

# HULME GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## CURRICULUM POLICY

*This policy is applicable from EYFS through to Year 13*

### School aim:

*'To offer a vibrant, inclusive education that nurtures young people as individuals, empowering them to realise their potential.'*

Our school's educational philosophy is founded on the principle of "Challenge for All". We passionately believe that every student has the potential to achieve great things regardless of their starting point. We apply this through supporting, challenging and inspiring all of our young people to realise their full potential.

By focusing on the development of knowledge, creativity, critical thinking and character, and by using research-informed teaching techniques and a shared language, we aim to ensure that all of our students are equipped with the essential skills and qualities they need to find their passion and pursue their dreams.

The full details of our 'Challenge for All' Educational Philosophy can be found [here](#).

We foster pupils' intellectual, social, physical, cultural, emotional, moral and spiritual development, encouraging enjoyment of learning, a spirit of enquiry and the pursuit of excellence within a disciplined and stimulating learning environment.

- To offer pupils varied and challenging opportunities for learning
- To provide opportunities for pupils' active and independent learning
- To encourage pupil discussion of issues relating to moral and spiritual development

We offer pupils a broad and balanced curriculum and co-curricular programme, for acquiring knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes in preparation for higher education and the world of employment, service, leisure and citizenship.

- To offer pupils a wide range of subjects in their curriculum
- To promote literacy, numeracy and key skills in programmes of study

### Principles of the HGS curriculum

It follows from the above aims that our curriculum aims to strike a balance between academic and practical subjects, between compulsory core subjects and optional courses, and between depth and breadth. Pupils are given experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. They acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills, as well as new knowledge in different subject areas.

Ultimately the curriculum aims to ensure that pupils are successful in examinations. More broadly it provides for all pupils the opportunity to learn and to make progress. It also aims to engage and inspire them, as well as developing them as individuals both socially and culturally. It aims to foster self - motivation, the application of effort and interest in their work, and the ability to think and learn for themselves.

A further aim is to ensure continuity or 'dovetailing' between the Pre-Prep, Prep and Senior sections of the school, and between GCSE and A level.

Any school needs a 'standard' curriculum model. However, we also tailor the curriculum to individual needs and circumstances. For example some year 9 students have Learning Support in place of a foreign language. In Year 7, students have a Mathematical Development where the aim is to support,

challenge and inspire learning within ability bands. All students in Year 7-9 have one dedicated English lesson per cycle for reading. Some students are timetabled with other year groups for certain subjects, most commonly in the sixth form. Some students take fewer GCSEs (with additional learning support instead) or A levels where this is advantageous to the individual student. In the planning of lessons the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of pupils are taken into account.

The HGS curriculum is subject to ongoing review. Periodically we carry a full curriculum review, most recently in 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2023. Discrete changes are made on an annual basis.

This policy sets out the general principles and structure of our curriculum. The more detailed picture relating to specific subjects and courses is to be found in department Curriculum Plans (Curriculum Maps) Schemes of Work (SoW) in Senior School and in the long and medium term planning in the Prep school. These take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an EHC plan and Individual Learning Plans (see SEND policy). Guidance relating to individual pupils with an EHC plan or ILP is communicated to staff separately from this policy, given that this document is publicly available. Our curriculum planning also accounts for the needs of EAL pupils, whose needs are identified on entry and appropriate provision put in place, whether this be guidance to subject teachers or additional provision (see EAL policy).

The school Accessibility Plan under the Equality Act 2010 aims to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum. For example through the use of Chromebooks: improving the accessibility of curriculum materials, and providing support for children with behavioural and social integration difficulties. SEND pupils' additional needs are considered in curriculum planning and delivery.

In the Prep School, we teach the statutory *Programmes of Study* in the Primary National Curriculum. We focus on the school aims, ensuring that we build a firm foundation in the basic skills, so that our pupils are well equipped for the further challenges they will face in key stages 3, 4 and 5. We aim to use problem solving and link learning to real life situations in all curriculum areas in order to fully engage learners. We organise a wide range of trips and visits in order to further enrich the curriculum and engage pupils. If we identify pupils (in our tracking) who are struggling to make progress, we provide intervention groups which run in addition to the regular timetable.

The primary purpose of our planning is to ensure that staff deliver courses in a consistent and organised manner, using the most effective methods and activities in their teaching, learning, and assessment, as well as effective utilisation of optimum classroom resources.

In the Prep, planning comprises of:

- Long Term Plans- these plans identify the topics for each year group and these are then linked to the learning criteria from the statutory guidelines in the Primary National Curriculum 2014. Our long term planning ensures the complete coverage of the National Curriculum in Years 1-6 as well as consistency in the different classes in each year group.
- Medium Term Plans- staff use the learning criteria from the long term planning documents to produce an outline plan of activities for each subject each half term. Medium term plans are done on a shared cross-curricular document so that subject specialist teachers can be aware of class topics taught in other subjects. They can then incorporate themes from other subject areas into their teaching when they feel it is appropriate and identify the practical details of lessons, differentiation and teaching and learning strategies.

Planning is communicated with Teaching Assistants and Support Staff in order that they can best support individual needs in lessons and help teachers prepare for lessons.

In the Senior School all departments follow a Scheme of Work for each course. A Scheme of Work guides teachers on how they can give the best experience of their subject to as many pupils as possible. The Scheme of Work is not static, it represents the department's latest thinking on what

knowledge pupils need, what the most effective sequence is for this knowledge, how much time should be given to each topic and should provide suggestions for what resources best facilitate learning.

A well-resourced scheme of work should help to reduce teacher workload, but teachers are not a slave to the document. The combination of the Scheme of Work and the Curriculum Map ensures that all teachers understand the 'what' and the 'why', and they are then able to teach in a way that suits their creativity, experience and professional judgement.

There is no set format for Schemes of Work at Hulme. This reflects the individual nature of the subjects we teach. However, to ensure consistency and coherence across subjects and within subjects, schemes of work for a topic should include the following elements (these are not listed in any particular order):

- Topic
- Approximate timings
- Specification links (for KS4 and KS5)
- Objectives/knowledge
- Key ideas/threshold concepts
- Scaffolding opportunities
- Suggested teaching and learning ideas – (must do's & could do's)
- Stretch & challenge opportunities
- Opportunities to develop creativity and critical thinking
- Assessment opportunities
- Keywords/glossary
- Common misconceptions
- Key questions
- Independent reading and independent learning opportunities
- Opportunities to develop speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy.

Our curriculum actively promotes different aspects of fundamental British values to varying degrees depending on subject area. These are recorded as an Appendix to our British values policy, and are highlighted in relevant Schemes of Work.

PSHE is part of the curriculum throughout the school, with weekly time dedicated to this. These help fulfil the school aims, most notably "to encourage pupil discussion of issues relating to moral and spiritual development", as well as encouraging mutual respect and tolerance. We pay particular regard to the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010, namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The PSHE programme also incorporates impartial and expert careers guidance to help pupils make informed choices about subject choices and career options, and to help them fulfil their potential. This includes the year 7 & year 8 programme. This is supported by an options guidance process, including individual guidance interviews in both Year 9 and Year 11, as well as preparation for university applications in year 12 and 13 or employment.

The totality of our PSHE and careers provision both in and beyond the curriculum helps prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities of life in British society, including economic education. (See PSHE policy).

We understand the importance of home-school collaboration in a child's education. We aim to consult with parents (and pupils, where appropriate) when changes are being made to the school's

curriculum. However, this may not always be possible, where the reason for the change/s is founded on clear educational principles and/or there is a clear business case for the change. A school's curriculum is iterative and will naturally and properly evolve in response to various factors.

### Setting by ability

In Senior school most subjects are taught in mixed ability classes (all Year 7 classes are mixed ability). Setting is introduced in Mathematics in Year 8 and in English in Year 9. Setting may take place during Year 10 and 11 in Science. Setting in these core subjects at these points allows the curriculum to be more tailored to the needs of the pupils. For example, higher performing pupils in Mathematics can be offered GCSE Further Maths. Pupils may require more support and consolidation, which setting can enable, with smaller class sizes and the potential of offering an alternative course, such as foundation tier in Combined Science or Mathematics, or an English Language only set in English. It is important that regular movement between sets is possible. Although we recognise that pupils can be demoralised by being placed in lower sets, there is no evidence that this is a lasting or widespread problem. We are mindful that in relatively small cohorts, with say only 2 sets, that ability setting is a 'blunt instrument' and that in some cohorts for some subjects we may revert to mixed ability groupings.

Science GCSE is set from Year 10. Pupils opt in Year 9 to take Trilogy (Plus 4 other subjects) or Separate Science (Plus 3 other subjects).

Pupils are placed in sets according to ability in:

|         |                |
|---------|----------------|
| Maths   | Year 8 to 11   |
| English | Year 9 to 11   |
| Science | Year 10 and 11 |

### The structure of the school day

We operate a fortnightly, 50 x 1 hour period timetable. The main advantage of the 50 period fortnight is that it allows timetabling flexibility, and we see the 1 hour period as optimum for teaching. The 60 minutes is felt to be an adequate length for practical subjects, and also gives time for a varied lesson in academic subjects. The 3 – 2 morning/afternoon split for the senior school balances the teaching through the day and gives a sensibly placed lunchtime. The current system is also a workable model for splitting the provision of lunch between the Junior and Senior School. The lunchtime (1 hour, plus 5 minutes for registration) does allow time for sporting, musical and other activities to meaningfully take place, as well as occasional sixth form lessons. The slot is also used by staff as a slot for revision/consolidation lessons.

### EYFS curriculum

Our Early Years curriculum uses the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the guiding principles:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The curriculum is taught through a range of adult-directed and adult-initiated activities; we also provide opportunities for the children to initiate their own learning experiences. We aim to support language development through opportunities for children to use their home language in our EYFS setting. As the children progress through Reception, the balance of activities moves more towards adult led activities in preparation for Year 1. We also offer co-curricular clubs to further enhance the curriculum and develop physical and speech development.

### Key Stage 1 curriculum

In KS1, we follow the National Curriculum statutory guidelines. We aim to provide a firm foundation in the basic skills, whilst maintaining an emphasis on active learning. We link our cross-curricular topics into our English and Maths teaching and plan practical learning and problem solving activities as often as possible.

In Year 1 and 2, we teach Read, Write, Inc. RWI sessions are 20 minutes long and take place at the beginning of the day, 3 times a week. In order to further develop Speaking and listening skills, we also have a role-play area for year 1 and year 2.

We have weekly Achievement assemblies to share good work and promote the importance and value of hard work. We regularly incorporate performances into our curriculum, as we believe that these help to develop confidence and language skills. We ensure that every child in the Infants has a role in the Christmas and Summer concerts and the Dance show.

All of the children in the Nursery and Infants have the opportunity to take part in forest activities in our woodland area. As in the EYFS, our year 1 and 2 extra-curricular clubs help to enhance the curriculum and further physical and speech development.

### Key Stage 2 curriculum

Similarly, in KS2, we teach using the National Curriculum statutory guidance. Our Primary specialists teach English, Maths, Humanities and PSHE to their own classes. We like to maintain this consistency to enable the teachers to nurture the pupils and care for their pastoral needs. KS2 also participates in the weekly Achievement Assembly to share good work and promote the importance and value of hard work. We encourage the children to look upon mistakes as an opportunity to learn, in order to develop resilience in our children.

The following subjects are taught by subject specialist teachers in KS2: Art, Languages, Music, PE and swimming, Computer Science, DT and Science. In Years 5 and 6, Art is taught in the Brierley Art block and Science is taught in the Senior School Science labs.

We offer a wider range of co-curricular clubs at lunchtimes and after school, as the children mature and become better able to cope with the demands of the longer school day. The clubs help to further enhance the curriculum and give children opportunities to experience and pursue new interests.

PSHE is a core subject in our curriculum. Aspects of PSHE and Citizenship are introduced through assemblies, different subject areas in the school curriculum, and in whole school events. PSHE and Citizenship is taught in weekly PSHE lessons and in some morning registration periods, delivered by the Class Teacher. We use the Jigsaw scheme of work to plan our PSHE curriculum. The six 'core themes' of these guidelines are: Being Me in My World; Celebrating Difference; Dreams & Goals; Healthy Me; Relationships and Changing Me. As part of our teaching of Relationships we teach RSE. See PSHE policy for full details.

### Key Stage 1 and 2 Subject period allocations

| Subject                          | Year 1                    | Year 2                    | Years 3-6     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| English                          | 6<br>+ 3 x 20 mins<br>RWI | 6<br>+ 3 x 20 mins<br>RWI | 6             |
| Mathematics                      | 5                         | 5                         | 6             |
| Science                          | 1.25                      | 1.25                      | 2             |
| Computer Science                 | 1                         | 1                         | 1             |
| PSHE                             | 1.75                      | 1.75                      | 1             |
| Humanities- Geography/History    | 1.5                       | 1.5                       | 2             |
| Religious Studies                | 0.5                       | 0.5                       | 1             |
| Spanish                          | 0                         | 0.5                       | 1             |
| Art/ Technology* (carousel)      | 1.5                       | 1.5                       | 1             |
| Music/Singing                    | 1                         | 1                         | 1             |
| Physical Education               | 1.5                       | 1.5                       | 2             |
| Registration and Key Worker Time | 1.5                       | 0.5                       | 1             |
| Forest                           | 2 every cycle             | 2 every cycle             | 2 every cycle |

1 lesson is 1 hour long and the timetable is based on a two-week timetable as in Senior School.

### Key Stage 3 curriculum

Our KS3 curriculum aims to provide a broad based foundation for pupils. Developing literacy, numeracy and scientific understanding through English, Maths and the Sciences is central. Study of the Humanities provides pupils with an understanding of the world in which they live. Our Religious Studies course develops an understanding of world religions and also a range of moral and ethical debates, thus contributing to the moral and spiritual development of pupils. Courses in Computer Science, Food Preparation & Nutrition and Design & Technology allow pupils to identify their personal strengths, as well as acquire skills useful in later life and employment.

In general, all pupils study Spanish at Key Stage 3. A small number of students are advised to choose additional learning support in place of the language from Year 9. Students in Year 8 are invited to undertake additional English and Maths support in form time if required. Students in year 7 all take part in a Mathematical Development Lesson, where students are placed in banded groups according to ability and the aim of the groups is to Support, Challenge and Inspire. Courses in Music and Art run over the full year and develop creativity, imagination and cultural appreciation, as well as enhancing manual dexterity and self-esteem.

Pupils all undertake a twice weekly timetabled Physical Education session of 2 x 1 hr (including changing time).

All pupils in Year 7, 8 and 9 have 2 hours per cycle devoted to PSHE. Components include citizenship (incorporating British values), drugs, alcohol, sex & relationships, mental health, well-being and financial management. See PSHE policy for full details.

We take steps to ensure continuity and progression of content and challenge from KS2 to KS3, in relation to both internal and external entrants. Heads of Department liaise with junior school subject coordinators, and account for the requirements of the National Curriculum to achieve this.

### KS3 subject period allocations

| <b>Subject</b>           | <b>Year 7</b> | <b>Year 8</b> | <b>Year 9</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Mathematics              | 6             | 6             | 7             |
| Mathematical Development | 1             | 0             | 0             |
| English                  | 7             | 7             | 6             |
| Biology                  | 2             | 2             | 3             |
| Chemistry                | 2             | 2             | 3             |
| Science                  | 0             | 1             | 1             |
| Physics                  | 2             | 2             | 3             |
| Spanish                  | 4             | 4             | 4             |
| Geography                | 3             | 3             | 3             |
| History                  | 3             | 3             | 3             |
| Religious Studies        | 3             | 3             | 2             |
| Computer Science         | 3             | 3             | 2             |
| Art                      | 2             | 2             | 2             |
| Music                    | 2             | 2             | 2             |
| Food and Nutrition       | 1             | 1.3           | 1             |
| Design Technology        | 1             | 1.3           | 1             |
| Drama                    | 1             | 1.3           | 1             |
| Physical Education       | 5             | 4             | 4             |
| PSHE                     | 2             | 2             | 2             |

### GCSE Key Stage 4 curriculum

Our KS4 curriculum centres around GCSE courses in line with linear courses.

At HGS pupils typically take nine full GCSE courses. The compulsory core subjects are:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Biology, Chemistry and Physics (either as Separate Sciences or Trilogy (Dual Award) depending on options).

PE and PSHE are an additional part of the curriculum, but not examined. In Years 10 and 11, PSHE incorporates Health & well-being, Careers, Financial Awareness, Citizenship, Religious Education, study skills and time management. The topics are delivered, where possible, by form staff, experts within the school and outside speakers. (See PSHE policy). Year 10 and 11 have 1 hour of designated PSHE time.

The National Curriculum requires all students to follow a course in science to GCSE. Pupils at HGS meet this requirement by studying either all three sciences separately leading to 3 GCSEs, or Combined Science: Trilogy, leading to 2 GCSEs. Students option to take Separate Science or Trilogy, heavily influenced by advice from the science staff during Year 9 Parents Evening and beyond. We stress that good Trilogy grades are a sound basis for proceeding to A level sciences.

We also offer all pupils the opportunity to complete the Higher Project Qualification (HPQ). This is equivalent to half a GCSE, graded at A\* - C. The HPQ course exemplifies the self-directed learning we champion throughout school. Pupils are required to explore a topic of their own choice and present their learning in the form of a written report or an artefact.

Our highest performing mathematicians are challenged beyond the standard GCSE course by taking Further Mathematics GCSE.

### Optional subjects

Pupils can choose 3 or 4 GCSE subjects in addition to the core subjects. In general, our advice is to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum, although the logic of options is to play to individual strengths, so these considerations need to be balanced. In the Spring term of year 9 we hold an Options Evening for year 9 and parents; we arrange an individual options guidance interview for all pupils.

We cannot guarantee to meet all initial preferences, and also reserve the right to withdraw a course if the demand for it is insufficient.

### KS4 subject period allocations

|            | Year 10 and Year 11           |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| Maths      | 7                             |
| English    | 8                             |
| Science 1  | 10                            |
| Science 2  |                               |
| Science 3  |                               |
| PSHE       | 1                             |
| Option A   | 5 (of which 1 may be science) |
| Option B   | 5                             |
| Option C   | 5                             |
| Option D   | 5                             |
| PE         | 2                             |
| Enrichment | 2                             |
| Total      | 50                            |

### Option subjects available at GCSE (all Full Course) (*subject to review*)

Art & Design (Fine Art / Graphic Communication / Textile Design / Three-Dimensional Design / Photography / Art, Craft & Design), Business Studies, Computer Science, Drama, Food Preparation & Nutrition, Geography, History, Music, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Spanish

### A level / Key Stage 5 curriculum

Our sixth form curriculum structure reflects the national framework of qualifications and evolves in line with reforms occurring nationally. Whilst we specialise in academic A levels rather than vocational qualifications, our range of A level subjects offered provides opportunities for creative and practical subjects as well as the traditional academic, or “facilitating” subjects, which maximise options for Russell Group universities.

At HGS our standard curriculum model is for students to choose 4 subjects to study in Year 12, reducing to 3 subjects in Year 13. This is in line with the standard previous approach to A levels both at HGS and elsewhere, and ensures both curriculum breadth, and an element of flexibility for students. Whilst this will be the norm we can agree to variations from this where appropriate for individuals. Students have the opportunity to be entered for the stand-alone AS qualification in the dropped subject.

We run an internal Enrichment Programme which includes Careers, Finance & Economics, Politics, First Aid, Study Skills, Ethical debates. We have now extended this enrichment programme into Year 13, where most students will meet with their Form Tutor once a week and complete directed activities. Some of this is focused on Academic Achievement while other sessions are focused on PSHE and Careers.

Since 2009 we have offered the AQA Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) to sixth formers, usually,

but not exclusively the more able. The school has a designated EPQ Coordinator, who is supported by a team of supervisors with subject specific backgrounds. Each year a small number of students successfully complete EPQ.

#### KS5 subject period allocations

| Subject                   | Year 12 | Year 13 |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Option A                  | 10      | 10      |
| Option B                  | 10      | 10      |
| Option C                  | 10      | 10      |
| Option D                  | 10      | 10      |
| Private study norm        | 4       | 14      |
| Academic Enrichment       | 2       | 2       |
| Games/ Weds pm enrichment | 4       | 4       |

Subjects currently offered at A level (*subject to review*)

Art & Design (Fine Art, Photography, Graphic Communication, Textiles), Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Criminology (WJEC Level 3), Computer Science, Drama & Theatre Studies, Economics, English Language & Literature, English Literature, Further Mathematics, Geography, Government & Politics, History, Food Sci & Nutrition (WJEC Level 3), Mathematics, Music, Physics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology, Spanish

We cannot guarantee to meet all initial preferences, and also reserve the right to withdraw a course if the demand for it is insufficient.

Other relevant policies

**Assessment policy**

**SEND policy**

**EAL policy**

**Gifted & Talented policy**

**Marking policy**

**Homework policy**

**PSHE policy**

**RSE policy**

**Exams policy**

**British values policy**

Next Review Due: February 2026