



CURRICULUM POLICY

Last updated: January 2024

Date of next review: January 2026

Author: Drew Vermeulen, Assistant Head (Academic), History



CURRICULUM POLICY

Box Hill School has the following curriculum aims:

- To create a supportive and caring learning environment that gives the pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education through the core academic and co-curricular (age-appropriate activities) programme
- To ensure that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills
- To promote academic excellence by providing rigorous and innovative educational experiences that challenge and inspire students to reach their full potential
- To provide challenging learning experiences appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of all pupils (see Special Educational Needs and Most Able policies)
- To provide personal, social, health and economic education (see PSHEE policy)
- To offer opportunities and experiences within the curriculum to explore social, moral, spiritual and cultural themes
- To promote Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) across all aspects of the curriculum, fostering an environment where every student feels valued, respected, and supported regardless of their background, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, or socioeconomic status.
- To offer accurate, up to date and impartial careers guidance to pupils to enable them to make informed choices about their futures and to enable pupils to achieve the best possible qualifications for further, higher education and employment (see Careers Education and advice policy)
- To inspire our pupils and instil in them a love of learning, inquiry and knowledge so that they question, discuss rationally and make informed decisions
- To enable pupils to develop the skills and attitudes that motivate them to learn and are necessary for independent learning
- To ensure that depth and rigour are balanced by breadth and coherence in our curriculum
- To teach pupils self-respect through an understanding of their own self-worth
- To enable pupils to respect, appreciate and acknowledge the achievements and aspirations of others
- To teach pupils to be positive members of a community through respect for fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual

respect and tolerance of those with different faiths or beliefs, as well as commitment to the IDEALS of Round Square – International understanding, Democracy, Environmental awareness, Adventure, Leadership and Service to the community

THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum at Box Hill School is planned to ensure a breadth and balance of subjects are studied throughout the 11-16 age range. Courses are constructed to suit the aspirations, abilities and interests of our students. This focus on choice and flexibility is continued in our Sixth Form provision. The subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those pupils with specific learning difficulties and those who are gifted or talented (see separate Most Able policy). To enrich the curriculum and to link with the Round Square ideals all students in Years 7-9 undertake adventure activities and expeditions. All students are baseline tested (baseline data does not take account of SEND or EAL) to assess potential in examinations; students are tracked and assessments are undertaken to measure attainment and progress in line with this data. Assessments are set half-terminally and annually to test attainment and progress throughout the school. The curriculum is delivered through a Week A and Week B 10-day timetable in 50-minute lessons, to allow all subjects a variety of learning slots dispersed across the two-week cycle. The school has a One Year GCSE programme which runs separate courses of study for primarily, although not exclusively, EAL students but others where appropriate, in order to prepare students for transfer into mainstream Sixth Form programmes. EAL support is also provided in mainstream classes for those students identified as requiring support.

Years 7, 8 and 9

In Years 7-9, the following subjects are taught: art (incl. fashion design), biology, chemistry, physics (science in years 7 and 8), computer science, design and technology, drama, English, French, geography, history, mathematics, music, physical education (including dance), PSHEE and Spanish are taught in class groups by subject specialists. In Year 9, science is split and taught as the separate disciplines. In years 7, 8 and 9 students are set by ability. Where there are more than two groups setting may be within 2 parallel streams.

English, mathematics French and Spanish are set from Year 7.

Two languages are taught in each of Years 7, 8 and 9: French and Spanish.

There are Heads of Year in 7, 8 and 9 who oversee the academic progress of students in their year group. There is a Deputy Head of Year 9 to assist with the management of the year group.

Years 10 and 11

In Years 10 and 11 most students study 9 (I)GCSEs. The subjects offered are art, biology, business studies, chemistry, 3D design, drama, English language, English literature, French, geography, history, computer science, mathematics, further mathematics*, music, physical education, physics, Spanish, and textiles design and fashion. All students follow a compulsory PHSEE programme. The compulsory core curriculum comprises English language, English literature, mathematics and at least one science together with core physical education. In English and mathematics students are set into 4 or 5 groups. EAL students are provided with a separate EAL sets in English leading to a GCSE in either first or second language English as appropriate.

*Offered to pupils in Set 1

Students choose six subjects from an options list, and they are encouraged to take a modern foreign language, a humanities subject and a creative arts option to achieve a balanced curriculum. Each subject provides a summary for students in an information booklet supported by an options process during the first and second terms in Year 9. We aim for a maximum group size of 20, dictated by the size of the classrooms. In some subjects the groups can be much smaller. The option blocks in the timetable are designed to allow the maximum number to study their first-choice options. Students doing fewer than 9 (I)GCSEs are by exception and identified by the SENCO, in consultation with the Head of English, based on their specific educational needs. Those students will not follow the GCSE English Literature syllabus but will undertake work that supports their progress and attainment in English language in order to underpin their performance in all subjects. There is also tutorial support for the academic programme, coordinated by year heads and their deputies, and delivered by personal tutors.

Years 12 and 13

In the sixth form, students study either the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme or the A Level programme. IB students have eight lessons of 50 minutes per fortnight for higher level subjects and five lessons of 50 minutes for each standard level subject. All A Levels subjects are allocated 11 lessons per fortnight. We aim for maximum group sizes of 10-15 students, but this varies considerably. IB students undertake Theory of Knowledge (TOK) in three, 50-minute lessons per fortnight and 150 CAS hours over the five term

programme. IB students undertake the extended essay and this element is also made available to A Level students.

The curriculum is constantly under review and the school reserves the right to make changes during the school year, as well as year by year. A Level and IB students have a personal tutor and tutor groups are programme specific (A Level or IB). There are two tutor sessions per week timetabled for each programme for PSHEE, careers, examination preparation and other relevant age-related input. Both programmes have terminal examinations which prepare students for the challenges of university whilst also providing them with both the hard and soft skills, plus knowledge, that make them more attractive to prospective employers.

Our part-time Careers Advisor supports students with applications for higher education, employment or apprenticeships and works with the tutor team and Heads of A level and IB programmes to facilitate transition.

IB subjects: biology, business and management, chemistry, Chinese*, economics, English, environmental systems and societies, French, geography, German*, history, Italian*, Japanese*, mathematics, physics, psychology, Russian*, Spanish, and visual arts. *Native speakers only

A Level subjects: art, biology, business studies, chemistry, computer science, economics, English literature, fashion and textiles, geography, history, mathematics, further mathematics, music, physical education, physics, psychology, and theatre studies.

The International Programme

This programme follows the same timetable structure as mainstream school and has a curriculum designed to facilitate entry to the mainstream sixth form programmes of the school after one year. There is a significant emphasis on developing and improving English language skills, with a particular focus on speaking, reading and writing. Class sizes are small and English teachers are experienced in teaching EAL. Mainstream subject teachers deliver the specialist subjects. This programme is managed by our international programme leader.

The programme prepares international students for (I)GCSE examinations in readiness for sixth form study at either IB or A Level. Students are assessed prior to offer, and then again on arrival, and are placed in the English set most suited to their language ability. The course offered is as follows:

One Year Intensive GCSE Programme (Pre-IB) (ages 15-16 years):

This course is designed for those students with more advanced linguistic skills, wishing to achieve between six and nine GCSEs in one year. The subjects offered are as follows:

English (1st and 2nd language), mathematics, further mathematics*, biology, chemistry, physics, business studies, economics, history, geography, art, German, French and Spanish. Students whose first language is not offered as a taught subject will also be able to sit a GCSE in their first language where available.

*Offered to pupils in Set 1

CURRICULUM POLICY AND SPECIAL NEEDS

Learning Support Department

The learning support department includes all students at Box Hill School who are neurodiverse or who have disabilities (Special Educational Needs or Differences – SEND), offering teaching that is ‘additional to and different from’ that received in the classroom, and making reasonable adjustments to accommodate individual needs. The department works with pupils who have a variety of neurodivergent needs, including dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, attention deficit disorder and autism. This list is not exhaustive and students with other needs have access to the department as required.

The department consists of a full-time Head of Learning Support (SENCO), a Deputy Head of Learning Support, two learning support assistants, one full time and six part-time specialist teachers. In addition, the school employs a part time Speech and Language Therapist to work with students requiring support in this area. The department is housed in a self-contained building with rooms for one-to-one teaching. Staff within the department liaise frequently with subject teaching staff.

Students are withdrawn from lessons on a rotation basis in Years 7, 8 and 9. In Years 10 and 11, students are withdrawn from PSHEE and core PE, or, by arrangement, from activities. They are not withdrawn from GCSE subjects. In the sixth form, lessons are arranged to coincide with private study time. The department does not withdraw students from mathematics, English, or science. There is provision for some in-class support, usually in English, mathematics, and science. The school does not currently have any students with an Education Health and Care Plan. Learning support lessons are 50 minutes long and the number of lessons received by the individual student is dependent upon their needs, usually one lesson per week.

Learning support lessons are individually planned. The focus may be either literacy, mathematics, social skills or language support; some students receive lessons in more than one of these areas. Lessons also aim to develop study skills, revision, examination techniques, and personal organisation. It is the aim of the department to help each student

to realise their potential by developing strategies for successful independent learning which can be applied across the curriculum.

In November each year, the whole of Year 7 is screened to identify any students who may benefit from additional support and to inform teaching of those who will be having learning support lessons. Further screening for access arrangements is carried out between Year 9 and Year 11, and for all students who are new to the school. The learning support department seeks to implement recommendations contained in educational psychologists' or specialist assessors' reports, where the necessary expertise exists within the department.

A 'Pupil Passport' is produced for all students who attend lessons in the department. This outlines their specific needs, strengths, and areas of difficulty. It also offers strategies and reasonable adjustments for subject teachers and information about access arrangements for tests and exams. The 'Pupil Passports' are available to all, via the staff SharePoint. Once needs are identified, the learning support teacher plans targeted intervention for each student. Pupil Passports are written in October and November and reviewed bi-annually, in February and June, with students and parents. Meetings are scheduled with parents in the spring term (Years 11, and 13) or summer term (Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12). In addition, the department holds an informal coffee morning in the first term of the academic year for parents to meet the learning support staff.

The SENCO and specialist teachers within the department undertake the assessment of students and applications for access arrangements for GCSE, GCE and IB in compliance with the requirements of the JCQ (Joint Council of Qualifications), and the IB. Where students transfer to a new educational setting, this information is shared in compliance with the JCQ and IB.

The SEN Manager area of iSAMS contains SEND information, access arrangements and the name of the member/s of the department working with individual students. This information is updated throughout the academic year and is available to all staff at Box Hill. There is close liaison with the learning support department and all other members of staff to set realistic targets for individual students.

Students who are giving cause for concern are referred to the department for an assessment and identification of learning difficulties. In such cases, the department provides support and advice about appropriate teaching and learning strategies. The department runs INSET for staff regularly on SEND related issues to raise awareness of the learning needs of students with additional learning needs.

DV **January 2024**

Review date: January 2026