

# Curriculum Policy

## St. James Senior Boys' School

### Aims of the Policy

- To set out the specific nature of the curriculum offered at St James, along with the pedagogical and educational justification for that curriculum
- To detail how the statutory requirements of the curriculum are met at St. James

### Summary of the St. James curriculum

The St James Senior Boys' School curriculum aims to educate all aspects of the students we serve: physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. The school day begins at 8:15am and finishes at 4pm and within that time students have a programme that addresses all aspects of their education. The whole of the curriculum is underpinned by our philosophical approach and the importance of stillness. Each lesson begins and ends with a short period of silence (called "the pause") and a dedication. All students also have two 5 minute periods of Quiet Time each day, where they can choose to meditate, pray or just sit and be still. Teaching this discipline inevitably develops students' higher powers of concentration as well as the ability to use reason over reacting to impulse.

Within each week, all aspects of a student are catered for. The physical is addressed by regular PE lessons, extra curricular activities (such as climbing club, ski trip, archery etc.) and for older students the extensive Friday Options programme where pupils have a wide array of sports to choose from. Intellectually, a good range of subjects are taught that cater for the strengths of different students:

- Students can take Design Technology, Art, Music and Drama

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- All three Sciences are taught separately from Year 8
- The Classical Languages; Sanskrit, Greek and Latin
- Modern Foreign Languages; Spanish, German and French
- The Humanities of Geography, History and Classical Civilisation are on offer throughout the school.
- ICT and computing is embedded throughout the curriculum to develop digital literacies.
- English and Maths are prioritized, with remedial English 'Literacy' lessons offered to specific students in the Lower School.

The emotional and spiritual aspects of a boy's education are catered for in regular Philosophy lessons, Form Periods (where Citizenship is covered in Year 10), PSHE sessions (for example; on drugs, sex and alcohol), Singing lessons, Assemblies on a common theme and special events (like 6<sup>th</sup> Form formal dinners with guest speakers) and the yearly Activities Week where pupils from Years 7-10 travel to various locations around the world for cultural and natural experiences.

Our aim for our curriculum, is that it helps form young men who:

- Have the ability to reason, be intellectually curious and good problem solvers
- Enjoy leading their peers, but who can also listen carefully and work with others
- Want to serve their community and society
- Are philosophically and spiritually curious, knowledgeable and sensitive to others
- Are disciplined, determined, courageous and hard working
- Are prepared for life in society through both their knowledge and skills

## Key Points

There are a number of key differences between the curriculum at St James and other mainstream schools that should be highlighted.

- Our focus on stillness, silence and meditation (see Aims and Ethos policy)
- Sciences taught separately from Year 8: with all Science lessons delivered in laboratories and most including a practical element
- Extensive PE programme, even for senior students
- Focus on the Classical Languages, with Sanskrit and Latin taught from Year 7 and Ancient Greek from Year 9
- Singing taught in lessons regularly for the whole school, with a focus on teaching boys how to sing in parts. This builds confidence, develops musicality and increases happiness.
- Friday Options Programme for Year 9 and above offering an extensive range of different sports both on and off site
- Clubs Period offering a diverse choice of clubs for all students (see Clubs activity list)
- Activities Week, where Years 7-10 travel overseas for one week a year in March for cultural and natural experiences
- GCSE Options chosen through the 'Stepping Into Manhood' programme at the end of Year 8, increasing focus and purpose in Year 9

## British Values

St James has been teaching 'British Values' implicitly within the academic curriculum and explicitly for many years. The Philosophy curriculum is organised around core themes that relate directly to human values such as justice, honesty, service and the understanding and celebration of other cultures and religions.

Factual ‘citizenship’ lessons are also embedded in the Year 10 Philosophy curriculum, where students are told about the workings of the British democracy and justice system. St James also is involved in discussing every significant British political decision – holding debates on the general election, Scotland leaving the UK and most recently whether or not to remain in the EU. These debates are led by members of the 6<sup>th</sup> form but are held in front of the whole school and everyone is encouraged to become actively involved. At INSETs (previously in 2014 and planned for 2018) we also discuss how the St James ethos, which promotes human values, can be embedded into the academic curriculum. Assembly themes for each term are publicised and staff are encouraged to plan lessons that make reference to the term’s theme.

## **1. Lower School Curriculum**

At Year 7 and 8, St. James Senior Boys’ School aims to provide students with a broad based curriculum, helping them to explore different subjects and areas of interest. The aim is to inspire students and light the fire of interest in particular fields of study.

At Year 7 and 8, most lessons are taught in Forms, allowing boys to forge relationships and work effectively in mixed ability groups. Mathematics and some Language classes are set.

## 1.1 Year 7 Curriculum

Academic Subjects (examined)		Non-academic subjects
English 3x Forms 5 l/p/w (incl Drama)		Drama 3x Forms (with English) 1 l/p/w – especially Term 1
Maths 4x sets 4 l/p/w	ICT 3x Forms 1 l/p/w	Philosophy 3x Forms 1 l/p/w
History 3x Forms 2 l/p/w	Geography 3x Forms 2 l/p/w	Form Period 3x Forms 1 l/p/w
Art 3x Forms 1 l/p/w	Design and Technology 3x Forms 1 l/p/w	Singing Year Group 1 l/p/w Music – 1 l/p/w per form
Latin 3x Forms 2 l/p/w	French 3x Forms 3 l/p/w	Physical Education 5 l/p/w Includes lessons on core sport (rugby/cricket) and cross country running (focus on fitness)
Sanskrit (one class, made up of boys from the Junior School who have previously studied the subject, and high achieving new boys) 2 l/p/w  The remainder of the year are on a carousel of sets of lessons on: St James Ethos, RE and English Literacy. 2 l/p/w	Science 3x Forms 2 l/p/w	Art of Science Targeted SEN pupils 2 l/p/w

## 1.2 Year 8 Curriculum

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<b>Academic Subjects (examined)</b>		<b>Non-academic subjects</b>
English 3x Forms 4 l/p/w		Drama 3x Forms 1 l/p/w
Maths 4x sets 4 l/p/w	French / German / Spanish Termly carousel 3x Forms 3 l/p/w	Philosophy 3x Forms 1 l/p/w
Art Half classes (Forms) 1 l/p/w	History 3x Forms 2 l/p/w	Singing Year Group 1 l/p/w
Design and Technology Half classes (Forms) 1 l/p/w	Chemistry 3x Forms termly carousel 3 l/p/w	Physical Education 5 l/p/w Includes lessons on core sport (rugby/cricket) and cross country running (focus on fitness)
Latin 3x Forms (set from 2014) 2 l/p/w	Biology 3x Forms termly carousel 3 l/p/w	ICT Unit delivered as part of a carousel for 1 term each class. 2 l/p/w (on a carousel with English Literacy)
Sanskrit Set 2 l/p/w For those boys not on a carousel of Computing and English Literacy.	Physics 3x Forms termly carousel 3 l/p/w	Form Period (with PSHE and Study skills sessions) 1 l/p/w
Geography 3x Forms 2 l/p/w	Music 3x Forms; 1 l/p/w	Art of Science Targeted SEN pupils 1 or 2 l/p/w

## 2. Upper School Curriculum (Years 9 -11)

At the end of Year 8, students choose their GCSE subjects. St James aims to provide a broad range of subjects. At St. James our academic aim is to enable a boy to develop

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his powers of reason. Each subject provides a unique discipline and helps develop reason in different ways, hence the balance of subjects is important as well as responding to the needs and talents of the young man.

All boys take the following academic subjects:

English Language	English Literature	Mathematics
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Boys are given free choice of other subjects to choose, constrained only by the matrix below in which they choose one subject from each band. The bandings are reviewed each year to enable maximum subject choice for boys. Boys will study eight subjects leading to 9 GCSEs (with English counting twice for literature and language). To enable a well-rounded education, boys are encouraged to take:

- at least one Language
- at least one Humanity
- at least one Science

Boys discuss their choices with the Deputy Head Academic, the Academic Director and subject teachers to ensure a balanced curriculum.

Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6
Chemistry	Chemistry	Physics	Physics	Spanish	French
German	Geography	Computing	Chemistry	Biology	Biology
Music	Latin	Art / Photography	Classical Civilisation	Latin	Design Tech
Physical Education	Drama	History	Design Technology	History	Religious Studies
Physics	Biology	Geography	Sanskrit	Geography	

This matrix is valid for Year 9. Minor modifications to the Matrix are made if needed to accommodate boys' choices. A boy does one subject from each column for 2 ½ lessons per week in Year 9 and 3 lessons per week in Years 10 and 11. The curriculum is organised over a 2 week timetable.

## 2.1 Extra GCSEs

Boys with higher ability (Gifted/Talented students identified as part of the Academic Enrichment programme) are offered a 10<sup>th</sup> GCSE. This is taught outside the Banding. It includes an Extra Greek class (currently Year 9, 10 & 11), an extra Sanskrit class (Year 11), Extra Music (Year 11). Two to three periods per week are found for these lessons (in Registration Periods, Activities, Assemblies etc.)

## **2.2 Non-examined Subjects**

All boys will take the following non-examinable subjects: Drama, Philosophy (which includes key PSHE topic Sex and Relationship Education, one lesson per week), Careers education (in Year 9 delivered during Form Periods), Citizenship (as part of Form Period in the Upper School – with a particular focus in Year 10) and PSHE (with a focus on drugs and alcohol in Year 10 and economic education in Year 11, in Form Periods and Special Assemblies).

## **2.3 Physical Education (non-Examined)**

All boys in Year 9 have 4 periods of PE. They have one period of ‘Sports Leadership’ shared across the year with Careers education delivered during the Form Period. Furthermore, they have 2 more hours of the Friday Options programme where a number of Physical Activities are available (over 15 per term), which can include; fencing, kayaking, squash, judo, cross country running, sailing and cricket nets. This totals 355 minutes per week of Sports Activities per week.

In Years 10-13, students have 2 lessons of PE per week (with a third is added if required for a fixture), along with an after school Squad training lesson for 1 hour. They also take part in the Friday Options physical programme (see above). This totals 215 minutes per week (275 minutes including Squad Training).

## **3. 6<sup>th</sup> Form Curriculum**

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In the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, St James offers a wide range of A Level subjects. Students choose three A Level subjects to follow for two years. In exceptional circumstances some students will take a fourth subject, often further maths. Our curriculum matrix is flexible, allowing us to tailor the timetable to our individual students' needs. Each A Level subject receives six lessons per week.

<b>A Levels Subjects offered</b>	
Chemistry	Politics
Geography	Spanish
Physics	Ancient History
Biology	History
Mathematics	Greek
Further Mathematics	Latin
Economics	Sanskrit
English Literature	French
German	Drama
Religious Studies	Computing
Music	Design & Technology
<b>BTEC Subjects offered</b>	
Business Studies 6 Units	Business Studies 12 Units

The wider curriculum is also covered in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form through special events and programmed courses. For example, 6<sup>th</sup> Form students have 'Life Compass' days with a guest trainer, who goes through setting goals for a successful life. They are taught financial skills and also have an extensive UCAS programme preparing their University applications and also preparing them for University life. Special Philosophy sessions are also delivered during the day and at 6<sup>th</sup> Form dinners and students also attend Model United Nations, Debating and Specialised Lectures with the St James Senior Girls School. During the academic year 2018-9 a new course on the 'power of knowledge' is being trailed to prepare pupils for undergraduate study. The 6<sup>th</sup> Form also take part in school wide events such as the speech and music competitions, the Christmas Service and the Summer Concert.

## **4. Assemblies**

All pupils in the school regularly attend whole school and Year Group Assemblies. PSHE is taught through Assemblies, including specific Assemblies on current issues, drugs, sex education, internet safety and study skills. An Anglican minister is also attached to the school and delivers Christian themed assemblies once every half term. Students are encouraged to take Assemblies themselves, as are all staff members, on issues that are important to them, academic interests and religious festivals. Assemblies are organised around a termly theme, although can be flexible so as to respond to important international events.

## **5. Careers and Work Experience**

A Careers Programme exists for the whole school. It comprises a number of specific activities planned through all Year levels. They include: Business and Enterprise days (with the Girls' School); University visits; UCAS statement workshops; Work Experience Placements; Taught careers education in lessons and Form periods; Career Aptitude Testing; Library Resource Centre; Individual Meetings with career expert(s); Bi-annual Careers Fair (with the Girls School).

## **6. Clubs, Societies and Clinics**

One lesson per week is devoted to student suggested Clubs and Societies. These generally are not sporting related, so as not to clash with the Friday Options programme. Clubs on offer change each year depending on staff expertise but can include Chess and Scrabble, Comics, Indian Vedic Astrology, Bird Watching (summer), Photoshop and Cadets weapon handling. Their aim is for pupils to expand their interest in any particular area, as well as giving them a chance to

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socialise with different age groups. Clinics are also run by departments to assist specific students with skills and are generally by invitation.

Clubs run in the first half of each term and in the second half boys experience a programme of headmaster's question time, a whole school debate and lectures on a specific theme or topic.

## **7. Special Events**

An important part of the St James curriculum is the regular special events. The school calendar lists these and individual departments are responsible for organising them. They range from Year group trips to Art Galleries to Speech and Music Competitions; lectures and workshops by specialized experts to role-playing Geography days. Events and trips are used to inspire and motivate the students.

## **8. Homework**

Homework is seen as an essential part of the curriculum offered. Year 7 and 8 have a specific homework timetable, which they follow and they receive approximately 60 minutes of work per evening and on the weekend, set on a particular night and handed in the next day. They also have a 20 minute 'learning' homework which can be set by any subject or teacher (for example, lines in a play, language vocabulary, etc). Years 9 and above are set homework and given at least 3 nights to complete it – on average they do between 90 and 120 minutes per evening but they are given the freedom to manage this workload so that it can work with outside school commitments such as sporting clubs. Homework is also posted on line.

## **9. On Line Resources**

St James operates the Firefly system for online resources. All pupils and parents have access to the system and teachers regularly require students to use it to complete work and homework.

## **10. Learning Support**

St James has a dedicated Learning Support Unit that offers one-to-one tutorials to boys with Special Learning Needs as well as in-class support. The Learning Support team and the teaching staff assess pupils. Individual Education Plans are written for boys with Special Learning Needs and communicated to the teaching staff.