

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College

Curriculum Policy - DRAFT FEBRUARY 2020

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College seeks to be one of the country's finest secondary schools and post 16 providers, providing an outstanding education which prepares our learners for a changing world.

To gain a complete understanding of the curriculum offer at the school it is necessary to read this document in conjunction with the following associated documents:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Equality SEND
- Assessment and Marking Policy
- Sex and Relationship Education Policy

Note that the following policies are currently being reviewed

- Literacy and Numeracy policies
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education. With specific reference to “British Values”
- Teaching and Learning

HCCS Curriculum Intent and Guiding Principles

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College is committed to providing a rigorous academic and intellectual education, which will challenge and engage students, offer continuity and progression of learning to foster a lifelong love of learning for its own sake, and provide them with a secure foundation on which to continue into Higher or Further Education, apprenticeships and/or the careers of their choice.

The curriculum, together with our ethos and values are our key drivers in achieving our vision of ***‘preparing learners for a changing world’***.

Key principles of intent: The curriculum at HCCS:

- Is about developing the whole individual
- Ensures equality of opportunity in learning
- Provides personalised pathways and ways of learning
- Inspires drive, passion and commitment
- Promotes high standards, success and achievement
- Embodies responsibilities, entitlements, safety and wellbeing
- Develops respect, tolerance and courtesy
- Reflects learners’ places in their communities

Ethos

At the core of the HCCS ethos is a genuine ambition for the students in our care to be the best that they can be. We are keen to celebrate the achievements of our students whenever and wherever they occur and encourage them to share their extra-curricular achievements with us. HCCS also places considerable emphasis upon examination success (most students will obtain 9 or 10 GCSEs or equivalent). The majority of students choose to enter Holmes Chapel Sixth Form College for their post 16 education.

Implementation - Main School

All students of compulsory school age receive a broad and balanced education. This education ensures that the students gain experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative aspects.

Key Stage 3 (Year 7 – 9)

In Year 7, all students receive a broad introductory curriculum which gives them experience in all of the aspects outlined above. In addition to mathematics, English, science, IT and PE, they study, history, geography, religious studies, art, music, drama, design and technology and food preparation and nutrition subjects. They are also able to study up to two modern foreign languages, chosen from French, German and Spanish.

Key Stage 4 (Year 10 & 11)

In Years 10&11, the curriculum offer is:

- English language and English literature
- Mathematics
- Science – Combined Science - Double Award Pathway = 2 GCSEs or by top up in Block 1 of the option blocks - the Triple Award Pathway
- PE (GCSE or Core) or GCSE Dance

The students are then free to choose from four option blocks.

Options process and the English Baccalaureate

Our option blocks are set up to favour the choice of English Baccalaureate subjects, whilst retaining an appropriate degree of choice within a broad and balanced curriculum. The school aims to run any optional course for which there is sufficient demand.

Religious Education

RE is taught as a discrete subject within Humanities and at KS3 the curriculum reflects the locally agreed syllabus as well as non-statutory national guidelines. To fulfil our legal requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship, the school engages all learners in a daily act of reflection and discussion (in the form of a `Thought for the Day`) during tutor periods. These, along with our whole-school assemblies, are prepared by our Head of RS. GCSE RE is a popular option subject at KS4. For those that do not follow the GCSE course, RE is delivered via an engaging curriculum enrichment programme of visiting speakers and workshops.

The Alternative Curriculum

At Holmes Chapel, the vast majority of students follow a GCSE curriculum following the options programme. We may occasionally create an 'Alternative Curriculum'. This is designed as a more bespoke curriculum tailored to a child's individual needs. Students may be offered access to this pathway for a number of reasons including Special Educational Needs and Disability as well as emotional, welfare, social or behavioural considerations. The Alternative Curriculum exists for the few students for whom a mainstream full GCSE provision is unlikely to meet their needs. Students who follow the Alternative Curriculum will take GCSEs or appropriate levels of qualification in English, maths and science but, depending on their needs, take on fewer

or no GCSE options compared to mainstream provision. The purpose of Alternative Curriculum is to give these targeted students an appropriately challenging, educational experience which is more appropriate to their specific needs and which supports learning in the core curriculum whilst offering a reduced number of GCSE subjects.

Implementation - The Sixth Form

Sixth form curriculum offer

In the Sixth Form, a similar open policy applies to students' choice of A Level and other level 3 qualifications including BTEC subjects. Students have a choice of three subjects. The exception to this is if students wish to take Maths and Further Maths they can choose four subjects. This however is dependent on students achieving a minimum of a grade 7 in Maths at GCSE. Other four A Level combinations may be possible and are considered on an individual basis. In addition, students who are needing to resit Maths or English may be able to access a two subject pathway alongside work experience, ensuring that we are able to meet the needs of all of our students wishing to study here. The school will consider running any course where numbers are economically viable.

Advice and guidance in the Sixth form college

AIG is provided to all students regarding their post-16 choices and this advice includes at least two interviews with each Year 11 student by the Headteacher, Head of School or Deputy Head, together with the option of a meeting with a Careers Advisor. Most students applying to HC6F will also be interviewed by the Director of Sixth Form.

Sixth Form Study Programmes are comprised of examination subjects and non-qualification activities. Non-qualification activities include an innovative information advice and guidance programme, including expert-led lectures and seminars on topics such as drug abuse, sexual health, safe driving, preparation for higher education and apprenticeships, as well as UCAS support and guidance. For Oxbridge candidates the school provides the opportunity to participate in a bespoke workshop as well as a mock interview. The school also tries to provide an additional subject-specific interview. A vibrant weekly enrichment programme allows students to develop skills not explored in their A level subjects. They can choose from a range of options. Taken as a whole, Sixth Form Study Programmes are designed to prepare students for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.

Alternative Learning Week (ALW)

During one week in the summer term of the school year the normal curriculum is suspended and an alternative curriculum is put in place. This week enables Faculty areas to organise learning experiences for students away from school - including sporting and musical tours - without having an adverse impact on our mainstream provision. Those students who remain in school during ALW also receive a rich and cross-curricular alternative learning experience that places a heavy emphasis on teamwork, challenge, creativity and fun.