



## CURRICULUM POLICY

*Elizabeth College provides a rich, diverse and exciting experience for pupils of all backgrounds, enabling them to flourish and make the very most of themselves.*

### Introduction

This Curriculum Policy has been developed to reflect the College's ethos, aims and values, and to respond to the Inspection Next Steps. In particular, our **academic aim** is to engender a love of learning so that all our pupils can achieve, or even exceed, academic expectations.

We want our pupils to be inspired by and relish their learning experiences in school, showing **creativity** and **perseverance** in working things out for themselves wherever possible. This will allow them to do the very best they can academically and help stimulate their minds through the rest of their lives. We particularly value scholarship and the great pleasures of learning for its own sake.

We are committed to providing the highest standards of education for all our pupils. We deliver a broad curriculum offering challenge and interest so that pupils can achieve their best in both academic results and wider skills they will need to succeed in life. We aim to foster a life-long love of learning for its own sake and to provide them with a secure foundation from which to continue into Higher Education or into the careers of their choice.

Pupils of compulsory school age receive full-time supervised education. This education provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative aspects. It promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development and prepares pupils for life.

Whilst considerable emphasis is placed upon examination success for all abilities, this should be achieved by a focus on learning. Key school initiatives in differentiation (see separate guidance document), assessment for learning (see separate guidance document) and growth mindsets should underpin classroom approaches. Colleagues are expected to monitor academic performance closely, informed by benchmarking using CEM data, and they should take remedial action promptly in the case of those pupils who are under-performing. All pupils are expected to give of their best and are encouraged to develop their natural talents to the full.

### Review

This policy is reviewed and updated every year by the Vice-Principal (Academic) and reviewed every three years by the Board of Directors in line with current best practice.

### The Curriculum

In the Senior School, in Key Stages Three and Four, pupils study a core curriculum of Mathematics, English, Science, Religious Studies and a Modern Language along with Wellbeing (PSHCE) and PE and Games. These develop skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy, which skills are further developed in the study of other subjects. IT skills are taught at KS3 and developed across the curriculum at all key stages. From April 2017, the introduction of the BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) solution will enable this to be further extended. Independent learning is encouraged from Year 7 through the use of regular research project homeworks set by subjects whereby the usual homework timetable is suspended for a week to

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Vice-Principal (Academic)

enable a more extended piece of investigative work to be completed. Collapsed curriculum days in Years 7 and 8 enable cross-curricular approaches to be developed.

Pupils are taught thirty-five periods per week of 45 minutes duration between Years 7-11 and between 45-55 minutes in the Sixth Form.

At GCSE and A level, the school seeks to satisfy individual pupil choices and so builds its option blocks around their initial decisions. A small number of pupils are allowed to study fewer subjects according to their ability and needs and will usually attend for additional help in the Learning Support Centre.

### **Years 7 and 8**

In Year 7, all pupils receive a broad curriculum providing experience in all of the aspects outlined above. In addition to this core curriculum (Mathematics, English, Science, Religious Studies, Languages, Wellbeing (PSHCE), PE and Games), they study Art, Classics, Design Technology, Geography, History, ICT, Latin and Music with History, Classics and ICT taught together in a block known as ITCH (IT, Classics and History). This latter has been done to reduce the large number of subjects with only lesson per week, to facilitate cross-curricular teaching and to enable more consolidated study of subject topics.

All subjects are initially taught in House groups (Country, North, South and Town) except for Creative Arts subjects (Art, Music, Drama and Design Technology) which are taught in smaller mixed ability groups.

Two subjects, Mathematics and French will adjust their House groups by proven ability during the early stages of the academic year in Year 7. Pupils are organised into two bands within each pair of houses, (Country/North, South/Town). The first band (CN1 and ST1) will contain those who are more confident in understanding and applying concepts, the other band (CN2 and ST2) those who perhaps need more time to refresh their understanding of the basic concepts in early secondary years. The banding decisions are entirely separate for each subject.

In Year 8, English and Latin follow the same pattern as Mathematics and French, again with setting specific to the subject. All pupils study Latin until the end of the Michaelmas Term when, based on the term's work and two common tests, a decision is made whether they continue with Latin or study Classics with some Latin. ICT, Classics and History are taught as separate subjects. German and Spanish are introduced, each have two mixed ability groups, one drawn from Country & North, the other from South & Town.

### **Year 9**

Pupils continue to study English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Religious Studies, at least one Modern Foreign Language (German, Spanish or French), ICT, PE and Games. Science is taught separately as Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Most pupils choose two creative arts subjects (from Art, Drama, Design Technology or Music) and most will study a second Modern Foreign Language. Some will study one Modern Foreign Language and so select three Creative Arts subjects. Wellbeing is delivered through collapsed curriculum days spread across each term equating to a weekly lesson.

English: taught in four groups, an upper set (En 1) a second set (En 2) and two equal mixed ability groups (sets EnA and EnB).

Mathematics: taught in four sets Ma1, Ma2, Ma3 and Ma4 which are grouped by ability from the start of the year.

Science: divided into two bands according to ability, with each band split into 2 classes (CN1 and ST1; CN2 and ST2).

## CURRICULUM POLICY

Modern Languages: Pupils may choose to study French, German or Spanish as their core language, which may be set by ability, depending on numbers who opt for each.

Creative Arts (Art, Drama, Design Technology and Music): Pupils choose two or three Creative Arts subjects, depending on whether they have selected one or two languages for study.

Latin/Classics: divided by ability and linguistic aptitude into four sets. The top two sets (La1 & La2) are selected on proven ability in Latin, and continue the study of Latin, while the remaining groups (3 and 4) study a non-linguistic Classics course, looking at the historical and cultural background of the ancient world.

All remaining subjects are taught in House groups.

### **Years 10 and 11:**

The core curriculum continues (English, Mathematics, Religious Studies, Science and a Modern Foreign Language as well as PE and Games and Wellbeing (PSHCE)) and is usually taught in 5 groups. This provides continuity and progression of learning alongside which further subjects (usually four options) are selected by the pupils. Pupils may opt to study Science as three separate subjects (Physics, Chemistry and Biology) or as Combined Science. If separate sciences are chosen, then that counts as one of the option choices.

In English, two or three groups will study IGCSEs in English Language and English Literature and two groups will be entered for IGCSE English Language only.

Mathematics has five sets, of which the top four (Ma1, Ma2, Maa and Mab) prepare for the Higher Tier course. Set 5 will prepare for the Foundation Tier course, with the exam taken in January in Year 11, providing the opportunity for those who achieve a grade 4 to be entered for the Higher Tier papers the following June.

Science has five sets. Sets 1 and 2 will be mixed ability groups (totalling 9 periods a week) entered for the three Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics), whilst the remaining sets (totalling 6 periods a week) will be entered for Combined Science.

All other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups by option block. Five option blocks have been created in order to increase choice and satisfy more learning needs. Modern Foreign Languages and Separate Sciences form part of this, so a pupil choosing Separate Science and a Modern Foreign Language will still have three other option choices. A pupil selecting Combined Science will have four option choices available. A small number, for whom further foreign language study is not appropriate, may, with the school's approval, select a fifth option subject or attend Learning Support.

Further options are chosen from Ancient History, Art, Business Studies, Computer Science, DT Graphics, DT Materials, Drama, Geography, History, Latin, Modern Foreign Languages (French, German, Spanish), Music and PE. In November of Year 9, an options booklet is made available on the Parent Portal along with an information evening to help pupils and their parents to make informed choices. GCSE examinations are taken in all academic subjects except English, MFL and Business Studies, History and Mathematics, which take IGCSEs. Religious Studies prepares pupils for the GCSE short course examination.

### **The Sixth Form**

Elizabeth College runs a joint sixth form with the local independent girls' school, The Ladies' College. This enables pupils to have a wide choice of up to four A Levels, and the schools aim to run any course in which numbers are economically viable. All of the subjects offered at GCSE are available at A level, as well as Economics, Film Studies, Further Mathematics, Photography and Psychology. Advice is given to all pupils

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Vice-Principal (Academic)

regarding their A Level choices and this advice includes at least two interviews between each Year 11 pupil and a senior member of staff. An options booklet is provided to help pupils and their parents to make informed choices, and a Sixth Form Open Evening allows them to meet with teachers from both schools to discuss courses before committing themselves to specific subjects.

Most pupils initially study four AS Level subjects, with a few taking three or five according to ability. Critical Thinking and the Extended Project Qualification are offered along with the Elizabeth College Diploma which recognises and rewards achievement and commitment across the range of sixth form activity. The Sixth Form curriculum of examination subjects is supplemented by a wide variety of Games choices (Football, Hockey, Cross Country, Athletics, Cricket, Tennis, Squash, Golf, Rugby, Sailing and Fitness) and Service options (Combined Cadet Force, Community Service, Subject Leadership and Sports Leadership) in which all pupils participate.

Sixth Form pupils have provision for Private Study which includes use of the dedicated supervised study centre, the Perrot Room (AJP), along with others areas such as the Sixth Form Common Room and Library. Year 12 pupils initially nominate half of their private study periods to be supervised. This is reviewed as the year progresses, increasing or decreasing according to progress and organisation. In Year 13, most pupils do not have to be supervised and some may request home study. Many choose to use the Perrot Room anyway and unsupervised private study is constantly reviewed in the light of staff feedback.

### **Learning Support**

#### **Learning Difficulties and Disabilities, Special Educational Needs and Able, Gifted and Talented**

New pupils are monitored and may be assessed for learning difficulties and disabilities during the first half term after their entry to the school along with information from the pupil's previous school. MidYIS tests help highlight those pupils who are able, gifted and/or talented and those who have specific learning difficulties and these are further identified by teachers.

Pupils who have been assessed as having a learning difficulty and/or disability or those with specific Special Educational Needs have their needs considered individually by the Head of Learning Support. The curriculum provision for a pupil with a learning difficulty depends on a pupil's need having been formally diagnosed and may include such help as withdrawal from certain lessons or support within the classroom. This may include disapplication from the study of a subject (usually languages). Teaching staff are well informed and have up to date knowledge of effective learning and teaching strategies as advised by the Head of Learning Support who has regular input to whole school INSET.

Able, gifted and talented pupils are provided with opportunities to extend their knowledge in extension work in the classroom or small group activities. Individual subject initiatives such as the Elite Athlete Performance Programme, Science Club and Maths Olympiad Challenge amongst many others provide enrichment opportunities for able, gifted and talented pupils to thrive.

Please refer to the separate Learning Support and AG&T policy for further information.

### **English as an Additional Language**

Pupils are assessed prior to entry into Elizabeth College to establish their English language capabilities and needs. Extra support may be provided through timetabled EAL lessons organised through the Head of Learning Support. These lessons aim to develop the pupil's English language skills and communication and to build the pupil's confidence to succeed in an English speaking environment.

### **Wellbeing (PSHCE)**

The Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education programme at Elizabeth College works to develop an understanding of responsibility, working with others, self-esteem, and an understanding of local and global

issues. Visitors such as the Guernsey Police and the Sexual Health nurses complement the subject content. One lesson per week is delivered in years 7 and 8. From Year 9, PSHCE is delivered through a combination of collapsed timetable days and tutor time.

Please refer to the separate PSHCE Wellbeing policy for further information.

### **Careers and Further Education**

Careers guidance is provided by two coordinators, one with responsibility for KS3/4, management shadowing, work experience and careers and the other for post-16 and Higher Education. The States of Guernsey also offers centralised careers advice. The coordinators provide support and advice as well as organising additional visits, such as lecture lunches, by outside agencies, speakers and advisers. There is a rigorous process of university advice and support for applications, including mentoring and extended projects, which is organised by the HE coordinator.

Please refer to the separate Careers and Higher Education policy for further information.

### **Games**

All pupils participate in the Games and PE programme which involves the use of facilities at the main school site, the College Field and the Memorial Field as well as various other indoor facilities.

### **Curriculum Monitoring and Review**

The curriculum is monitored and reviewed by the Academic Board (and sub-committees as appropriate) linked to the School Development Plan and its strategic aims. Its implementation is monitored through annual faculty and department reviews, faculty and department schemes of work, appraisal, lesson observations, work scrutiny, and ongoing professional development.

## **Teaching and Learning**

Heads of Department or Faculty are responsible for maintaining and monitoring up to date schemes of work with the support of their colleagues. Lesson plans are created by teachers either individually or in co-operation with colleagues.

Monitoring is achieved through development planning, department/faculty discussion, annual department/faculty review meetings with the Principal and Vice-Principal (Academic), lesson observation and work scrutiny.

Teaching at Elizabeth College should focus on the learning experience of pupils, enabling each pupil to be challenged and fulfilled in his studies. Teachers should demonstrate high levels of subject expertise, and by their enthusiasm seek to excite in pupils a sustained intellectual curiosity. Excellent teaching and the setting of consistently high standards are key elements in this. Lessons should be thoroughly prepared, well-judged in content and duration, have a purpose and structure made clear to pupils, and with a variety of techniques employed. Assessment for learning, differentiation and growth mindsets should inform planning and practice, making the classroom environment stimulating, challenging and supportive in appropriate ways to all pupils, whether they be able, gifted and talented or with particular learning support needs.

Teachers should be aware of the power of growth mindsets, as defined by Prof Carol Dweck, to encourage pupils to strive to achieve their best. Pupils and parents need to understand the importance of having a growth mindset as opposed to a fixed mindset, with emphasis on the importance of motivation and the quality of practice enabling improvement rather than relying on talent and ability. Discussing learning rather than working and praising determination and effort using vocabulary such as 'I cannot do this YET' is a further part of encouraging grit and determination.

## CURRICULUM POLICY

Teachers must ensure that all boys are equally involved in a lesson. They should differentiate learning to provide challenge to all pupils along with support for those who have difficulties. The setting of tasks, the pace at which work is done, may be varied accordingly. They should encourage boys to think and research for themselves. They should be aware of boys receiving learning support, and should discuss the progress of such boys with the Head of Learning Support.

It is very important to encourage, motivate and reward boys for good work wherever possible using praise, either verbal or by means of written comment in the pupil diaries, and formal rewards such as commendations and merits. In subscribing to the mindset approaches, teachers can motivate pupils to achieve the best that they can.

Homework should be set regularly according to the homework timetables published. It should be meaningful, varied and appropriate to differing abilities. Please refer to the separate Homework policy for further information.

Learning should be regularly assessed by a variety of methods in line with the College and department/faculty assessment policy. Poor work is not acceptable and should be repeated. Teachers in all departments have a responsibility for ensuring that spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors are corrected according to guidelines given in Department/School Policy as detailed in the staff handbook.