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# STRATHEARN SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

## 2010/11

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This Policy was written in consultation with the Senior Management Team, Heads of Department, Teachers in Charge, and the Curriculum Committee of the Board of Governors and will be reviewed annually.

### **Rationale**

The School's Curriculum seeks to fulfil the School aims and the educational aims specified in the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989. In addition to the compulsory subjects specified for study at each Key Stage, it is the policy of the School to provide an enriched curriculum for all pupils, offering optional subjects as appropriate and making a wide choice of extra-curricular activities available to all age groups.

### **Organisation of the Curriculum**

#### ***Outline Structure of a School Day***

Registration	08.45 - 08.50
<b>Assembly / Form time</b>	<b>08.55 - 09.05</b>
Period 1	09.05 - 09.40
Period 2	09.40 - 10.15
Period 3	10.15 - 10.50
<b>Break</b>	<b>10.50 - 11.05</b>
Period 4	11.05 – 11.40
Period 5	11.40 - 12.15
Period 6	12.15 – 12.50
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>12.50 -1.45</b>
Period 7	1.45 – 2.20
Period 8	2.20 – 2.55
Period 9	2.55 – 3.30

Hence, in one week there are 45 teaching periods lasting 35 minutes each.

#### ***Organisation of pupils***

Girls entering the School in Form 1 are placed in one of five non-streamed form classes of 22. At Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form, groups for optional subjects are determined largely by individual subject choices.

#### ***Assembly***

Forms 1 – 3 have assembly on Mondays and Wednesdays, Forms 4 – U6 have assembly on Tuesdays and Fridays.

## Content of Curriculum

### Key Stage 3

At Key Stage 3 (Forms 1-3) the School provides a broad and balanced curriculum and has implemented in full the Northern Ireland Curriculum as required by the Education Order 2006, this includes a Learning for Life and Work (LfLW)<sup>1</sup> Programme (incorporating Home Economics, Personal Development, Local and Global Citizenship and Education for Employability), Skills and Capabilities (incorporating Communication, Using Mathematics, ICT, Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities) and the General learning areas.

**Table 1.**

Learning Area	Subject	Number of periods per week		
		Form 1	Form 2	Form 3
Language & Literacy	English Incorporating Drama	6	5	5
Mathematics & Numeracy	Maths	6	5	5
Modern Languages	French German or Spanish	5	4 3	4 3
The Arts	Art Music	2 2	3 2	3 2
Environment & Society	Geography History	3 3	3 3	3 3
Science & Technology	Science Technology	5 2	5 2	5 2
Physical Education	PE	3	3	3
Learning for Life and Work	Home Economics LfLW	3 2	3 1	3 1
Religious Studies	RS	2	2	2
ICT	ICT	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>		45	45	45

### Note

Learning for Life and Work is led by Form Teachers and gives girls an opportunity to investigate a range of themes from the LfLW Programme, including a careers module.

In relation to the listed contributory subjects, the School curriculum will adhere to the statutory requirements that the Department of Education considers appropriate.

<sup>1</sup> Outside Agencies are invited into the school to deliver selected aspects of the LfLW programme.

## Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 (Forms 4 and 5) the School provides 21 courses (19 General and 2 Applied). Pupils are given the opportunity to study 9 or 9.5 GCSE's.<sup>2</sup>

Most single award GCSE subjects have 5 periods allocated for teaching time. Pupils choose GCSE subjects within a framework of a 'broad and balanced curriculum'. We aim to give each pupil:

- a meaningful learning experience;
- a basis for choosing A level subjects suited to her capabilities and aspirations.

The compulsory subjects at Key Stage 4 are:

GCSE English	GCSE English Literature	GCSE Mathematics
Physical Education (PE)	Religious Studies (RS)	

Pupils must also choose *one* subject from *Groups 1 to 4 and two subjects from Group 5*.

[If pupils select Double Science in Group 4, then you can choose only *one* subject in Group 5.]

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
French	Geography	Add Maths	Double Science	Art
German	History	GCSE PE	Biology	Biology
Spanish	Home Economics	GCSE RS	Chemistry	Chemistry
		ECDL	Physics	Drama
				French
				Geography
				History
				Home Economics
				ICT
				Music
				Physics
				Technology

It may not be possible for the School to provide every subject combination, as some may lead to classes which are too small. If pupils choose such a combination, they will be advised of this and given an alternative choice.

The Examination Board for the majority of subjects is CCEA (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment), with the exception of Physical Education and Religious Studies Short Course which are examined by AQA (Assessment and Qualification Alliance) and EC DL which is examined by BCS Qualifications.

In addition, pupils in Forms 4 and 5 have a one period allocation for the delivery of a LfLW programme.

<sup>2</sup> Note: 0.5 GCSE refers to Religious Studies – Short Course which is undertaken by those who study RS in 2 periods per week. This is equivalent to one half of a standard GCSE course in terms of the value of the award.

## Post 16

Most pupils return after GCSE to complete their studies in Sixth Form. While maintaining the principles of breadth and balance which underpin the curriculum from Form 1 to Form 5, the Sixth Form curriculum is based on AS level study for Lower Sixth followed by A2 level study in Upper Sixth. 8 periods are allocated to the teaching of most subjects. Most pupils study 4 subjects in Lower Sixth and continue with 3 of these in Upper Sixth. We offer 22 courses of which 17 are General and 5 are Applied. We are working with two neighbouring Grammar Schools (Bloomfield Collegiate and Campbell College) and the South eastern Regional College (SERC) to provide a curriculum in line with the Entitlement Framework by 2013. The AS/A2 subjects we currently offer are:

General Subjects	Applied Subjects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Art and Design</li> <li>❖ Biology</li> <li>❖ Chemistry</li> <li>❖ <i>Drama</i> (1)</li> <li>❖ English Literature</li> <li>❖ <i>French</i> (1)</li> <li>❖ Geography</li> <li>❖ <i>German</i> (2)</li> <li>❖ <i>Government &amp; Politics</i> (3)</li> <li>❖ History</li> <li>❖ Home Economics</li> <li>❖ Mathematics</li> <li>❖ Further Mathematics</li> <li>❖ Music</li> <li>❖ Physics</li> <li>❖ Religious Studies</li> <li>❖ <i>Spanish</i> (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Health and Social Care</i> (4)</li> <li>❖ Information &amp; Communication Technology</li> <li>❖ <i>Media Studies</i> (1)</li> <li>❖ <i>Performing Arts</i> (5)</li> <li>❖ Technology</li> </ul>

### *Subjects offered in Collaboration*

1. Hosted by Strathearn School
2. Hosted by Campbell College
3. Hosted by Bloomfield Collegiate
4. Hosted by SERC in Bloomfield Collegiate
5. Hosted by SERC in Campbell College

Each pupil in Lower Sixth also has one period per week of Tutorial, Careers and ICT. The latter is used to cover the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) which most pupils complete. In Upper Sixth, the pupils have one period per week of careers<sup>3</sup> and an optional period to complete the ECDL course.

The examination board for the majority of A level subjects is CCEA. Media Studies is examined by AQA and Art is examined by Edexcel.

In addition to the formal curriculum, the School facilitates a range of opportunities for individual pupils to gain voluntary experience in the Lower Sixth year. Such opportunities are co-ordinated by the School and are designed to inform and support the pupils as they prepare for matriculation and the world of work.

<sup>3</sup> The Sixth Form Programme for Careers is outlined in the Careers Policy

## **Constraints on choice of optional subjects**

In all cases pupils are invited to choose from a number of alternative subjects, the following criteria will be considered:

- (a) the pupil's proven aptitude for this subject or area of study
- (b) the need for the pupil to study a particular subject in order to proceed towards a definite career goal which is within her capabilities
- (c) the pupil's personal preference
- (d) timetable constraints

However, if a particular course is over-subscribed, the School reserves the right to allocate the available places in line with the criteria listed above. The school's assessment of the pupil's ability provides the basis for advising a pupil (and her parent or guardian) in relation to a subject choice. In the event of a difference between staff and the parent or guardian in the matter of subject choice, the School's decision will prevail.

The viability of a course will be considered when deciding whether or not to offer it in a particular year.

## **Homework**

Homework is essential for all pupils as a very important way of reinforcing the work done in class. Each girl is required to complete homework and the time requirement increases as she proceeds up the school. As her school career progresses each individual is expected to take more responsibility for managing the time which she spends on homework. This is an integral part of encouraging girls to become increasingly self-reliant learners.

## **Assessment & Reporting**

The procedures of the School are explained in its Assessment and Reporting Policy. The policy outlines the purpose, principles and methods of assessment as well as recording progress and achievement.

## **Current Arrangements**

All year groups receive one full report annually as well as a short report.

November 2010	Form 1, 2, 5, L6, U6	Short Report
February 2011	Forms 3, 5, L6, U6 Forms 4	Full Report Short Report
June 2011	Forms 1, 2, 4 Form 3	Full Report Short Report

## **Special Educational Needs**

All pupils, including those with special educational needs will be given access to the full statutory curriculum and to the full range of extra curricular activities. A risk assessment will be undertaken, where deemed necessary, to ensure pupil safety. The need for reasonable adjustments will be assessed and implemented in accordance with SENDO legislation. Full details are available in the School's Special Educational Needs Policy.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***The Board of Governors***

The Board of Governors is responsible for making sure the school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. They must ensure that all statutory guidance is adhered to and that the curriculum is delivered in a manner to allow pupils to achieve success at school.

### ***The Principal***

The Principal is responsible, through the Board of Governors for curriculum provision at Strathearn School. He must ensure that all statutory guidance is adhered to and that the curriculum is delivered in a manner to allow pupils to achieve success at school. The Principal reports regularly to the Curriculum Committee of the Board of Governors.

### ***Vice Principal (Teaching and Learning)***

The Vice-Principal (Teaching and Learning) is responsible, through the Principal to the Board of Governors for the curriculum provision at Strathearn School and for the Teaching and Learning Section of the School Development Plan.

### ***Heads of Department / Teachers in Charge***

Heads of Department / Teachers in Charge submit annual Departmental Development Plans and Action Plans (in line with the School Development Plan) to the Vice-Principal (Teaching and Learning). These are reviewed at the end of each academic year. Heads of Department / Teachers in Charge ensure that appropriate Schemes of Work are in place and implemented by all teaching staff.

### ***Subject Teachers***

Under the direction of their Heads of Department / Teachers in Charge, subject teachers deliver the appropriate Schemes of Work ensuring pupils are given the opportunity to gain their best possible experience and outcomes.

### ***Heads of Year / Heads of Section / Form Teachers***

Heads of Year / Heads of Section / Form Teachers monitor their students' academic progress, behaviour and well being.

## **Liaison with External Agencies**

The school avails itself of opportunities provided for In-service Training and Curriculum Support provided by DE, RTU, CCEA (and other relevant examination boards), BELB and a range of other curriculum providers.

## **Review of the Curriculum Policy**

This policy is reviewed by the Vice-Principal (Teaching and Learning) in consultation with the SMT, Heads of Department and Teachers in Charge and updated in line with external guidance and the changing needs of the School.

The Board of Governors will annually approve the policy through the Curriculum Committee of the Board of Governors.

## **Curriculum Complaints**

Any person who may have a complaint about curriculum provision is asked to contact the Vice Principal (Teaching and Learning), who has responsibility for curriculum development. The Principal or Chairman of the Board may also be contacted at the School.

Chairman of the Board of Governors: Mr P White

Principal: Mr D Manning

Vice Principal (Teaching and Learning): Mrs N Connery