



Strathearn School

Curriculum Policy

Version History:

Date	Amendment
12/10/2016	Updated for 2016/17
05/09/2017	Updated for 2017/18
14/08/2018	Updated for 18/19
29/08/2019	Updated for 19/20
10/08/2020	Updated for 20/21
15/09/2021	Updated for 21/22

This Policy was written in consultation with the Senior Leadership 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 Order (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. 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 (kept under review in light of COVID-19 restrictions and changing guidance from DE/PHA).

Registration	08.45 - 08.50
Assembly / Form time	08.55 - 09.05
Period 1	09.05 - 09.40
Period 2	09.40 - 10.15
Period 3	10.15 - 10.50
Break	10.50 - 11.05
Period 4	11.05 – 11.40
Period 5	11.40 - 12.15
Period 6	12.15 – 12.50
Lunch	12.50 -1.45
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 24. At Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form, groups for optional subjects are determined largely by individual subject choices.

Assembly

Each year groups will have assembly once per week: Forms 1-3 on Tuesday, Forms 4-5 on Wednesday and 6th Form on Thursday. Monday and Friday slots will be used as required for house assemblies, year Assemblies and other exceptional assemblies.

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)¹ 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	5	4	3
	German or Spanish		3	4
The Arts	Art	2	3	2
	Music	2	2	2
Environment & Society	Geography	3	3	3
	History	3	3	3
Science & Technology	Science	5	5	6
	Technology	2	2	2
Physical Education	PE	3	3	3
Learning for Life and Work	Home Economics	3	3	3
	LLW	2	1	1
Religious Studies	RS	2	2	2
ICT	ICT	1	1	1
Total		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 LLW 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.

¹ Outside Agencies are invited into the school to deliver selected aspects of the LLW programme.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 (Forms 4 and 5) the School provides 23 courses (15 General and 8 Applied). Pupils are given the opportunity to study 9 or 9.5 GCSE's.²

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 Mathematics, GCSE English and GCSE English Literature;
- Religious Studies Full Course GCSE **or** Short Course GCSE (*half a GCSE*);
- Learning for Life & Work (*non-certificated - no examination*);
- Physical Education (*non-certificated*, except those who opt for it as a full GCSE).

Pupils choose **ONE** subject from Group 1 and **ONE** from Group two, **THREE** subjects from Group 3, unless they chose Double Science in Group 1, in which case **TWO** subjects from Group 3.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Biology	French	Art
Chemistry	German	Biology
Physics	Spanish	Business Studies
Science (Double Award)		Chemistry
		Drama
		French
		Geography
		German
		History
		Home Economics
		ICT
		Music
		Physical Education
		Physics
		Spanish
		Technology and Design

Pupils choose **ONE** subject from Group 4. A Group 4 subject is offered in only two periods a week

² 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.

Group 4
Further Mathematics
Religious Studies (Selection of this course will lead to a full GCSE)

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 all subjects is CCEA (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment)

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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 26 courses of which 19 are General and 7 are Applied. We are working with neighbouring Schools (Ashfield Boys, Bloomfield Collegiate and Campbell College) to provide a curriculum in line with the Entitlement Framework. The AS/A2 subjects we currently offer are:

General Subjects	Applied Subjects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Art and Design ➤ Biology ➤ Business Studies ➤ Chemistry ➤ <i>Computer Science</i> (1) ➤ Drama ➤ English Literature ➤ <i>French</i> (2) ➤ Further Mathematics ➤ Geography ➤ <i>German</i> (3) ➤ Government & Politics ➤ History ➤ Mathematics ➤ Nutrition and Food ➤ Physics ➤ <i>Psychology</i> (4) ➤ Religious Studies ➤ <i>Spanish</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Art and Design ➤ Health and Social Care ➤ Digital Technology ➤ <i>Media Studies</i> (5) ➤ <i>Moving Image Art</i> (6) ➤ Music ➤ <i>Technology and Design</i> (7)

Subjects offered in Collaboration

1. Hosted by Campbell College for one pupil at A2 level
2. One pupil studying A2 French at Campbell College due to timetable clashes with subject choices
3. Hosted by Campbell College
4. Hosted by Bloomfield Collegiate for one pupil at A2 level
5. Hosted by Strathearn School
6. Hosted by Ashfield Boys' High School
7. AS hosted by Bloomfield Collegiate for 2021/22

The examination board for the majority of A level subjects is CCEA. Media Studies, Computer Science and Psychology are examined by AQA and Drama is examined by Edexcel. A small number of Strathearn pupils may study subjects we offer here in one of our partner schools due to timetable clashes with their choice of subjects. This may mean they are following a specification under a different examining board from that offered in Strathearn.

Each pupil in Lower Sixth also has one period per week of Tutorial and Careers. In Upper Sixth the pupils have one period per week of Careers³.

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. **Opportunities of this nature may continue to be limited in 2021/22 due to COVID-19 restrictions, but this will be kept under review.**

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 of opinion 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.

³ The Sixth Form Programme for Careers is outlined in the Careers Policy
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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.

All year groups receive one full report annually as well as a Pupil Progress Update.

November 2021	Forms 1 & 2	Pupil Progress Update
December 2021	Form 5	Pupil Progress Update
December 2021	Forms L6 & U6	Full Report
January 2022	Form 3	Full Report
January 2022	Form 4	Pupil Progress Update
March 2022	Forms L6 & U6	Pupil Progress Update
March 2022	Form 5	Full Report
June 2022	Forms 1, 2, 4	Full Report
June 2022	Form 3	Pupil Progress Update

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 SEND 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 commensurate with their full potential.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible, through the Board of Governors, for curriculum provision at Strathearn School. She 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 are 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 the best possible experience and outcomes.

Heads of Year / Form Teachers

Heads of Year / 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, EA, CCEA (and other relevant examination boards) 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 SLT, 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 through school reception.

Chairman of the Board of Governors:	Mrs L Mallon
Principal:	Mrs N Connery
Vice Principal (Teaching and Learning):	Mr A Anderson