



# Curriculum Policy

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## Stoke College's Curriculum Aims and Intentions

Stoke College offers a broad curriculum to students from Years 7-13. We believe that this broad and balanced curriculum enables each child to find his or her strengths and to develop them in a safe and nurturing environment. We aim to ensure equal access to learning, with high expectations for all: the most academically able are stretched and the less able are supported, so that every student achieves more than they thought they were capable of. We follow a mainstream curriculum culminating in GCSE and A-Level (and/or equivalent) qualifications.

Our aims underpin all that we teach. We aim to produce young people who:

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

The aims and values of the school are reinforced through our assemblies, which are underpinned by Christian values and are tolerant and inclusive in tone, in line with our non-denominational ethos.

Our curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enables them to be active.

In addition to the explicit subject teaching outlined further in this document, the curriculum is also designed to develop students' soft skills and personal characteristics, including but not limited to independence, initiative, decision-making, collaboration and communication, study skills and resilience. It is the aim of the Stoke College curriculum that these skills and characteristics are taught both implicitly and explicitly in lessons across the whole curriculum and extra-curricular range. Through these skills and through further enrichment experiences it is the College's aim to enhance the employability of every student.



The curriculum aims to promote equality and diversity in all areas as part of the College's commitment to promoting British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The students that we teach are digital natives and we use IT within lessons and through out-of-class learning to ensure our pupils and students are equipped to learn, socialise and eventually work in the digital environment.

The College tracks the progress of children at regular points each year and shares progress information with parents (see separate Assessment and Reporting Policy).

In addition to timetabled lessons, the College offers a rich variety of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities. These cover activities in sports and the arts, studying for additional academic qualifications, and visits and trips that support academic and personal development. Programmes for extra-curricular clubs and activities are published termly and visits and trips appear on the school calendar.

## Legislation

The Stoke College curriculum reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#).

## Senior School (Years 7-11)

From Years 7 to 9, students are taught most of their lessons in their tutor groups of 15-20 students. These small class sizes allow plenty of individual attention for each learner. Students are set in Mathematics, English and Science according to their ability in each subject.

Students in the higher Mathematics set will follow a pathway to the Higher Tier GCSE qualification (offering access to grades 4-9) while those in the lower Mathematics set follow a pathway to the Foundation Tier GCSE (offering access to grades 1-5). Students may move between sets throughout their time in the Senior School under the direction of the Head of Mathematics. Students will always be placed in the set that we believe gives them the best chance of success relative to their ability and performance in Mathematics lessons and assessments.

Students in Years 7-9 follow a broad curriculum:



Core	Humanities	Languages	Arts	Technologies	
English	Geography	French	Art	Design and Technology	PSHEE (inc. careers)
Mathematics	History	Spanish	Music	Food and Nutrition	Enrichment
Science	RE	Chinese	Drama	Computer Science	PE and Games

Students may opt to withdraw from some languages lessons in order to attend the Learning Development Centre (LDC) for additional lessons in literacy and numeracy.

Students whose first language is not English may be withdrawn from some lessons to attend individual or small group English as a Foreign Language (EFL) lessons, according to their learning needs.

Individual instrumental music lessons are taught by peripatetic teachers and LAMDA is offered by our full time teaching staff on a similar basis: students are withdrawn from lessons to attend on a rota basis to minimise the impact on curriculum learning.

Students select their Key Stage Four options during the Spring Term of Year 9. Most students follow GCSE courses in Years 10 and 11, though some subjects offer BTEC alternatives. The exact programme of courses is determined each academic year so as to best meet the needs of our students.

In Years 10 and 11, students are taught in small classes according to their options choices. Students are set in Mathematics, following either the Higher or Foundation GCSE course; in English, most students follow both English Language and English Literature courses, although some international students will sit IGCSE Second Language English; in Science students will choose to study separate or combined sciences (achieving either three or two GCSE grades) with support and guidance from the Science department staff and in close consultation with parents.

Key Stage Four options blocks are created each year to best match the preferences of Year 9 students. All students follow the core curriculum and select three or four GCSE/BTEC options:



Core	GCSE/BTEC Option			Other
English	French	Geography	Art	Games
Mathematics	Spanish	History	DT	PSHEE (inc. careers)
Science	Chinese	Business Studies	Food	
	Statistics	Computer Science	Music	
		Physical Education	Drama	

The taught curriculum relies on the regular completion of homework to research, apply or consolidate classroom learning. All students in the Senior School are set homework according to a timetable issued in September of each year. Homework is set on Google Classroom, where students can access their homework tasks and manage their workload.

## Sixth Form

Sixth Form students are able to select their own programme of study combining A-Level and other available qualifications. Our usual expectation is for students to achieve the equivalent of three A-Levels and an EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) to enable access to the widest range of Higher Education courses. We are committed to offering a broad curriculum so that students may take different pathways to university education, apprenticeships or employment.

The choice of courses on offer each year can be found in the school's annual Sixth Form Options booklet. The selection of courses on offer is tailored each year to meet the needs and interests of current Year 11 students and prospective external applicants for entry into Year 12.

An open choice of courses is initially offered until an early application deadline mid-Spring term. After this, based on early applications, the courses running in Year 12 the following year are finalised and timetable option blocks, from which later applicants must choose their subjects, are established.



Students and their parents/guardians are provided with support in choosing an appropriate combination of Sixth Form courses through the Year 10 and 11 PSHEE and careers programme, Sixth Form information and options evening events in the Autumn and Spring terms of Year 11, written guidance in the Sixth Form Options handbook and the opportunity to participate in Sixth Form taster lessons during the Autumn term of Year 11.

The EPQ qualification carries UCAS points equivalent to half an A-Level and is highly valued by Universities because of the independent research, academic motivation and project management skills it requires. It is delivered through a discrete programme of small group tutorial style lessons developing the necessary skills and one-to-one mentoring with a member of staff to support students' individual work on their projects.

ECDL Levels I-III (European Computer Driver's License) is an additional complementary course offered to Sixth Form Students within the Stoke College Sixth Form Diploma in Global Communications. ECDL develops essential computer literacy skills that not only complement A-levels but importantly prepare the student for the modern workplace. Level III carries UCAS points equivalent to half an A-level.

Students whose first language is not English also attend individual or small group English as a Foreign Language (EFL) lessons, according to their learning needs, noting that it is a requirement of UK universities that these students have achieved IELTS examination scores of at least 6.0 and often 6.5 or 7.0 to be admitted. Every effort is made to schedule these EFL lessons during students' private study periods rather than withdrawing them from taught lessons in their other chosen courses.

Students may opt to attend the Learning Development Centre (LDC) for additional lessons to support their independent study and develop their exam technique, revision strategies and exam literacy.

The Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) programme continues in the Sixth Form. It includes development of skills for effective independent study, supporting their Sixth Form courses and preparing them for higher education, and for independent living, looking ahead to higher education and employment. Careers guidance and individually tailored support with applications to higher education (including UCAS for British Universities), apprenticeships or direct employment is provided. The whole programme is enriched by regular exposure to visitors or external speakers in a variety of different fields, helping to broaden students' horizons and encourage them to think more widely and deeply about their future paths.

Sixth Form students have a timetabled physical well-being afternoon where they can choose from activities such as running, table tennis, badminton, tennis, fitness classes, pilates and yoga. During the extended school day, the Activities programme is available to Sixth Form students; they are strongly encouraged to take part in Activities regularly and to seek further valuable opportunities for leadership and volunteering.



In the Sixth Form, there is an expectation that students will work on homework and wider reading in each subject every day. As a guide, students should receive around four hours of formal homework per week for each subject in Year 12 and six hours in Year 13. All homework is recorded on Google Classroom.

Students are expected to take responsibility for their own homework and manage their time to complete a good proportion of it during study periods within the school day and therefore meet deadlines consistently. We expect students to complete approximately an hour's independent study for every hour they spend in lessons; accordingly they should always have work to complete, and are given at least two nights to complete all but the very shortest tasks (those tasks expected to take only twenty minutes or less).

## SEND and EAL Curriculum

Students with statements of special educational needs will be found in mainstream classes, but for meeting their precise needs please see the SEND policy. Some students have an EHCP or an IEP, which are managed by the LDC.

The College will make reasonable adjustments to allow students with a physical disability to access the curriculum through appropriately adapting classroom and outdoor activities to the student's needs, adapting or re-allocating classrooms where feasible and by accommodating the use of specialist equipment. Adjustments are constrained by the historic nature of some of buildings of the College. A copy of the College's Equal Opportunities Policy is available with further information.

Students in the College whose first language is not English will have individual provision designed in response to their needs. This provision will be coordinated and monitored by the Deputy Head Academic.

## Monitoring arrangements

The quality of curriculum planning and delivery is monitored by the Deputy Head Academic. Monitoring procedures include, but are not limited to, scrutiny of plans; scrutiny of student work; review of academic performance; lesson observation; staff performance management process; student evaluations.

## Links with other policies

Assessment and Reporting Policy  
SEN Policy

Behaviour Policy