



CURRICULUM POLICY

The Curriculum at The River School aims to provide a broad and balanced education based on Christian values to all pupils, suitable to their academic and skills development and to their future life needs. Each phase or subject area is responsible for offering a suitable curriculum which meets the school's aims and any statutory objectives necessary as directed by the Department for Education (DFE).

OVERALL CURRICULUM POLICY

There are two major influences on the curriculum that we have used and developed at The River School. The first influence is our Christian faith; the second is the curricula developed in our nation which enables students to emerge from schools with recognised qualifications that equip our leavers to go on to further educational and training establishments with a view to gaining employment in our society.

THE CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE

At The River School we believe that God is the Creator and therefore all of life finds its origin and meaning in Him. He is the Lord of all things, so all elements of the curriculum derive their significance and value from God and the trust of His word. For this reason, most of our subject policies and schemes of work are introduced by a brief Christian philosophical statement that identifies why that subject is important and how it relates to God. For example, Science is the study of the physical world that God created. The purpose of Science and Technology should be to glorify God; to use our minds and hearts to understand how He made things to function so that we can fulfil the command to exercise dominion in the earth; and to use our knowledge and skills to reflect God's character. This would mean that we would use that knowledge and those skills to bless our neighbours, therefore to feed our fellow human beings across the earth. This approach can be extended to all subjects in the curriculum.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

One of the ways in which we glorify God is by being qualified and equipped to serve in society in some career or employment or other. The principle of service is very important to us. To facilitate this, we ensure that our pupils are able to get suitable and recognised qualifications, such as GCSEs for example, that mean they can proceed to further education and training so that they can realise their individual potential and discover their personal destiny in life. We therefore use many aspects of the National Curriculum and endeavour to prepare students of secondary age for GCSE examinations, sometimes supplemented with other qualifications such as ASDAN or B-Tech courses where that seems appropriate.

Curriculum at The River School is separately defined in five Key Stages:

- Reception (EYFS)
- Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2
- Key Stage 2: Years 3 to 6
- Key Stage 3: Years 7 to 9

- Key Stage 4: Years 9 to 11 (Delta)

Each key stage and subject area defines and updates annually its own Schemes of Work (SOW) as appropriate. SOW are required for inspection purposes and are available to parents on request.

The Christian values of the curriculum may be explicitly stated in each phase's SOWs but will also be integrated into classroom practice by teachers. This process describes teachers as the most important element of the curriculum as they bring their faith, personality, knowledge and experience to bear on a SOW. We also teach 'British Values' and develop critical thinking, in particular, as we seek to develop tolerance and understanding of alternate points of view and incorporate particular regard to protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010).

For this reason, staff are expected to maintain high standards of integrity in their lives and spirituality enabling the words of Colossians 3:16 to become central to the curriculum at The River School.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

KEY STAGE 1

Children in this phase broadly follow the National Curriculum. The subjects included in the curriculum are Maths/Numeracy, English/Literacy, Topic (Science, Geography, History), PE, ICT, Design and Technology, Art, PSHCE, Bible Study, Forest School. We make full use of the grounds whenever possible and the children are involved in various gardening projects. This key stage works closely with the next key stage to ensure continuity and also makes use of their facilities such as the Science Lab, IT suite and Art room. There is Teaching Assistant support to aid the delivery of the curriculum in the classes most of the time.

KEY STAGE 2

In this key stage, the pupils continue to broadly follow the National Curriculum. The subject areas they study are Maths, English, Science, R.E., History, Geography, Music, French, Art, Games, DT, IT, Cookery, Forest School and PSHCE.

KEY STAGE 3

From Year 7 the pupils begin to receive tuition in the various subjects from a variety of teachers and they move around the school to different classrooms for the relevant lessons.

KEY STAGE 4 (DELTA)

In Year 9 the pupils decide which subjects (options) they would like to study for GCSEs in Year 10 and 11. The options from which the pupils chose are decided by close consultation with the pupils and their parents.

The core subjects followed by all pupils include:

- English (Single or Double)
- Mathematics
- Science (Double)

Optional subjects include:

- Art
- ASDAN
- Child Development (BTEC)
- Computer Science
- Cookery (BTEC)
- French
- Geography
- History
- Physical Education (PE)
- Music
- Science (Triple)

The optional subjects are grouped so that students choose a number of these and not all; typically, most students take between 7 and 9 GCSEs overall. Where timetabling allows, some subjects may be offered at a non-examined level to help pupils who need a lighter load academically to build a wider portfolio. Finally, there are opportunities in the curriculum for activities that are not examined or academic but are designed to develop spirituality, teamwork, initiative, leadership skills and responsibility (e.g. Delta, Forest School and PSHCE).