowess and musical excellence, for example.

17.2 It is the responsibility of all staff to identify such students, to encourage their interests and to make appropriate provision for them. Such provision includes planning classroom-based work which genuinely stretches such students, and additional challenges and experiences offered through clubs, discussion groups, interest and support groups, attendance at lectures and conferences, and opportunities to participate in external groups, societies, teams and organisations.

17.3 The school has a separate, detailed Policy for Higher Achieving Students.

18 Examinations

18.1 It is expected that all students who embark on a course leading to a public examination will be entered for that examination, unless they fail to fulfil the examination board's requirements in relation to coursework, attendance or other criteria. Subject areas are expected to identify, at an early stage, students who are in danger of failing to meet the requirements, so that they can be supported, guided and encouraged. Those who, despite the best efforts of staff, are not entered for the examination are nonetheless expected to complete the course of study, alongside other students. The school will pay for all examination entries for courses for which it has prepared students.

18.2 The school has a separate, detailed Examinations Policy.

19 Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Enterprise Education

19.1 The PSHCE programme in all years will be delivered through a discrete Lifeskills course which will specifically address Careers and Enterprise and Health (especially sex and relationships; and alcohol and drugs).

19.2 The school has a separate, detailed policy on Personal and Social Development (incorporating PSHCE, Careers and Enterprise Education, Drugs Education and Sex and Relationships Education).

20 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

20.1 Governors will monitor the effectiveness of this strategy through a monitoring sheet.

APPENDIX 1: CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

Subject	KS3		KS4		
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11
English	4	4	4	4	5
Maths	4	4	4	4	4
Science	3	4	4	6	6
Lifeskills	0	0	1	1	1
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	2
R.E. (Philosophy & Ethics)	2	1	1	1	0
MFL 1	3	3	2	4 x 3	4 x 3
Design Technology	2	2	6 x 2		
Geography	2	2			
History	2	2			
I.C.T. and Computing	1	2			
Art	2	2			
Drama	1	1			
Music	2	2			
TOTAL PERIODS PER WEEK	30	30	30	30	30

The range of subjects in the Y9 6 x 2 list includes:

Art, Dance, Design Technology, Drama, Computing Science, Food & Nutrition, French (beginners) Geography, German, History, ICT, Music, PE (additional), Religious Studies or Spanish (beginners)

The range of subjects in the Y10 and Y11 4 x 3 list includes:

Art (3D), Business Studies, Child Development, Design Technology (GCSE or vocational), Drama, Fine Art, Food & Nutrition (GCSE or vocational), French, Geography, German, History, Horticulture and Small Animal Care (non-exam), ICT, Media Studies, Music, Photography, Physical Education (GCSE or vocational), Religious Studies and Spanish

APPENDIX 2: MONITORING EVIDENCE

	DATE
Strategy agreed by Board of Governors	July 2019
Strategy published on website	July 2019

Curriculum Policies	AGREED BY BOARD OF GOVERNORS	PUBLISHED ON WEBSITE
Homework Policy	Autumn 2019	Yes
Special Educational Needs Policy	Summer 2016	Yes
Policy for Higher Attaining Students	Autumn 2018	Yes
Examinations Policy	November 2017	Yes
Personal Development Policy	January 2015	Yes

Curriculum Structure	AGREED BY BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Y8 into Y9 Curriculum Structure	April 2019
Y9 into Y10 Curriculum Structure	April 2019

Complaints Received	Received	Resolved
Y9 Curriculum Choices		
Y10 Curriculum Choices		
Other Curriculum issues		

Links to School Self-Evaluation: Parental views
Links to School Self-Evaluation: Student views
Links to School Self-Evaluation: Staff views
Links to School Self-Evaluation: views of LA/Ofsted/others
Any other issues/Implications for action

Date:

Form completed by: