

DARRICK WOOD SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

Reviewed:	November 2025
Agreed:	November 2025
Next Review Due:	November 2027
Person responsible	Mr J Eynon

‘The curriculum is a framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage (intent); for translating that framework over time into a structure and narrative, within an institutional context (implementation) and for evaluating what knowledge and understanding students have gained against expectations (impact).’

(Ofsted, Curriculum: intent, implementation and impact)

Intent

The School’s Curriculum Goal sets out the overall intent of our curriculum: “to provide all students with the appropriate qualifications, skills and values to equip them for life”.

Focus of the Darrick Wood School Curriculum

At the heart of the Darrick Wood School curriculum is the National Curriculum (NC). This is designed to enable all students to respond positively to the opportunities and challenges of the rapidly changing world in which they live. Students should leave school having become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. The NC establishes a coherent framework to promote study, building on previous learning and becoming more demanding as students move through the School. In addition, our curriculum is focused on developing an awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion. It aims to teach students skills for lifelong learning, referred to as the Darrick Wood School Life Learning Skills. These skills include: Knowledge; Resilience; Inquiry; Open-mindedness; Communication; Reflection; Risk taking; Thinking; and, Initiative. These are taught in stages throughout Key Stage 3, and then holistically in Key Stage 4 and 5. The principles of the curriculum at Darrick Wood School are taught through the Darrick Wood School Vision for Learning, with five main pillars of focus for supporting learning: Progress, Challenge, Relationships, Engagement and Ownership.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the [Academies Act 2010](#), and the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#) which we have chosen to follow.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education’s [Governance Handbook](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Head Teacher to account for its implementation.

The Governing Body will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- The School is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, Mathematics, Science and (subject to providing the right to withdraw) Religious Education, and enough teaching time is provided for students to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum.

Staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

The Darrick Wood School Curriculum - Intent

The overall intent of the curriculum at Darrick Wood School is to engage and inspire students through an extensive range of relevant, challenging and thought-provoking learning opportunities. We deliver a rigorous academic education, underpinned by our core values, which ensures our students develop a deep understanding and knowledge of a rich, broad and balanced curriculum. We believe passionately in learning beyond the classroom and provide a wealth of experiences and opportunities that enhance students' learning and their understanding of the wider world.

Aims of the curriculum at Darrick Wood School are to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all students that is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge for skills and future learning and employment
- Enable students to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations. These include subject-specific skills and the Darrick Wood School Life Learning Skills
- Support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support students' development of an awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion
- Support students' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning for all students, with high expectations for every student and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Have a high academic, vocational and/or technical ambition for all students
- Equip students with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Provide subject choices that support students' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals
- Provide a broad curriculum prioritising a strong academic core of subjects, such as those offered in the EBacc
- Develop students' Life Learning Skills, to equip them for further/higher education and employment

In achieving these aims the curriculum should provide appropriate challenges for all students in ways which satisfy the diversity of their needs (including those in the Deaf Centre and Support), so that opportunities for their inclusion in mainstream lessons are maximised.

Opportunities for Progress

For all students, the curriculum should allow teachers to set high expectations for all students. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able students
- Students with low prior attainment
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Students with SEND
- Students with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that students with SEND can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every student achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of students whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help students to develop their English, and to support students to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEND Policy and information report.

For all students, and as outlined below, through a pursuit and appreciation of the opportunities for challenge, relationships, engagement and ownership (as outlined below), and in line with the curriculum aims listed previously, the opportunity for all students to make continued progress is supported.

Opportunities for Challenge

For all students, the curriculum should:

1. encourage and stimulate the best possible progress and the highest attainment;
2. build on strengths, aptitudes, interests and experiences;
3. develop physical skills and a safe and healthy lifestyle.

Opportunities for Relationships

For all students, the curriculum should:

1. develop knowledge and understanding of British Values;
2. develop knowledge and understanding of different beliefs and cultures;
3. develop an appreciation of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Opportunities for Engagement

For all students, the curriculum should:

1. develop the enjoyment of, and commitment to, learning;
2. promote enquiring minds and the capacity to think rationally, creatively and critically;
3. develop an appreciation of human aspirations and achievements in aesthetic, scientific technological and social fields.

Opportunities for Ownership

For all students, the curriculum should:

1. develop confidence in their capacity to learn and work both independently and collaboratively;
2. contribute to the development of a sense of identity through knowledge and understanding of spiritual, moral and cultural heritage as well as local, national, and international issues.

Responsibilities and experiences of life

For all students, the curriculum should:

1. pass on the values of society, develop integrity and help them to become responsible and caring citizens;
2. challenge discrimination, bias and stereotyping;
3. develop respect for the environment on a personal, local, national and global level;
4. promote self-esteem, emotional well-being and respect for others;
5. develop the ability to relate to others and to work for the betterment of each other;
6. enable them to cope with change and adversity and to make informed choices;
7. support the development of skills for life, through the Darrick Wood School Life Learning Skills
8. prepare for the next steps in learning, training and employment and enable them to appreciate the relevance of their achievements to life and society outside school, including leisure, the community and employment.

The five pillars in the Darrick Wood School Vision for Learning reinforce one another and all play an essential part in enabling the School's curriculum goal to be achieved and for students to make continual progress over time.

Educational Trips and Visits

The curriculum at Darrick Wood School offers the opportunity for students to partake in additional educational trips and visits. The School recognises that educational trips and visits form an important part of children's education, including enjoyment of education, additional challenges, offering unique experiences and allow students to acquire knowledge and skills. It also offers the opportunity for students to experience resilience, team and morale building and can offer the chance to shine for others, where this isn't typically the case in school. It can help to build relationships and the cross-curricular elements of trips and visits allow students to apply things they've learnt to the real world. There is also educational research evidence that students can, having experiences enriching trips and visits, make additional progress, both in particular subjects and the curriculum.

The School uses *Evo/ve* to prepare for, and co-ordinate, educational trips and visits. Our Educational Visits Policy also sets out the 'Extended Learning Area' for Darrick Wood School, allowing staff to embed outdoor learning experiences within their curriculum during the school day.

Organisation and Planning

The Curriculum Model at Darrick Wood School:

The School's curriculum design does allow for setting where deemed appropriate, but not in all subjects. This is dependent upon each year group's individual circumstances, and the use of evidence-based research to consider if, or if not, setting would be appropriate. Recent evidence suggest that setting does not, in many circumstances, enhance student progress over time. This is particularly the case for certain groups of students, who may actually experience a diminished amount of progress due to setting. These findings are, however, dependent upon a range of factors and, therefore, the School will make carefully informed decisions about setting students in every year group and subject. The School reserves the right to change its decision on setting in any one year group, or subject, at any time.

Healthy lifestyles are emphasised in Food and Nutrition, Science, PE and PSHE. Healthy eating is covered comprehensively in Food and Nutrition in Key Stage 3. Health and safety awareness is constantly reinforced (through the use of goggles in D&T and Science and where trampolines are used in PE, for example). The PE Department offers a school fitness programme, and a range of extracurricular opportunities, both before, during and after school.

Students have the opportunity to develop enterprise, business and teamwork skills through cross-curricular days (e.g. through the electives curriculum and Prefect training days, for example) as well as within Career Days and work experience. Students also have the opportunity to participate in educational visits, including theatres, museums, day and residential experiences to support the curriculum.

Key Stage 3

Students in Key Stage 3 experience a broad, balanced curriculum, including Drama and Dance, which has always contributed significantly to students' enjoyment, personal confidence and achievement. All statutory requirements are met and Religious Studies reflects the content of the locally agreed syllabus.

Computing/IT is a discrete subject. Other subjects signpost their use of IT in schemes of work. IT suites are located in each Faculty area, supplemented with laptops where appropriate. All classrooms have interactive display screens.

Careers education is subsumed within PSHE, whilst it is also part of the assemblies programme and, for some year groups, as collapsed days or events. Citizenship is taught across the curriculum; as a component of PSHE and of other subjects. In order to maintain a very broad base of study, students do not have a choice in the lessons which they attend. In the Key Stage 3 curriculum a second modern foreign language is studied by most students in Years 8 and 9. A smaller group of students for whom a second language would not be appropriate follow a literacy course. We may, where opportunity presents itself, introduce an Electives Curriculum into any one Key Stage 3 curriculum.

Schemes of work focus upon the subject specific knowledge and skills necessary for academic progress, and this is enhanced with the specific inclusion of the Darrick Wood School Life Learning Skills. All schemes of work are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are relevant, up-to-date and are considerate of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Key Stage 4

In this key stage, the basic curriculum contains fewer subjects, allowing students a degree of choice in the construction of their courses of study, though a fairly broad common core remains for all. The Key Stage 4 curriculum meets statutory requirements and is constructed to enable most to gain the English Baccalaureate (GCSEs in English, Mathematics, Science, a Modern Foreign Language and either Geography or History. Computer Science also contributes towards this for some students).

When students move into Year 10, they must study English, Mathematics, Science, Core PE, PSHE and Religious Studies. The majority of students also study at least one modern foreign language. Students also choose three additional subjects, selecting one from three option blocks. Geography and History appear in each option block and all students select History and/or Geography, plus two other subjects. This enables coverage of the English Baccalaureate whilst maintaining breadth of choice. GCSE Computing is offered as an additional course in an option block.

All students take GCSE English Literature in addition to GCSE English Language. All students study either Combined Science (which leads to two GCSE passes) or Separate Science (which leads to three GCSE passes in Biology, Chemistry and Physics). Most students in Year 11 take the GCSE course in RS. In Design & Technology, students can choose from Food Preparation and Nutrition, Resistant Materials and Textiles Art and Design.

Careers Education, Citizenship, Work-Related Learning, Enterprise Education and Sex & Relationships Education are taught within PSHE, through other subjects and, on occasions, through suspension of the timetable. Some students have the opportunity to choose a more vocational route. These students study a slightly reduced number of GCSEs.

Schemes of work focus upon the subject specific knowledge and skills necessary for academic progress, and this is enhanced with the specific inclusion of the Darrick Wood School Life Learning Skills. All schemes of work are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are relevant, up-to-date and are considerate of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Sixth Form

The Post-16 system of qualifications allows students to choose from a selection of routes to achieve an advanced qualification. The majority of sixth form students study a minimum of three subjects with some studying four subjects. All students in Years 12 and 13 follow a PSHE programme. A two-week work experience placement is compulsory in the summer term of Year 12. In Year 13 students have the opportunity to pursue the Extended Project Qualification.

In addition to the general entry criteria to the Sixth Form, students must also meet the individual requirements for each course and/or subject they wish to study. Details of the entry requirements are published on an annual basis for the next academic year.

In addition, the majority of students follow the DWS² programme, which includes elements such as Community Service programme and/or a sporting activity during Wednesday afternoons.

Schemes of work focus upon the subject specific knowledge and skills necessary for academic progress, and this is enhanced with the specific inclusion of the Darrick Wood School Life Learning Skills. All schemes of work are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are relevant, up-to-date and are considerate of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Supporting documents

The National Curriculum

The Bromley Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

Darrick Wood School Assessment and Feedback policy

Darrick Wood School Examinations Policy

Darrick Wood School Non-examination Assessments Policy

Darrick Wood School Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Darrick Wood School Life Learning Skills guidance

Darrick Wood School Home Learning guidance

Darrick Wood School booklet for parents of new Year 7 students

Darrick Wood School booklet for entry to Key Stage 4

Darrick Wood School Key Stage 4 Information Booklet

Darrick Wood School booklet for entry to the Sixth Form

Darrick Wood School SEND Policy

SEN Information Report

Curriculum Guides for each year group