



SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

Committee Responsible: School Life Committee

Reviewed by: Director of Studies and School Life Committee

Adopted by Committee: March 2011

Last reviewed: February 2024

Date of next review: March 2027

Sibford School Curriculum Policy

Sibford School Curriculum Policy applies to Sibford Senior School, both day and boarding, and Sibford Junior School, including our Early Years and Foundation Stage. The procedures described comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations (The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended as from January 2013) also known as the registration standards or ISSRs; the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (made under section 87 of the Children Act 1989) (NMS) and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014 (EYFS). These regulations are laid down by the Department for Education.

In accordance with, and beyond the requirements of these regulations, Sibford School makes all of its policies available to parents and prospective parents on the public area of the school's website – www.sibfordschool.co.uk; printed copies can be made available on request to the Head or viewed in school.

1 Curriculum Principles

The following quotations are taken from Quaker Faith and Practice:

QFP 23.78 We seek to affirm in each child at school, each member of the meeting, each person we meet in our daily lives, the person that he or she may with God's help grow to be.

When we find ourselves teaching - as we all do in our relationships within meeting - can we draw upon that respect for one another and faith in one another's potential that will enable the other to feel taller and more capable? At Rufus Jones's memorial meeting one of his students simply said: 'He lit my candle'. That is a high aim for us all to aspire to in educating ourselves and our young people.

Barbara Windle, 1988

QFP 23.79 No examination has yet been devised the passing of which will guarantee wisdom or culture. For these are slow-growing breeds, matters of character as well as of intellect and sentiment, the outcome of long exposure to the influences of truth and beauty.

Caroline C Graveson, 1937

2 Curriculum aims

Our curriculum provides full time education for pupils aged 3 to 18 (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996). Children in EYFS may attend on a sessional basis. The school believes in providing an education for the 'whole person'. We aim to give pupils a broad and balanced curriculum which includes experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, horticultural, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. We believe that our curriculum extends beyond the classroom and includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities and experiences, appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of all pupils, including those with a statement of Special Educational Needs.

We aim:

- To encourage pupils to enjoy learning and to celebrate progress and achievement by providing opportunities for pupils to learn and make progress
- To ensure pupils acquire appropriate speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills

- To make the programmes of study accessible and relevant taking into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils including those with an EHC plan who can independently access the curriculum.
- To prepare pupils for external examinations as part of a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities for outdoor learning
- To encourage pupils to make a positive contribution to the school community and the wider world based on a balanced view of different political systems
- To identify and nurture the talents of each pupil, wherever those talents lie
- To encourage trust and respect
- To encourage initiative and independent thinking
- To encourage students to be committed to, and responsible for, developing skills for lifelong learning
- To foster self-esteem and consideration of others
- To encourage pupils to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- To provide appropriate and impartial guidance for pupils in making decisions about their future careers and further education which helps individuals fulfil potential
- To help students understand that the internet and social media can be both beneficial and harmful and they should keep themselves safe.
- To provide appropriate personal, social and health education (see Schemes of Work) which reflects our aims and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- To ensure that the needs of all children, including those with a EHCP, are fulfilled (See SEND policy), and to ensure that EHCP plans are reviewed annually
- To help our pupils to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies and to develop a set of values which do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and which promote mutual respect and tolerance of those with other faiths and beliefs, through which these might flourish.

We expect that our curriculum will provide effective preparation to our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society and in a multi-cultural, diverse, rapidly changing and global community.

The curriculum policy is reviewed by School Committee (the Governing Body) on a three yearly cycle, although immediate changes will be made in response to changes made to the regulatory framework.

Our Curriculum Policy actively promotes fundamental British values across the age range.

3. Curriculum Organisation

EYFS

The EYFS department at Sibford is known as Foundation. There are two year groups in the department, Nursery and Reception. Pupils can join Foundation from the September after they turn three.

The subject areas covered in Foundation are governed by the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017. They comprise the Prime Areas of Learning: Communication and Language; Personal, Social & Emotional Development; Physical Development and the Specific Areas of Learning: Maths; Literacy; Expressive Art & Design; Understanding of the World.

The topic foci which cover the 7 Areas of Learning are chosen by reference to the interests and preoccupations of the cohort and individual pupils within it. Therefore, the plans are fluid and flexible, changing according to need, circumstance and opportunity. The length of a topic will vary depending upon how well it suits the learning and development needs of the class and consequently, the teaching objectives. Planning is based on formative assessment. Children in Foundation also take part in a programme of Forest School, PE, magical adventures and swimming sessions led by specialist instructors.

Some children attend Foundation on a sessional basis. Liaison with parents and carers ensures a range of curricular experiences for those pupils where possible.

Pupils in Foundation take part in whole school activities such as, Meetings for Worship, Apple Day and other events, providing they are appropriate to their age group. Foundation pupils do not take part in evening activities.

In Foundation there is no distinction between learning within and learning outside of the curriculum. Events such as lunch time dining, child-initiated activities, indoor and outdoor pursuits are perceived as potential learning activities and Foundation staff try to ensure that every environment experienced by Foundation pupils is an enabling environment.

Junior School

The school year runs for 34 weeks and the curriculum is taught in 28 hrs per week, depending on the age of the pupil.

In the Junior School, pupils follow a broad curriculum with a strong emphasis on outdoor education, implemented through the use of raised beds, a living history area and a Forest School setting among other resources. Pupils experience a wide range of subjects that build on cross-curricular skills and this is reflected in the flexible structure of the timetable. This includes a half term long Creative Curriculum topic delivered at the beginning of the Spring term which includes all subjects.

Literacy and Numeracy schemes of work and planning shadow key aspects of the National Curriculum, while non-core lessons are planned and built around a series of annually reviewed skills and knowledge objectives, sometimes drawn from the National Curriculum. Building on the curriculum of EYFS, children in Key Stage 1 and beyond continue to take part in a programme of systematic synthetic phonics before moving on to the National Curriculum spelling framework. All year groups up to Year 5 participate in a programme of Forest School which takes place in our dedicated area.

An emphasis on the development of social skills and self-esteem is delivered in PSHE sessions and in Meeting for Worship, but is also integrated into all curriculum subjects through a focus on teamwork, communication and leadership abilities.

Throughout the Junior School learning is enriched by the opportunity to use various whole school facilities such as the science laboratories, food technology room, the sports hall and the music school. Specialist staff deliver some aspects of the curriculum, such as Music, Science, Food and PE. A strong emphasis is placed on transition from EYFS to Year 1 and from Year 6 to Year 7 involving strong links with staff in Key Stage 3. The curriculum is also supported by provision for pupils with SEND and involves the integration of teaching and learning between support and mainstream lessons.

Senior School

The school year runs for 34 weeks. The curriculum is taught in 27 hours and 5 minutes each week and is planned to allow pupils access to a broad range of subjects at Key Stage 3; the options process allows maximum flexibility at Key Stages 4 and 5 by constructing the option blocks based on pupils' individual choices.

PSHE is taught by tutors in timetabled periods. Careers advice is delivered during PSHE lessons with individual interviews arranged on demand, (mandatory for pupils with an EHCp). During the year careers events are provided for pupils; work experience is encouraged in the holidays and is facilitated for year 12 students.

The curriculum (and extra-curricular activities) throughout the school provide opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking, listening and numeracy skills.

A wide range of subjects is taught at Key Stage 3 which is broadly in line with the National Curriculum. Pupils also have one lesson of outdoor education each week.

At KS3 pupils are set according to their ability in English, Science, Maths and Humanities. Carousels allow a wide range of subjects to be taught to allow pupils a wide curriculum experience and the chance to see where their talents lie. Appropriate in-class and out of class support is arranged by the SfL (Support for Learning) department, for those pupils who require it.

At KS4 pupils must study the core curriculum: English, Maths, Science, Religious Studies, PSHE and Physical Education. In addition to these subjects pupils may choose four options; pupils requiring a support programme, including English as a second language, will select three GCSE options. The option blocks are arranged in the light of the pupils' preferences and guided by the demands of the courses e.g. examination-only or NEA heavy combinations; when certain options are particularly popular they may appear in two blocks. Further details of the GCSE courses on offer may be found in the GCSE options booklet issued to parents in the Spring Term of each academic year and posted on our website. Targeted and specialist support will be put in place for those students with a special educational need.

At KS4 pupils are set according to ability for English, Maths and Combined Science. Pupils are generally taught in mixed-ability groups for all other subjects.

At KS5 students typically opt to study three subjects with some also choosing to complete an extended project. The five option blocks reflect the students' preferences. PSHE and Games are also timetabled for Sixth Form students. Further details of the A Level and BTEC courses on offer may be found in the A level options booklet issued to parents in October of each academic year and posted on the school website.

It is also possible for KS5 students to re-take GCSE English and/or Maths. Support for students with specific learning difficulties is available on a one-to-one basis. ESOL lessons are available for students whose first language is not English or they can study on the Intensive English course for one year to raise their English language skills to a level sufficient to begin level 3 courses. This course combines language teaching with other subjects to give breadth and variety to the curriculum.

Students are taught in mixed ability groups at this level; the small group size means that students receive a high level of support.

At all Key Stages the curriculum is delivered using a wide range of approaches rooted in scientific research, including active learning, enquiry and practical activities; these are selected in the light of a shared understanding of how learners learn. Support is offered, as appropriate, to learners who have special educational needs. Staff have access to detailed information on pupils' learning needs allowing them to plan appropriate lessons. Pupils experience a wide range of learning experiences both in and out of lesson time through a wide range of educational visits, lunchtime, extra-curricular activities and opportunities to take responsibilities within school. Staff and pupils make use of appropriate technology to enhance teaching and learning.

4. Support for Learning

We run a range of interventions to support pupils, as well as offering training to support classroom teachers. The provision provided takes a 3-tiered approach.

Universal approach

This is the teaching that a pupil receives from their class teacher and includes thoughtful adaptations to support learning needs. It also includes ensuring that all teachers are aware of how to support these learning needs, through good communication, coaching and training systems.

Targeted approach

It may be appropriate to consider making additional special educational provision to remove or reduce any obstacles to a pupil's learning. This takes the form of a graduated four-part approach of:

1. assessing a pupil's needs;
2. planning the most effective and appropriate intervention;
3. deliver the intervention;
4. reviewing the impact on a pupil's progress towards individual learning outcomes.

Our graduated approach is delivered in either a targeted or specialist format, depending on the needs of the child.

This approach will take place outside the classroom, as a 1-to-1 or with a small group of other pupils with similar needs and led by a specialist teaching assistant. It is usually recommended by an external professional such as an Educational Psychologist

or a Speech and Language Therapist but may also be advised following assessments completed by school staff.

Targeted programmes are typically reviewed every twelve weeks, a desired outcome is agreed prior to the programme starting and parents and guardians are kept informed of their child's progress. When a pupil is offered targeted support, they are placed onto our SEN register for the duration of the programme.

Specialist approach

Sometimes a child's needs are complex, requiring a more specialist approach to help them progress in school. For these students, they are removed from elements of the mainstream curriculum and invited to the Support for Learning department with a small group of their peers, to learn a wide range of skills to help them access the curriculum independently. Specialist sessions are delivered by advanced teaching staff who have a range of expertise. Children on specialist programmes will likely remain on them for the duration of their school career.

5. Curriculum evaluation

Subject Leaders/Heads of Department review examination results, and in particular the added value as measured by ALPs or CEM, annually in a meeting with an Assistant Head. These reviews highlight progress made and identify areas for development (with an action list) to ensure that the curriculum/course followed is appropriate for the candidates.

In the Junior School, objectives for programmes of study are reviewed annually by subject. For Numeracy and Literacy, the curriculum is reviewed through triangulation of assessment data arising from bi-annual Teacher Assessments, Cognitive Ability Tests and classroom performance.

An analysis of value added data allows subject teachers and Assistant Heads to assess the success with which the curriculum is delivered.

The Performance Review process may highlight issues relating to the curriculum that can be addressed through targeted In Service Training.

The Academic Board (Subject Leaders, Head of Junior School and Head of Sixth Form, chaired by an Assistant Head (Academic)) meetings consider issues relating to teaching and learning and curriculum changes in the light of national developments and the needs of our pupils.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the SEND Policy, Behaviour (Rewards and Sanctions) Policy and the published (see website) programmes of study for Personal Social and Health Education.

This policy is supported by detailed schemes of work and departmental handbooks, individual teacher plans, the assessment protocol and protocols on curriculum organisation, evaluation, marking and target setting.

Detailed curriculum booklets are given to parents to explain syllabus, subject content and assessment objectives at GCSE and for Sixth Form courses.