



William Edwards School

Curriculum Policy 2023-2024

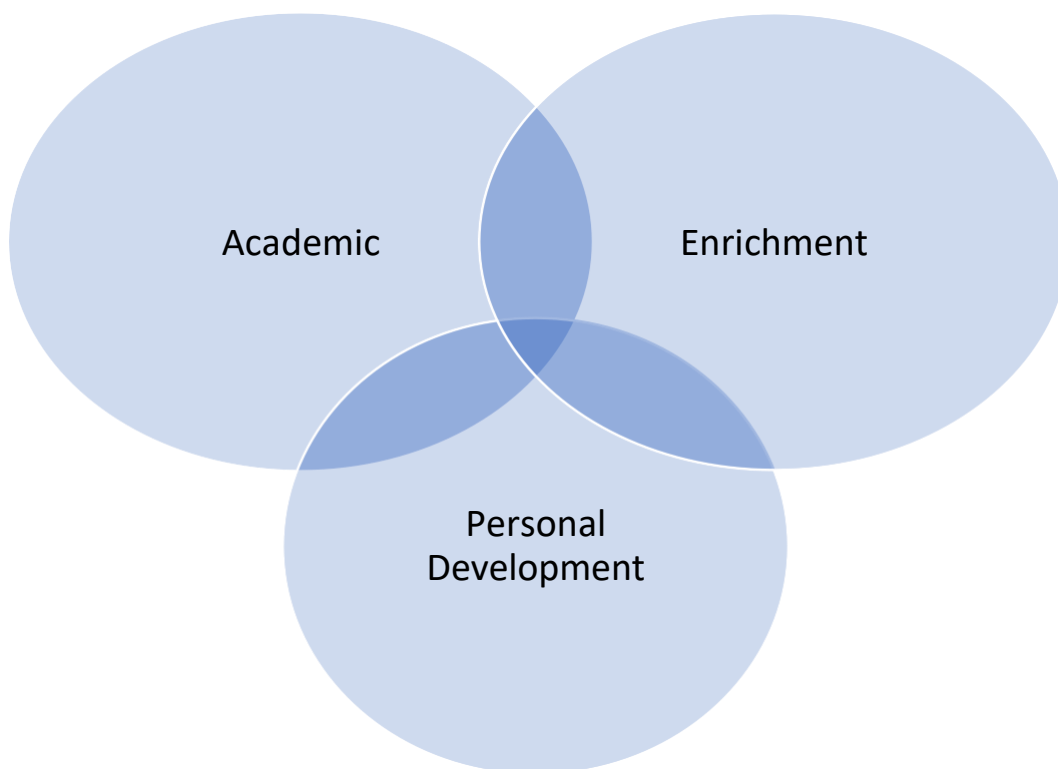
1. Vision

At William Edwards School, we are intent on providing a broad, rich, and inclusive range of learning experiences, which enable all children to be highly successful learners and individuals. An appropriate, coherent, and ambitious curriculum delivered by excellent teaching will facilitate the growth of the powerful knowledge needed for our pupils to achieve the academic success necessary for progression to further study, training, and employment opportunities. High quality curriculum activities will provide the learning experiences necessary for our pupils to gain cultural experience and become curious, respectful, and conscientious people who can demonstrate the resilience needed to make a lasting contribution to wider society.

2. Scope

William Edwards School defines the curriculum as:

- The body of substantive and disciplinary knowledge and understanding we wish for all pupils to learn and develop
- The learning skills and approaches we wish for all pupils to develop and practise
- Support and adaptations to meet the needs of all learners
- The enrichment opportunities provided across the school such as trips, visits, and clubs
- The personal development spiral learning journey including PSHE, RSHE and British Values
- The plans for learning and teaching including interventions, revision, and catch-up activities such as use of the National Tutoring Programme



3. Purpose, principles, and ethos

Key Purpose:

The purpose of our curriculum is to transform the lives of each of our pupils for them to be the best learners and people they can be:

- The curriculum will help to eradicate social inequality and maximise social mobility
- We aim to reduce educational disadvantage for our most vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils including pupils with SEND
- All pupils will gain a range of experiences which will develop their cultural capital
- The curriculum will ensure all pupils will secure high quality qualifications to be best prepared for their future education, employment, and training
- Pupils will be able to take advantage of future regional, national, and international opportunities as Thurrock and the Thames estuary locality develops
- The curriculum will reinforce British Values
- Pupils will develop effective skills of literacy, oracy, and numeracy
- All pupils gain both a depth and breadth of knowledge
- All pupils will become independent thinkers who can make well-informed decisions
- All pupils will understand how to manage their own physical and mental health and well-being
- For all pupils to be global citizens and understand the importance of sustainability in the modern world
- Pupils to have a developed spiritual, moral, social, and cultural compass
- To provide pupils with opportunities to be an active contributor to team, leadership, and group activities

Key Principles:

- The school has a culture of respect and courtesy for all others
- The school has a culture of tolerance and understanding of different points of view
- All pupils can actively participate in our local and global communities
- Pupils are encouraged to celebrate ambition
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and behave responsibly
- All pupils must study an appropriate curriculum which is wide-ranging, balanced, and rigorous
- The curriculum must be developed on effective understanding of the previous and next key stage
- The rigour of the curriculum must be engaging and rewarding for all
- Knowledge is the foundation of all learning and generates further knowledge, so subject specialists with expertise plan and deliver a knowledge-rich curriculum
- Our planning considers core and subject-specific skills
- Enrichment activities are a crucial component of learning
- Our curriculum uses the Secondary National Curriculum as its basis and seeks to further develop pupil knowledge from this starting point

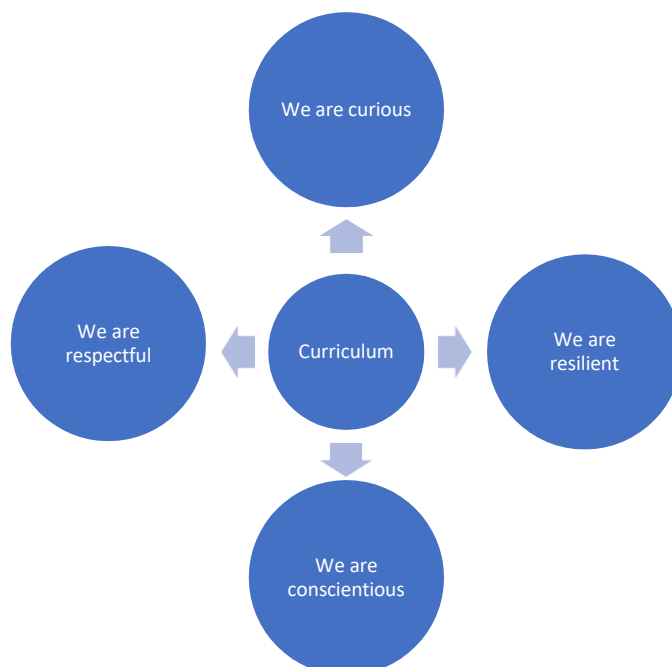
Implementation ethos:

- All pupils will learn the curriculum: no matter their background, respectfully and safely, with increasing independence, with effective communication and with enjoyment and enthusiasm

- We believe that teaching and learning is the method by which the teachers facilitate students' understanding of the curriculum. We think that many of the best practices in teaching are represented by Rosenshine's Principles, as outlined in the core and expert habits explained in our [Teaching, Learning and Professional Development Reference Guide](#):

- Daily review
- New material in small steps
- Ask questions to lots of students
- Provide models
- Check students' understanding
- Guide students in implementing ideas
- Ensure students obtain high success rate
- Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks
- Independent practice
- Monthly and weekly reviews

Our essentials in terms of teacher planning, delivery, management, and assessment of learning are contained in our [WES Consistency Guide](#).



4. How our values and curriculum are shaping our pupils

We are curious

We have a broad and balanced curriculum at each Key Stage, which provides great opportunities for all pupils. As many pupils as possible study EBacc and Triple Science. We have a strong vocational offer alongside GCSE subjects. Departmental curriculum plans are ambitious and challenging as well as being sequenced to develop knowledge and understanding at a high level. Fertile and probing questions are used to stimulate intellectual curiosity and encourage independence of thought and application of knowledge. Our Creative Curriculum provides numerous opportunities to engage with an enriched experience and see the world in new ways. Retrieval practice ensures knowledge is re-visited and embedded into long-term memory. Homework provides further opportunities for subject exploration. Curriculum review is on-going, and we see staff CPD as critical to the ongoing success of our curriculum in planning, delivery, and assessment. The teaching staff acknowledges that is learning alongside our pupils.

We are resilient

Our contextualised safeguarding assemblies ensure we are prepared and consider different challenges that we might experience. Our personal development curriculum teaches resilience and social responsibility to all pupils. Our pastoral team and youth workers provide a personalised service to support our pupils. Our Focus Days provide an opportunity to consider our mental health, well-being, and a range of personal development areas. Our collaboration with other Trust schools and external agencies such as the Royal Opera House ensure our pupils are given enrichment opportunities, which will make them resilient to future social changes. Our PALS listen to and with a range of pupils to develop their social skills and resilience. We have high expectations of ourselves and others. Activities such as Duke of Edinburgh expeditions develop our resourcefulness and team approach.

We are respectful

We constantly emphasise that WES is 'our' school to develop an ethos of belonging, collaboration and 'buy-in'. Our curriculum and teaching emphasise a celebration of diversity and empathy. Our Student Executive offers leadership opportunities for a range of pupils and collaboration with staff. Our personal development curriculum provides numerous opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of different people and communities and to emphasise equality. Disciplined behaviour management ensures all pupils and staff collaborate effectively to ensure all pupils are respected and that time is used effectively to maximise progress.

We are conscientious

Our expectations are high. We set challenging academic targets, using KS2 and CATS data, for our pupils to achieve their full potential and we expect them to achieve these at a minimum. Our 'Deep Dive' approach to Quality Assurance reinforces this with staff and pupils. Attendance and homework expectations of pupils are rigorous. Our Teaching and Consistency Guide emphasises our high expectations of all teaching staff. Assessments are used to adapt curriculum planning and we use the National Tutoring Programme and Impress the Examiner to ensure knowledge gaps are closed. Our careers service, CV writing, and mock-interview day ensure pupils are prepared for the world of work.

5. Curriculum Leadership

The Senior Leadership Team leads strategic and operational development of the curriculum. The three dimensions of the curriculum, academic, personal development and enrichment are characterised by several key elements:

- Clear long-, medium-, and short-term plans which outline pupil learning and progress
- These plans specify the substantive and disciplinary knowledge required by pupils to understand the academic discipline they are studying including the enrichment activities, such as trips and fieldwork, used to exemplify the practical application of the discipline
- The plans detail the subject specific and transferable skills and approaches pupils will learn and apply
- The academic and personal development plans detail the methods of assessment used to measure impact on pupil learning as well as clear endpoints
- The enrichment plans outline the wide range of activities which pupil participate in

All Department Leaders are engaging with curriculum focused CPD to explore the latest academic thinking on curriculum development. This CPD is to ensure leaders are outward thinking, have a theoretical appreciation of curriculum design and understand current operational considerations when planning their subject specific curriculum.

All departments have specified CPD time where they focus on the development of subject knowledge:

- Reading groups using academic texts
- Use of subject association materials
- Discussions and training on how to best teach a specific topic

The school and departments are developing subject specific academic libraries, specific training plans for non-specialist teachers and have integrated subject knowledge development into the appraisal cycle.

The academic and personal development curriculum is subject to regular scrutiny and quality assurance by:

- Senior Leadership Team and Department Leaders using the William Edwards School Quality Assurance process which includes lesson visits, pupil work scrutiny and pupil and staff interviews to check academic and personal development curriculum implementation and impact
- Senior Leadership Team and Department Leader line management meetings
- Public examination analysis reviews with Department Leaders
- Quality Assurance visits from Trust staff
- The process which leads to the production of the whole school SEF and Development Plan

6. Academic Curriculum Model

At **Key Stage Three**, all pupils study the following academic disciplines:

Art & Design
Creative Curriculum*
Drama
English
MFL**
Geography
History
Tech
Computing
Catering
Mathematics
Music
Physical Education
PSHE/RSHE
Religious Education
Science

* This is a broad creative curriculum linked to our work with the Royal Opera House and was essential in our obtaining the Arts Mark Platinum Award. This focuses on studying social issues, developing creativity and transferable academic skills such as debating. This is delivered to Year 7 only.

**This is French or German. We have also obtained Foundation International School Award status.

All pupils in Key Stage 3 also engage in a personal development/enrichment period each Monday morning to engage in the Personal Development curriculum. The enrichment curriculum is available across the two-week timetable. Each year group has Focus Days to explore aspects of the personal development curriculum. We have introduced Forest School and the Rising Stars programme for some Year 7 and Year 8 pupils.

Year 9 pupils choose options for Key Stage Four study in the latter half of the year before starting these courses at the start of Year 10.

We evaluate each cohort annually to devise an ambitious and accessible curriculum for those pupils. We vary the amount of time awarded to the delivery of each subject accordingly. We use a Learning Through Sport programme to support literacy and numeracy for an identified cohort.

Rationale:

- Utilise and build on the National Curriculum
- Extend pupils learning and progress coherently from Key Stage 2
- Provide a broad and balanced educational experience
- Creative Curriculum provides whole child development focusing on creativity and cultural experiences

At **Key Stage Four**, all pupils study the following academic disciplines:

English
English Literature
Mathematics
Science*
Geography/History
Core Physical Education
Core RE and Core Computing

Core Computing is delivered as part of our enrichment and focus day programme.

*Double Award or as Triple Science – Biology, Chemistry and Physics

We facilitate as many pupils' study of EBacc as possible. Pupils can take qualifications in 'home' languages they are proficient in because of learning outside school.

In addition to the core subjects, pupils choose options from the following range of GCSE and BTEC subjects:

GCSE:

Art and Design
Business Studies
Computer Science
Dance
Design and Technology
Drama
Film Studies
French/German
Media Studies
Music
PE
Photography
RE
Sociology
Triple Science

BTEC:

Health and Social Care
Music Technology
Construction
Hospitality and Catering
Sport

We evaluate each cohort annually to devise an ambitious and accessible curriculum for those pupils. We utilise ASDAN and Entry Level Certificates if appropriate.

All pupils in Key Stage 4 also engage in a personal development/enrichment period each Monday morning to engage in extra academic support in subjects identified from assessment data as requiring improvement. The enrichment curriculum is available across the two-week timetable. Each year group has Focus Days to explore the personal development curriculum preparation for KS5, employment and apprenticeships.

7. Enrichment

The WES curriculum is the main component of our provision and is a key strength. Our enrichment provision is a core part of this broad curriculum offer. We aim to offer these extra opportunities through various types of provision delivered by school staff, external providers, and independent clubs — all with a view to increasing the range of experiences that pupils have, enabling them to make informed choices for adult life.

‘Enrichment’ refers to all those activities, which are not timetabled formally into the school day. This would include:

- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Brilliant Club
- External competitions e.g., Jack Petchey Speak out (English); Have Your Say (MFL); Next Top Boss
- Projects e.g., Dora Love (History)
- Outreach visits to Primary Schools
- Sports teams and training
- Subject based trips e.g., Paris; geography field trips
- Whole school trips
- After school clubs
- School holiday provision such as Y11 Revision
- After school revision
- Masterclasses e.g., Junior Maths Challenge
- NTP programme
- Visiting speakers/groups e.g., Chicken Shed; Paul Hannaford; Ben Nye from Blackrock
- Visiting Workshops e.g., Dance
- Impress the Examiner workshops

Procedure

It is an expectation that every department will contribute to our enrichment provision. A timetable of activities is published half-termly on the school website, advertised on the school screens as well as being shared on Google Classroom. It will be an expectation that all pupils engage with as many enrichment activities as they can. Tutors will play a key role in encouraging pupil participation. Our enrichment activities are promoted and celebrated on our Facebook and Twitter pages.

Safeguarding

Department Leaders and Club leaders must report attendance to the office at each session.

If an after-school club is cancelled, the club leader must plan for parents to be informed via the school office.

Impact

Department Leaders and Club Leaders (whichever is relevant) must analyse attendance at enrichment activities termly and continuously seek to increase engagement.

8. Personal Development

Personal development of pupils is a key component of our curriculum planning and delivery as we seek to facilitate our pupils becoming global citizens with highly sensitive moral compasses. Our teaching focuses on the delivery of an innovative and comprehensive PSHE/RSHE/BV and SMSC spiral curriculum with recurring themes, at appropriate levels, as a pupil progresses through WES. With each delivery of the theme, the level of demand and knowledge increases and learning is progressively deepened. Pupils will have regular, timetabled lessons for PSHE and RSHE, alongside off-timetable focus days throughout the academic year. For both of these aspects, a trained team of teachers teaches pupils. There are visits from external agencies and speakers such as the Fire Service, Brook Advisory Service and the Mental Health Wellbeing Team. There are also wider, extra-curricular activities completed during tutor time, which enrich the PSHE and RSHE curriculum.

Please see the [WES PSHE and RSHE Policy](#) for additional detail regarding teaching responsibility, creating a safe learning environment, assessment and quality assurance.

Review Date	July 2024
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