



CURRICULUM POLICY

Ethos and Aims

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

Aims

- To instil traditional Christian values, manners and a strong sense of service to others to enable our pupils to live lives that matter
- To encourage a love of learning so that all our pupils can achieve, or even exceed, academic expectations
- To provide a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and sports so that all pupils can find their niche
- To present opportunities for the broadening of horizons and the development of future leaders in all walks of life

ISI School Inspection Report March, 2009

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Overall Conclusions

Elizabeth College meets its aims successfully. It enables all pupils to learn well, and to become socially responsible citizens. It provides a high standard of education for all its pupils, from the Early Years Foundation Stage to the sixth form and passage to university or employment. Its provision is wide, both in the formal curriculum it offers to all pupils and in the range of its extra-curricular activities and visits. The overall quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning and achievement throughout the college are good, and sometimes they are excellent. The college is confident in the education it offers; it also reviews regularly its provision and its practice to improve these still further. The college's weaknesses, of which they are aware, are few: they lie in the limited exchange of best practice in teaching, and ensuring that all pupils throughout the ability range are catered for in every lesson, according to their prior attainment and their current needs.

Next Steps

The college is clear in its aims for all its pupils. To secure these more fully, it should:

develop further the programme of professional development to share best practice in teaching throughout the school;

ensure that all teachers recognise pupils' prior attainment and provide regularly for all different levels of ability, particularly for those pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are gifted and talented.

The Curriculum Policy has been developed to reflect the school's ethos and aims and to respond to the Inspection Next Steps.

Elizabeth College is committed to providing a rigorous academic and intellectual education which will challenge and engage pupils, offering continuity and progression to foster a life-long love of learning for its own sake and provide them with a secure foundation from which to continue into Higher Education or into the careers of their choice.

All 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.

The main academic objectives from the School Development Plan are:

- To improve the learning experience of our pupils and in doing so to engender a love of learning
- To strive to maximise the academic achievement of pupils, across the full range of abilities
- To offer an appropriate curriculum to develop key skills and to prepare for higher education and future careers

Considerable emphasis is placed upon examination success though it is important that as much attention is given to those who find academic work challenging as to the high-fliers. Drives to improve the focus on learning have been realised through key school initiatives in differentiation and assessment for learning, both of which 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 to be encouraged to develop their natural talents to the full. More modest results for pupils who may find academic work challenging are as worthy of recognition as are outstanding results for another who may be naturally gifted.

In the Senior School, in Key Stages Three and Four, pupils study a core curriculum of Mathematics, English, Science and a Modern Language until the end of Key Stage 4, providing the opportunity for pupils to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy. These skills are further developed in their other subjects. 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 enable a more extended piece of investigative work to be completed. Collapsed curriculum days have also been introduced in Years 7 and 8, enabling 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.

Years 7 and 8

In Year 7, all pupils receive a broad curriculum which gives them experience in all of the aspects

outlined above. In addition to Mathematics, English, Science and Languages they study Art, Classics, Design Technology, Geography, History, ICT, Latin, Music, PE and Games, Religious Studies, and have PSHCE lessons, known at EC as Life Skills. History, Classics and ICT are taught together in a block known as ITCH (IT, History and Classics). This 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 D&T) 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 seem to be 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 they sit a common test to decide whether they continue with Latin or study Classics with some Latin. German and Spanish 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.

English is divided into four groups, an upper set (En 1) a second set (En 2) and two equal mixed ability groups (sets EnA and EnB).

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

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

Modern Languages: Pupils may choose to study French, German or Spanish as their core language, which may be set by ability.

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

Latin/Classics is 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: (changes are being introduced to year 10 wef September 2013)

The core curriculum is English, Mathematics, Religious Studies, Science and a Modern Foreign Language as well as PE and Games and PSHCE Life Skills. The core curriculum 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 Core and Additional Science. If separate sciences are chosen, then that counts as one of the option choices.

From September 2013, five option blocks have been created in order to increase choice and satisfy more learning needs. Modern Foreign Languages and Separate Sciences will 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 Core and Additional 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 Art, Business Studies, Classical Civilisation, 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 (commencing teaching in September 2013), History and Maths, which take iGCSEs. Religious Studies prepare pupils for the GCSE short course examination.

English is taught in five groups. Groups 1, 2 and 3 will study iGCSE English and English Literature. Groups En4 and En5 are of equal mixed ability and will be entered for iGCSE English only.

Mathematics has five sets, of which the top four (Ma1, Ma2, Maa and Mab) prepare for the Higher Tier course. The top set will also be entered for GCSE Statistics in Year 10. 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 C 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 Science and Additional Science.

All other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups by option block.

The Sixth Form

EC runs a joint sixth form with the local independent girls' school, the Ladies' College. This enables

pupils to have a wide choice of any four or in some cases five 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 Ancient History, Economics, Film Studies, Further Mathematics, Photography and Psychology. Advice is given to all pupils 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. 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 Gifted and Talented

New pupils are screened 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 gifted and those who have specific learning difficulties.

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. In a few cases, 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.

Gifted children are provided with opportunities to extend their knowledge in extension work in the classroom or small group activities. Individual subject initiatives such as the Arts Award, Science Club, Maths Olympiad Challenge provide opportunities for gifted pupils to thrive. This is an area which will continue to be developed through the recent appointment of an Assistant Principal with responsibility for Gifted and Talented provision.

English as an Additional Language

There are rarely pupils whose first language is not English. When applicable, they 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.

Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education (Life Skills)

At Elizabeth College, PSHCE is known as Life Skills. In Years 7 and 8, pupils receive one period per week of Life Skills. From September 2013, in Years 9, 10 and 11, Life Skills will be delivered through collapsed curriculum half days. The Head of Department coordinates the programme, which follows the States of Guernsey policy statement for PSHCE and includes many visitors from support organisations.

Careers

Careers guidance is provided by two coordinators, one with responsibility for KS3/4, 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.

Games

The Games programme involves the use of facilities at the main school site. The Sports Hall, Astroturf, and various indoor facilities are used for a variety of sporting activities during Senior games afternoons.

In the Senior School, each pupil, regardless of age, participates in a full Games programme on one afternoon of the week.

Teaching and Learning Policy

The aim at Elizabeth College is to ensure that every boy achieves his full potential. To this end, teachers should focus on the learning experience of pupils. Teachers at Elizabeth College should know their subjects thoroughly, and by their enthusiasm seek to excite in the boys an abiding curiosity. Excellent teaching and the setting of consistently high standards is vital. Lessons should be thoroughly prepared; well-judged in content and duration; have a clear purpose and structure; and a variety of techniques should be used.

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. Pupils with a fixed mindset give up easily when they struggle or fail, so fostering a growth mindset will enable them to try harder to master something they are struggling with. Discussing learning rather than working and praising determination and effort using vocabulary such as 'I cannot do this YET'.

Teachers must ensure that all boys are equally involved in a lesson. They should differentiate, within a given set, between those who can be stretched more than the rest of the group and those who clearly have difficulties. The setting of tasks, the pace at which work is done, may be varied

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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. Teachers should subscribe to the mindset approaches to motivate pupils to achieve the best that they can.

Work should be regularly assessed by a variety of methods in line with assessment for learning and in accordance with department/faculty marking policies. 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.

Peer observation is encouraged, both formally as part of the Appraisal process, and informally between colleagues.