

## **ST CYRES CURRICULUM STATEMENT**

### **DEFINITION**

The term 'curriculum' covers everything that is taught and learnt in school, whether it is deliberately planned or not. Its contents include not only what is learned from the work of the teacher in the classroom, but also the attitudes instilled in pupils from day to day incidental contacts with staff and from the those created by our values and our beliefs as a community. These values, such as the quality of relationships, the concern for equality of opportunity, high expectations and the way the school is organised, produce our school's unique ethos.

In its widest sense, our curriculum is the whole range of learning experiences both formal and informal, which we offer our pupils. It is the means by which we set out to achieve our aims.

### **AIMS**

From the general aims of the school it follows that our curriculum should be pupil-centred.

At St Cyres School we seek in our curriculum and organisation :

#### **Mission Statement :**

**Strive  
Together**

**Challenge  
Yourself  
Realise  
Everyone can  
Succeed**

- To provide all members of the school with the widest range of educational opportunities in a well structured, orderly, secure, caring and happy environment
  - To maximise the potential of all pupils so that they all have the opportunity to experience success and achieve the highest academic standards of which they are capable.
  - To promote a life-long enjoyment of learning, celebrate success, value effort and learn from our failures.
  - To recognise achievements of all kinds and refuse to accept underachievement.
  - To prepare all pupils for life in the Twenty First Century with the key skills they will require at work, as citizens and at leisure.
- 
- To develop self-discipline, self-esteem and self-motivation.
  - To promote tolerance and equality of opportunity for all.

- To respect, value and be considerate and courteous towards all members of the community within and beyond school including their religious and moral values, races and ways of life.
- To have pride in the school, the community and ourselves.
- To recognise our responsibilities towards the community and help those who are less fortunate than ourselves.
- To develop and maintain close and effective links with parents, employers, Further and Higher Education.
- To develop and care for the environment both within and beyond school.
- To recruit, develop and retain a highly skilled and motivated staff.

In addition to the school aims, the curriculum also seeks to:

- Develop lively, enquiring minds, particularly the ability to question and argue rationally
- Develop key, personal, social and learning skills which will help them in adult life
- Provide pupils with a full and rounded entitlement to learning
- Foster pupils' creativity
- Promote a healthy lifestyle, physical fitness and a respect for the environment
- Inspire pupils to a commitment to learning which will last a lifetime
- Promote high standards in all learning and teaching

The school's curriculum follows statutory requirements and the requirements of the National Curriculum.

It is balanced and broadly based, and promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and of society, and prepares our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Pupils are expected to acquire the key skills of communication, application of number and ICT, in addition to the wider key skills of improving own learning and performance, working with others and problem solving.

Personal, social, health and citizenship education reflect the school's aims and ethos and aim to assist pupils in:

- Developing a set of values, a respect for truth and a capacity for self-discipline and enjoyment
- Gaining a sense of personal dignity and self-esteem
- Seeking to fulfil the highest expectations of themselves
- Becoming aware of the needs of others in the community and the need to help them

- Making the experience of full-time education enjoyable as a realistic preparation for adulthood

Religious education is also provided for all pupils and a programme of careers education is followed.

Appropriate programmes of activity are provided for pupils who are above or below the compulsory school age.

An appropriate programme of enterprise education is provided.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Entry to all programmes of study is based on academic suitability and appropriateness, regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief. The school has a separate policy for equal opportunities.

Disabilities: in accordance with the statutory requirements, the school aims to make the curriculum accessible to all pupils as far as is reasonably practicable. The school has an Accessibility Plan which is available to parents on request.

### **DIFFERENTIATION**

A variety of different teaching and learning methods and materials are used in all courses to suit pupils' different needs. This is covered in greater detail in the school's Teaching and Learning Policy.

### **PRINCIPLES FOR CURRICULUM DESIGN**

The 11-16 curriculum will be based upon an entitlement curriculum which will allow for differentiation by setting, where appropriate and possible, but will embody the principle of equality of opportunity in terms of access.

### **TRANSITION**

The transition process at St. Cyres begins in September and carries on throughout the academic year. Before the end of September, the Headteacher and the Director of Key Stage 3 accompanied by a group of Year 7 pupils visit all feeder schools to talk about St. Cyres and invite all Year 5 pupils to attend the Open Evening which takes place in October. During the year, a number of activities and visits are organised by the various departments and include St. Cyres teachers visiting the primary schools and teaching alongside their Year 6 teachers.

In July, the Induction Day takes place when the new Year 7 attend St Cyres for the whole day. They are put into their new forms, meet their Learning Coach and sample lessons throughout the day. The St. Cyres Passport is given out and all pupils have the opportunity to start collecting their first visas. In the evening, there is a meeting for their parents/guardians where all information is distributed.

The final transition event is the music concert where Year 6 join with St. Cyres to present a concert for parents.

The school will also seek to work with partnership schools and Higher Education institutions, as well as Careers Wales, to provide a series of pathways for pupils into Higher Education and beyond to meet the needs of lifelong learners.

## **SUBJECTS OFFERED**

### **Key Stage 3**

At KS3, the curriculum follows the guidelines of the national curriculum.

Year 7 curriculum is : English 6 lessons/hours per fortnight (to include Drama), Mathematics 6, Modern Language 5, Welsh 4, Science 7, Religious Education 2, Geography 3, History 3, Technology 4, Art 2, Music 2, PE and Games 4, Personal and Social Education 1, Information Technology 1.

The main foreign language taught to all Year 7 classes on the Penarth site and on the Dinas Powys site rotates each year between French and German. A limited number of pupils who make outstanding linguistic progress will have the opportunity to take a second foreign language a year later.

These subjects cover vital areas of experience: the ethical, the spiritual, aesthetic/creative, the linguistic, the mathematical, the scientific, the physical and the social experiences. We maintain this balance throughout the first five years of secondary education. Year 7 pupils will be placed in Form Groups for registration and will be taught in broad bands based loosely on ability levels as dictated by the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils will be placed in ability sets for Mathematics.

In Year 8 the curriculum remains the same as Year 7 but there will be some setting in Languages.

In Year 9 the curriculum remains the same but there are slight changes in the allocation of periods to certain subjects : Geography 4, History 4, PE and Games 3. There is additional setting in English, Science and Geography.

### **Key Stage 4**

The KS4 curriculum is designed to allow progression from KS3 to 4 and from KS4 to Post-16 studies. Pupils follow one of four pathways:

- **Pathway 1** would normally lead to Advanced Level study and Higher Education. It would be suited to students who are expected to achieve level 5 and above in year 9.
- **Pathway 2** provides examples of routes which will provide a more practically focussed curriculum or one which specialises in a vocational route. They will primarily prepare children for advanced courses in further education, modern apprenticeships or a vocationally biased university education. These pathways are best suited to students which are likely to achieve level 4 in year 9.

- **Pathways 3 and 4** will be recommended to some children in full consultation with their parents. These children are likely to be on the register of pupils with Special Educational Needs. **Pathway 3** provides an entry level curriculum. **Pathway 4** provides an alternative curriculum route, both in school and out of school, for pupils for whom a full time education in school is not appropriate.

The school is piloting the Welsh Baccalaureate at Foundation and Intermediate Level for two groups of pupils in KS4.

In particular the inclusion of vocational courses at KS4 is designed to allow all pupils to develop and follow a variety of pathways to Higher and Further Education and training. A small number of pupils follow an Alternative Curriculum.

The Alternative Curriculum is run by training providers that are based in Barry, Penarth and Cardiff. They offer opportunities for pupils to gain experience in the work environment, also giving them the chance to gain NVQs. It is designed to assist the pupils in developing their key skills areas.

All pupils will be required to study the National Curriculum Core: English (language and literature), Mathematics, Science and Welsh. In addition to this core, all pupils are required by law to pursue courses in: Religious Education, Physical Education and Personal Social Education.

The option subjects available to pupils include: History, Geography, Art, Religious Studies, French, German, Music,

There are also a number of new subjects available to pupils: Business Studies, Music Technology, Information Technology, Media Studies, Drama, Office Technology, Catering, Sociology, Child Development, Photography, Physical Education and various Design Technology courses.

In addition the school offers Vocational GCSEs in Health & Social Care, Leisure & Tourism and Information Technology.

Each qualification will offer the full range of GCSE grades.

### **Sixth Form**

Pupils stay on to take a variety of courses to AS level leading to a full A level at the end of Year 13, in addition to studying for the Welsh Baccalaureate. At present we have a Sixth Form of over 250 students.

The entry requirements and courses offered to pupils are set out in more detail in the Sixth Form Option Booklet.

All students in the Sixth Form study for the Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma. Achieving this broad ranging qualification attracts 120 UCAS or university entrance points, the equivalent of an A grade in an A Level subject.

The WBQ consists of a study of key issues in Wales, Europe and the World, as well as Personal and Social Education. All students complete a thirty hour community participation, an enterprise activity and work experience. An important part of the WBQ is the Individual Investigation which students complete as a PowerPoint presentation. Finally the Advanced Diploma requires all students achieve all six key skills. These are Communication, Information Technology, Application of Number, Improving Own Learning and Performance, Problem Solving and Working With Others.

## **CURRICULUM ORGANISATION**

Pupils who enter St Cyres School will vary considerably in their overall potential and attainment and the aim of the school must be to ensure that each pupil reaches their full potential. This is to be achieved through the work of the SEN Department, the Co-ordinator for Special Abilities Pupils and through the work of all the teachers in the school.

In order to achieve these aims, upon entry the pupils in Year 7 are placed in broad ability bands across the two sites, the SEN pupils being placed on the Penarth site. This SEN class will be fewer in number than other classes. Placement in bands and sets is produced as result of the transition data available from Primary Schools and is decided upon by a meeting of the school's Academic Board, which consists of appropriate Heads of Year and the Heads of the three Core Faculties. Pupils are also tested upon entry in Year 7 using CATs.

Pupils are encouraged to integrate outside of their ability bands through participation in clubs, sporting activities, school productions and play. All pupils are given the opportunity to take part in at least one extra-curricular activity.

Setting in Mathematics takes place upon entry and is further refined after the first half-term.

## **DISAPPLICATION**

In accordance with the law, the school, has the right to respond to individual needs by modifying the National Curriculum programmes, or disapplying the National Curriculum for the duration of KS4 to:

- Allow a pupil to participate in extended work-related learning
- Allow a pupil with individual strengths to emphasise a particular curriculum area
- Allow a pupil making significantly less progress than other pupils of his/her age to consolidate his/her learning and progress across the curriculum.

Decisions about any of the above will only be made after discussion with the pupil and parent.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Religious Education is available to all pupils. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education.

The Religious Education curriculum follows the Vale of Glamorgan Agreed Syllabus at all key stages.

In Years 7-9, the focus is mainly on the four major world religions of Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. In Years 10 and 11 all pupils follow the WJEC Short Course in Religious Education, with the focus on Christianity and Islam.

In years 12 and 13, Religious Studies is offered as an option at AS/A level following modules in Ethics, Philosophy and Buddhism. Statutory Religious Studies in years 12 and 13 is provided for all students through the Welsh Baccalaureate Core.

### **Collective Worship**

All pupils are expected to take part in daily collective worship. The school has a programme of collective worship involving year group assemblies, lower school assemblies and tutor periods. A programme is in place which covers a number of themes; these are common to all year groups and form the basis for assemblies and 'thought for the day' sessions during tutor period.

## **SEX EDUCATION**

The school provides sex education in the basic curriculum for all pupils, in which pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life.

All full statement of the school's sex education policy is available to parents. It has been drawn up in consultation with staff, pupils and parents, and takes into account the views of representatives from the community. It has regard for the government's guidance in *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (0116/2000)*.

**In accordance with the law the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all pupils, but parents may withdraw their children from any part of the sex education provided without giving reasons.**

## **POLITICAL EDUCATION**

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school is forbidden by law. Political issues are introduced in a number of courses and are presented in a balanced manner.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND GAMES**

All pupils are expected to take part in the school's Physical Education and Games programme. Pupils can only be excused from PE and Games lessons for medical reasons, for which a note from a parent will suffice, or other reasons agreed with the school.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The school has a wide and varied programme of cultural and sporting activities that take place outside the formal curriculum. All pupils are expected to take part in the programme. There is an annual audit of extra-curricular activities which is then made available to all pupils.

## **CURRICULUM CYMRAEG**

The Curriculum Cymraeg is developed within the whole school curriculum to help instil the sense of Welsh identity within our pupils.

Welsh is taught as a second language to all pupils to the end of KS4. There is a school Eisteddfod each year on Saint David's Day, when pupils compete in a wide range of events for their school houses.

In addition, pupils follow the Curriculum Cymraeg in each subject, where appropriate. This is available in more detail in schemes of work.

## **HOMEWORK**

The school expects homework to be set and completed as appropriate and a separate homework policy has been produced. As guidance the school expects pupils to spend the following times on homework:

Years 7 and 8 - 45 to 90 minutes per day.

Year 9 - 1 to 2 hours per day.

Years 10 and 11 - 1 to 2 hours per day.

Years 12 and 13 - this is subject specific.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

The school has a special educational needs policy for statemented and non-statemented pupils which is available separately. The school will determine the appropriate courses in consultation with the parents.

## **CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the pupil's Head of Year. This may then be referred to the Deputy Head with responsibility for the curriculum. A Complaints Procedure document is available separately.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy will be monitored by the Deputy Head with responsibility for the curriculum, who will report to the Headteacher on its implementation on a regular basis.

The Headteacher will report to the governing body's Curriculum Committee on the progress of the policy and will recommend any changes.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of the Governing Body**

July 2008