

The Curriculum Policy

Stoke College follows the national curriculum. The College provides for experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. The Junior School adds to the content of the national curriculum through the insertion of regular Enrichment Days during which students are taken off timetable and are grouped vertically to work on a project. The college enables students to sit SATs exams as internal exams purely for the purpose of tracking progress. The College has no Sixth Form and so students select colleges at which to continue their education. At the end of year 9 students must continue with the core subjects of Mathematics, the Sciences and English (and French if applicable – see SEN policy), but will choose four options from the list on the table below. This table identifies where in the timetable each curriculum area is addressed.

The precise composition of the curriculum can be found within the schemes of work of each department. Students with statements of special educational needs will be found in mainstream classes, but for meeting their precise needs please see the SEN policy published by the Learning Development Unit (LDU) and Individual Education Plans. Speaking and listening forms an important part of the work of the English department into which the teaching of Drama is interwoven.

At present there are no students in the College for whom English is a second language so there is no necessity to provide lessons in written and spoken English for such students. Were EAL students to arrive at the college the Learning Development Unit would be tasked with developing a matching educational plan.

The College teaches lessons in personal, social and health education once per week. The scheme of work for PSHE is drawn up with regard to the aims and ethos of the school to be found on the school website.

A Curriculum Plan

	Linguistic	Mathematical	Scientific	Technological	Human and Social	Physical	Aesthetic and Creative
Reception	In with EYFS for 80% of their time						
Year 1 45 periods	9 English 1 French 1 Reading	9 Maths	2 Science	1 ICT	2 Ass'ly 1 RE 1 Hist 1 Geog 1 PSHE	1 PE 3 Swim 1 Dance	2 Creative 2 Art 1 Music 1 Story
Year 2 45 periods	9 English 1 French 1 Reading	9 Maths	2 Science	1 ICT	2 Ass'ly 1 RE 1 Hist 1 Geog 1 PSHE	1 PE 3 Swim 1 Dance	2 Creative 2 Art 1 Music 1 Story
Year 3 45 periods	9 English 2 French	9 Maths	3 Science	1 ICT	2 Ass'ly 1 Tutor 1 PSHE 1 RE 1 Geog 2 Hist	1 PE 2 Games 3 Swim 1 Dance	1 Drama 2 Music 3 Art
Year 4 45 periods	9 English 2 French	8 Maths	4 Science	1 ICT	2 Ass'ly 1 PSHE 1 RE 2 Geog 2 Hist	1 PE 2 Games 3 Swim 1 Dance	1 Drama 2 Music 2 Art
Year 5 45 periods	9 English 1 Reading 2 French	8 Maths	4 Science	1 ICT	2 Ass'ly 1 PSHE 1 Tutor 1 RE 2 Geog 2 Hist	1 PE 2 Games 1 Dance	1 Drama 2 Music 1 Choir 2 Art
Year 6 45 periods	8 English 1 Reading 2 French	9 Maths	4 Science	1 ICT	2 Ass'ly 1 PSHE 2 Hist 1 RE 2 Geog	1 PE 2 Games 1 Dance	2 Drama 2 Music 1 Choir 2 Art
Year 7 45 periods	5 French 5 Eng (2 sets)	5 Maths (2 Sets)	6 Science (2 sets)	DT 2 ICT 2	2 Hist 2 Geog 1 RE 1 Ass'ly 1 PSHE	6 Games	1 Drama 2 Art 2 Mus 1 Choir
Year 8 45 periods	5 French 5 Eng (2 sets)	5 Maths (2 sets)	6 Science (2 sets)	DT 2 ICT 2	2 Hist 2 Geog 1 RE 1 Ass'ly 1 PSHE	4 Games 2 PE	1 Drama 2 Art 2 Mus 1 Choir
Year 9 45 periods	5 French 5 Eng (2 sets)	5 Maths (2 sets)	6 Science (2 sets)	DT 2 ICT 3	2 Hist 2 Geog 1 RE 1 Ass'ly 1 PSHE	4 Games 1 PE 1 Duke of Edinburgh	1 Drama 3 Art 2 Mus

Year 10 45 periods <i>(italics=</i> <i>options)</i>	5 French 6 Eng	5 Maths	9 Double Science	<i>DT 4</i> <i>ICT 4</i>	<i>Bus St 4</i> <i>Hist 4</i> <i>Geog 4</i> 1 PSHE 1 Ass'ly	Games2	<i>Mus 4</i> <i>Perf.</i> <i>Arts 4</i> <i>Art 4</i>
Year 11 45 periods	5 French 6 Eng (2 sets)	5 Maths (2 Sets)	9 Bio,Ch, Phys (top) 9 Dble Sci (bottom)	<i>DT 4</i> <i>ICT 4</i>	<i>Hist 4</i> <i>Geog 4</i> <i>Bus St 4</i> 1 PSHE 1 Ass'ly	Games2 <i>PE 4</i>	<i>Mus 4</i> <i>Perf Arts</i> <i>4</i> <i>Art 4</i>

Careers guidance

As part of the PSHE program students are constantly exposed to input from visitors who work in differing fields. Once per year the College receives a visit from one branch of the armed forces and students are sent on Open Days. Formal careers guidance begins at Easter in year 9 with the publication of the options booklet. At this stage students undergo a period of consultation with their form teacher, teachers, parents and, in some circumstances, Suffolk Connexions in order to select the most appropriate GCSE subjects.

Work experience occurs at the end of the summer term of year 10 and is seen as a vital part in the formation of attitudes to work. It is enmeshed in the English department scheme of work and a successful assessment will follow a student in their record of achievement.

In the autumn term of Year 11 students are interviewed by the Head on their likely A-level or vocational choices. Applications to college go on throughout this and the next term and students are all likely to have at least two offers of places by Easter. Students who find the choice less than straightforward are seen at this time by Suffolk Connexions and are subject to their computerized diagnosis/careers selection process.

The College has in mind at all times the necessity to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life and accomplishes this intention through the provision of the curriculum below as well as the myriad of extra-curricular activities and opportunities for students to demonstrate responsibility and leadership.

The content of the curriculum

Stoke College seeks to present a broad and balanced curriculum which addresses the aims of the school. In general the school follows the National Curriculum but with divergences at Key Stage Two, which is assessed internally so as not to excessively interrupt the educative process. French is taught throughout the school as is Personal, Social and Health education. Religious Education is taught to Year 9.

In Years 10 and 11 Science is taught as double award combined science, but the top set specializes in three single sciences (i.e. Biology Chemistry and Physics). Accordingly an able student can expect to sit English Literature, English Language, French, Mathematics, Triple Science and four GCSE options from: ICT, Business Studies, PE, Geography, History, Art, Performing Arts, Design Technology (Resistant Materials), Music. In addition all students have two periods of games.

Schemes of work in Years 7, 8, and 9 are directed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines and are focused at the Key Stage Three examinations at the end of Year 9 as well as the demands of the approaching GCSEs. The curriculum during these years differs from that described above in that the options are not optional, Business Studies does not occur yet Religious Education does, and PE appears as a timetabled subject. Under the QCA schemes all subjects focus upon literacy and numeracy and speaking and listening skills, not just English. Schemes of work in Years 1-6 are also directed by QCA guidelines, yet we do not enter our students for the public examination at Key Stage 2. For the details of the subject matter taught in each subject please see departmental schemes of work. The planning of work ensures that each pupil will be able to make at least satisfactory progress in their learning or be picked up by the rigorous tracking of performance, measures for which occur termly and from which data is stored centrally. The use of ICT is embedded in the work of the Junior school and any teacher can reserve the ICT suite at any time in order to maximize the exposure of their students to the most up to date and relevant resources. It is the belief of this school that the body of evidence in support of the teaching of literacy using the synthetic phonics approach is so overwhelming that we must be firmly committed to the use of this strategy throughout the first years of school.

In the Early Years and Foundation Stage we follow the EYFS Curriculum. The four themes are: A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments, Learning and Development. We complete curriculum planning each week by referring to weekly observations that we have copied into each of the children's developmental records. In this way we can ensure that we are building on the children's previous learning and their interests. Throughout each session the children participate in a variety of activities to enable them to work towards the Early Learning Goals in the following six areas: Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Language, Literacy and Communication; Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy; Knowledge and Understanding of the World; Creative Development; Physical Development. This is achieved by taking part in structured free-play and adult focused activities. Children are active learners and need first hand experience, so play is an essential part of learning. Each child is

unique and will reach the goals at a different point depending on their age and stage of development.

Plainly the school is small so the scope for a huge number of subjects is limited, but our review process attempts to ensure the relevance of what we teach. The curriculum at Stoke College is reviewed in a three year cycle. During the last cycle in 2009 the number of options was increased and the structure of the school day comprehensively reviewed. The process is ongoing and lies in the hands of the Curriculum Steering Group. The next comprehensive review is scheduled for the spring of 2012.

The Steering Group is composed of Heads of Department and its findings are collated by the Teaching and Learning Coordinator. The group meets regularly during any period of curriculum change and is responsible for weighing the evidence about the change which is returned by the body of the staff, and proposing the next appropriate phase of development. This is then presented back to the body of the staff who experiment with it and report back in writing to the Steering Group who then decide the next step, and so on. In this way curriculum change is a cyclical, continual and democratic process.

Teaching and Learning

(to be read in conjunction with Department Statements on Learning)

The AIMS OF THE SCHOOL underpin all that we teach:

Stoke College aims to teach a number of values and skills. We aim to produce young people

- Who are well mannered and respectful of others, tolerant, and understanding of differences
- Who have a strong desire to learn, and an ability to learn independently
- Who are good communicators with anyone regardless of their background
- Who are ready to accept responsibility
- Who have a positive self-image and an ability to accept criticism
- Who have the necessary skills for a fast changing world

We aim to teach these **values** by modelling them in everything we do, and consistently rewarding instances when students display them.

We aim to teach these **skills** by being aware of the individual learning needs of each of our students and tailoring our teaching to meet these needs, in the belief that we can raise the ability of any student, and through teaching a curriculum which most fully addresses the aims of the school.

The teaching of values

Much of what we aspire to teach children can be described as **values**. We believe values are mainly transmitted in three ways: Through the explicit teaching of values mainly during assemblies, RE, PHSE and Citizenship lessons; indirectly as a result of teachers rewarding and modelling the behaviour they seek to inculcate; through children experimenting with moral codes of behaviour with their peers (there is some evidence that this last method is the most effective, yet it is plainly the hardest to mediate).

Assemblies at Stoke College are based upon a Christian message and will contain at least one formal prayer each week. They will also contain input from disparate bodies all of whom should be concerned with exposing our students to the messages associated with a Christian community; service, charity and similar themes. The RE, PHSE and Citizenship curricula are described elsewhere, but it should be emphasised that these subjects are more inclusive in the cultures that they study and make no judgments as to the superior merits of the moral code of one culture over another.

The second and probably more effective method of transmitting values is what use to be called the hidden curriculum. During the fifteen thousand hours that a typical child spends in school s/he will be exposed to a huge amount of adult behaviour. Children will mimic the behaviour they observe. If we want children to behave in the way we describe in our Statement of Aims then it is of utmost importance that **we attempt to behave in these ways in front of them**.

This has two main implications. Firstly there is a level of professional behaviour that we are expected to display to each other and the students. It is never, for example, appropriate for a member of staff to talk to a child in a rude, personally insulting, aggressive or bullying manner. There are however plainly moments when assertiveness and the use of a raised tone is necessary but this should be done under control and the teacher should at all times ensure that the dialogue remains professional rather than personal.

The second implication is one of positive reinforcement. If we, for example, want children to open doors for each other then it seems necessary to model this behaviour by opening doors for them. If we want children to say please then it must be the case that we say please

when we ask them to do something. The transmission of respect must be seen as being a two way process.

High quality learning

Teachers should be aware that Stoke is a mixed ability college which means that your preferred teaching style will not necessarily benefit all the students in your class. Different students learn in different ways and the way lessons are planned and delivered and the way work is marked and assessed needs to reflect this. With this in mind teachers should ask themselves whether their lesson has been as **inclusive** as it might have been – have the needs of every learner been met?

The following facts about how human beings retain information and ideas have significant implications for the kind of learning activities we promote in the classroom:

- We retain 10% of what we hear
- We retain 25% of what we read or see
- We retain 50% of what we hear, read, see and experience
- We retain 80-90% of what we hear, read, see, experience and teach to others

To echo the assessment policy, teachers should be as aware of the “how” of their teaching as they are of the “what”.

Defining high quality teaching and learning

A lesson of very high quality would be one where an observer was able to answer “yes” to all of the following questions. These could be used as the basis for feedback sessions following lesson observations.

Planning

Were the learning objectives clear at the beginning of the lesson?
Did the students understand them?
Was the pace and sequencing appropriate?
Did the lesson have a clear structure?

Knowledge

Did the teacher show a good up-to-date knowledge of the subject?
Was the content pitched at the right level?
Were links made to previous learning?
Did the teacher show a good knowledge of the students?

Did the teacher convey enthusiasm for the subject?

Teaching Methods

Did the teacher use an appropriate and effective range of teaching methods and activities?

Was the presentation clear?

Was there an effective use of good learning resources?

Were the students challenged?

Learning

Did the teacher establish that learning had taken place?

Was there a high level of interest from all students?

Did the teacher promote independent thought and learning?

Did the students gain any new skills, knowledge or understanding?

Inclusiveness

Did the teacher account for the full ability range and different learning styles in the planning and delivery of lessons?

Were all students given an equal opportunity to participate in the lessons?

Did all students actively participate?

Assessment

Has the student's work been thoroughly marked?

Has the work been marked in such a way that future work will improve?

Guaranteeing quality

Teachers will be observed by the Head once during their appraisal cycle (see Appraisal Policy). A much more effective method of distributing useful developments in learning is the use of **Peer to Peer Observations**. There is voluminous support in the research to support the idea that the most effective way for us to learn about new and useful techniques is for **us to teach each other**. Outside agencies are useful at the right time, but there is a growing consensus that the solution to any educational problem is found somewhere within the staff room. It is a question of persuading the holders of this "sticky" knowledge to part with it and ensuring that the receivers of this knowledge are in a fit state to make use of it.

The staff have spent some time at Stoke College developing a stance on peer-peer observations. At the time of writing this document we have trialled one phase of observations and the Steering Group has reported back to the staff in order to inform the next phase. It is the strong opinion of the group that observations are best performed when four conditions are fulfilled: there should be a focus for the observation (use of questioning say); there must be ample time for an immediate de-brief; that the observation should occur outside the teacher's curriculum group; that the ideal condition of observer should be that of critical friend (there is, it is felt, little use in reinforcing previously held beliefs). The learning process for observer and observed in this way is more likely to stimulate reflection and experimentation.

In addition every member of staff will be observed either by the deputy head or the head teacher once per appraisal cycle. These observations are different in nature to those described above, and are termed performance management observations. The appraisal conversation immediately after the observation will take as its starting point the learning that occurs within the classroom of the appraisee. Teachers seeking to give a lesson that OFSTED would describe as outstanding should attempt to satisfy the questions at the beginning of this document.