



## **Curriculum Policy**

### **Aims**

The curriculum offered at The Downs is in line with our core values:

- We believe that The Downs exists to provide an education for children of all backgrounds who are of suitable ability, where all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress, and be exposed to subject matter appropriate to their age and aptitude. We also appreciate the necessity to provide appropriate academic support for both the gifted and talented, and for those who find the demands of the classroom challenging.
- We aim to provide an all-round education at The Downs but the focus of our attention is on the classroom and the pupils' academic achievement, where we aim for pupils to acquire skills in listening, literacy, and numeracy.
- We are mindful of the importance of academic achievement which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, and scientific education. However, we value highly the various benefits of exposing the pupils to a diversity of other areas such as the physical, the creative and aesthetic, human and social, and technological.
- We aim to provide personal, social, and health education which reflects the core values and ethos of the school, including appropriate careers guidance for our secondary age pupils.

### **Objectives**

- to provide children with a curriculum that has a strong focus on the teaching of the core subjects
- to provide a curriculum that has a balance of the non-core subjects that is relative to the school's culture, i.e., modern languages, humanities, technology, arts, music, PE and games, and PSHE

- to promote the development and implementation of schemes of work that are consistent with the developments in educational research, and which allow pupils to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy, and numeracy
- to ensure that the curriculum provides the opportunity for students to reach levels of attainment that ensures a smooth transition to their next school
- to provide experiences in the curriculum that give children exposure to a broad education, and which help prepare the pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life.

### The School's Hours

The school day starts at 8.35am for all year groups, with these finishing times:  
 Reception and Year 1 – 3.45pm (35 hours and 50 minutes),  
 Year 2 and 3 – 4.00pm (37 hours and 5 minutes),  
 Years 4 to 8 – 5.10pm (42 hours and 55 minutes).

However, there are numerous activities such as after school care, prep, clubs, supper, and matches that mean pupils are often in school beyond these times.

### Pupils with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

The school's SEN department supports pupils with moderate learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia. If a referral is made the SEN department will carry out diagnostic testing, and make recommendations. Any pupil placed on the school's register of pupils with learning difficulties will have an individual education plan (IEP) which is made available to all staff. These are reviewed annually. If learning support lessons are deemed necessary in English or Maths, these take place in the SEN departments' own teaching rooms, and take place during normal lesson times.

### Gifted and Talented Pupils

Given the school's aim of providing subject matter appropriate to the aptitudes of pupils, differentiation is employed (including setting as stated in the tables below) for all year groups. Potential scholars are identified in the summer term of Year 6, with an academic scholarship group being formed in Year 7. Pupils in Year 8 can be entered for a variety of scholarships to senior schools. These scholarships can be academic, sporting, music, drama, or all round. For academic scholars, beginning in Year 7 and following through into Year 8, these pupils are provided with differentiated work appropriate to the examinations of the senior school of their choice.

### Curriculum Development

At the highest level, both the School Development Plan and Departmental Development Plans, inform the Leadership team of proposed changes that are expected to impact on the balance, selection and delivery of the curriculum. When these proposals become effective the curriculum is adjusted accordingly.

Staff are encouraged to attend courses to enhance their professional development and thus incorporate current educational thinking into both their

teaching and schemes of work. The sharing of this knowledge is valuable in developing a curriculum that reflects our aims and objectives and is kept up to date.

Within departments staff are expected to have a broad based knowledge of the most 'recognized' curriculum documents, programmes of work, textbooks, computer software and resources, that are applicable to their subject and the levels of the children they teach. For example, staff are required to be familiar with QCA documents, the Common Entrance Syllabus. etc.

### Subject Breakdown

The following tables illustrate the number of lessons allocated in each curriculum area, in all years of the school (with the exception of Reception which adheres to the EYFS guidelines). Further notes provide additional information, demonstrating the manner in which the subjects are taught. Where there is no setting according to ability, the pupils are taught in two mixed ability form groups.

**Curriculum Subjects Years 1 & 2**

	<b>Year 1 (32 pupils)</b>	<b>Year 2 (36 pupils)</b>	
<b>Subject Name</b>	<b>Lessons per week</b>	<b>Lessons per week</b>	<b>Notes</b>
English	5	10	Includes Drama in Y2
Mathematics	7	8	
Science	5	4	
ICT	1	1	
History	3	2	Humanities-includes H1 GG & RE in Y1
Geography			HI & GG alternate in Y2
Art	2	3	Includes DT
Music	2	2	
Dance	1		Includes Drama in Y1
Physical Education	4	4	Includes Swimming
Religious Education		1	
French	1	1	
PSHE	4	5	
Special Educational Needs			Provision provided through SEN Department

### Curriculum: Years 3 & 4

Subject Name	Year 3 (25 pupils) Lessons per week	Year 4 (29 pupils) Lessons per week	Notes
English	9	7	Drama incorporated in the English Curriculum
Mathematics	6	6	
Science	3	4	
ICT	1	2	
History	2	2	
Geography	1	2	
Art	2	4	
Music	2	2	
Physical Education	4	2	Includes 2 swimming lessons in Year 3
Games	4	6	
Religious Education	2	2	
French	1	2	
PSHE	6	1	
Tutor period		1	Circle time in year 3 and tutor time in year 4
Special Educational Needs			Provision provided through SEN Department

### Curriculum: Years 5 & 6

Subject Name	Year 5 (20 pupils) Lessons per week	Year 6 (29 pupils) Lessons per week	Setted by ability	Notes
English & Drama	7	7	Set in year 6 (2 sets)	Drama incorporated in the English curriculum
Mathematics	6	6	Set in year 6 (2 sets)	
Science	4	5	Set in Year 6 (2 sets)	
ICT	2	2		
History	2	2		
Geography	2	2		
Art	4	3		
Music	2	2		
Physical Education	2	2		
Games	6	6		Year 5 & 6 participate together
Religious Education	2	2		
French	4	4	Set in year 6 (2 sets)	In exceptional circumstances children may be exempt from French
PSHE	1	1		Established groups of 6-8 children
Special Educational Needs				Provision provided through SEN Department

### Curriculum: Years 7 and 8

Subject Name	Year 7 (30 pupils) Lessons per week	Year 8 (29 pupils) Lessons per week	Setted by ability	Notes
English & Drama	7	7	Yes – 2 sets	Drama incorporated in the English curriculum
French	4	4	Yes – 2 sets	In exceptional circumstances children may be exempt from French, but must maintain Spanish or Latin
Spanish/Latin option	4	3		In exceptional circumstances children may be exempt from Spanish or Latin but therefore must maintain French
History	2	3		
Geography	2	3		
Religious Studies	2	2		
Mathematics	6	6	Yes – 2 sets	
Science:			Yes – 2 sets	
Physics	2	2		
Chemistry	2	2		
Biology	2	2		
Art & Design	2	2		
Music	1			
PE	1	1		
Games	6	6		Years 7 and 8 participate together
PSHE	1	1		Established groups of 6-8 children
Special Educational Needs				Provision provided through SEN Department

#### Monitoring

The Deputy Head (Academic) and the Headmaster liaise with the Heads of Department to set lesson allocation before the start of each academic year. A review of the school's resources may impact on lesson allocation and decisions are made accordingly. The Head of Pre-prep, having considered school resources, also prescribes, in accordance with government guidelines, the time devoted to each of the curriculum areas.

#### Evaluation

An annual review of attainment levels across subjects is undertaken in the summer term. An annual review of school resources, both human and physical, is also considered prior to finalising the curriculum for the next academic year.

R Morgan  
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