



Curriculum Policy

This policy applies to all pupils at Bishop's Stortford College including those in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

One of the College's principal aims is to provide a full-time education for pupils of compulsory school age, which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. Subject matter is provided for each pupil, appropriate to their age and aptitude to ensure that they fulfil their academic potential. The curriculum encompasses the best of academic tradition, with its emphasis on depth and rigour, as well as other courses designed to prepare our pupils for the increasingly complex challenges of the modern world. For pupils in Form 2 through to the U6th careers information is provided. The extensive programme of extra-curricular activities and the arrangements for pastoral care give each individual pupil the opportunity to develop a range of talents and to grow in self-confidence.

Aims

The College seeks to balance breadth and depth in learning, taking into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those who require an EHC plan. It is hoped that pupils gain an interest and enjoyment in learning and develop skills to make this a life-long engagement, with a particular focus on acquiring speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. The aim is to engender enquiring minds, the facility to think independently, to learn and work co-operatively through the active engagement of the pupils. Underpinning the curriculum, therefore, are the two key areas of knowledge and transferable skills: the process of learning is as valuable as the outcomes. In this way, the curriculum should be flexible and relevant through changing circumstances. Fundamental British values are promoted, and the curriculum reflects the British society in which we live and prepares pupils for future, as well as present challenges. It also aims to give pupils a good understanding of their cultural, historical and linguistic heritage so that a culture of equality between College pupils is maintained. This approach encourages respect for other people, paying regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Education Act. The curriculum is designed to be purposeful, accessible for all, stimulating and provide opportunities for pupil achievement. Subject curricula should illustrate continuity, differentiation, and a sense of progression, so that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.

As pupils transition into the secondary phase of their education they will be provided access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that:

- is presented in an impartial manner
- enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options
- helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.

Arrangements

Within the three sections of the College (Pre-Prep [4-7yrs], Prep School [7-13yrs], Senior School [13 - 18yrs]), there are detailed schemes of work to highlight curriculum development and to ensure continuity for pupils moving to the next section.

In Reception the curriculum is broadly based on the EYFS framework having been granted exemption in 2013, which has been updated in 2021 to accommodate the new EYFS curriculum changes for September 2021. The EYFS curriculum follows the seven areas of development – three prime areas and four specific areas. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Prime Areas

Prime areas are fundamental, work together, and support development in all other areas.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Specific Areas

Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The children relate to people and things through the *characteristics of effective learning*, which move through all areas of learning.

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

. Seven key features of effective practice are.

- The best for every child
- High quality care
- What we want the children to learn (curriculum)
- Helping children to learn (pedagogy)
- Checking what children have learnt (assessment)
- Self-regulation and executive function
- Partnerships with parents

The balance between child and adult led activities is judged by the Foundation Team and gradually becomes more structured in preparation for Year 1.

From Year 1, under the umbrella of a topic theme, pupils are introduced to the concept of different subject areas of study: English – literacy, language and drama, Mathematics, RE, PSHE, RSE, Science, History, Geography, Art, Design, Music, Swimming, IT, PE, Dance and Games. Whilst the children are taught through topics, certain distinct skills are still taught separately: phonics, reading and handwriting, as well as specific topics of mathematics.

Pupils are also encouraged to become more independent as they develop their questioning and thinking skills. The Pre-Prep is a Forest School that enables a period of learning to be carried out in the “forest area”, reinforcing their thinking skills, collaboration, independence, and confidence.

The Prep School curriculum gives the pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. There is a common curriculum for the pupils to follow: English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Music, Art, Religious Education, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE), Design Technology, Drama, Computer Science, Physical Education (including swimming) and Games.

In Lower Shell (Year 3) Spanish is introduced to the common curriculum to give pupils their first regular exposure to a modern foreign language. In Upper Shell (Year 4) Spanish is replaced by German. In Form 1 (year 5) Classical Civilisation is an addition to the common curriculum alongside French (Neither German or Spanish are studied in Form 1 (Year 5)). In Form 2 (year 6) a multi-language course is introduced to develop the understanding of how different languages interrelate and work. Biology, Chemistry and Physics are separate subjects in Lower Third (year 7) and Spanish and German are re-introduced, as option choices, at the start of Lower Third (Year 7).

The school’s aims and ethos are reflected throughout the common curriculum with particular emphasis in the provision of PSHEE. Career guidance is delivered through the PSHEE program to Form Two (Year 6) and above.

Specialist help is available for English for Speakers of other languages; this usually takes place through in-class support in English lessons and 1:1 during a Form Period. In addition, there is an extensive programme of activities which includes, for example, street dance, yoga, creative thinking, cookery, and golf.

The **Senior School**

Pupils in the Fourth Form (Year 9) follow a common curriculum including English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, History, Computer Science, Art, Religious Education & PSHE. One modern foreign language is chosen from French, German and Spanish. Pupils also choose two further options from DT, Music, Latin, Drama, or a second MFL. Specialist help is available for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); this support can be provided as an option instead of one of the subjects listed above. This would be at the recommendation of the ESOL Department.. The majority of subjects begin teaching GCSE content in the Fourth Form.

At the end of this first year of Senior School, pupils continue with their GCSE courses, while making further subject choices. These consist of a range of core subjects, with the addition of four or five optional subjects, depending on the choice of double (5 options) or triple science (4 options). The core consists of English; English Literature; Mathematics; Biology; Chemistry and Physics. The options are, Art and Design; Computer Science; Design and Technology; Drama; French; Geography; German; History; Latin; Music; Religious Studies and Spanish. At the recommendation of the ESOL and Learning Support Departments, pupils may be advised to receive additional support in these areas, instead of one of their optional subjects.

Pupils also pursue a programme of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) through our Empower programme, which consists of a mixture of lectures, seminars, and conventional lessons.

These, together with a full Activities and Games programme, ensure that a pupil’s education has breadth as well as depth.

The **Sixth Form**

Our aim is to develop young men and women who are well prepared to face the challenges of the adult world. By the time they leave the College, they will have achieved their short-term goals (good A level results) and will be well aware that they have developed the life skills and adaptability needed to achieve their longer-term goals at university, through exciting career prospects, and in their personal lives.

A special Guide to the Sixth Form is published each year, containing information about all the courses on offer.

The **Sixth Form Curriculum**

We currently offer 24 subjects:

Art	English Literature	Media Studies
Biology	French	Music
Business Studies	Further Mathematics	Physical Education
Chemistry	Geography	Physics
Classical Civilisation	German	Politics
Design Technology	History	Psychology
Drama and Theatre Studies	Latin	Religious Studies
Economics	Mathematics	Spanish

Most students choose three A Level subjects. Some students, however, will take four subjects, particularly the most academically gifted. These subjects will then be taken as public examinations at the end of the U6th Form.

Further breadth is provided through the Independent Study programme, in which all the L6th students are equipped with advanced study skills. They are then required to opt for one of the following: the EPQ, or our own in-house project (IRP.). Opportunities are given to students through the Pathways and Enrichment programme in the L6th, the U6th lecture programme, PSHE lectures and tutor periods in which the tutors have an academic link with their tutees. Pupils also have the opportunity to follow the Mini-MBA programme.

All students also take part in a Games and Activities programme which promotes breadth as well as depth.

Continuity

Pre-Prep to Prep School: Regular meetings take place between the Head of Pre-Prep and the Head of Shell (Year 3 & 4), to review curricular progression between Year 2 and Year 3. The EYFS leader regularly meets with the Key Stage One Leader to discuss progression of skills and curriculum content. The Key Stage One Leader also shares curriculum information and updates with the Head of Lower Shell and the Head of Shell.

Heads of Department in the Prep School are responsible for the curriculum from Year 3 to Year 8, thus ensuring continuity of curriculum during transition from Shell to Form 1.

Prep to Senior School: Prep School and Senior School Heads of Department meet regularly to review the curriculum, particularly for the final two years (Year 7 & 8) in the Prep School, to ensure that pupils are properly prepared for their move into the Senior School and that the curriculum dove-tails appropriately in terms of curricular content and the development of skills.

Please see the policy for Special Educational Needs and Learning Support as well as English for Speakers of other languages

Review

Regular reviews take place within departments in the three sections of the College.