



William Brookes Academy Trust

Curriculum Policy

September 2018



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This policy is due for review in 12 months

William Brookes School is a learning environment at the heart of our community. We promote care and respect and expect high standards in all aspects of School life. Our aim is to meet the needs of young people in South East Shropshire preparing them for adult and working life in the 21st century.

The educational vision and curriculum design for William Brookes School recognises that:

- The world of 2020 will be very different to the world of today.
- The pace of change is increasing, hence the importance for flexibility.
- Young people have, and will have increasingly, greater access to information and learning material independently of school.
- Adulthood entails economic participation but more.
- The fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 18+ year olds will still be at an early stage of learning
- The current curriculum defined in subject terms is not always well suited to equipping every young person with the knowledge, skills and understanding they will need for a fulfilling adult life.
- Curriculum delivery should involve a greater use of adults other than teachers. These could include support staff, graduates, artists, sports people and people from industry and business to support curriculum delivery.

Our curriculum policy is based on the following aims, to:

- Have students at its heart, putting their interests above those of the institution
- Have a curriculum that is fit for purpose, offering differentiation and personalisation
- Be a centre of excellence in learning and teaching
- Prepare all students for a successful adult and working life in a 21st century global society
- First achieve and then exceed national standards in achievement, attainment and progression
- Be committed to excellence and continuous improvement
- Value vocational and academic routes equally
- Nurture the talents of all and celebrate success
- Work with Primary Schools to ease transition
- Involve the community
- Involve parents/carers
- Be in a learning environment that is above all else inspiring

The school day starts at 8.50 am and ends at 3.10 pm and consists of five 60 minute lessons split by two breaks one at 10.50 am (20 mins) and one at 1.10 pm (40 mins). Each lunchtime has a split arrangement by House or Year Group

1. Curriculum Aims

The curriculum should inspire and challenge all learners and prepare them for the future. The academy's aim is to develop a coherent curriculum that builds on young people's experiences in the primary phase and that helps all young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Specifically, the curriculum should help young people to:

- Achieve high standards and make good/excellent progress
- Enable those not achieving age-related expectations to narrow the gap and catch up with their peers
- Move towards enabling students to more easily progress based on ability not age and to be able to enter students for public examinations when they are ready rather than dictated by age
- Have and be able to use high quality personal, learning and thinking skills (plts) and become independent learners
- Have and be able to use high quality functional skills, including key literacy, numeracy and ICT skills
- Be challenged and stretched to achieve their potential
- Enjoy and be committed to learning, to 19 and beyond
- Value their learning outside of the curriculum and relate it to the taught curriculum

2. Curriculum Outcomes

William Brookes School's curriculum will:

- Lead to qualifications that are of worth for employers and for entry to higher education
- Fulfil statutory requirements
- Enable students to fulfil their potential
- Meet the needs of young people of all abilities
- Provide equal access for all students to a full range of learning experiences beyond statutory guidelines
- Prepare students to make informed and appropriate choices at the end of KS3, KS4 and beyond
- Help students develop lively, enquiring minds, an ability to question and argue rationally and an ability to apply themselves to tasks and physical skills
- Include the following characteristics: breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, progression, continuity and coherence
- Ensure continuity and progression within the academy and between phases of education, increasing students' choice during their academy career
- Foster teaching styles which will offer and encourage a variety of relevant learning opportunities
- Help students to use language and number effectively
- Help students develop personal moral values, respect for religious values and tolerance of other races beliefs and ways of life
- Help students understand the world in which they live
- Ensure that the curriculum incorporates, and is improved and extended by, the academy's specialist status – performing arts and maths and computing

- Design a KS4 curriculum which meets the needs of students, parents and the wider society
- Design a KS4 curriculum which is not constricted by the curriculum offer from the academy alone but incorporates other schools/colleges which may be in partnership with the academy
- Benefit other secondary and primary schools in the area

3. Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1 The head teacher will ensure that:
- All statutory elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the academy chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the academy and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met. This will include how the subject will be taught and assessed
 - The amount of time provided for teaching the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governors' annually
 - Where appropriate, the individual needs of some students are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from the national curriculum
 - The procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements and students and their parents/carers receive information to show how much progress the students are making and what is required to help them improve
 - The governing body is fully involved in decision making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
 - The governing body is advised on statutory targets in order to make informed decisions
- 3.2 The governing body will ensure that:
- It considers the advice of the head teacher when approving this curriculum policy and when setting statutory and non-statutory targets.
 - Progress towards annual statutory targets is monitored.
 - It contributes to decision making about the curriculum.
- 3.3 The Deputy and Assistant Head Teachers will ensure that:
- They have an oversight of curriculum structure and delivery within their learning zone
 - Levels of attainment and rates of progression are discussed with subject leaders/heads of house on a regular basis and that actions are taken where necessary to improve these.
- 3.4 Subject Leaders will ensure that:
- Long term planning is in place for all courses.
 - There is consistency in terms of curriculum delivery.
 - Appropriate awarding bodies and courses are selected so that they best meet the learning needs of our students.
 - Where necessary an appropriate combination of qualifications or alternative qualifications can be offered which best suit the needs of learners
 - Assessment is appropriate to the course and the students following particular courses. There should be consistency of approach towards assessment.
 - They keep the appropriate Senior Leadership Team member informed of proposed changes to curriculum delivery.

- All relevant data is shared with the data manager. This includes meeting deadlines related to exam entries etc.
- Student performance data is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that any necessary changes in terms of curriculum delivery are planned and carried out in a timely fashion.
- They share best practice with other colleagues in terms of curriculum design and delivery
- They oversee CPD needs with regard to curriculum planning and delivery within their area of responsibility

3.5 Teaching staff and learning support staff will:

- Ensure that the academy curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.
- Keep up to date with developments in their subjects.
- Have access to, and be able to interpret, data on each student to inform the design of the curriculum in order that it best meets the needs of each cohort of students.
- Share and exchange information about best practice amongst their colleagues in different schools and through external networks, resulting in a dynamic and relevant curriculum.
- Participate in high quality professional development, working with other teachers to develop their skills in understanding the learning needs of their students and how best to address those needs and engage them.
- Work in partnership with other agencies to provide an appropriate range of curriculum opportunities.

3.6 Students will:

- Be treated as partners in their learning, contributing ideas towards the design of the curriculum
- Have their individual needs addressed, both within the academy and extending beyond the classroom into the family and community through a curriculum which offers breadth, support and challenge
- BE given additional support if they start to fall behind in their learning, helping them get back on track quickly
- Receive co-ordinated support to enable them to make the appropriate curriculum choices at KS4 and 5

3.7 Parents and carers will:

- Be consulted about their children's learning and in planning their future education
- Be confident that their child is receiving a high quality education that is designed to meet their learning needs and which will equip them with the skills they need to thrive throughout their lives
- Be informed about the curriculum on offer and understand the rationale behind it

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The governing body will receive an annual report from the head teacher on:

- The standards reached in each subject compared with national and local benchmarks.
- The standards achieved at the end of each key stage taking into account any important variations between groups of students, subjects, courses and trends over time, compared with national and local benchmarks.
- The number of students for whom the curriculum was dis-applied and the arrangements which were made.
- The governing body will review this policy at least once a year and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

5. Teaching Groups, Class Sizes and Grouping by Ability

In year 7 students are placed in teaching groups of approximately 28 and the year group then split into two halves of approximately 84 and 78 to allow for a smaller golden group with literacy support needs. They work in variations of these groups for all subjects other than Maths, English, DT, ICT, Art and PE where students are grouped in 7 classes. These are ranged in a 4 class half year of 90 and a 3 class half of 72, allowing for appropriate support and challenge.

In years 8-9, two half year with three groups in each give an average class size of 27 but are considerably smaller for those students for whom more support is required. English, Maths, DT, PE and Science teach students in 7 groups across the whole year and thus average class sizes are 23/24.

In years 10-11 there are typically 7 groups in a subject or option block. Maths, English and Science also teach in seven groups with planning to allow the teaching of the whole year group at the same time for added flexibility. The details of the option blocks and timings are shown in Section 7. Average class sizes are approximately 23/24.

6. Key Stage 3

6.1 Years 7 - 9

In their first 3 years of life at William Brookes School, students learn in specialist subject areas with teachers who will prepare them for KS4 and 5. They use the specialist facilities to improve the quality of their experience and get the best possible teaching input from staff from that area.

Currently students in Y7-9 have the following number of periods per subject per fortnight:

6.1.1 Year 7

Subject	Periods
English	3
Maths	3
Science	3
Physical education	2
Design and Technology	2
ICT	1
Performing Arts	2
Art	1
History	2
Geography	2
RE	1
French and Spanish	2
PSHE	1

6.1.2 Year 8 & 9

Subject	Periods
English	3
Maths	3
Science	3
Physical education	2
Design and Technology	2
ICT	1
Performing Arts	1
Art	1
History	2
Geography	2
RE	1
French / Spanish	3
PSHE	1

7. Key Stage 4

KS4 is extended to start in the June of Year 9, although many subjects start relevant KS4 topics at an earlier point. Students will follow a set of core courses mostly leading to a GCSE qualification. This core will be supported by a range of optional courses.

7.1 Years 10 and 11

Subject	Hours per week
Maths	4
English	4
Physical education	2
Science	6 (5 vocational)
PSHE	1
Options: Art, Business Studies, Citizenship, Computer Science, Dance, Drama, Food, French, Geography, History, iMedia, Music, PE (BTEC & GCSE), Product Design, RS, Textiles	(4 x 2) = 8 Vocational: 1x5+2x2 = 9

College Provision:

Motor Vehicle Maintenance 1 day per week
Construction

7.2 Students can follow one of four Pathways but with an emphasis on following the 8 requirements for Progress 8/Attainment 8. This provides rigorous, high quality course structure for students through the following pathways:

Single Science (potentially 10 GCSEs)

English Language	English Literature	Maths
Biology	Chemistry	Physics
Modern Foreign Language (if compulsory)	3 or 4 option preferences (inc. History/Geography)	

Modern Foreign Language (potentially 9 GCSEs)

English Language	English Literature	Maths
Trilogy Science	Modern Foreign Language	
3 option preferences (inc. History/Geography)		

Core (potentially 9 GCSEs)*

English Language	English Literature	Maths
Trilogy Science	4 option preferences (emphasise E Bacc)	

Vocational (potentially 7 GCSEs)

English Language	English Literature	Maths
Trilogy Science	Work Experience/College	2 option preferences

* In a few cases a student may not take a third EBacc subject preference.

8. Key Stage 5

8.1 A Level Courses

The vast majority of students will study 3 A level courses over a two year linear model. This means that students would not be expected to sit AS level exams at the end of Y12, although a judgement may be made if students are at risk of not passing a subject. Most subjects are allocated 5 hours of contact time per week.

Our annual offer places subjects into two categories:

- Subjects that we are definitely going to offer based on previous recruitment, retention and results track record: **Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English, English Literature, History, Geography, Theatre Studies, Government and Politics, French, Further Maths, ICT, RS and Business Studies**. These subjects offer us a 'core' group that we need to run in order to be a viable sixth form
- Subjects that will run if there is sufficient recruitment for them to be viable (there is no set number for this but 10 is a benchmark for financial viability): **Dance, Art, Psychology, Product Design, PE (BTEC) and Music Technology**
- As part of a student's programme of study, they will have an hour of tutor period and 4 hours of directed study each week, on top of work experience and other elements of voluntary work

8.2 Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

We expect that around 25% of the cohort will want to study the EPQ. We plan to therefore give it time to manage this across the two years of study. However, the plan for delivering it will be much different, with colleagues being allocated one hour each per week to work with approximately 8 students to produce the EPQ. This will involve a range of teaching approaches, from group sessions to 1 to 1 mentoring etc. Only students who are deemed capable will be able to opt for the EPQ.

8.3 Entry Requirements

- The school will maintain an overall principle that students must obtain a **grade 6** (but grade 5 in exceptional circumstances) in the subject at GCSE, or if the subject is new to KS5, in the identified subject e.g. History for Government and Politics. This will help support the idea of achievement for all.
- We will also look at Average Points Score for shaping wider entry issues such as subject combinations and additional qualifications to support success at A level, eg, Core Maths.