

## CURRICULUM POLICY

### 1. Our Approach

- 1.1 Our Curriculum Policy supports the aims and approach of the School. We encourage children to think for themselves, work together and act responsibly. We help pupils to become self-disciplined and self-motivated individuals who are independent learners, creative thinkers and able to make informed choices.
- 1.2 High Expectations:  
At St Chris we have high expectations of all within the School. We expect excellent behaviour and maximum effort and that is what we get from our pupils. We also expect everyone to work together, to enjoy their time at School and have fun working hard.
- 1.3 Preparation for Work:  
We have been pioneering a distinctive and innovative approach to education for almost 100 years and our methods have stood the test of time. Universities and employers tell us that the School produces well-rounded, high capability students with the skills and confidence to thrive in the modern world. We can think of no better role for a school.

### 2. Promoting British Values

- 2.1 The School has, from the outset, held the dignity of the individual and the values of personal freedom, equality and inclusion to be at the heart of all aspects of this community. These values are actively promoted in every facet of school life: among and between staff and students; in all policies and practices where the freedom to be oneself exists within the scope of respect for law and order. This Liberty is mindful of the need actively to embrace difference of nationality, belief and religion. In so doing, the school ensures that principles are actively promoted which:
  - 2.1.1 enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
  - 2.1.2 enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
  - 2.1.3 encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
  - 2.1.4 enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
  - 2.1.5 further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
  - 2.1.6 encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010; and
  - 2.1.7 encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England;

### **3. Preparation for Life in British Society**

- 3.1 The Curriculum works to develop in every young person the values, skills and behaviours they need to get on in life. All children receive a rich provision of classroom and extra-curricular activities that develop a range of character attributes, such as resilience, grit and compassion, which underpin success in education and allow them to make a positive contribution to society.

### **4. Prevent Duty**

- 4.1 The School is aware of its duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ("the Prevent Duty"). The content of the Curriculum and the interaction of teaching of staff with children, both in curricular and in extra-curricular activity whether on site or on excursions should take into account the School's responsibilities under the Prevent Duty. Within the School, concerns or identified risks should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for guidance. The School will work with partner agencies, including Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), to seek advice, support and guidance drawing on multi-agency expertise, to support pupils and to prevent exposure to extremist views and political indoctrination. This will include, where appropriate, referring external visitors, including speakers, contractors or hirers of the School's facilities to the LSCB for advice.

### **5. Early Years Foundation Stage**

- 5.1 Our curriculum is designed to:-
- 5.1.1 Meet the needs of individual students and to 'expect the best of all' including those pupils with a complex learning profile or those with statements as well as those for whom English is an additional language
  - 5.1.2 Provide a variety of learning experiences that have breadth, depth and balance
  - 5.1.3 Give continuity and progression between the Key Stages
  - 5.1.4 Find and celebrate potential for growth in girls and boys of all ages
  - 5.1.5 Develop moral courage, spiritual, social and cultural values
  - 5.1.6 Develop the skills of literacy and numeracy and to prepare students for an international and technological future
  - 5.1.7 Meet the requirements of 'Every Child Matters'
- 5.2 During their time in the Early Years, our children are introduced to a range of activities and materials designed to nurture their sense of independence and self-esteem. Through these activities concentration, confidence and perseverance develop naturally.
- 5.3 Children in our Nursery have access to Montessori teaching materials as well as other Early Years resources. The Montessori element is designed to develop independence through activities that encourage exploration, concentration, social interaction and movement.
- 5.4 Our Nursery and Reception children follow the Early Years Curriculum. The Early Years curriculum reflects seven areas of learning and development:
- Three prime areas:**
- 5.4.1 Communication and language
  - 5.4.2 Physical and personal development
  - 5.4.3 Social and emotional development

**Four specific areas:**

- 5.4.4 Literacy
- 5.4.5 Mathematics
- 5.4.6 Understanding the world
- 5.4.7 Expressive arts and design

- 5.5 These areas make up the early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year. Each area of learning and development is implemented through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Our adult-led activities follow a cross curricular approach through which context is given to the children's educational experiences.
- 5.6 The Nursery focuses on a different theme each week whilst in the Reception class there are termly topics. During Child-initiated activities the children explore their interests. Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Creating and Thinking Critically support children's learning across all areas of the curriculum.

**6. Junior School**

- 6.1 Our Junior School has a challenging, broad and balanced curriculum. Emphasis is given to developing key skills in English, Mathematics and social and personal skills. These act as a solid foundation for future learning.
- 6.2 Great care is taken to ensure that the children enjoy and are engaged in their learning; we believe that hard work and fun enhance learning potential and support the children to learn effectively now and in their future.
- 6.3 Each class is facilitated by a class teacher who takes academic and pastoral responsibility for the children in his or her class. From Reception to Year 2 (H Group) there is a full time classroom assistant in each class. In Year 3 (G Group) there is a shared assistant. In Year 4 (F Group) there is a full-time assistant and in Years 5 (E Group) and 6 (D Group) there is an assistant for each year group.
- 6.4 Careful assessment and monitoring ensure that each child fulfils her or his full potential. Teaching styles are flexible to match individual learning styles.
- 6.5 Teachers plan carefully to ensure there is a well-balanced and structured curriculum which is in line with national expectations, but presented in a stimulating, creative and holistic way. There is a different topic for each term, allowing for the development of rich and varied teaching and learning. In addition there are extension groups for the most able in mathematics and English.
- 6.6 Subject specialists teach Music, PE and French. In addition Year 6 (D Group) is taught by Senior School Specialists in Pottery, cookery and Computing. In the EYC there is a specialist Forest School teacher who supports this outdoor learning with Nursery up to Year 3 (G Group).
- 6.7 In the Junior School we are committed to supporting the physical development of every child. We have a structured programme of Physical Education to support the development of fine and gross motor skills and to ensure all children experience a range of sports, games and activities which develop appropriate individual skills and the ability to work as a team.
- 6.8 All children also have a swimming lesson each week on site in the school's indoor pool.

6.9 The School has a network of computers giving all children access to a range of learning resources. All classrooms are networked and have either interactive whiteboards or interactive plasma screens in the Junior School and there is an ICT suite within the open plan library capable of holding a full class. Personal safety when using the internet is also taught.

6.10 Please refer to the information booklets for more detailed summaries.

## **7. Senior School**

7.1 In the Senior School there are five teaching periods of 60 minutes each per day, with class changeover times in between to enable teachers and students, time to move to (and prepare for), one lesson to another.

**7.1.1 Key Stage 3** (Years 7–9/I-III Group) forms a pupil's first years in Senior School. It acts, therefore, as the transitional stage between Junior School and the start of courses for external examinations after Year 9 (III Group).

7.1.1.1 The purpose of the academic curriculum in Key Stage 3 is to ensure that pupils gain a firm foundation in the subjects they may wish to take to GCSE. Some subjects – Maths, English and Science – are part of the core curriculum up to GCSE level and they consequently have rather more time spent on them at Key Stage 3 level. All other subjects eventually become Options and so it is important that breadth is maintained in the early part of secondary school. There is thus a broad balance between other subjects – humanities, languages, creative subjects and PE. The Personal, Social and Health Education ('PSHE') programme seeks to encourage young people to seek personal fulfilment and to become active participants in the wider world. Impartial careers education at KS3 is encompassed within the PSHE programme.

7.1.1.2 Education is about much more than academic work and it is very important that pupils participate in the wider life of the School. Not only do we want all our pupils to do as well as they can academically, we want them to become confident people and responsible citizens. Involvement in our wide range of extra-curricular activities – sport, drama, music, societies, Council – will help them to develop the necessary attributes to enjoy and participate in life to the full. Indeed, the development of character and personality through participation in all the School has to offer will lead to stronger academic performance.

7.1.1.3 We trust that a pupil's time in Key Stage 3 will allow them to expand the abilities they have already begun to reveal in Junior School. It should prepare them for the challenges of the greater academic demands of external examinations and encourage them to grasp the opportunities that adolescence and increasing maturity bring.

#### 7.1.1.4 KS3 Subject hours each week

|   | <b>Year 7</b> | <b>Year 8</b> | <b>Year 9</b> |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| English   | 3             | 3             | 3             |
| Maths   | 3             | 3             | 3             |
| Science   | 3             | 3             | 3             |
| Spanish   | 1             | 2             | 2             |
| French  | 2             | 2             | 2             |
| Geography   | 2             | 2             | 2             |
| History   | 2             | 2             | 2             |
| Design Technology   | 1             | 1             | 1             |
| Art   | 1             | 1             | 1             |
| Music   | 1             | 1             | 1             |
| Drama   | 1             | 1             | 1             |
| PSHE To include Computing, Cookery & Citizenship elements | 1             | 1             | 1             |
| Physical Education  | 2             | 2             | 2             |
| Swimming (Yr 7)   | 1             |               |               |
| Options   | 1             | 1             | 1             |

7.1.1.5 Many lessons in Years 7 and 8 are taught in Company/Registration or other mixed ability groups. In Maths, classes are set according to ability after the Autumn half term holiday. Science is set according to ability in Year 9. English introduce setting arrangements in later years based on the learning profile of the year group.

#### 7.1.2 Key Stage 4

7.1.2.1 In Years 10 (IV Group) and 11 (V Group) most pupils follow a curriculum which leads to nine or ten GCSE awards.

7.1.2.2 The **core curriculum** is compulsory for all:

7.1.2.2.1 English and English Literature (2 GCSEs)

7.1.2.2.2 Mathematics

7.1.2.2.3 Science (2 GCSEs, or 3 if taking the individual sciences)

7.1.2.3 The remaining four subjects are chosen from a broad range of options.

7.1.2.4 Pupils are strongly advised to opt into those subjects that they enjoy and are good at. Higher Education and career

aspirations should also be considered. PSHE and appropriate, impartial, Careers guidance (in line with the Government's 'Prevent' Strategy, see 4. above) forms part of the curriculum at KS4.

- 7.1.2.5 Wherever possible it is sensible to aim for a balanced programme of study. However, the School does **not** require that pupils choose courses to include all the main curriculum areas (languages, humanities, creative subjects and technology). It is possible, therefore, to select a combination of subjects tailored to individual needs.
- 7.1.2.6 The process of choosing subjects may take some time. We recommend that students and parents start to think about this at the start of Year 9.
- 7.1.2.7 The School provides advice and consultation for pupils and parents during Year 9 (III Group) to help them make appropriate choices.
- 7.1.2.8 Key Stage 4 Subject hours each week

|  | <b>Year 10</b> | <b>Year 11</b> |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| English  | 4              | 4              |
| Maths  | 3              | 3              |
| Science  | 6              | 6              |
| GCSE Option E  | 2              | 2              |
| GCSE Option F  | 2              | 2              |
| GCSE Option G  | 2              | 2              |
| GCSE Option H  | 2              | 2              |
| PSHE (including careers/exam skills/sixth form choices, etc) | 1              | 1              |
| Physical Education   | 2              | 2              |
| Thursday Activities  | 1              | 1              |
| Total  | 25             | 25             |

7.1.2.9 Example GCSE BLOCKS

| E                | F         | G                | H            |
|------------------|-----------|------------------|--------------|
| Art 3D           | Art       | French           | Art          |
| Geography        | Drama     | Film Studies     | Drama        |
| History          | French    | PE               | Art 3D       |
| Music            | Geography | Spanish          | History      |
| Spanish          | History   | Food & Nutrition | Film Studies |
| Computer Science |           |                  |              |

### 7.1.3 Sixth Form

#### 7.1.3.1 **Entry Standard:**

Generally we expect our intending Sixth Formers to obtain at least 5 GCSEs at grade '5' and above in order to follow an AS/A Level programme, with at least grade '6' in the subjects selected for studying at A Level, or in relevant subjects where a student is starting a subject from scratch (such as Psychology or Business). Those not doing GCSEs will need to show suitable ability. In practice, the vast majority of entrants into our Sixth Form gain significantly better results than the minimum requirement.

#### 7.1.3.2 **Recent Results:**

St Christopher takes a broad view of academic success. We regard A Level results as extremely important and our pupils nearly always gain access to the universities of their choice. These destinations regularly include Oxford, Cambridge, and London, as well as other Russell Group universities, and newer universities. Some students move on to Art Foundation Courses before pursuing courses in Fine Arts or Design. Most significantly, we have no doubt that the breadth of the experience of St Christopher prepares our students well for university life and the world of employment. They have a maturity and independence which help them to settle relatively easily into higher education and to make the most of the opportunities they find there.

#### 7.1.3.3 **Academic Programme:**

The majority of students study 3 or 4 A Levels in the Sixth Form

#### 7.1.3.4 **Choosing an A level Programme:**

For internal candidates for the Sixth Form the process of deciding which A Levels to take starts in the October of Year 11 (V Group) with a Sixth Form Information Evening followed by initial interviews. During this time we hope to make students aware of the options that are available and encourage students to begin to consider their A Level choices.

7.1.3.5 Most students are motivated to take an A Level subject that they find interesting. This may also be combined with a personal aptitude for the subject. Moreover, students should bear in mind their possible future university courses and careers. For example, for a student thinking of studying medicine at university, it is essential to take Chemistry at A Level.

7.1.3.6 By starting the thought process early in Year 11 (V Group) students have time to look into options in a careful and informed manner.

7.1.3.7 There is a Lower Sixth Form Induction Conference on the day before the start of the Lower Sixth year in September. Students will by then have received their GCSE results. This conference provides a further

opportunity to meet with the A Level subject teachers and receive advice and guidance towards the students' final choices. The conference also offers the opportunity for new students to the School to receive further advice and guidance, in addition to the discussions that may take place during the admissions process. Clearly, at this stage in the process, students will only be able to choose subjects from the blocks established in the timetable.

**7.1.3.8 Subjects offered:**

19 AS and A Level subjects are currently offered:

|                    |                     |                 |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Art                | Further Mathematics | Drama & Theatre |
| Biology            | Geography           | PE              |
| Chemistry          | Music               | Photography     |
| Art (3D design)    | History             | Physics         |
| Business           | Mathematics         | Psychology      |
| English Literature | Film Studies        | Spanish         |
| French             |                     |                 |

**7.1.3.9 Subject combinations and subject blocks:**

The current block arrangements are printed separately and are subject to change.

**7.1.3.10 Entry into the Upper Sixth:**

To some extent, moving onto the Upper Sixth is dependent on satisfactory progress in the Lower Sixth. However, work habits, attitude and evidence of determination are also considered. St Christopher has always taken pride in pupils who work hard and display positive attitudes to the wider life of the School. This will continue to be the case.

7.1.3.11 St Christopher has always been keen to produce well-balanced people. Sixth Form life at St Christopher combines hard work and enjoyment.

7.1.3.12 The Sixth Form is also a time when interests widen. St Christopher's longstanding commitment to its local community, to issues of international concern such as environmentalism and globalisation, and to the development of independently-minded individuals, all ensure that involvement in major issues can be combined with academic work. The School is a very outward-looking community.

7.1.3.13 With its long-standing record of academic success, its concern with the needs of the individual, its connections with the developing world (through our long-standing links with projects in Rajasthan etc.), St Christopher aims to offer a genuinely stimulating, enjoyable and successful Sixth Form experience.



The curriculum Policy should be read in conjunction with PSHE and Citizenship Policy, Individual Needs Policy, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Provision. Further information about each Key Stage can be found in:

- Early Years Booklet
- Junior School Information Booklet
- KS3 Information Booklet
- KS4 Information Booklet
- Sixth Form Information Booklet

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