



# *CURRICULUM POLICY*

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Southend High School for Boys aims to provide a strongly academic education which also delivers the core values at the heart of our school's 2020 vision. The aim of our 2020 vision is to help prepare young people for adult and working life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (see appendix, 'Promoting values: position statement'). This is so young people will:

- have a happy life secured through their intelligent and well-informed choices;
- enjoy a fulfilled life which is enabled through whole-hearted endeavour;
- live a moral life with integrity and tenacity;
- undertake a practical life that provides satisfaction through skill and commitment.

As a result, young people at Southend High School for Boys will develop into empathetic and open individuals, who live a life in balance, support and lead others through being agents of change.

## **Curriculum aims**

Our curriculum enables our pupils and sixth form students to develop:

- inquisitiveness and the ability to question, solve problems and argue rationally;
- a willingness to apply themselves and an aptitude for learning, knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and employment in a changing world;
- literacy skills, numeracy skills and excellence in the use of information technology;
- creativity, critical awareness, empathy and sensitivity;
- a recognition of their own and others' achievements, in school and beyond;
- self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence;
- the skills of working as an individual and as a member of a group or team;
- appropriate moral and spiritual values and tolerance of others, to value each individual and to learn to live together in an atmosphere of mutual respect;
- an awareness of their place in the school community and opportunities for service to each other and to the wider community;
- knowledge, skills and understanding to progress to higher education;
- the qualities and values to be a global citizen.

## **Curriculum principles (entitlement)**

We are committed to the principle that all pupils and students, regardless of race, cultural background, gender or ability, have a right to the highest quality of education we can provide. This means that we seek to ensure:

- breadth and balance for all;
- appropriate levels of expectation and challenge;
- relevance, continuity and progression in learning through carefully chosen components with appropriate sequencing;
- planned repetition to embed learning in the long term memory;

- connections across learning to enable pupils to apply their knowledge and experience to unknown experiences and problems;
- essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said, thus helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement;
- comprehensive careers guidance so all are well-informed to make the choices for their next stage of learning/work.

Through providing courses of study and teaching methods which are tailored to the wide range of needs, interests and aspirations of our pupils and students, all will be able to achieve and develop the values of our 2020 vision.

## **Curriculum access**

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils and students are engaged in their learning, motivated and enabled to succeed. Teaching staff are expected to ensure that those who may be having difficulties are identified early and provided with appropriate support, encouragement and guidance.

### **1. Special educational needs**

The school's curriculum and schemes of work take appropriate account of the needs of all pupils. For pupils who have special educational needs and/ or disabilities they are given help, support and guidance from our inclusion department. All those who teach a pupil or sixth form student who has specific requirements are informed of their needs by the inclusion manager. As such they can adapt their learning so that they have equal opportunity to participate in the full curriculum and its enrichment opportunities. The inclusion manager will ensure that all who are likely to come into contact with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are updated regularly with appropriate information. The work of the inclusion manager is supported by the learning support assistants. Each pupil who is in receipt of an Education Health Care (EHC) plan will receive their allocated hours of classroom support. When a lower school pupil with special educational needs and/or disabilities is choosing his options, he will do so in consultation with the inclusion manager and the year leader.

### **2. More able**

More able pupils are identified by their teachers in conjunction with their parents. Some pupils may have specific talents and gifts in certain subject areas, they may possess certain skills and attributes that means they are an 'all-rounder' (exceptionally able). Some pupils may demonstrate prowess beyond the curriculum in sporting endeavours or musical excellence. In Year 7 parents and pupils are asked to inform the school of achievements that go beyond the classroom. This is updated on a regular basis. A review of the register for the more able occurs annually. It is the responsibility of all staff to identify more able pupils, to encourage their interests and to make provision for them. Such provision will include planning classroom-based work and homework tasks that stretch the more able. Also additional challenges and experiences may be offered through clubs, discussion groups, interest and support groups, attendance at lectures and conferences and opportunities to participate in external societies, teams and organisations.

### 3. Pupil premium and sixth form bursary

The school receives additional funding to ensure that pupils who are identified as being disadvantaged through their circumstance achieve as well as they should. This means that funding is used to ensure that where gaps exist that these are diminished. Such pupils may receive additional resources, equipment or opportunities to help them to access the curriculum. For example, instrumental lessons in GCSE music. Where there are achievement issues appropriate intervention is arranged to help pupils to catch up.

### 4. Examinations

It is expected that all pupils who embark on a course that culminates in a public examination are entered for the examination, unless they fail to fulfil the examination board's requirements in relation to coursework, attendance or other criteria. Subject leaders are expected to identify at an early stage, pupils who are in danger of failing to meet the requirements, so that they can be supported, guided and encouraged. To this end, a mentoring system exists for pupils. Any pupil who is not entered for the examination in a subject (despite the best efforts of staff), are expected to complete the course of study, with other pupils. A non-entry for an exam needs to be agreed by the deputy headteacher.

### 5. Disapplication of the curriculum

In exceptional circumstances, disapplication of aspects of the curriculum may be agreed for a short period of time or where there is a determined need such as a special educational need. In such circumstances due regard must be paid to the Department for Education revised document *Disapplication of the National Curriculum*. Where a pupil who does not have a special educational need requires a curriculum amendment which is in their best interests to maintain and sustain engagement in learning, an appropriate alternative curriculum must be put in place involving an alternative curriculum provider. All disapplication requests must be agreed by the deputy headteacher.

## **Curriculum content**

The core values of our 2020 vision and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is delivered through our tutor and assembly programmes, as well as through individual subjects. Pupils are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society through active consideration of their own experiences as well as through comparison to the experience of others. Pupils experience democracy in action through our School Council and Form Captain and prefect structure. The importance of laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced throughout regular school days, as well as when dealing with behaviour and through school assemblies. Pupils are taught the values and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Visits from authorities such as the police and fire service are regular parts of our calendar and help reinforce this message.

Individual liberty is emphasised through encouraging pupils to make choices, knowing that they can do so in a safe and supportive environment. As a school, we educate and provide boundaries for young pupils to make choices safely, through the provision of a safe environment and empowering education. Religious education and understanding different faiths and beliefs is central to our education provision. We want pupils to appreciate the diversity of modern Britain while also understanding their place within it, enabling them to make informed decisions about the way in

which they want to live. All pupils follow a course of study in this area and in key stage 4 all pupils undertake a qualification. Our comprehensive programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) seeks to reflect the school's ethos and aims, with particular regard to the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Pupils have access to accurate, up-to-date and impartial careers guidance as well as advisory support from staff and mentors from the world of work. All pupils progress through a structured work related learning programme which helps pupils to develop an understanding of the demands and challenges of the workplace, the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees, and knowledge of the requirements of employers and educational institutions. We develop pupils' skills for the workplace, including research, problem-solving, decision-making, presentational and communication skills, planning and self-management, as well as building pupils' confidence to operate in the market place. All pupils in key stage 3 are taught basic IT skills and programming. Computing is then offered for those that wish to study it in key stage 4.

Aristotle famously wrote, "The more you know, the more you realize you don't know." Our curriculum is designed to foster curiosity so that pupils want to learn more about their subjects and topics that interest and engage them. This means that we do not place ceilings on pupils' learning. Instead, we wish to encourage independent learning, research and reading. Pupils have access to a well-stocked library and extensive reading lists linked to subject topics which endeavour to broaden their horizons and interests. We agree with the philosophy that generally your confidence grows as your experience increases. Bearing in mind the academic context of our school, the demands of the specifications pupils study and the pressures pupils themselves place on their young shoulders, our curriculum also teaches pupils resilience, a 'can do' attitude, while also supporting pupils' mental health.

### **Extracurricular opportunity**

We encourage all pupils to participate in a club or additional lessons to follow their passions, such as music. Extracurricular activities not only enhance and extend the curriculum learnt in school hours, but they also help pupils forge bonds and enjoy relationships across year groups. We have over 70 different clubs and societies that pupils can join. These are regularly publicised to all. Parents and pupils are recommended to check the school's website. Every year, club fairs take place for new entrants in Years 7 and 12 so they can decide which clubs they would like to try. Pupils can also set up their own clubs with the support of a member of staff.

All pupils throughout the school have access to the house competitions and points secured via these competitions culminate in the Cockhouse trophy. A celebration is held annually. House competitions include: reading, music, debating, art, basketball, badminton, rugby, football, hockey, cross country and languages.

Other competitions that pupils routinely undertake are: Senior and junior mathematics challenge, the Olympiad in mathematics and physics, Moot court competition, to name but a few.

In addition to activity in the classroom, many departments arrange trips to reinforce learning. These complement the curriculum. They range widely in scope, for example, from local geographical observation to economic trips to see Fairtrade in action in Africa.

## The library

The library is the heart of the school. Pupils benefit from and enjoy a well-stocked library, which has substantial collections and resources, as well as professional librarians to offer advice and support. The Accessit tool enables all pupils to see reading lists linked to each topic and subject they study. This helps to encourage wider reading and independent reading. Pupils also have the opportunity for library sessions through the tutor programme. A calendar of author visits and workshops also encourage pupils to appreciate the written and spoken word.

## Curriculum planning and organisation

Pupils undertake five one hour lessons a day. Our timetable is organised over a fortnight – alternating between odd and even weeks. There are 50 periods in the fortnight. Pupils also undertake tutor times and assemblies.

### Key Stage 3: Years 7 and 8

Due to the nature of our cohort, we deliver a rigorous curriculum which

- Groups objectives from the national curriculum to create added challenge;
- Delivers some topics concurrently across the curriculum;
- Provides opportunity for independent learning;
- Has a strong focus upon reading so that pupils continue their enjoyment of reading, develop their literacy skills and professional writing, and build cultural capital (the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best of what is thought and said, and helping engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement).

Pupils study subjects as follows:

Subjects	Number of periods a fortnight	
	Year 7	Year 8
English	6	6
Mathematics	6	6
Science	6	6
French	5	5
German or Spanish	4	4
RE	2	2
PE and Games	4	4
PSHE	1	2
Citizenship	1	n/a
ICT	2	2
Geography	3	3
History	3	3
Art	2	2
Music	2	2
Design technology	2	2
Food technology	1	1

Year 7 parents should note that all pupils study French. Half the year group study Spanish and the other half German. This is then swapped in Year 8 so that all pupils have studied Spanish and German for one year before deciding whether they wish to continue their studies.

In both year groups they are taught in their tutor forms except in mathematics where they are in sets in two parallel bands (2 x set 1, 4 x set 2). Science in Year 8 is taught in four groups in each half of the year group.

In Year 8 pupils choose the subjects they wish to continue studying in Year 9 and also have further choice of new subjects they have not yet learnt, such as business studies and economics, computing or a further language.

### Key Stage 3: Year 9

Year 9 is a hybrid year where subjects are finishing their delivery of the key stage 3 national curriculum and introducing new components of the GCSE. Typically we start GCSE courses in subjects at the beginning of the summer term of Year 9. GCSE is a two year course and so our pupils finish their courses in April of Year 11 ready to sit their exams which begin at the start of the month of May. In Year 9 we also introduce other opportunities for pupils to learn different subjects which may help inform their choices. For example, pupils can undertake a combined course in business studies and economics, can learn more advanced computing, multi-linguists may look to study a further language and scientists may decide to study the separate sciences (this begins in Year 10). In Year 9 pupils make their final choice of options ready for GCSE.

(Please note that the exam boards do not allow pupils to undertake both GCSE business studies and economics as the courses are similar).

Subjects	Number of periods a fortnight
English	6
Mathematics	6
Science	6
Language (French, German or Spanish)	3
RS	3
PE and games	4
PSHE	1
7 Options chosen from art, business studies and economics, citizenship, computer science, design and technology, drama, French, geography, German, history, music, GCSE PE and Spanish	3

In mathematics, pupils are in sets in two parallel bands (2x set 1, 4 x set 2).

### Key Stage 4: Years 10 and 11

Pupils undertake 10 GCSEs. They have to study the following subjects before they can make further choices: English language, English literature, mathematics, science, RS and a modern foreign language. We recommend that pupils also study either geography or history so that they can achieve the English Baccalaureate. Pupils can also study as options: art, business studies and economics, citizenship, computer science, drama, DT electronics (systems), DT plastics (polymers), French, geography, German, history, music, GCSE PE and Spanish.

Subjects	Number of periods a fortnight	
	Year 10	Year 11
English	7	7
Mathematics	7	7
Science	10	9
French or German or Spanish	4	5
RS	5	4
PE and games	3	2
PSHE	2	1
Option 1	4	5
Option 2	4	5
Option 3	4	5

Pupils who are in set 1 mathematics undertake GCSE mathematics and GCSE further mathematics.

### Key Stage 5: Years 12 and 13

We offer an academic experience in the Sixth form with a strong focus on careers education, advice, information and guidance. A specialist careers team, along with sixth form tutors provide assistance, ensuring that pupils reflect upon their strengths and preferences, while making informed choices about the world of work and career options. We also run a health and wellbeing programme which all students participate in. Sex and relationships education is run through our tutor programme. All students have the opportunity to undertake leadership roles either through coaching, the prefect programme, mentoring or through running societies and clubs.

Students who enter in Year 12 will choose four AS subjects to study. All subjects offered at key stage 4 are offered for study at key stage 5 as well as psychology and further mathematics. Upon successful completion of AS students may:

- continue all four as a full A level
- continue three out of the four subjects at A level
- continue two at A level and complete the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

Please note that any student can apply to undertake the EPQ. Students are prevented by the exam boards from undertaking certain combinations as the courses are too similar. For example music and music technology, English literature and English combination. Students who choose further mathematics are required to also study mathematics A level.

A level and AS level courses are delivered via eight hours a fortnight with directed study attached to this. Whichever courses they follow, students are encouraged to become more independent in their modes of study; the intention is that they should be fully equipped for the challenges of university life or professional apprenticeships by the time they leave. To that end research skills are fostered, independent reading is undertaken and presentation skills developed. All students are encouraged to think critically, to challenge perspectives and to engage in debate. Every effort is made to encourage a love of learning and scholarship which will last after the students' time at school.

## Appendix 1

### Promoting “values”: position statement

Southend High School for Boys is committed to the values enshrined in our 2020 Vision document and is fully resolved to honour and exceed the duties that are implicit, both as a public sector organisation and more significantly, as a community committed to embodying the values that we would want our pupils to learn.

#### 2020 Vision

Pupils spend seven years at Southend High School for Boys: the influence of the school across that time can be significant in determining the life trajectory for each individual.

Our vision is to set them on the path towards young adulthood with the highest aspirations and equipped to make a positive and worthwhile contribution to society – often in the role of leaders.

Our responsibility extends beyond the necessary, but limited, confines of examination preparation, behaviour management and tutorial administration.

Pupils learn what we teach, but more significantly they learn by how we teach.

The extent to which they are **skilled** for **practical** adult life is very obviously in our hands; as is the degree to which they develop a sense of **moral purpose** for their public and private conduct in society.

Our actions demonstrate that high self-esteem is not a consequence of high performance but of knowing what it means to have been ‘at your best’ through effort – we help to shape the choices and attitudes that make for the **happy life**.

The opportunities and enthusiasm, within and beyond the classroom, induct our pupils into the **fulfilled life**.

The contented, **happy**, young adult who is living a **fulfilled life** will visibly demonstrate **self-assurance**.

Those who are skilled for the **practical life** and rich in wider cultural, social and personal experience can be seen to **live in balance**.

Entering adult life with a clear sense of **moral purpose** and equipped to act, we see our students maturing to be **agents of change** within society.

But also open to change and open to others – **empathetic** – as the values of personal morality and social justice blend with the tools that give access to sustained happiness.



Governors, school leaders, staff, students and parents are all expected to give due regard to sustaining and promoting these attributes and attitudes.

Evidence of our extensive work in this area can be found in our assembly programme, PSHE provision, the teaching of RE and citizenship, the school's behaviour policy, and our approach to student participation and leadership.

The values that we embody, promote and cultivate are seen as 'universal' with an historic foundation in moral philosophy, rational discourse and spiritual reflection.

The school promotes:

- 'democratic values' and the relative merits of different forms of social organisation and civic structure;
- an understanding of the 'rule of law' including the uses and abuses of judicial, corporate or collective power;
- a concept of 'liberty' that is inevitably constrained by mutuality; and
- a deep recognition of the vitality and challenges of a multi-faith, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society.

In doing so, the school recognises that these values are fundamental: to the extent that they underpin and over-ride other considerations, although we acknowledge they have also developed, and will mature further, over time. Our approach acknowledges, additionally, that these values – whilst often advocated within British public life and evident in many aspects of British political and social history – are not uniquely British.

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