WESTHOLME

PREP | SENIORS | SIXTH FORM

SENIORS CURRICULUM POLICY

Reviewed:	September 2026
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Produced by:	Senior Deputy Head
Approved by:	Governor Education Committee
Cross referencing	Learning & Teaching Policy SEND Policy Equal Opportunities Policy Accessibility Policy PSHE (including RSE) Policy EAL Reporting and Assessment Marking and Feedback Scholarship

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The School will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

1 Introduction

The aims of the curriculum are:

- to provide full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age, which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;
- that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
- to provide personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aim and ethos; and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010;
- for pupils receiving secondary education, to provide access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner and enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
- for any pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills;
- where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, to provide a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs;
- that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress;
- to provide effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

As a school we will give experience in the following areas:

Linguistic - This area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Mathematical - This area helps pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics will be developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion.

Scientific - This area is concerned with increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry.

Technological - Technological skills can include the use of information and communication technology (ICT); developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products; and evaluating processes and products.

Human and social - This area is concerned with people and their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. The subjects of English, history, geography and religious education and religious studies make a strong contribution to this area.

Physical - This area aims to develop the pupils' physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. Pupils will also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health.

Aesthetic and creative - This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing and appreciating. There are aesthetic and creative aspects of all subjects, but some make a

particularly strong contribution, including art, music, drama and the study of literature, because they call for personal, imaginative, and often practical, responses.

1.1 We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, which provides continuity and progression and fosters moral, cultural, aesthetic and physical development. The curriculum has been devised to be appropriate to students' ages, abilities and aptitudes, in order to foster talents and fulfil potential. We expect students to take responsibility for their own work and to be willing to take advantage of the intellectual challenges which are offered to them; we encourage them to question rather than to accept the received wisdom without thought. Our aim, as we deliver the curriculum, is that students will become independent thinkers and develop into lifelong learners, and that they will leave school as informed, cultured, civilised and skilled young people, prepared for higher education, the workplace and the opportunities, responsibilities, challenges and experiences of British Society and indeed any community in which they live.

1.2 Only when students are happy and secure can meaningful and productive learning take place, so we recognise the importance of strong pastoral support; we take a keen interest in each student's learning and development as they progress through the school. Careers advice and guidance about subject choices, higher education courses and the world of work are vital and are provided to students throughout the school.

1.3 The breadth of the curriculum, from Year 7 up to the end of Year 11, gives students experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. Through these subject areas, they will acquire and develop skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy to a high standard. Within both the academic and pastoral curricula, students are encouraged to explore and understand multiple viewpoints and perspectives.

1.4 The curriculum is designed to be inclusive, to allow for different learning profiles and prior learning experiences, but at the same time to ensure that there is a match between each student and the tasks they are asked to perform. Subject matter is designed to be appropriate for the ages, aptitudes and needs of all students, including, if applicable, those with special educational needs (with or without an EHC plan).

1.5 Although selective on entry, we recognise that we have a cohort of students with a range of abilities, but majority lie within the average ability range. At Seniors, MidYis cohort overall scores are between 104.1 – 108.4, with individual MidYis scores ranging between 78 – 142. Our long-term expectations for each student are very high. However, individual students' abilities and levels of confidence will vary across subjects, topics and tasks and our curriculum is designed so that teachers provide appropriate challenge across all areas of learning.

1.6 Our learning and teaching focuses on 'teaching to the top' and schemes of work include scaffolded activities to ensure that all students can access the highest outcomes. Students are taught in sets in Mathematics (Years 7 – 11) and Science (Years 9 and above); they are also given additional individual support or challenge by their teachers as and when this is required. In Mathematics, where appropriate, students are advised to study a Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics, taking these examinations, alongside their GCSE Mathematics exams in June of Year 11.

1.7 See Appendix 2 for more information about provision for more able students across the curriculum.

1.8 All students have the opportunity to learn, develop and make progress through access to:

- a broad and balanced curriculum;

- equitable access to all curriculum areas regardless of ability;
- a learning and teaching approach which embodies at its heart the principles of enabling each student to have and fulfil the highest possible expectations of themselves, and which encourages independent thinking and learning (see the Learning and Teaching Policy);
- flexibility of teaching to allow for different learning needs;
- support from the Individual SEND Department in order to assess special educational needs or individual learning needs and offer any specific support required at any stage of their school career (see SEND Policy);
- regular, constructive feedback on progress to students and their parents with challenging and attainable targets for improvement (see Marking & Reporting Policy and Assessment Policy);
- a coherent programme of personal, social, health, economic and citizenship education which reflects the school's aims and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and any relevant legislation or statutory guidance (see the Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship Policy, the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy, the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy and the Equal Opportunities Policy);
- wide-ranging opportunities, both within the curriculum and as extra-curricular activities, for students to be involved in creative and performing arts;
- opportunities for cross-curricular work to encourage teamwork as well as independent thinking and learning;
- a diverse range of extra-curricular opportunities which enrich and extend the school curriculum, help students to develop a sense of responsibility and raise self-esteem;
- accurate, up to date and impartial higher education and careers advice, which enables students to make informed choices about a broad range of study and career options and opportunities for work-related learning, and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential; and
- opportunities for students to serve their community through voluntary work.

1.9 The curriculum has been designed to help students to develop lively and enquiring minds, a love of learning, the ability to question and argue rationally, listen and communicate effectively and apply themselves to tasks both cognitive and physical.

1.10 In their delivery of the curriculum, staff are encouraged to promote the school's aims and ethos and the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance. This is done through offering a balanced presentation of opposing views when political issues arise, having clear expectations of behaviour, treating students equally, listening to their opinions and encouraging them to work collaboratively.

1.11 The curriculum is reviewed continuously to ensure that it remains linked to the needs and aspirations of students, allowing them to reach their full academic potential, whilst also enabling them to acquire knowledge and skills which will be up-to-date and relevant to adult life and employment in the context of a fast-changing world.

1.12 Our curriculum promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It is demonstrated by the effective implementation of appropriate plans and schemes of work.

2 Details and implementation of the curriculum: Years 7 - 11

2.1 From Sept 2026, in Years 7 and 8, all students study the following subjects: Design Technology, English, Drama, History, Geography, Ethics, Philosophy and Religion (EPR), Mathematics, Science, Art, Music, Physical Education and Games, Computing, Psychology, Economics and Politics (PEP), Spanish, Wellbeing and PSHE (including RSE)

From October half-term of Year 7 students are taught in sets for Mathematics. Setting is constantly reviewed, with the opportunity for students to move from one to set to the other, where appropriate. All students study PSHE for one lesson a week.

2.3 In Year 9, students continue to study the following subjects: English, Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Chemistry; Spanish or German, at least two humanities (from History, Geography and EPR), PEP, Art, D&T, Computing, Drama, Music, PE and Games. The subjects they study start to lay the foundations for GCSE study. All students study PSHE for one lesson a week.

2.4 GCSE Subjects:

2.4.1 In Years 10 and 11 all students study the core curriculum: English, English Literature and Mathematics. Students opt for one of two pathways in Science: Separate Science (3 GCSEs) or Combined Science (2 GCSEs).

2.4.2 Students then have a free choice of either three or four subjects (depending on their choice of scientific route) from, Geography, History, EPR, , German, Spanish, Art, Photography, Dance, Drama, Music, Physical Education, Design and Technology (Product Design), Computer Science and Business Studies. Some students may also follow the Level 2 course in Further Mathematics.

2.4.3 All Year 10 and 11 students follow courses in PSHE (including RSE) and Physical Education and Games.

2.5 The school week works on a two-week timetable consisting of 60 fifty-five-minute periods and daily five-minute morning registration slot. There is a 15-minute assembly / pastoral slot every morning, all fully supervised. Each area of the curriculum is allowed sufficient time for its contribution to be effective.

2.6 Time allocations for each subject from Years 7 - 11 are shown in the table in Appendix 1 to this policy.

3 The post 16 curriculum

3.1 The post 16 curriculum is responsive to the needs and demands of students; it offers a broad range of academic courses, together with: an enrichment and lecture programme; a pastoral programme which incorporates PSHE and RSE; the opportunity to complete wider qualifications, including an extended project (A Level); and guidance appropriate to Sixth Form study. There are also many opportunities for leadership for INSPIRED Sixth Form students, both in terms of school leadership roles in the Student Executive and through schemes such as mentoring. ISF subject ambassadors lead and interact with younger students in their nominated Departmental areas; House Captains take on the composition and direction of House plays, as well as whole school events.

3.2 The post 16 curriculum helps to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life in British Society and indeed in any environment in which they may choose

to live and/or work. They leave school as confident lifelong learners with a responsible attitude to the world in which they live.

3.3 A Level Choices:

3.3.1 In the Sixth Form students study A Levels. Subjects offered include all those offered at GCSE. New subjects are also offered as follows: Economics, Politics, Psychology and Sociology. Westholme also offers L3 BTECs in Sport and Exercise, Performing Arts and Music Technology.

3.3.2 In the Sixth Form A Level and BTEC subjects are taught on six periods per week each over two years. Most students study three subjects, though a small number may continue through the Sixth Form with four subjects. Some students who study A Level mathematics may also study Further Mathematics. The Year 12 programme also includes the level of teaching, support and advice required in order for students to complete the AQA Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Through working towards their EPQ students will gain valuable experience in independent research as well as a deeper knowledge and understanding of a topic of interest to them.

3.3.3 Sixth Form students also have a double Enrichment slot on a Wednesday afternoon which enables them to experience wider opportunities, which outside of the curriculum, enable students to develop their communication, leadership and confidence. Activities typically offered in the Enrichment programme include: Debating; Ice Skating, Climbing, preparation for Drama productions, Charity & Amnesty group, WSS News, Westies (school-based shop and enterprise) and Sport.

3.3.4 There are also additional qualifications and opportunities offered for students in three 55-minute lessons slots –Tuesday period 3 and Friday period 3 and 4 to give students further opportunity to develop their skillset and wider experience of the world. These qualifications and wider opportunities include: CSLA Sports Leadership Award, Model United Nations, BSL and Deaf Awareness certificate.

4 Higher Education and Careers Advice and Guidance

4.1 The school provides a comprehensive programme of Higher Education and Careers information, advice and guidance sessions, workshops and activities to each student throughout their years at Westholme. This programme recognises that all of our students are individuals with different skills, aspirations and life goals. The programme is designed to encourage them to identify their aspirations, to build on their strengths, and work on those areas that they could develop further. This is in preparation for making informed decisions about their academic life and future careers, to allow them to fulfil their potential in whichever professional area(s) they choose. All advice and guidance is impartial and is designed to counter gender and other stereotypes.

4.2 The Head of Careers works closely with form tutors and Heads of Year in planning the schedule for the programme, which includes:

4.2.1 Advice and Guidance on subject choices and higher education options (from Year 9 upwards), the core of which is individualised advice and guidance. An understanding of the student's aspirations, goals, skills and academic interests form the basis of discussion about options at every stage at which decisions have to be made; the aim is to give the student the information with which to make informed choices about the next step. Students can also drop-in to the Higher Education and Careers room for informal discussions or with queries or questions. The Head of Careers attends all relevant Parents' Evenings.

4.2.2 The careers programme, devised in-house by the Head of Careers, interweaves skills development and self-awareness with an understanding of the breadth of opportunities available in the C21 workplace (throughout the school).

4.3 The programme includes year group meetings and activities, form group sessions, and individual meetings to discuss each student's specific aspirations and goals. In addition to the times in a student's school career when individual meetings are scheduled, students (and their parents) can request a meeting at any stage during their school career. The in-house guidance is supplemented with talks from external speakers and students are also encouraged to undertake work experience at the end of Year 11 after their GCSE examinations.

4.4 The principles on which the programme was devised, and is delivered, are in concordance with DfE advice: Careers Guidance and access for education and training providers (October 2018) and aim to fulfil the best practice outlined by the Gatsby Benchmarks.

5 Ensuring access to the Curriculum for all Pupils

5.1 The school recruits well-qualified subject specialists to allow each area of the curriculum to be taught by those with a high level of subject expertise.

5.2 Training and professional development opportunities are provided for all staff to enhance the delivery of the curriculum and to keep teachers informed of current initiatives and developments relating to their subject areas.

5.3 Teachers prepare schemes of work which ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively with regard to differentiation, the needs of individual students from all ethnic and social groups, the most able and those who are experiencing learning difficulties.

5.4 Additional literacy / numeracy support lessons are offered, by the SEND Department, to those students who are identified as having particular learning needs. When a student is identified as having individual learning needs his / her teachers will be informed by the SENDCo, with advice given as to how they can best support him / her and help him / her to access all areas of the curriculum. The progress of all students who have been identified as having individual learning needs is reviewed annually.

6 Review and Evaluation

6.1 Heads of Departments are responsible for their departmental development plans which share the same areas of focus as the whole school priorities. Development plans are reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis.

6.2 Heads of Departments' meetings are held every term to review and evaluate the curriculum and our academic provision.

APPENDIX 1 - Curriculum structure – 2026/27: 2-week TT (55 min per lesson)

Y7

English	Maths	Science	PSHE	EPR	History	Geog	Spanish	PEP	W/being	Art	Tech	Comp.	Drama	Music	PE	Games
8	8	8	2	3	3	3	4	2	1	2	4	2	2	2	2	4

Y8

English	Maths	Science	PSHE	EPR	History	Geog	Spanish	PEP	W/being	Art	Tech	Comp.	Drama	Music	PE	Games
7	8	8	2	3	3	3	4	3	1	2	4	2	2	2	2	4

Y9

English	Maths	Separate Sciences	PSHE	Hum 1	Hum 2	PEP	Ger / Sp	Music	Drama	Comp	Art	Tech	PE	Games
7	8	12	2	3	3	3	4	2	2	2	2	4	2	4

Y10 & Y11

English (2 GCSEs)	Maths	Sciences (2 GCSEs)	PSHE	Option W	Option X	Option Y	Option Z	Games
10	8	12	2	6	6	6	6	4

Y12 & 13

PSHE	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D	Enrichment	Additional Qual
2	6	6	6	6	4	4

APPENDIX 2

1: Provision for more able students

1.1. Exceptionally able pupils will be supported in exploring opportunities for independent study beyond the school curriculum, such as:

- Annual Oxbridge visit to explore and experience life at Oxford / Cambridge University
- Access to UniFrog – a tailored programme to support students with the next steps in their education, offering access to FE courses as well as guidance into University courses and the application process
- The opportunity to act as a subject mentor to younger students, further developing communication and leadership skills, as well as supporting subjects in wider, whole events such as Options Evening and whole school assemblies

In addition, the school provides flexible and individual curriculum adjustment for a number of students who are following elite sporting programmes or engaged in unusually extensive performance preparation outside school, e.g. in music, drama or dance.

2. Teaching for Challenge: within the classroom:

2.1. We aim to present challenge to our learners at all levels.

Some of the many ways this is achieved are:

- a focus on metacognition so that students have an awareness of, and take control of, their own learning
- use of open-ended tasks, enabling all learners to respond at their own level
- encouraging evaluation and analysis and avoiding over-emphasis on right/wrong answers
- open-ended questioning; asking pupils to justify their answers and respond in greater depth
- problem-solving activities of varying levels of difficulty
- building resilience to keep going; discussing strategies for what students should do when they get stuck
- encouraging self-assessment and target setting
- focusing on process rather than outcome to encourage risk-taking
- opportunities for collaboration and debate
- differentiated homework tasks
- developing cross-curricular awareness
- using library resources to encourage wider reading
- promoting external events, such as lectures, and encouraging participation in external competitions

2.2. In all areas of the curriculum the emphasis is on encouraging students to think for themselves. We believe that depth of knowledge and good learning habits, which equip students for post-16 study and beyond, are more important than accelerated learning and the acquisition of a host of GCSEs.