



# Curriculum Policy (Upper School)

<b>Policy number</b>	US014 / ISI 02a
<b>Applies to</b>	Upper School
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Head Master
<b>Responsibility</b>	Head Master
<b>Date reviewed</b>	July 2023
<b>Next review</b>	July 2024

## Overview

Our mission is to teach boys to think intelligently, act wisely and be fully engaged in a challenging and changing world.

The school aims to develop the possibilities within each of its pupils by using to the full the opportunities provided by its long history and high investment in staff and facilities. These possibilities exist in academic endeavours, in a sense of community, and in recreational, sporting and cultural activities. Developing excellence in both academic achievements and personal development is paramount, and it complements and informs all else that is undertaken.

The Curriculum Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Assessment and Feedback Policy (Upper School)
- Careers Education Policy
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy (Upper School)
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

In accordance with the Education Act 1996 (Section 8), full-time supervised education for pupils from Year 9 to Year 13 (13-18 years old) is provided in the Upper School.

### Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Upper School Curriculum:

- for pupils to develop a life-long intellectual passion for learning and discovery, and to build excellent skills in independent learning and academic resilience
- for pupils to acquire and develop sophisticated communication skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy, through an integrated curriculum
- for pupils to experience learning across different curriculum areas (linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative) to develop broad knowledge and understanding to inform future choices
- for pupils to develop their critical and analytical thinking, creativity, and academic ambition across all curriculum areas
- for pupils to develop their learning attitudes in line with the School values of curiosity, integrity, responsibility, endeavour and kindness
- to ensure pupils acquire the level of skill and knowledge to achieve their potential in public examinations, and to give choice and opportunity for the next stage of their lives
- for pupils to develop social awareness, respect for others, humility, and respect for their environments, and to ensure they are ready to embrace the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life in British society and in the global community
- for pupils to develop their skills of collaboration, leadership, entrepreneurship, and risk-taking, both in and beyond the classroom
- for pupils to develop safe and effective use of digital technology to enhance their learning now and to prepare for life in a challenging and changing world
- for pupils to learn in external contexts, such as in academic partnership and community partnership activities
- for pupils to experience an inclusive curriculum that is diverse and representative

- to actively encourage our belief that each pupil should be able to share their ideas with confidence and respect in a range of different environments
- to ensure that all pupils develop their competence and understanding across the curriculum (e.g. all those with special educational needs and disabilities, those with English as an Additional Language, those who are more able)
- to promote physical activity, encourage participation and competition both in the individual and team context, and to promote the benefits of a physically and mentally healthy lifestyle;
- to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- to access accurate, impartial, up-to-date careers guidance that enables pupils to make informed choices and fulfil their potential.

The School recognises that the aims and objectives of the curriculum may be achieved across all aspects of school life, including through House personal tutoring, cocurricular activities, trips, and partnership activities. Within its curriculum, the School understands its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and actively promotes the Prevent strategy.

Our vision is for an exciting, challenging curriculum that inspires every boy to discover his unique potential, and helps them discover what inspires them, what they excel at, and what their future will be.

This means providing a broad, balanced and rich statutory core curriculum, complemented by opportunities for pupils to adapt the curriculum in response to their particular interests and strengths, for example through: opportunities to vary the number of GCSEs studied in the Remove and Fifth Forms, in some cases complemented by various levels of structured support from our Academic Support department and/or EAL provision; the offer of both IB and A Level courses in the Sixth Form; the chance to start with four A Level subjects in the Lower Sixth, with scope to make a final decision about three A level subjects through one of several carefully structured opportunities over the course of the Lower Sixth year. The school deliberately invests a great deal of staff time and expertise in supporting pupils and their families to make sensible strategic decisions about how they might make best use of these opportunities for flexibility as appropriate.

### **Areas of Curriculum Experience**

The following areas of experience are covered within the curriculum:

Linguistic	English Language, French, Spanish, German, Latin, English as a Second Language, Mandarin Chinese, Computer Science
Mathematical	Mathematics; mathematical skills are also developed and applied in other subjects such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, Design and Technology, Geography, Economics, Business
Scientific	Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, Design Technology
Technological	Computer Science, Design and Technology, Music Technology; ICT skills are integrated in all other subjects
Human & Social	History, Geography, General Education (Citizenship and PSHE), Politics, Economics, Business, Classical Civilisation, Religious Studies, Careers Education, Theory of Knowledge

Physical	PE, Drama, Games (including Rugby, Hockey, Cricket, Rowing, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Canoeing, Cross-country, Fencing, Fitness, Fives, Football, Hill Walking, Golf, Gym, Pilates, Sailing, Squash, Skiing, Swimming, Table-tennis, Taekwondo, Tennis, Water Polo, Weight training, Yoga)
Aesthetic & Creative	English Literature, Art and Design, Design and Technology, Music, Media Studies, Music Technology, Latin, Modern Languages, History of Art

## Personal, Social and Health Education

A comprehensive and well-researched General Education programme, which includes PSHE and Citizenship, forms a key component of the curriculum in teaching boys to think intelligently, act wisely and be fully engaged in a challenging and changing world. The programme encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The PSHE component of our curriculum is under continual review, based on pupil, staff and family feedback, and assessment of pupil progress.

General Education is most comprehensively delivered via whole school Citizenship Mornings in which pupils come off-timetable to follow specially designed courses. The General Education programme includes, among other aspects, RSE, drugs and alcohol education, health (including mental health), politics, financial literacy, environmental and sustainability education, and citizenship. Outside speakers are invited to contribute and pupils teach peer-led lessons in a variety of topics. Some topics are learned together with pupils from Bedford Girls' School. Further information on the school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education is set out in the relevant policy.

In addition, there are events which aim to raise awareness of a range of issues across the whole School, through a variety of participatory and fund-raising activities.

Pupils attend School Assemblies three times a week, which typically include matters of ethical, religious, political and social education.

## Monitoring and Reporting Progress

The School has a thorough academic tracking and intervention system in place; further information can be found in the Assessment and Feedback policy (Upper School). Daily management of a pupil's progress is carried out by their Tutor. Full reports are sent home regularly (at least one per year), and these are complemented by Grade Cards and at least one Parents' Evening a year. Additionally, pupils have regular Academic Tutorials with Tutors to discuss their progress, review their reports and set aspirational targets.

## Sport

Through Sport at Bedford School, it is our aim to promote physical activity, encourage participation and competition both in the individual and team context and to make boys aware of the benefits of

a healthy lifestyle. Our intention is, that having been given access to a wide range of physical activities, the boy will be equipped and motivated to continue his sporting participation on leaving school.

The aims and objectives of sport at Bedford School are:

- To provide boys of all ages and abilities, from beginner to elite, the opportunity to foster a love and understanding of sport.
- To offer boys of all abilities the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sporting activities.
- To provide, through high quality coaching at all ages, a coherent, structured, progressive and safe coaching programme.
- To improve every individual's skill, game understanding and fitness and thereby maximise his potential.
- To run competitive internal competitions through House Matches.
- To promote the ethos of 'fair play' and respect for: the laws, fellow players, spectators and officials.
- To provide a varied, wide and challenging fixture list for boys of all abilities and ages.
- To ensure the continuation of the School's reputation for sporting excellence on a local, regional and national level.

Boys will be required to take part in the major sport(s) for that term, if they are chosen to do so.

The major sports are defined in each term as follows:

Autumn Term	Rugby
Spring Term	Hockey and Rowing
Summer Term	Cricket and Rowing

All other sports will be defined as 'minor'.

### **Outside the classroom**

Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to choose from our impressive array of clubs and societies. The Duke of Edinburgh Award and Combined Cadet Force are both active within the school community alongside over sixty clubs and societies. Many of these arrange weekly activities including external trips, visits from guest lecturers and practical sessions on a variety of themes.

## Curriculum Organisation

### Fourth Form

A pupil enters the Upper School in the Fourth Form (Year 9) to follow a broad foundation course. The allocation of teaching time in the Fourth Form is as follows:

English	5 x 40 minute periods per week.
Mathematics	4
Sciences	8
Design Technology	2
History	3
Geography	3
Religious Education	2
Physical Education	1
Computer Science	1
Art	2
Music	1
Language 1	3
Language 2	3
Drama	1
= 39 periods each week.	

General Education (PSHE and Citizenship) is taught via the General Education programme, which also includes some Careers Education.

Pupils must choose two languages from French, German, Spanish and Latin. It is possible to start German or Spanish in the Fourth Form without prior exposure to these languages. Information about the languages options is given prior to a boy joining the Upper School. Some pupils are taught English as a Second Language in place of a second language, as determined by the Head of Academic Support and EAL Co-ordinator.

In addition to the programme above, pupils in the Fourth Form have two games afternoons (on Tuesday and Thursday) and there is Saturday afternoon sport for selected games players involved in school matches.

The year group is split into two halves, X and Y, to facilitate the scheduling of lessons. Pupils are generally in mixed-attainment groupings, with some pupils in a support group. There is some

attainment grouping in Mathematics and Modern Languages based on prior attainment, experience, and baseline testing data, as determined by the relevant Heads of Departments.

Changes to the Fourth Form curriculum may occur for pupils at the relevant tier of SEND support, as determined by the Head of Academic Support and Deputy Head (Academic).

### Remove and Fifth Form

In the Remove Form (Year 10) a pupil starts, in most subjects, his formal two-year course to the GCSE/IGCSE examinations. Some academic departments may have started elements of the IGCSE/ GCSE course in the Fourth Form. All pupils study all three sciences and are taught by subject specialists, but different course structures and final IGCSE examinations will be advised for individual boys.

All pupils study a core curriculum of English, Mathematics, Sciences, at least one Language (French, German, Latin, Spanish), at least one Humanities subject (Geography, History, Religious Studies), and non-examined courses in Physical Education and Theory of Knowledge. Three further subjects are typically selected from the following list (subject to timetabling availability): French, German, Latin, Spanish, Geography, History, Religious Studies, Computer Science, Design and Technology, Art and Design, Drama, Music. Mandarin Chinese may be studied “off timetable”.

The allocation of teaching time in the Remove and Fifth Form is as follows:

English Language and Literature (or ESL)	6 x 40 minute periods per week.
Mathematics	5
Core Language	4
Sciences	9
Theory of Knowledge	1 (Remove Form only)
Supervised Study	1 (2 in Fifth Form)
Physical Education	1
Option Block 1 subject	4
Option Block 2 subject	4
Option Block 3 subject	4 = 39 periods each week.

General Education (PSHE and Citizenship) is taught via the General Education programme. Careers Education is taught via off-timetable lessons at appropriate times. A Theory of Knowledge forms part of the Remove Form curriculum. The course introduces students to certain fundamental ideas and information in the three areas as well as aesthetics and ethics. It also seeks to engage our pupils in issues of current affairs and includes an independent research project.

In addition to the programme above, pupils in the Remove and Fifth Form have two games afternoons (on Tuesday and Thursday) and there is Saturday afternoon sport for selected games players involved in school matches. All pupils attend school and Chapel assemblies.

Information about GCSE/IGCSE courses, including subject statements and advice on subject combinations, is published in a Course Guide via the school website.

Some pupils are taught English as a Second Language in place of a second language, as determined by the Head of Academic Support and EAL Co-ordinator. Changes to the Remove and Fifth Form curriculum may occur for pupils at the relevant tier of SEND support, as determined by the Head of Academic Support and Deputy Head (Academic).

Pupils are generally in mixed-attainment groupings based on subject combinations, with some pupils in a support group for English, Maths, Science and Languages. Maths and Science both use setting, with some parallel sets. The Head of Mathematics and the Head of Science are responsible for setting arrangements in their respective areas, and the timetable is deliberately structured so that they can revise their setting arrangements without affecting or disrupting pupils' timetables in other subjects. The approach to setting is regularly reviewed in response to external and internal examination outcomes.

Pupils are supported in making informed decisions about Sixth Form study through a comprehensive programme of careers guidance presentations, careers aptitude tests, individual careers guidance interviews, trial assessments, and school/parent consultations.

Pupils do not take early GCSE/IGCSEs in any of their timetabled Fifth Form subjects, although much subject teaching takes them beyond the needs of GCSE/IGCSE, particularly to challenge the more able.

In the Fourth Form, Remove and Fifth Form the school issues all textbooks. These then remain school property and are returned at the end of the Summer Term. If returned in good condition no further charge is made for their use. We charge for English examination texts at IGCSE and Music Scores at GCSE as they are heavily annotated and of no subsequent use to other students. All necessary paper and exercise books are issued to boys without charge, through the Bell Room.

### Sixth Form

On entering the Sixth Form, all pupils embarking on A Level will study four subjects in the Lower Sixth Year, with many reducing to three A Levels by the Upper Sixth Year. Those embarking on the IB Diploma will study three subjects at Standard Level (SL) and three subjects at Higher Level (HL). Sixth Form entry requirements are given in the Sixth Form courses document via the school website.

The subjects, which are usually offered (subject to demand), are:

Art	Biology
Religious Studies*	Chemistry
Music	Physics
English Literature	Mathematics
History	Further Mathematics*
Geography	Economics
French	Business*
German	Computer Science*
Spanish	Design Technology
Latin	Drama and Theatre Studies
Classical Civilisation*	Politics*
Music Technology*	Philosophy †
Mandarin Chinese	
Media Studies*	

\* A Level only

† IB Diploma only



The Sixth Form courses are organised into 'Blocks' of teaching time, from which pupils must choose their courses. The expected block system from which boys must choose is published on the school website at the time choices are made. General Education (PSHE and Citizenship) is taught via the General Education programme. Careers Education is taught via off-timetable lessons at appropriate times. IELTS tuition is available for EAL learners.

In addition to the programme above, pupils in the Sixth Form have two games afternoons (on Tuesday and Thursday) and there is Saturday afternoon sport for selected games players involved in school matches. All pupils attend school and Chapel assemblies.

The period allocation for pupils taking the IB Diploma is:

3 x 6 Higher Levels	=	18	teaching periods
3 x 4 Standard Levels	=	12	teaching periods
2 x Theory of Knowledge	=	2	teaching periods
4 x Private Study	=	4	private study periods
3 x CAS	=	3	Creativity, Activity and Service

The period allocation for pupils taking A Level courses in the Lower Sixth is:

4 x 8 A Levels	=	32	teaching periods
1 x Independent Project	=	1	teaching period
6 x Private Study	=	6	private study periods

In the Spring and Summer Terms, pupils may request to reduce their curriculum to three A Level subjects. If agreed by their teachers and their family, pupils have participate in a community partnerships placement, have additional supervised private study periods and may participate in a leadership course.

A Level pupils may also elect to study and optional Extended Project Qualification.

Changes to the Sixth Form curriculum may occur for pupils at the relevant tier of SEND support, as determined by the Head of Academic Support and Deputy Head (Academic).

There is no attainment grouping in the Sixth Form, except for some Mathematics groups in the same A level block. Typically, teaching groups are determined by the combination of subjects selected.

The period allocation for pupils taking A Level courses in the Upper Sixth is:

4 x 9 A Levels	=	36	Teaching Periods (boys can opt to take 4 subjects)
2 x Upper Sixth lecture	=	2	General Education Lecture Programme

1 x Private Study = 1 private study period

It is important that any boy entering the Upper Sixth does so with as strong a foundation as possible, so they can be sure of being able to cope with the increased challenge of Upper Sixth study. The School, usually via a member of the Core management Team, will therefore assess with boys and their parents the wisdom of continuing with a subject (or subjects) into the Upper Sixth. Careful consideration will be given at that stage to the structure, location, and timings of future study, with the best interests of the pupil at the heart of any decisions.

It is customary practice that small Lower Sixth groups are combined in the Upper Sixth, to facilitate timetabling of other classes and to promote collaborative learning.

Unless GCSE retakes are required in Mathematics or English, we do not recommend any GCSE retakes. Mathematics and English retake candidates receive staff guidance, but not tuition unless this has been privately arranged through the Deputy Head (Academic).

Textbooks and other resources for use by Sixth Formers in their A Level and IB studies are purchased by the boys, the charge being made through the termly 'Blue Bill'. In some subjects, if textbooks are returned in good condition some of the cost may be reimbursed. All necessary paper and exercise books are issued to boys without charge, through the Bell Room.