

Priory School

Senior School Curriculum Policy

Summary

Priory School is committed to providing a rigorous academic and intellectual education which will challenge and engage pupils, and offer continuity and progression of learning to foster a life-love of learning, both for its own sake and to provide them with a secure foundation on which to continue into Higher Education and into the careers of their choice.

The Senior School Curriculum leads on from that of the Junior School and shares the same set of values and overriding principles. It is intended that the school as a whole provides a seamless and consistent policy in the education it offers, and the values it fosters.

All pupils of compulsory school age receive a full-time supervised education. This education is intended to give pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, human and social, physical, spiritual, aesthetic and creative aspects. For Years 7 - 11, the core curriculum of subjects provides the opportunity for pupils to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy. These are further developed in their other subjects. Pupils are taught 40 periods per week, each of 40 minutes.

In Years 7, 8 and 9, all pupils receive a broad introductory curriculum which gives them experience in all of the aspects outlined above. Thereafter an element of choice is introduced to enable pupils to explore those subjects more fully for which they have a natural enthusiasm and/or aptitude.

In addition, with plans to begin Sixth Form studies in mind, starting in September 2010, GCSE teaching is increasingly being seen not only as an end in itself, but also as a prelude to AS level and beyond. Detailed planning is at present still in the early stages, but it is intended that a reasonably wide range of subjects will be offered, leading on from the current Senior School curriculum.

In Year 9, all pupils study the core curriculum of English, Mathematics, ICT and Science; the latter is externally assessed by examination as Core Science GCSE in Year 9. In addition there the other subjects of one Modern Language, History, Geography, Performing Arts, Art, Religious Studies, as well as Civics and Games.

In Year 10, the core curriculum is English Language and Literature, Mathematics and Additional Science; the latter is externally assessed by GCSE examination in Year 10. To this core is added a further four subjects selected by the pupil from ICT, French, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Performing Arts, Art, Graphics, Photography, Textiles. Further pupil preferences may be met by the assistance of external tutors. Pupils also have Civics lessons and Games.

For Years 10 and 11, therefore, whilst all pupils study a core curriculum of Mathematics, English and Science until the end of Key Stage 4, there is also the opportunity for them to build around that a combination of other optional subjects. Quite deliberately, the school chooses each year to construct Years 10 and 11's timetables around pupils' choices, and not the other way round; thus there are no "Option Bands". The school aims to run any course in which there is sufficient demand and can be effectively resourced in both teaching and material terms.

In Year 11 a choice is made to study one, two or three separate sciences: Biology, Physics and Chemistry. The core curriculum provides continuity and progression of learning, supplemented by additional subjects.

Monitoring is conducted both within subject teaching and across the subjects, including as in Junior School regular liaison with parents. Detailed monthly "tracking" reports are maintained and used to monitor progress and plan individual and class teaching. These are also issued direct to parents to assist this process. Parents's evenings are regularly held to assist this process, and also to enable discussion of career options and the subjects relevant to that at GCSE level. Individual meetings with pupils and parents are also frequent.

PSHE is delivered within the curriculum, especially in Science, Religious Studies and Civics lessons.

Each pupil, regardless of age, participates in a full Games programme on one afternoon of the week.

Careers guidance is provided by visits from outside agencies, speakers and advisors. Priory School supports the organisation of work experience for Year 11 pupils during school holiday periods.

The school has a Learning Support department which is responsible for screening all pupils in Year 7 and all new entrants up to Year 11 for special educational needs. Parents of pupils who are identified as having a special educational need are then informed and additional support either in class or externally is arranged by agreement. Where this is more than can be covered by the Support teachers, further additional support is arranged by private agreement. The appropriate information is passed to the subject teachers and a co-ordinated approach is adopted for the benefit of the individual child. The Learning Support department assembles Individual Educational Plans for these pupils.

Where a pupil has a statement of educational needs, this also involves liaison with the Local Authority and with relevant external agencies, as well as the support from the department.

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