## Curriculum Policy

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<td>Local Governing Board</td>
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<td>Sponsor:</td>
<td>Martin Higgon – Deputy Head</td>
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<td>Martin Higgon – Deputy Head</td>
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Ownership and Control

History

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<td>24/10/12</td>
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Intended Audience

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AMENDMENT TRACKER

Name of reviewer: Martin Higgon

Date of review: October/December 2018

Summary of all changes being proposed in this policy review:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Curriculum policy enhanced to give a level of detail about our curriculum which is in line with the policies of similar schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Stage Three</td>
<td>Paragraph 6 was added following suggestions made by LGB October 2018</td>
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<td>Key Stage Four</td>
<td>Paragraphs 3 and 5 were added following suggestions made by LGB October 2018</td>
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Curriculum Policy

Key Stage Three

At Harwich and Dovercourt High School, we are committed to a Key Stage Three that ensures we are able to build the strong foundations required to support achievement at Key Stage Four. When students join us in Year 7, they begin a five-year journey to GCSE success, with each year having its own distinct identity. Our curriculum is broad, balanced and inclusive. We establish a firm foundation to build on as students gather the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to thrive in an education system that is increasingly linear and based on written examinations.

Key Stage Three is unique as it is liberated from external exams. We use this freedom to innovate and design a curriculum that captures the imagination of all our students and fosters enjoyment and enthusiasm for a wide range of subjects. Our students study English, mathematics, science, French, geography, history, computer science, art, dance, drama, music, technologies (art textiles, graphics, food, engineering), philosophy and ethics and Physical Education. At the end of Year 8 students are afforded the opportunity to experience taster lessons in subjects such as business studies and Health and Social Care which are not taught in Key Stage Three in order to help them decide which subjects they would like to take for their GCSE Options in Years 9-11.

Reading, writing, literacy and numeracy are at the core of the curriculum and many interventions are centred around these areas as they allow us to communicate effectively, make decisions and solve problems. Examples include 1:1 and small group interventions, handwriting support and strategies designed to redress low reading ages.

We do more than teach a broad and balanced curriculum, however. We build cultural capital and help our students to become citizens prepared for the demands of life in the 21st century. Learning at HDHS extends beyond the classroom, where we actively encourage students to take part in a wide range of enrichment opportunities across the curriculum. Whatever their interests, there is something for everyone.

When they join HDHS, our students also become members of one of our four “Learning Communities”: Alhambra, Heidelberg, Versailles and Windsor, each one comprising of a team of pastoral professionals and dedicated form tutors. Many of our students will remain under the care of the same form tutor, a central figure in the development of the whole child during their time at our school, throughout their five years with us.

Academically, we use prior attainment data from year 6 SATs to organise students into sets in the majority of subjects, with the notable exceptions of PE where students are generally grouped by gender and in technology where students are taught in slightly smaller groups according to Health and Safety guidelines.

We use our 1-9 assessment scale at Key Stage Three to map a clear journey to GCSE success. We build in challenge, aspiration and clarity so students can see their own clear route to success. Positive, critical and formative feedback ensures students understand the next steps needed in order to make progress and achieve highly.

Three tracking points in each year give teachers the opportunity to communicate formally with parents/carers and students on current progress. These also allow the Heads of Community and Subject Leaders to:

- Identify students causing concern;
- Produce a clear and digestible overview of students’ progress, preparedness, independence, positivity, perseverance, respect and ambition, for staff;
- Meet with the relevant staff, including the SENCO, to put appropriate and well informed interventions in place;
- Celebrate endeavour, hard work and moving forward.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and Careers Education, Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)
PSHEE is delivered through a range of exciting days spread throughout the year. During each of these days (typically taking place in November, February and July), each year group focuses on a dedicated theme relevant to their age group during that point of the school year, for example healthy living (Year 7), democracy (Year 8), careers (Year 11) and cookery for university (Years 12 and 13).

In school, students are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities and experiences across and beyond the curriculum, contributing fully to the life of the school and the wider community. In particular the community system, and the many activities organised within, support an inclusive and participatory ethos. PSHEE aims to enable students to:

- Value others and feel valued
- Respect others and be respected
- Be independent, but also interdependent
- Behave responsibly
- Have a concern for justice and uphold the rights of others
- Understand the consequences of actions
- Treat others the way they wish to be treated

Further information regarding PSHEE can be found in our PSHEE policy.

Careers, employability skills and pathways to success are emphasised from day one. A culture of aspiration permeates everything we do. We have high expectations and promote a growth mindset. As per the HDHS careers policy, we endeavour to make a major contribution to preparing our young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life, in order to help them make a successful transition to adulthood.

Further information regarding CEIAG can be found in our Careers policy.

**Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development**

At Harwich and Dovercourt High School we recognise that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students plays a significant part in their ability to learn and to achieve their full potential. As such, SMSC is integral to the school’s ethos. We believe that students cannot and will not learn effectively unless they are both happy and secure; unless their individuality is respected; their differences celebrated; their difficulties understood; their interests extended and their talents developed. For that reason the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is as important as their academic development. As a consequence of this belief we aim to provide an education that gives students the opportunity to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, to engage with their spiritual lives; to develop positive and caring attitudes towards others; to develop an understanding of their social and cultural roots and to hold an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures.

Students are given the opportunities to explore the SMSC aspects of their personal development through school pastoral activities, themselves designed to foster and cultivate the values above; through collective worship, delivered in community assemblies, which provide rich opportunities for personal and collective reflection; and through all curriculum areas, each making a contribution to students spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within their particular context.

Further information regarding SMSC can be found in our SMSC Policy/British Values Statement.

**Key Stage Four**

In Key Stage Four, it is important to ensure that students receive an education that is broad, balanced and relevant, and equips them for the next stage in their lives, be that further education or employment with training. Our Key Stage Four curriculum is made up of compulsory (core) subjects and chosen subjects that will enable students to follow courses appropriate to their interests and abilities. Students will follow a total of four option choices in all. We offer a range of qualifications, namely GCSEs, BTECs, NCFE Certificates and Cambridge National Certificates.
Firstly, our ambition is for all of our students to achieve to the maximum of their potential. This means that we would expect a significant proportion of them to be able to go on to study academic courses when they finish Year 11. Academic success in Year 11 is therefore highly important, as it allows our students to progress to an appropriately challenging route at Sixth Form, from traditional A levels to vocational, classroom-based options, to employment based routes including apprenticeships.

We strongly believe in giving our students the best possible chance of achieving their potential in Year 11, and to that end in 2018-19 moved to a three year Key Stage Four. We believe that this affords students the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed to thrive within the curriculum they have chosen, leading to the best possible outcomes for the student at the end of the three years, and providing the best possible preparation for the next steps in their academic careers as they move into Key Stage Five.

We recognise and promote the importance of studying a Modern Foreign Language both for individual development and for potential future university applications, and encourage all of our more able students to continue with French at Key Stage Four. However it remains their choice, and whilst it is in their best interests to consider very carefully all of the advice they are given, ultimately they should and must decide. For this reason, the school has not made the study of a language compulsory.

In core subjects and, where possible, in history and geography, students are taught in sets, organised by ability. In history and geography, setting does depend on the other options chosen by the individual student, as the majority of options subjects are taught in mixed ability classes.

**Compulsory (Core) Subjects**

- GCSE English language and literature (2 GCSEs)
- GCSE mathematics (1 GCSE)
- GCSE science – the majority of our students study the “trilogy” science GCSE (2 GCSEs), although a small number of our more able scientists study separate GCSE sciences instead - biology, chemistry, physics - (3 GCSEs)

**Option One: English Baccalaureate Subjects**

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) recognises those students that have studied a core of academic subjects – English, mathematics, sciences (which includes computer science), history or geography, and a language. EBacc subjects are becoming more important with employers and universities, therefore all students at HDHS are required to choose one EBacc subject from the following list:

- computer science
- French
- geography
- history

**Options Two and Three**

Students have a free choice from the following, although we recommend that they take advantage of the wide range of subjects on offer to make choices from different subject areas:

- art & design (fine art or graphic design)
- business studies
- child development
- computer science
- design & technology
- drama
- engineering
- food technology
- French
- geography
- history
- media studies
- music
Option Four: Core Sport or Dance

All students finally make a choice between studying BTEC Sport or BTEC Performing Arts (dance) during their core physical education time.

Key Stage 5

Academic Offer (Level 3)

At Harwich and Dovercourt Sixth Form College, students choose the courses which best suit their interests and abilities and which offer them appropriate opportunities for progression. Initial course choices are made via the application form and all applicants have a counselling meeting to give advice and guidance on their choices. The General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (GCE Advanced Level or A Level) courses offered focus on academic subjects. In 2018-19 the offer was as follows, although this is under review with a view to broaden the offer for 2019-20:

One BTEC National Diploma (double award) from:
- Health & Social Care
- Performing Arts
- Media

Plus one single award from:
- A level Art
- A level English Literature
- BTEC Sport (Level 3)

Extended Project Qualification

All students have the opportunity to study the Extended Project Qualification (Level 3) or the Higher Project Qualification (Level 2). EPQ is a free standing qualification offered by AQA, and involves choosing a topic and carrying out research into that particular area, then creating either a 5,000 word report or a 'product' and a 1,000 word report. After that, students deliver a small presentation to a group of non-specialists about their topic, lasting from 10 - 15 mins. It allows students to develop their understanding of a topic they are personally interested in. Plus, it helps when applying for University as it demonstrates commitment to a subject, and allows students to develop the independent research skills needed for successful undergraduate study.

Vocational Offer: Hairdressing

Our successful hair salon offers level 2 qualifications in hairdressing which, alongside an organised industry-specific work experience programme, enables our students to move onto either further study at Level 3 or apprenticeships in the industry. Many of our graduates have gone on to successful careers in the hair and beauty industry at the end of year 12.

Knowledge, Learning, Independence and Careers (KLIC)

We also offer a one year Knowledge, Learning, Independence and Careers (KLIC) course. The purpose of this is to support students who fell short of the grades required for Level 3 study in developing their qualifications at Level 2, in order to prepare them for employment or further education in Year 13 and beyond.