



# PHILIPS HIGH SCHOOL POLICY Curriculum

**Date of Policy:** January 2024

**Date of Review:** September 2025

## Intent

Our Curriculum intent is at the heart of what we do as a school. Our philosophy is that each pupil including our SEND and disadvantaged pupils is entitled to a curriculum that meets their needs and prepares them for life's opportunities, responsibilities and experiences. Our curriculum is designed to enable each individual to develop their maximum potential through stimulating and challenging pathways and by carefully monitoring each student's social and academic progress. We believe that every student is capable of excellence both academically and personally. As a school, we encourage each student including our SEND and disadvantaged pupils push themselves to achieve their potential. Our core aim is to help every student climb the tree of knowledge and cultural capital so they can access University, Higher Education, Employment or an Apprenticeship and be the very best version of themselves. We also ensure that our Curriculum does not discriminate anyone and celebrates difference and diversity so that all children and young people can see themselves reflected and valued. All students are inspired to 'be a STAR', strive for success, work together, aspire to excellence and demonstrate respect for all.

The Philips High School Curriculum Intent consists of two strands:

- An academic curriculum which is based on powerful knowledge and educational research. It builds on cumulative sufficient knowledge which enables students to leave Philips with the best examination results and life chances.
- A personal development curriculum. This enables our students to go 'the extra mile' and develop Leadership and independence skills, Oracy skills, wellbeing, resilience, internet safety, SMSC, British Values, R&SE and a range of Extra-Curricular Opportunities.

Together, these two strands are central to our STAR Vision and Values.

We believe that Knowledge precedes skill. Students need knowledge to provide *context* to their learning and use knowledge to develop their skills. Without knowledge, students will not be able to think critically. Interleaving is at the heart of our learning journey across all subjects in every year group. In doing so, our students are developing a deep knowledge.

Our Curriculum remains as broad as possible for as long as possible to enable our students to study a strong academic core of subjects, such as those offered by the EBacc, as well as a full range of Non EBacc subjects. The Curriculum has been carefully considered to build towards what pupils need to know (*knowledge*) and be able to do (*skills*) to reach their end points.

## Background

Philips High School is characterised by high levels of deprivation and the majority of our students do not experience the range of more rounded, cultural and developmental opportunities available to their more affluent peers elsewhere. We believe that we have to do all we can to bridge this gap as a significant number of our families are unable to do so themselves. *At Philips we try to expose students to an array of cultural, religious, geographical, aspirational and activity based opportunities that they would not otherwise encounter.*

## Our Aim

The purpose of all this is to provide a future for all – we know that good exam results alone are not enough to secure a positive future. We also have to equip students with the necessary communication, social and emotional intelligence skills to thrive in the future.

At Philips there is a three-year Key Stage 3 and a two-year Key stage 4. At KS3 and KS4 the Curriculum covers all the National Curriculum programmes of study and all other statutory requirements. We also have a Character programme of study in Years 7-11.

### **The aim of KS3 is to:**

- Ensure students are 'Key Stage 4 Ready' for subjects they will continue and start with in Years 10 – 11.
- Ensure students have enough essential knowledge so that if they stop studying that subject at the end of Year 9 they have sufficient knowledge to function effectively when discussing that subject and are aware of the broader implications of that subject.
- Experience a broad curriculum including a range of Arts and Technology subjects to complement Maths and English, Sciences, Humanities and Languages.
- Ensure students have an awareness of how all subjects' impact on broader aspects of their life.

### **The aim of the KS4 curriculum is to:**

- Ensure students can access a rich curriculum and choose a broad and balanced portfolio of subjects to take to examination level.
- Enable students to achieve the best grades they can to equip them for the next stage in their *Education, Training or Employment*.

### **Subjects**

All subjects produce a Curriculum Map, which establishes their intent or Big Picture, outlines the main knowledge areas students will study throughout the academic year, the big question for all Units of Study, Assessment, Homework, Literacy, SMSC and the use of the Gatsby Benchmarks to develop and improve career provision. Unit Plans are then written for each unit.

Student progress is assessed through regular Mini Tests and more formal Key Assessed Test(s) every half term (KATS). At the end of the Academic Year, all students sit Exams in their subjects.

### **Option Process**

In the Spring Term in Year 9, students choose their options for KS4. This is to enable students the opportunity to specialise in their areas of interest, enhancing their motivation and attitudes to learning and gives them time to consolidate the skills required for examination success in each subject. *These options are structured such that we have the flexibility to ensure an appropriate suite of subjects is available to everyone.*

### **Our Pathways**

We have five separate Pathways (Aspire, Success, Inspire, Explore and Thrive) in KS4. The Aspire Pathways enables students to study the EBacc Pathway and complete 9 GCSEs, The Success Pathway is not an Ebacc pathway but still enables students to study 9 GCSEs, Our Inspire Pathway, enables our Higher Middle Ability students to complete 8 GCSE and have more time to complete more Academic subjects.

The Explore pathway, enables our Lower Middle Ability students and less able students the opportunity to complete 7 GCSE subjects. This pathway includes a core consisting of

(English Language, Literature, Maths, Combined Science, two Option subjects and then the remaining five hours split between Character, Health and Social Care, Duke of Edinburgh or Asdan lessons.

Finally, a Thrive Pathway, overseen by our SENCO which will include the core KS4 subjects, a Personal Development Curriculum and either the Duke of Edinburgh, Asdan or Enterprise Programme as above.

The Thrive Pathway is implemented in all year groups, where there is a need and a bespoke package for these students has been carefully considered for our students with additional learning needs.

We encourage an EBacc pathway where appropriate and our academic, knowledge based Curriculum helps prepare students for this route, leading to high levels of uptake. However, with no '*Options blocks*' in the process, students have the freedom to create the right set of qualifications for them. This is supported by a one-to-one interview with a Senior Leader and Head of Year to help informed and appropriate choices. We also take a flexible approach, with a system in place enabling students to change an Option should they wish to, however few students choose to do so. Further information on the process can be found in the *Option Guidance Booklets*.

### **Setting**

At Philips, students in year 7 are split into two equal ability bands. There are three sets in each band (C, O & N on the X side and U, E & R on the y side). The top set on both sides (7C and 7U) is based on Mathematics ability determined by their KS2 Scaled Scores and/or the sharing of data from the individual pupils' Primary School. The remaining two sets are set on equal ability, which again is based on KS2 Scaled scores. Other intelligence from Primary schools on the needs and complexities of individual students is also used and these are reviewed during year 7 to ensure pupils are placed in the most appropriate set and opportunities to move sets are always given.

In year 8 & 9, pupils are split into two bands, *x and y* for all subjects. Setting is based on academic ability. Those bands are reviewed in conjunction with Curriculum leaders.

Thrive students are always set in the class group N for all lessons when Thrive lessons are not taking place. This is so that they can still experience a broad curriculum and have the same opportunities as every other student. When Thrive lessons take place, these students are in the set T.

### **Two Week Timetable**

We run a two-week timetable to provide an equal allocation of Curriculum time for subjects across all Year groups. In each week there are 25 hours of lessons.

## Key Stage 3

Subjects	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	3.5 hours	3.5 hours	3.5 hours
Mathematics	3.5 hours	3.5 hours	3.5 hours
Science	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours
History	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Geography	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
RS	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour
French	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Physical Education	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
Computing	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour
Design and Technology	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour
Character	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour
Art	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour
Drama	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour
Music	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour

## Year 10 & 11

Pathway	5 Hours	4 Hours	5 Hours	2.5 Hours	2.5 Hours	2.5 Hours	2.5 Hours	1 hour
<b>ASPIRE*</b>	English	Maths	Science	MFL	Geog/His	Option 1	Option 2	PE
<b>SUCCESS</b>	English	Maths	Science	H&SC	Geog/His	Option 1	Option 2	PE
<b>INSPIRE</b>	English	Maths	Science	Character	Geog/His	Option 1	Option 2	PE
<b>EXPLORE</b>	English	Maths	Science	Character	<i>Duke of Edinburgh</i>	Option 1	Option 2	PE
<b>THRIVE</b>	English	Maths	Science		<i>Health And Social Care</i>	Intervention/ ASDAN/ 1 Option		PE

\*Character will be taught during form time and online within the Aspire pathway