

WOLVERHAMPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

CURRICULUM POLICY (SENIOR)

Statutory Requirements

WGS is a selective, co-educational, socially diverse day school providing full time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age and above. The curriculum offered to pupils is broad and balanced, appropriate for their ages and aptitudes, with equal access for all to linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative areas as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and of society in order to prepare our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life and British society. As they progress, pupils acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy; fundamental British values are promoted where relevant in curriculum policies, plans and schemes of work “such that pupils are prepared for the responsibilities and experiences of life in a British society”. Appropriate Careers information and guidance is also provided for all pupils as they progress through the School. The curriculum in each subject is designed to offer continuity and progression of learning and be appropriate to the age and aptitude of every pupil, including those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Flexibility and Individual Learning

The School works hard to ensure that programmes of study are suited to all and that subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those with an EHCP. Differentiation of learning experience ensures that there is access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress. Attention is given at all levels to pupils reflecting upon the process of learning. Each department identifies the Gifted and Talented cohort within their subject. Extension work is provided to stretch the most able and colleagues suggest progression routes for the most talented.

Subject Advice

Through the House tutor system, presentations in assemblies and information evenings, pupils are helped to make the best possible choices of GCSE/IGCSE and Sixth Form (A level and Cambridge technical) courses. Guidance is given appropriately and impartially to whole cohorts and their parents in such presentations and individual pupils by House Tutors, Heads of Houses, subject teachers, Heads of Department, and members of SMT. The Careers department is involved in this process throughout the school.

Curriculum Structure

With oversight from the Academic Deputy, the academic programme is delivered over a two-week timetable with six periods per day, each lasting 50 minutes. This model was introduced in September 2015.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9)

Students study a wide range of subjects in Years 7 to 9 to allow them the opportunity to discover their interests and strengths for academic study in the future as well as developing a variety of general and subject specific skills. Contact time is prioritised for English and Maths, the sciences are taught separately, with broad parity given to the remaining subjects. Students have the opportunity at the end of Year 8 to choose mini-options in Computer Science, Drama, Art, Design & Technology and Music in readiness for further options to be made at the end of Year 9 for GCSE courses. Some subjects will start covering GCSE material in the final term of Year 9 due to the significant content which needs to be covered.

Maths sets are constructed by ability in Years 8 and 9 – all other teaching groups are mixed ability.

Core subjects until the end of Year 9***	English, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, History, Geography, Religious Studies, French, German, Art, Design & Technology, Music, Drama, Computer Science, Physical Education, Games, Wellbeing* and Aspire**.
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Some students have an adjusted curriculum and may not study French and/or German see Additional Learning Needs (ALN), OpAL & Enhance below)

*Wellbeing - (see Wellbeing (PSHE & RSE), Citizenship and Careers below)

**Aspire is a subject designed for pupils in Years 7 and 8 that includes Debating, iPad key skills, the Accelerated Reader programme and other important life skills including advice about future careers.

***Pupils in Year 8 take mini-options choosing one of Computer Science or Drama and two from Art, Design & Technology and Music.

GCSE and IGCSE (Years 10 & 11)

The GCSE options system is designed to enable pupils the greatest scope of choice enabling them to opt for their greatest strengths and interests whilst also allowing a breadth of study to ensure options remain open for Sixth Form study.

Pupils choose from the range of subjects below up to a maximum of ten GCSE/IGCSEs:

Compulsory subjects	English Literature, English Language, Mathematics
Sciences (a minimum of 2)	Biology, Chemistry, Physics
Languages (minimum of 1 in most cases)*	French, German
Humanities (minimum of 1)	History, Geography, Religious Studies, Business Studies
Other options	Art, Design & Technology, Music, Drama, Computer Science, Enhance (non-examined)
Other compulsory non-examined subjects	Physical Education, Wellbeing, Games

*Pupils usually study at least one of French or German, unless they have a particular Special Educational Need or disability that would make this unsuitable for them.

Pupils are asked to choose a pathway of either eight, nine or ten GCSE options. The majority of pupils will select ten subjects, but some might be better suited to choosing slightly fewer in order to achieve higher grades across them all which will enhance their chances of success at subsequent stages of their education. Staff help and advise these pupils, and parents, prior to option choices being made (in particular those students who have previously received OpAL support, have Access Arrangements and those with an EHCP) with Enhance (see below) being available instead of one or two GCSE options. All pupils have an individual interview with a member of the Careers department to assist in advising on options based on possible future studies or career aspirations.

Maths sets are constructed by ability – all other teaching groups are mixed ability.

Sixth Form (Years 12 & 13)

The Sixth Form options system enables pupils to specialise in their chosen areas of interest and in those subjects for which they have the greatest aptitude (entry requirements for subjects and Sixth Form in general are published annually in the Sixth Form Options Booklet). The majority of pupils in the Lower Sixth (Year 12) study three subjects enabling them to have sufficient contact time alongside independent study to achieve of their best. Breadth of curriculum and opportunity is provided through a weekly Games afternoon, Wellbeing and Futures lessons. Those students who study four subjects are almost exclusively Further Mathematicians and must have achieved a GCSE average score in excess of 8.

At Sixth Form the options system is designed to be flexible and we are usually able to accommodate all combinations requested by a pupil (subject to sufficient students opting for a given subject). Each subject is timetabled for 13 periods per fortnight in the Lower Sixth and 12 periods per fortnight in the Upper Sixth.

Pupils choose from the range of subjects below up to a maximum of 3 (except if they study Further Mathematics):

English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Business Studies, Economics, French, German, Art, Design & Technology, Music, Theatre Studies, Information Technology (Cambridge Technical), Physical Education (Cambridge Technical)

All pupils have an individual interview with a member of the Careers department to assist in advising on options based on possible future studies, Higher Education or career aspirations.

In addition to the subjects above all Sixth Form pupils can opt to undertake an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). The EPQ provides pupils the opportunity to study a subject or topic beyond the confines of examination specifications and is designed to develop independent study skills and aptitudes sought after by universities. Pupils can opt for the EPQ through the Futures programme in the Lower Sixth. develops high level study and research skills for university and their careers.

The Sixth Form team and other staff also provide the Futures programme (one lesson per week) which covers a range of HE, Careers and examination guidance along with a series of half-termly courses which students can opt in to covering such areas as: EPQ, Employability and “How to be a grown up”.

In the Upper Sixth each option block includes a fortnightly assessment period in which some subjects are timetabled for assessments to take place under exam conditions.

Gifted & Talented

WGS recognises that some of our pupils are particularly gifted and talented: for some, this may be across the curriculum; for others, it will be in specific subject areas or other aspects of school life. This includes activities which range from sport and outdoor education through music, art and drama to leadership and support or mentoring of others. The opportunity to extend learning, both academic and personal, beyond the boundaries of the curriculum is something which enables our pupils to stand out in the increasingly competitive and complex market of Higher Education, apprenticeships and graduate employment. WGS’s aim is to encourage the growth of intellectual curiosity, creativity and passion for learning within a scholarly community.

A comprehensive set of guidelines is issued for the attention of Heads of Department, teaching staff and others to ensure that Gifted & Talented pupils are appropriately catered to.

Aims

- Provide all pupils with learning experiences and opportunities, which will help them to fulfil their potential and secure the highest possible levels of achievement.
- Provide our most gifted pupils with opportunities to work at higher cognitive levels and for our most talented pupils, opportunities to develop their specific dispositions.
- Support all staff in meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils and in the identification of these pupils.
- Help stimulate and motivate gifted and talented students, especially underachieving, able, gifted and talented students.

Provision for more able students might include:

- Opportunities for extension and enrichment built into every scheme of work.
- Higher order thinking skills are developed.
- Pupils have the opportunity to develop their independence and organise their own work (learning to learn).
- Pupils evaluate their own work and set their own targets (Assessment for Learning).
- Helping gifted and talented pupils to make links between subjects.
- Provide differentiated activities and appropriate support and resources for the most able pupils, e.g. extension and enrichment activities, extra reading material/website referrals.
- Target questions and work to challenge the thinking of gifted pupils.
- Less use of scaffolding and greater independence in task completion.

Additional Learning Needs (ALN), OpAL & Enhance

The School's unit for Additional Learning Needs (ALN) ensures that staff have an awareness and understanding of pupils' learning styles and preferences which is central to effective learning for all.

Pupils who would benefit from additional support through the OpAL program are identified through initial and, where relevant, second look screening as well as via parental and/or teacher referrals and, following agreement with parents, are given a slightly adjusted curriculum to serve their own strengths. At Key Stage 3 students will receive OpAL support in the periods given over to languages for other pupils.

At Key Stage 4 as part of their GCSE options, students and parents can choose Enhance as one of their subjects. These may be students who have previously used OpAL support, students who have Access Arrangements for examinations and would benefit from additional support as workload increases, or students who would benefit from using the time to support and embed their learning and skills. Enhance is a set of six lessons, replacing an option choice, that will enable a student to receive specialised intervention alongside the opportunity to seek further support with their studies. These lessons involve individualised small group tutorials with staff who work alongside students to further develop their range of study skills and revision strategies, enabling them to maximise their performance across all academic subjects. These lessons may also be used to further develop their confidence and skills, supplementing the work undertaken in academic subjects, to help them achieve of their best and heighten their chances of success at subsequent stages of their education.

At Key Stage 5 students who have previously received support are given the option to access a weekly OpAL tutorial session in which they may discuss any difficulties with work along with a focused working environment with specialist support on hand.

Special Educational Needs

Pupils with an EHCP have equal access to the curriculum and, working with the Local Authority, the School fulfils the requirements of the EHCP which are reviewed every year including, if required or appropriate, adaptation of the curriculum to meet individual pupil needs.

For pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who do not receive a differentiated curriculum (OpAL or Enhance), the School's support is coordinated by the Head of ALN. Regular assessments are conducted and individual action plans agreed. See Special Education Needs Policy for further details.

EAL

On entrance, parents are asked which languages other than English are spoken at home. Pupils who are on the EAL list are monitored by the Head of ALN. The ALN department consults with parents to agree what support is needed. Subject teachers also closely monitor performance. See English as an Additional Language Policy for further details.

ICT/Computer Science

Increasingly ICT is taught as cross-curricular skill, incorporated into all subject areas using one to one iPads in Years 7 to 11. This is supported by an ICT skills lesson in Year 7. Computer Science is taught as a separate subject in Years 7 and 8, with the option of taking the subject in Year 9 leading to the OCR Entry Level Computer Science qualification. Computer Science is offered as a GCSE option for those pupils who have passed the Year 9 course. ICT is offered as a Cambridge Technical in the Sixth Form.

Wellbeing (Personal, Social and Health and Economic Education (PSHE)–and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE))

In September 2022, a new subject of Wellbeing was introduced. This subject combines Personal, Health and Social Education (PSHE), Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) along with a number of other topics designed to help pupils to lead confident, healthy responsible lives in the democratic and tolerant British society. Pupils have the opportunity to reflect on their own experience and development, whilst at the same time showing understanding and respect for others, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act. Wellbeing is also developed through other curriculum areas, through the pastoral system and through the School's overall ethos.

Both inside and outside the classroom, the School provides opportunities for every pupil to learn and to make progress as well as providing information, guidance, opportunities and experiences to help prepare pupils for the next stage in their education and adult life.

WGS has an active Careers Department which provides appropriate impartial information and advice on possible future careers paths. This guidance begins in Year 7 in Aspire lessons and continues throughout the school in Wellbeing lessons. One-to-one interviews are arranged, along with Year group assemblies and presentations to enable pupils to make informed choices and encourage them to fulfil their potential. See Careers Policy for further detail.

This Curriculum Policy is supported by policies and Schemes of Work across subject areas.

Monitoring and review

Please also refer to the following policies:

Curriculum Policy Senior School - website	Wellbeing Scheme of Work (Senior School) - website
IT Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils - school network	English as an Additional Language- website
Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils - website	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy- website
Gifted & Talented Guidelines to Staff - school network	Anti Radicalisation Policy - on request
Careers Policy - website	

Monitoring and Evaluation of this policy

The school monitors and evaluates its curriculum provision through the following activities:

- Annual Governing body audit.
- Senior leadership team discussion
- Annual parent survey
- Annual results analysis
- Comparison against national competitors and professional bodies recommendations
- Self-evaluative and reflective professional ethos throughout all staff
- Teacher assessments/ assessment data shows attainment is well above national average.
- Data management indicates steadily improving standards.
- Classroom observations by SMT show policy is being implemented by staff
- Regular analysis of a range of risk assessments
- Review of concerns and complaints registers by SMT and board of Directors.

TRH
July 2026
Next Review:
July 2027

Appendix A

Homework

Homework is set for all years on the basis of the following tables (timings are approximations). Where a lesson does not take place on a homework day due to a school event (e.g. trip, external speaker etc) that subject can still set a homework task for completion as per the homework timetable.

The homework timetables have been designed to allow more developed tasks to encourage depth rather than breadth and improve concentration and focus. The progressive nature of the volume of homework set is to enable students to build up the skills and stamina required for success during the examination years.

As the potential for the use of AI by students in homework tasks continues to grow all departments should ask students to handwrite homework tasks (either in books or on OneNote) unless a student has a word-processing access arrangement.

Year 7

	PER FORTNIGHT	Time
	Homeworks	
English	2	30
Maths	2	30
Geog	1	40
RS	1	40
Hist	1	40
Bio	1	40
Chem	1	40
Phys	1	40
Germ	1	40
French	1	40
DT	cumulative time per subject per half term (1 to 3 homework tasks)	60
Art		60
Music		60
Comp Sci		60
Drama		60
No	Approx 13	
Time		560

Year 8

	PER FORTNIGHT	Time
	Homeworks	
English	2	30
Maths	2	30
Geog	1	40
RS	1	40
Hist	1	40
Bio	1	40
Chem	1	40
Phys	1	40
Germ	2	30
French	2	30
DT	cumulative time per subject per half term (1 to 3 homework tasks)	60
Art		60
Music		60
Comp Sci		60
Drama		60
No	Approx 15	
Time		600

Year 9

	PER FORTNIGHT	Time
	Homeworks	
English	2	30
Maths	2	30
Geog	1	60
RS	1	60
Hist	1	60
Bio	1	60
Chem	1	60
Phys	1	60
Germ	2	30
French	2	30
DT	1	30
Art	1	30
Music	1	30
Comp Sci	1	30
Drama	1	30

No		17	
Time			690

Year 10

	PER FORTNIGHT		Time
	Homeworks		
English	2		45
Maths	2		45
P	2		45
Q	2		45
R	2		45
S	2		45
T	2		45
U	2		45
V	2		45
No		18	
Time			810

Year 11

	PER FORTNIGHT		Time
	Homeworks		
English	2		50
Maths	2		50
P	2		50
Q	2		50
R	2		50
S	2		50
T	2		50
U	2		50
V	2		50
No		18	
Time			900

Lower Sixth

3 hours per subject per week (1080 minutes per fortnight)

Upper Sixth

4 hours per subject per week (1440 minutes per fortnight)