



Marple Hall School

Policy Document

# Curriculum Policy

Staff responsible for policy: Rhian Davies

Date reviewed: January 2022

Date approved by Governors: .....

Signed by Chair of Committee: .....

Signed by Headteacher: .....

Date for next review: Spring 2023

## **Marple Hall School Curriculum Policy**

### **Rationale**

The curriculum policy is essential to help ensure ongoing developments to the curriculum and to help stakeholders to understand the underlying principles behind decisions already made and those made in the future, that impact on the curriculum delivered.

The policy should reflect the aims of the school and is based on a set of principles that lie at the heart of education:

- All students of the school are entitled to a balanced, broad, coherent, relevant and personalised curriculum to suit their own specific needs and requirements.
- The learning process should be stimulating, enjoyable and meaningful.
- All students should have equal access to the curriculum irrespective of gender, ethnicity, belief, social or cultural background, academic ability, specialised need, learning difficulty or disability.

In addition all students must have access to the entitlement areas laid down in the National Curriculum.

The curriculum consists of all activities planned by the school inside and outside the classroom. The curriculum should promote the intellectual, social, moral, spiritual, cultural and physical developments of the students with the aim of preparing students for their life beyond school.

### **Purposes**

- To ensure all students are offered a balanced, broad, coherent, relevant and personalised curriculum to suit their own specific needs and requirements.
- To shape future organisational decisions related to curriculum plans/ models.
- To provide all stakeholders with an understanding of the underlying principles on which curriculum decisions are made.
- To state clearly the responsibilities of each group of people, to ensure the best outcome for each individual student.
- To ensure all types and styles of learning are valued and given emphasis with the appropriate recognition and where appropriate, accreditation.

### **The School Curriculum**

Our prime concern is that all students achieve their potential. The timetable is constructed to allow as many opportunities as possible for this to happen.

The timetable is arranged to allow the maximum time possible for each subject. Therefore, we teach 25 hours a week: 5 lessons per day of 60 minutes each. However, we organise this over 10 days to ensure that subjects with smaller time allocations have reasonable contact. In 2018, we introduced slightly shorter lessons of 50 minutes on a Monday. This is to facilitate additional staff training and development after school to enhance our teaching and learning provision.

All lessons are checked for attendance using electronic registration.

Every Thursday there is a timetabled tutor period where Personal and Social Education is taught by the form tutors. One lesson per half term is a designated “drop-down hour” which means all students have an additional PSHE lesson delivered by their Form Tutors. The six extra sessions allow us a greater

degree of flexibility and scope when challenging the statutory elements of PSHE and reacting to any social issues relevant to our students.

### Curriculum model 2021-22

Year	7	8	9	10	11
English	7	6	6	9	9
Mathematics	6	6	6	7	7
Science	6	6	6	10	10
MFL	7	8	8	<b>Options</b>	<b>Options</b>
Technology	2	2	2	6	5
Art	2	2	2	6	5
Geography	4	4	4	5	6
History	4	4	4	5	6
Drama	2	2	2		
Music	2	2	2		
PE	4	4	4	2	2
Computing	2	2	2		
RE	2	2	2		
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>

### Curriculum model 2022-23

Year	7	8	9	10	11
English	7	7	6	9	9
Mathematics	6	6	6	7	7
Science	6	6	6	10	10
MFL	7	8	8	<b>Options</b>	<b>Options</b>
Technology	2	2	2	6	5
Art	2	2	2	6	5
Geography	4	4	4	5	6
History	4	4	4	5	6
Drama	2	2	2		
Music	2	2	2		
PE	4	3	4	2	2
Computing	2	2	2		
RE	2	2	2		
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>

### **Key Stage 3**

We have a traditional three-year Key Stage 3 and two-year Key Stage 4. Despite the fact that we are acutely aware of the pressures of reformed GCSEs we believe that it is essential to keep KS3 as the bedrock of our provision where we can enjoy certain freedoms over curriculum design, focus on the knowledge and skills we want to build up to suit our context and be innovative in our approach.

Students follow a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 3 and study English, Maths, Science, a modern foreign language, art, drama, music, computing, history, geography, RE, technology and PE. PSHE is taught by form tutors as part of an extended registration on Thursdays. French and Spanish are taught to the current Year 7 and 8. The school decides the language studied.

Initially, in Year 7, the tutor group forms the basis for teaching in most subjects. Setting occurs in Maths, Science and MFL. Parents are kept informed of arrangements. The curriculum remains accessible to all students.

In Year 7 we have two transition groups to support our most vulnerable learners. The two groups accommodate a maximum of 32 students whom the primary schools identify as someone who may struggle with the challenges of secondary school. Students are taught together for the majority of their subjects. They will reintegrate back into mainstream classes from the Spring term of Year 7.

Science and maths continue to be set in Year 8 and Year 9. Currently Modern Languages set groups within bands. The majority of students will sit their MFL GCSE examination in the summer of Year 9. A small number of students study the NCFE Health and Fitness course alongside MFL.

The tutor period enables students to be aware of the organisation of the School and to develop a relationship with their Tutor. Various topics such as bullying, homework and health education are covered.

### **Key stage 4**

Our current KS4 students follow a Core Curriculum of English Language and Literature, Maths, Science (either Combined or Separate) and general PE. PSHE is also taught in tutor period on a Thursday. All students are expected to study a Humanities subject (Geography or History) followed by three additional choices. Students who take their MFL GCSE at the end of Year 9 will be able to study a second language at KS4. Furthermore, we offer an optional Bridging Unit course which is designed for students who have an interest in continuing to study a language beyond GCSE.

Our curriculum is structured so that all students are given the opportunity to take the EBacc suite of qualifications. Approximately 80% of KS4 students follow an EBacc curriculum. Additional qualifications such as VCerts, Cambridge Nationals and BTEC Technical Awards are also offered which are more practical and are a mixture of terminal exam and on-going assessment.

In total we offer over 20 formal qualifications ensuring all of our students, regardless of prior attainment, have the opportunity to study a broad and balanced curriculum which will equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to be successful in the 21st century.

### **Assessment**

All students will be issued with a gradebook three times per year. This will report on individual student's effort, learning behaviours, homework and response to feedback. We report on 'independent learning' as opposed to 'response to feedback' in Year 10 and 11. In addition, each Gradebook gives an attendance figure as well as the number of merits and sanctions received.

Students in Year 7- 9 will have regular assessments throughout Key Stage 3. Formative assessments in each subject are the most important part of our assessment system. We use tests, marking criteria and examples of excellent work to show students the standards that are expected and how to reach them.

### **Homework**

At Marple Hall we value the importance of homework on student progress. We only set two types of homework for students in Years 7 to 9:

1. **Embedding learning**

These homeworks are set regularly, according to a timetable decided within curriculum areas. Homework is most effective when it involves practice or rehearsal of topics that have already been taught in class. We will therefore set short, frequent homework, closely monitored by teachers. This could include summarising notes; using worksheets to think deeper about classroom topics; short exam questions; guided revision etc. These tasks will be set 'little and often', typically taking 10-15 minutes to complete.

2. **Extended Practice**

Students are set these homeworks according to a timetable. They are timetabled so that students aren't overwhelmed with lots of 'Extension Practice' homework at the same time. The level of difficulty of 'Extension Practice' homework will increase from Y7 to Y9. They take the form of extended writing and could include an English essay; Science report; RE debate speech; Historical account etc

Homework in KS4 will typically increase in length and take a more varied approach depending on the subject.

### **Careers Education**

Our careers curriculum is structured around the Gatsby Benchmarks. All students receive unbiased information about potential next steps and high-quality careers guidance. The school provides high quality, meaningful opportunities for all students to encounter the world of work through a variety of different approaches. For example, online encounters delivered through the curriculum as well in person events both on site and elsewhere.

In Year 9 the Careers Programme begins in November and is carefully structured to help students with their GCSE option choices. All students have an individual interview with a member of the SLT.

In Year 10 and 11 students are given help and advice in preparation for post 16 education and the world of work. This is spent on acquiring skills needed to find information about jobs and courses, the completion of forms and CVs and also interview techniques. There are presentations from local colleges and students and parents are encouraged to attend other events organised locally. All students have a careers interview in Year 10 or 11.

There is a Careers area in The Hub.

### **Sex and Relationships Education**

Central to the Sex and Relationships Education programme is the growth of self-esteem and taking responsibilities for oneself and one's action. We believe the development of students' self-esteem is essential to an effective health education programme. If young people feel positive and good about themselves, they are more likely to take care of themselves, think positively of other people and therefore develop non-exploitative, caring relationships. They are also less likely to be exploited by others. Marple Hall School is committed to the holistic development of all students.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is delivered through PSHE in Tutor Period and in Science lessons for certain years. Relationships and RSE will be age-appropriate, building knowledge and life skills over time in a way that prepares pupils for issues they will soon face. It includes:

- **different types of relationships**, including friendships, family relationships, dealing with strangers and, at secondary school, intimate relationships;
- how to recognise, understand and build **healthy relationships**, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, and how to manage conflict, and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships;
- how relationships may **affect health and wellbeing, including mental health**;
- healthy relationships and **safety online**; and
- factual knowledge, at secondary school, around **sex, sexual health and sexuality**, set firmly within the context of relationships.

We are committed to retain parents and carers right to withdraw their child from sex education, other than sex education in the National Curriculum as part of science.

If parents/carers have any anxieties or worries or wish to discuss any aspect of Sex and Relationships Education they should in the first instance contact the relevant Head of Year.

If parents/carers wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from any Sex and Relationship Education session, they are asked to put the decision in writing detailing the topic or lessons from which they wish their child to be withdrawn.

## **Religious Education**

The Religious Education provided at the school is non-denominational in character. All students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have RE lessons. RE is also offered as an option at Key Stage 4.

Assemblies, again non-denominational in character, are held in Year Groups.

Any parent or carer who does not wish their child to participate in religious worship or instruction may write in to request that the student be excluded from assemblies and R.E. Lessons.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Extra-curricular provision is that which happens outside the classroom to support young peoples' social development and engagement, learning and happiness in school. Marple Hall School offers extra-curricular opportunities through

### **a) Subject departments**

Eg., Clubs and societies/curriculum related trips and visits.

### **b) The Pastoral System**

Form tutors, Heads of Year and Pastoral Managers all combine to provide opportunities for young people to develop socially and form lasting friendships.

## **Responsibilities**

### Governing body

- To review regularly the school curriculum policy and make amendments to reflect any changes nationally.
- To have an overview of local and national issues that will affect and shape the future curriculum.
- To have an overview of the local needs and ways the school curriculum may address these needs.
- To have an overview of curriculum issues both in and outside school at Key Stage 3 and 4.
- To have an overview of curriculum issues relating to Key Stage 2 and post 16 and the effect this has on the curriculum within an 11- 16 school.
- To have an appropriate understanding of the school curriculum model and the impact this has on the curriculum on offer to students of the school and impact on student achievement and progress.
- To have an understanding of the impact curriculum changes will have on the schools resources; including staffing levels.

### Headteacher

- To have an understanding of local and national issues that will affect and shape of the future curriculum.

- To have an understanding of the local needs and ways the school curriculum may address these needs.
- To have an understanding of issues relating to Key Stage 2 and post 16 and the effect this has on the curriculum within an 11- 16 school.
- To ensure an appropriate and relevant curriculum is on offer to students of the school and to monitor its impact on the students with regard to standards, achievement and progress.
- To annually review the curriculum model/ plan.
- To ensure a timetable is devised to reflect the needs of the students and financial restraints within which the school operates.

#### Senior Leadership Team

- To have an understanding of local and national issues and consider how this may affect the shape of the future curriculum.
- To have an understanding of the local needs and consider ways the school curriculum may address these needs.
- To have an understanding of issues relating to Key Stage 2 and post 16 and consider the implications for 11-16 and 14 – 19 learning.
- To annually review the curriculum model/ plan and present this to Governors and consult with other appropriate groups within the school and those within the 14-19 partnership.
- To discuss curriculum issues with Directors of Teaching and Learning and Curriculum Leaders and negotiate ideas to develop the curriculum.
- To devise a timetable to reflect the needs of the students and financial restraints within which the school operates
- To have a working understanding of the curriculum on offer in the departments they line manage
- To evaluate the impact of the curriculum regularly through line management of departments

#### Directors of Teaching and Learning

- To have a good understanding of local and national curriculum developments in their subject area and consider how this may affect the shape of the future curriculum.
- To have an understanding of the local needs and consider ways these needs may be addressed within their subject area.
- To have an understanding of issues relating to Key Stage 2 and post 16 and consider the effect this has on the curriculum within their subject area.
- To analyse student attainment data to evaluate relevance and effectiveness of curriculum provision within their subject area.
- To implement changes within their subject area to improve the curriculum being delivered based on student needs, abilities, and aspirations, local and national agendas.
- To actively seek to develop the curriculum for their area of responsibility.
- To ensure the curriculum is delivered in line with other school policies, including the Teaching and Learning Policy and the SEN policy.
- To review and monitor regularly the curriculum in their subject area.
- To support the devising of a timetable to reflect the needs of the students within the subject area and the restraints of the whole school.

#### Classroom Teacher



- To deliver the curriculum in line with the school's Teaching and Learning policy.
- To ensure they have a good working knowledge of the area they are responsible for delivering.
- To continually develop their knowledge of the curriculum they are responsible for delivering, particularly in light of the National Curriculum and the recent changes to the curriculum at Key Stage 4.
- Contribute towards the development of the curriculum in their specialist subject area.
- Differentiate the curriculum to enable access to all learners.

#### Support Staff

- To develop a working knowledge of the curriculum in which they support students.
- To use any individual skills to enhance and differentiate the curriculum.
- To contribute their working knowledge of the curriculum to the development of the curriculum.

#### **Procedures**

The curriculum model/plan is reviewed annually by the SLT in the Spring term and presented to Governors and staff. Key stage 4 options will be agreed by November each year and a draft timetable will be written for discussion at SLT by mid June to allow amendments improvements to be made. Monitoring will take place throughout the year by a variety of means including line management meetings and analysis of data.