



Cambridge House Grammar School

CURRICULUM POLICY

1. Rationale

- 1.1 The purpose of the Curriculum Policy is to provide a framework for action in the implementation of school aims, development plans and the Department of Education's curricular requirements. The Curriculum Policy will help to inform decisions, provide guidance and establish principles. Cambridge House Curriculum Policy is based on the definition of curriculum as 'all the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school'. The curriculum is the basis for raising standards and the effective curriculum enables pupils to acquire learning that they can apply consistently to achieve personal effectiveness.
- 1.2 The School will continue to offer a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum within the Department of Education's terms of reference and within the constraints of the resources being made available. Additional subjects will be studied to extend the breadth and balance of knowledge and experience for all pupils to fulfil our aim of promoting personal excellence and creating futures.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The curriculum is organised and planned with the aim of meeting the needs of individual pupils, promoting personal excellence and responding to external demands within resource constraints and is developed in line with pupil needs in preparation for the world of work.
- 2.2 There will be appropriate assessment in line with departmental requirements and pupils will be given the opportunity for progression across the Key Stages.
- 2.3 In order to ensure that the curriculum offered is maintained in a way which encourages a wide participation in education and training appropriate to individual needs and interests, our policy is to:
 - 2.3.1 systematically review the courses and training offered in line with the school's aims and objectives and various external needs;
 - 2.3.2 design and deliver each programme of study to be relevant, varied, interesting and effective in promoting achievement and success;
 - 2.3.3 provide feedback to pupils in order to maximise opportunities for further study or employment;
 - 2.3.4 identify a range of performance indicators, both internal and national to monitor performance of programmes and effective utilisation of resources dedicated to the curriculum.
- 2.4 The school aims to:
 - 2.4.1 cater for the needs of individual children including the most able/gifted and talented and those who are experiencing learning difficulties;
 - 2.4.2 facilitate pupil's acquisition of knowledge, skills and qualities which will help them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, morally and creatively, so that they may become independent, responsible, confident and considerate members of the community;
 - 2.4.3 create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment
 - 2.4.4 ensure that each pupil's education has continuity and progression
 - 2.4.5 ensure that there is a match between the pupil and the tasks he/she is asked to perform

- 2.4.6 provide an appropriate curricular balance amongst the competing and sometimes conflicting aims of education
- 2.4.7 recognise the crucial role which parents play in their children's education and make every effort to encourage parental involvement in the educational process
- 2.5 Consideration will be given to the provision of a wide range of subjects to ensure breadth and balance of knowledge and experience.
- 2.6 At Key Stage 3, the curriculum will be developed in line with Department of Education Directives and Circulars. It will be published in the School's Prospectus and Website. The Principal will keep all stakeholders up to date with developments through a range of communication structures including: School Website; Annual Parent Reports and Annual Awards Speech.

3. Key Stage 3 Curriculum

3.1 At Key Stage 3, Cambridge House Grammar School offers:

- Art and Design;
- Careers (Year 10);
- Drama;
- English Language and Literature;
- Geography;
- History;
- Home Economics;
- ICT;
- Learning for Life and Work (Personal Development, Citizenship, and Employability);
- Mathematics;
- Modern Languages: French and Spanish;
- Music;
- Physical Education and Games;
- Religious Education;
- Science (General Science classes in Years 8 and 9; discrete classes in Biology, Chemistry and Physics in Year 10);
- Technology and Design;

3.2 Through these subjects cross-phase strands are delivered, including Thinking Skills, Personal capabilities, Personal and Social Education, Citizenship, Careers (Years 8/9).

4. Key Stage 4 Curriculum

4.1 At Key Stage 4, there is an opportunity for a degree of choice in order to accommodate personal preferences and career aspirations. This will be undertaken with parental consultation and professional guidance from staff. Careers advice, in line with CEIAG guidance, will be provided as appropriate during timetabled Careers classes and individual interviews.

4.2 Information will be made available to parents on the relevant Parent Consultation Evenings e.g. Year 10. The curriculum of Key Stage 4 pupils will also be monitored, evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis in the light of experience, developments, directives, circulars and initiatives.

4.3 Core GCSE courses (2021-22) are:

- English Language;
- Mathematics.

4.4 Optional GCSE courses (2021-22) are:

- Agriculture and Land Use;
- Art and Design;
- Business and Communication Systems;
- Business Studies;
- Construction and the Built Environment;
- Digital Technology;
- Double Award Science
- Drama
- English Literature
- French;
- Further Mathematics
- Geography;
- History;
- Home Economics: Child Development;
- Home Economics: Food and Nutrition;
- Media Studies;
- Music;
- Physical Education;
- Religious Studies;
- Single Award Science,
- Spanish;
- Statistics;
- Technology and Design.

4.5 Statutory non-examination classes at Key Stage 4 are:

- Religious Education;
- Games;
- Learning for Life and Work (Personal Development, Employability / Careers, and Citizenship) which is provided through a planned whole school programme including visiting external agencies.

5. Key Stage 5 Curriculum

5.1 At Post-16 level, the school provides the opportunity for a wide and comprehensive range of Advanced Level study complemented by a range of life skills. The programme offered will provide for a wide range of choice based on blocks of subject options. Professional guidance from key staff during Year 12 will support the process of choice and selection in partnership with parent and pupil. Information will be made available to parents on the relevant Parent Consultation Evening.

5.2 Requests for change of subjects will be handled in line with the school's curriculum protocol and decisions will be made in the best interests of the pupil based on professional experience and expertise in consultation with parent and pupil. The deadline for any subject change is after the first Tracking Report outcome and no later than 31 October in each year.

5.3 Where there are subjects attracting small numbers of pupils, the school will endeavour to provide such courses possibly on a reduced contact time arrangement or a collaborative arrangement with the Ballymena Learning Together, post primary collaborative initiative with other post primary schools and Northern Regional College (VEP). This will be carried out in liaison with the relevant Head of Department/Subject/Learning Area Co-ordinator and with respect to financial or staffing limitations.

5.4 The post-16 courses on offer (2021-22) include:

- Art and Design;

- Biology;
- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in IT;
- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Construction and the Built Environment;
- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Engineering;
- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Sport;
- Business Studies;
- Chemistry;
- Drama and Theatre Studies;
- English Literature;
- French;
- Further Mathematics;
- Geography;
- Health and Social Care;
- History;
- Life and Health Sciences;
- Mathematics;
- Media Studies;
- Music;
- Nutrition and Food Science;
- Physics;
- Professional Business Services;
- Religious Studies;
- Spanish;
- Technology and Design.

5.5 Careers classes are also timetabled for Key Stage 5 pupils.

6. Teaching and Learning

6.1 The aim of teaching is to promote knowledge, understanding and practical ability in the individual pupil. Teachers will demonstrate flexibility in approach in the delivery of learning experiences. Staff are encouraged and supported to use new strategies and ideas with regard to learning and teaching. Active learning experiences are given a high priority in the classroom and within departmental planning. Teaching strategies vary to include differentiated teaching and learning methods, setting achievable goals and realistic targets to ensure that pupils may achieve their highest potential and develop a positive self-image. Each subject area has agreed departmental policies and schemes of work to ensure continuity in learning and avoidance of overlap and repetition. These are reviewed on a regular basis throughout the school year and reported on to the Principal and SLT, as part of the school's quality assurance process (MER), at the end of each academic year.

6.2 Teaching methods vary according to purpose in specific lessons and subject areas; at all times methods include variations on class activities (whole class, pair work, group work and individual work). Teachers consistently encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, while at the same time identifying areas of weakness which require remedial support and then providing the necessary help.

6.3 The quality of learning relationships within classrooms is regarded as vital in assisting pupils to achieve the best academic outcomes possible for them. Teachers will ensure a positive teaching and learning environment, including mutual respect for learning and for each other's role within this context.

6.4 Pupils are actively encouraged to develop as independent learners, through engagement with the assessment process enabling informed choices and decisions, as well as contributing to individual departmental pupil feedback mechanisms.

6.5 Awards Day recognises the academic achievement of pupils; the Honours Assembly recognises the contribution of pupils to the school's extra-curricular activities.

7. Inclusion

7.1 The entitlement to an education which takes account of diversity of need is recognised by the staff and Board of Governors of Cambridge House Grammar School. The ethos of the school supports the fostering of mutual understanding, the practice of tolerance, respect for and understanding of other cultures, religious denominations and nationalities.

7.2 It is desirable that all pupils who have been identified as having difficulties with learning are given opportunities to progress within the broad and balanced curriculum provision. Within the constraints of available resources, pupils will be given appropriate, suitable support in order to maximise their opportunity for success. Where pupil needs change or special circumstances exist, the school will apply the protocol relevant to that circumstance in liaison with DENI and EA (North Eastern Region).

8. Pastoral Programme (including Spiritual and Moral Education)

8.1 The school actively encourages the development of the whole person; this permeates every aspect of school life so that all members of the school community feel valued and sustained as they grow together through their school experiences and relationships. To achieve this we encourage pupils to identify and cultivate areas of personal achievement both in academic, curricular and extra-curricular areas. Through organisation of learning activities the school seeks to develop the skills of working co-operatively in groups and teams, and also foster those leadership skills which become apparent. The development of such interpersonal skills is seen as a necessary preparation for adult and working life.

8.2 The pastoral programme in Cambridge House Grammar School involves:

8.2.1 The quality of relationships that exist within the school;

8.2.2 Home –school links and opportunities afforded to parents to participate in the education of their children;

8.2.3 A concern for each pupil and member of staff as an individual and member of the school community;

8.2.4 Whole School Careers programme (CEIAG) which allows pupils to access the fullest information possible and enables individual pupils to make informed judgements on future subject choices/career pathways;

8.2.5 Quality Counselling and help available for all members of the school community through both internal and external counselling provision;

8.2.6 Early detection and intervention strategies to support pupils underachieving;

8.2.7 Extension and enhancement programmes for high ability pupils;

8.2.8 Concern for the school environment;

8.2.9 A wide range of extra-curricular activities, sporting and leisure pursuits, clubs and societies;

8.2.10 Links with other schools;

8.2.11 School Councils;

8.2.12 Pupil Leadership opportunities;

8.2.13 Charity involvement;

8.2.14 Shared opportunity for worship and ceremony.

9. Careers Education Information and Guidance

9.1 The school aims to equip pupils with the key skills and the knowledge necessary for personal development, the transition from school to adult and working life and employability.

9.2 At Key Stage 3, pupils in Years 8 and 9 study Employability as part of an integrated approach across all subjects. Additionally, pupils in Year 10 have a designated period of Careers on their timetables. The focus is on Career Planning and Management; pupils begin to develop their Career Folders. In addition to this taught programme, all Year 10 pupils receive:

- 9.2.1 Class talks from the DEL Careers Officer;
- 9.2.2 Parent and pupil subject choice evening;
- 9.2.3 One to one advice and guidance interviews;

9.3 At Key Stage 4, pupils in both Years 11 and 12 have a designated period of Careers on their timetables. In addition to this taught programme all Year 12 pupils are offered:

- 9.3.1 A one to one interview with DEL Careers Officer;
- 9.3.2 The opportunity to attend the Past Pupils' Careers Evening;
- 9.3.3 Attend a subject choice evening with parents/carers;
- 9.3.4 One to one advice and guidance interview, which parents are invited to attend, with follow up interviews post results.

9.4 At Key Stage 5, pupils in Years 13 and 14 have a designated period of Careers on their timetables. In addition to this all pupils are offered:

- 9.4.1 Opportunity to attend the Past Pupils Careers Evening;
- 9.4.2 UCAS personal statement building support. Pupils and parents are invited to a UCAS information evening as well as a subject choice evening;
- 9.4.3 Interview and Assessment Training day (external providers);
- 9.4.4 Mock interview programme;
- 9.4.5 Pupil Finance Seminar and Clinic;
- 9.4.6 Work Experience;
- 9.4.7 One to one advice and guidance interviews during the year and post results.

10. Enrichment and Extra-Curricular Activities

10.1 Cambridge House Grammar School provides a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities to support the development of pupils' physical, social and personal development. Extra-curricular activities complement and give value to the curriculum. All pupils have the opportunity to follow up special interests, develop personal skills, attain excellence and build informal relationships with their peers and with staff. The school encourages each pupil to become involved in at least one extra-curricular activity throughout their time at the school; it is expected that parents will share in this positive encouragement. Pupils have the opportunity to record their achievements each week in their Pupil Study Planner. There is also the opportunity for personal target setting. All staff are encouraged to make a contribution to these activities, which offer pupils the chance to enjoy experiences not normally available in the classroom situation.

11. Organisation of Pupils

11.1 Each year group consists of five Form Classes with an allocated Form Teacher. There are two Year Heads for Years 8-12 and one Year Head for each of Years 13 and 14. Year 8 Form Teachers and Year Heads are specifically trained for this transition year and do not progress with the year group into Year 9. Sixth Form Year Heads and Form Teachers are, likewise, allocated for Key Stage 5 only (Years 13/14). Form Teachers and Year Heads for Years 9-12 stay with their groups until the Year 12 transition point.

11.2 Key Stage 3 Form Classes are streamed on entry in Year 8 based on AQE score. In the absence of AQE scores for the Year 8 entry in Summer 2021, these classes were organised alphabetically by surname. These classes will be streamed on progression into Year 9 in Summer 2022 based on outcomes in Year 8 assessments. Further streaming may take place at the end of Year 9 for progression into Year 10 as determined by outcomes in Year 9 assessments. There is streaming in Key Stage 4 English and Mathematics classes based on Year 10 assessments.

11.3 Sixth Form pupils are actively encouraged to develop their leadership skills in organising a range of lunchtime and after school activities and in assisting other pupils as peer tutors/mentors.

12. Parental Engagement

12.1 Cambridge House Grammar School welcomes the positive participation of parents at every stage of their child's education. The school provide a range of communication channels to facilitate this and ensure good relationships between parents and teaching staff.

12.2 Parents are provided with four Assessment Tracking Reports during each school year, including the formal Annual Report. Parents are invited to attend Consultation meetings to discuss their child's progress with subject staff; Subject Choice meetings take place for both Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils and parents (Year 10/12). The school extends an open invitation to all parents to meet with Form Teachers/Year Heads/Head of Key Stages, Vice Principal and Principal, by arrangement, to discuss any matters relating to an individual pupil's academic progress or welfare.

12.3 Parents are expected to monitor homework, using the pupil Study Planner and in signing this weekly; be actively involved in subject choices for GCSE and GCE, and play a continuous role in supporting the learning of their child. The school welcomes parental engagement with extra-curricular activities and the school's enrichment programme.

12.4 Parents are provided with continuous updates on events in school through the school website, which is changed on a daily basis. Parents are also regularly directed to new information on the website through CHGS Twitter and Facebook channels. The Board of Governors provide an annual report, available on the website; this may also be viewed, on request, at the school office, along with any published school policies. An Audit of parental opinion on aspects of school life is carried out by the SLT on a biennial basis; the results are reported to the Board of Governors.

12.5 A formal complaints procedure guaranteeing a response within one calendar week operates within the school.

13. Primary School Links

13.1 Our aim is to develop formal and informal contacts with our feeder primary schools to the mutual benefit of both. This will involve a two-way flow of information between them and us, as well as offering facilities and specialist services of our staff where these can be of benefit. By building up good relationships and allowing primary pupils to visit the school they may become aware of our strengths. It also enables them to become familiar with the school and the caring atmosphere which exists, so as to ease the transfer from primary to post primary level.

13.2 During the summer term there are Taster Days for Year 6 pupils.

13.3 The Year 8 Induction programme begins with a visit to each feeder Primary School by a member of the Pastoral Team, followed by an Induction Day.

14. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 14.1 Curriculum provision will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed annually by the leadership teams and school curriculum committee. The outcomes and professional recommendations will be forwarded to the Board of Governors.
- 14.2 The Board of Governors reserve the right to alter curriculum provision as a result of staffing or financial changes.
- 14.3 Sources: Relevant DENI Circulars and guidance documents
- 14.4 Linked Documents: Assessment Policy; Pastoral Policy; Child Protection Policy; Homework and Home Study Policy;
- 14.5 Superseded documents: CHGS Curriculum Policy 2015-16
- 14.6 Review Date: January 2026 or in the light of experience, new guidelines from EA, DENI or legislation

Signed:



Principal

Signed:



Chair of Governors

Date:

Tuesday 17 May 2022