

Curriculum Policy

Date approved:	17 May 2017
Review cycle/date:	Every 2 years, May 2019
Party responsible:	Student Committee
Linked Policies:	Academically More Able Student Policy; Assessment, Recording & Reporting Policy, Numeracy Policy, Literacy Policy, Schemes of Work, SEND Policy

Overview

The vision of The Swanage School is integrated into the design and structure of the curriculum and organisation of learning. The curriculum is aligned to our vision by enabling a human scale approach to learning; smaller than average class sizes, personalised tracking systems and the emphasis on relationships. There is a relentless emphasis on empowering all students to achieve at the highest levels academically, whilst developing positive relationships and a strong sense of responsibility in the school and wider community.

In order to fully meet the needs of all students, The Swanage School offers an innovative, broad and balanced curriculum providing a framework of academic challenge that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and become critical and reflective thinkers. The School largely follows the National Curriculum and English Baccalaureate in terms of subject offer in each year group and aims to deliver these in an innovative way.

The curriculum is fully accessible to disabled students, those with special educational needs (SEN) but sufficiently challenging for the most able of students.

The Aims of the Curriculum

- Provide an intellectually rigorous community where learning is central
- Ensure that students have the opportunity to develop skills of literacy, numeracy and communication across the curriculum
- Enable students to have ownership of their learning and their achievement
- Ensure that students develop self-belief and the resilience to achieve their ambitions
- Inspire a human-scale approach with relationships at the heart of learning
- Create an innovative and challenging learning experience
- Promote all aspects of students' personal development (PSHE), including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Curriculum and Qualifications

The Curriculum challenges students to engage in academic excellence, make a contribution to society, participate in their local community and be global students with strong leadership and teamwork skills. Local partnerships provide additional forms of learning that will be accessed by the school.

The Learning Framework

The learning framework is intended to support high quality teaching and ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the students, supported by highly effective leadership, management, pastoral care and academic guidance.

The learning framework is designed to cater for each individual student's needs. Throughout the fortnightly cycle of lessons and the extended curriculum students are engaged in a flexible, broad and balanced entitlement that recognises each individual's strengths and weaknesses.

In line with human scale education principles we aim for each student to have fewer teachers than is often the norm in secondary school.

Students at The Swanage School are expected to take part in five key elements of the learning framework throughout their time at The Swanage School.

- National Curriculum / English Baccalaureate
- Challenge Days
- Challenge Weeks
- Extended Curriculum
- Community

- I. National Curriculum:** Whilst The Swanage School does not have to comply with the requirements of the National Curriculum, in general the NC forms the basis of the school curriculum.

In years 7 and 8 students are taught using a project based learning approach for humanities, citizenship, art and drama, with the aim to include other subjects through cross-curricular links.

In Key Stage four all students follow GCSEs in maths, English and PRE. Students may opt to follow a 'separate science' program, resulting in separate GCSE qualifications in each science. All other students follow the core, then additional science courses.

Most students follow courses to achieve the 'English Baccalaureate': GCSEs in English literature and English language, maths, science, history and/or geography, a Modern Foreign Language. A minority of students are withdrawn from studying a modern foreign language and are given further support with English or maths.

Students also have the choice of two 'option subjects'. Option choices are:

Art, Catering, Computing, Design Technology, Performing Arts and PE

In exceptional circumstances a personalised vocational training is put in place for students unable to access the 'standard' curriculum.

Students are 'set' in ability groups in maths and science, also in English and MFL throughout the school. Students' sets are reviewed every half term.

- 2. Challenge Days:** These are days when the whole-school timetable is collapsed. They provide opportunities for learning within and beyond the classroom. Challenge days provide the flexibility to extend the school day, facilitate visits, participate in local crafts and activities (like conservation work, enterprise activities, in-depth investigations). 'Expert witnesses' also provide a focus and resource for Challenge days.

- 3. Challenge Weeks:** These occur two times in the year – February and July. The whole-school timetable is collapsed for the entire week. During this time students may work in year groups or across year groups. The challenge week gives an opportunity for deep learning, where students spend time really 'getting under the skin' of a subject or concept and often includes experiences that build character and resilience. With time comes the opportunity for independent learning, independent investigation and high quality learning outcomes.

Whilst the purpose for each challenge week varies and usually includes residential and non-residential learning opportunities, the common thread is that students hold a plenary day at the end of the week, where learning is shared.

- 4. Extended Curriculum:** extra-curricular clubs and activities, often community-based that may or may not be accredited. The extended curriculum allows students to become inspired by something that might stay with them for the rest of their lives.

- 5. Community:** students take part in community service. This can involve providing a service to the community or developing an understanding of the community and how individuals affect and are affected by the community. It can take place in school or in partnership with local groups and organisations. For example, assisting in the school library, helping with a local conservation project, organising fund raising events, helping elderly neighbours understand the internet etc.

The Swanage School Challenge

All students are encouraged to participate in The Swanage School challenge, which recognizes and rewards students' achievements in the areas above. Awards at Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum levels cater for progress throughout the school.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The effectiveness of the Curriculum Policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed both day to day and more strategically:

- I. On-going monitoring:
 - Formal lesson observations
 - Learning walks
 - Sampling of students' work
 - Sampling students' learning diaries

- Feedback from students
 - Discussions between members of staff
 - Feedback from parents.
2. Strategic monitoring and evaluation:
- Schemes of Work are reviewed and the end of the period of study, or annually as appropriate
 - Analysis of student summative assessment data
 - Written and oral feedback from students, annually
 - Review of The School and Departmental Development Plans, annually.

The Governing Body will review the Curriculum policy every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.