



HOLYWELL CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

Curriculum Policy

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Rationale:

Our curriculum is designed to help us realise our school vision:

At Holywell, our vision is that everyone in our community chooses to **“Live Life in all its Fullness”** (John 10:10).

Inspired by the teaching of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, we choose ...

to live our values,

being the best we can be

in community.

The curriculum also reflects our ethos: Holywell School is a caring, distinctively Christian, community-focussed Church of England School. We aim to continue the historic tradition of Church of England Schools by providing a Christian Values-inspired education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. As a school, we are a loving, supportive community with high aspirations for all.

We promote inclusion, we are proud to belong and we value each individual. We look after each other, believe in second chances and aim to be the best we can be so we can serve and support the common good. High expectations and ambitious learning ensure students make good progress academically while also developing confidence, responsibility and positive learning behaviours. Through a broad and balanced curriculum, students are well prepared for the demands of secondary education, able to engage positively with wider opportunities, and equipped to become active, successful members of their community and modern society. Our curriculum is designed as a coherent five-year journey from Year 7 to Year 11, carefully sequenced to build knowledge, skills and confidence over time. Each stage of learning prepares students for the next, ensuring strong academic progress, personal development and readiness for further education, employment and life beyond school.

For us at Holywell, the curriculum is the totality of student experiences and, through those experiences, we aim to enable all of our learners to be happy, successful and to be the best they can be.

Curriculum Intent

We are committed to a deep and rich curriculum that enables students:

- to achieve high standards
- to be 'secondary ready'
- to be independent, curious learners
- to be ready to take on challenges with an open, positive and caring approach
- to be discerning, thoughtful members of their community
- to serve others
- to be grounded in strong Christian values so that they can make ethical and informed choices and decisions.

We believe that the curriculum of the school:

- should be designed to enable our children to enjoy and achieve, to grow and prosper, and to be stimulated by learning
- must look to serve the full breadth of student ability and the variety of interests and skills
- must be coherent and well planned
- must be designed, over time, to maximise the likelihood that children will remember and connect the steps they have been taught
- should be designed to develop the wider cognitive skills of analysis, evaluation, problem-solving, creativity and independence.

Curriculum Implementation

We have a secondary curriculum model underpinned by a values-based approach to learning. The taught curriculum is delivered substantially through discrete national curriculum subjects so that students have access to subject specialists who can enthuse and inspire them. Most subjects are taught in mixed-ability groups; however, Maths is taught in ability sets. Schemes of Learning cover the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Lessons are between 55 and 60 minutes long. In the academic year 2026-2027, students have the following allocation of lessons:

	English	Maths	Science	Art	Drama	DT	Geography	History	IT/Comp Sc	MFL	Music	PE Core	PSHE	RE	Option group	
Yr 6	36	36	10	5	0	8	5	5	5	5	5	10	5	5	0	Total hours per subject
	6	6	5	5	0	8	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	Number of classes
	6	6	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	Number of hours per week
Yr 7	24	20	18	6	5	12	5	5	5	5	6	10	5	5	0	Total hours per subject
	6	5	6	6	5	6	5	5	5	5	6	5	5	5	0	Number of classes
	4	4	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	Number of hours per week
Yr 8	24	24	24	8	6	16	6	6	6	12	8	12	6	6	0	Total hours per subject
	6	6	8	8	6	8	6	6	6	6	8	6	6	6	0	Number of classes
	4	4	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	0	Number of hours per week
Yr 9	24	20	21	7	0	14	5	5	5	10	7	10	5	5	8	Total hours per subject
	6	5	7	7	0	7	5	5	5	5	7	5	5	5	8	Number of classes
	4	4	3	1	0	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	Number of hours per week

In Year 9 students have an 'Option' lesson in their weekly timetable. Students choose from a wide range of subjects – in 2026-2027, the possible options are: Sports Leadership, Eco & Sustainability, Art, Music Technology, Drama, Further Design, German, Business and Young Leaders. This prepares students for the very important choices they will be making about Options soon after arriving in Upper School.

PSHE is part of the timetabled curriculum. This ensures full coverage of the new statutory curriculum for PSHE and RHE.

GCSE curriculum

Our Key Stage 4 (Year 10 and 11) curriculum will include:

- Core subjects (English Language and Literature, Maths, Science)
- Core curriculum requirements: PE, PSHE/RSE, RE

- Optional subjects (GCSEs and Technicals) with the EBacc options available - a curriculum which is flexible to allow for student choice and specialisation

English Literature



French



Business Studies



Music



English language



Geography



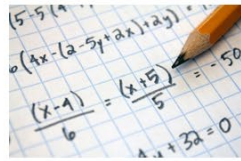
Computer Science



Performing Arts



Mathematics



German



Design Technology



PE GCSE & Sports Studies



Science (Combined and Triple)



History



Hospitality & Catering



Religious Studies



Over the last 3 years we have worked diligently towards developing our GCSE curriculum, all new staff in the last 4 years have deep GCSE knowledge and experience. We have selected our GCSE subjects and exam boards and have carefully planned our curriculum for all subjects for Year 10 and Year 11. As we have used a 'top down' (planning backwards from the Year 11 assessment expectations) our next step is to plan our Year 9 curriculum. All planning and preparation will be completed a year in advance to ensure staff focus on the students in Year 11 and time is used efficiently to ensure students achieve their best.

For each GCSE we have selected our exam board after visiting other schools and reviewing their curriculum. We have carefully considered job opportunities in the local job market needs. This approach ensures students are aware of potential career paths relevant to their local area and can make informed choices about their GCSEs, potentially leading to better post-16 pathways.

Our Subject Curriculum Overviews for each subject are accessible on our website. As shown in the Subject Curriculum Overviews, each unit of learning in every subject is broken down into specific learning aims. This gives us a clear understanding of what students need to know, as well as how to effectively teach the required knowledge, understanding, and skills. We reviewed how long we should spend on each topic in the course which is dependent on the marks that unit is worth within the whole GCSE. We have also carefully planned the timing of units across subjects. For example, in Science the students learn about Climate Change and Global Warming, in Geography we teach the same topic and have decided to teach it towards the end of Year 11 which supports the students with revision for Science and is time efficient for Geography.

Wider Curriculum Opportunities

The curriculum at Holywell benefits from a range of additional activities and events to support our children's learning. Examples include: Values Day: this provides an opportunity to explore our Values with a specific focus; An Extended PSHE Day provides each year group with an

opportunity to explore an aspect of PSHE in more depth – Year 5 look at Safety Awareness; Year 6 look at Health and Wellbeing; Year 7 look at British Values; and Year 8 look at Careers and Work-related learning. Other whole-school events include: The School Sponsored Walk, World Book Day, and various charity days. There is a wide range of opportunities for residential trips and these vary according to availability. There is a bi-annual Ski-Trip.

Teaching and Learning

At Holywell, the curriculum will be implemented by using our agreed key ingredients of high-quality teaching and learning. The implementation of the curriculum is mainly through active learning strategies which are carefully structured to ensure progression in learning. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods to provide variation and enhance students' understanding.

The teaching of the curriculum ensures that students of all abilities are able to engage with the curriculum as effectively as possible, enhancing their knowledge and skills.

Students will be taught to describe key characteristics and associated processes in common language throughout curriculum subjects, as well as understand technical terminology and specialist vocabulary. These will include having a Growth Mindset and demonstrating resilience and aspiration.

Students will undertake independent work and have the opportunity to work in groups and discuss with their peers.

Teachers ensure students apply their knowledge and understanding when developing, presenting and reflecting on ideas.

Teachers have been exploring research on Memory and Brain-Based Learning as well as the use of Rosenshine's Principles to help structure learning with particular attention to recall, working memory and long-term memory. Questioning is used to check students' learning and to increase levels of challenge.

Planning

- Long-term planning is used to outline the units to be taught within each year group.
- Medium-term planning is used to outline the skills and content that will be taught in each unit of work, as well as highlight the opportunities for assessment.
- Medium-term plans will identify learning objectives, main learning activities and differentiation.
- Medium-term plans will be shared with subject leaders and heads of year to ensure there is progression between years.
- Short-term planning is used flexibly to reflect on the objectives of the lesson, the success criteria and the aims of the next lesson.
- Short-term planning is the responsibility of the teacher. This is achieved by building on their medium-term planning, taking into account students' needs and identifying the method in which topics could be taught.
- All lessons have clear learning objectives, which are shared and reviewed with students.
- Wherever possible, curriculum subjects will provide opportunities to establish links with other curriculum areas.

Assessment and reporting

- Assessment is integral to the curriculum and its planning.
- Students are assessed, and their progression recorded, in accordance with the Holywell's Assessment Policy.
- Students sit the following statutory assessments throughout their time at our academy: KS2 SATs and regular GL Assessments.
- Termly Teacher Assessments summarise students' performance against internally generated performance descriptors which describe the progression in learning for

each subject.

- A written report for each student is sent to parents once per academic year. Reports outline students' progress in the subjects of the curriculum, what they have achieved and their developmental needs.
- Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings with their child's teachers at specific and strategic points during the year. Parents are also welcome to discuss their child's progress with their teachers or the headteacher at other times.
- Teachers or the headteacher may invite parents for a discussion based on their child's progress and/or results at any point during term times.
- The headteacher reports students' progress to governors on a termly basis, both as part of the discussion at the Curriculum Sub-Committee and then as part of the headteacher's report to the Full Governing Board. Progress is monitored at all levels (class teacher, subject leader, SENDCo, Senior Leadership Team) and takes into account the progress of specific groups of learners (e.g. SEND, PP, EAL)
- In terms of summative assessments, the results of end-of-year assessments are passed to relevant members of staff, such as the student's future teacher, in order to demonstrate where students are at a given point in time.
- The progress of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is the responsibility of and is monitored by all staff including classroom teachers, subject leaders, other leaders across the school, SLT and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo).

Homework

- Homework is planned as part of the curriculum provision for each subject.
- A full Homework Policy is available and complements this Curriculum Policy.

Curriculum Resources

- Subject leaders are responsible for the management and maintenance of resources.
- Resources are stored in each classroom, including workbooks, text books and any other materials, e.g. calculators.
- Resources which are not required regularly, and those in relation to key whole-academy topics, will be stored in the relevant department office.
- Display walls will be utilised as part of the learning process.
- Equipment and resources will be easily accessible to students during lessons.
- Subject leaders will undertake an audit of equipment and resources on an annual basis.

Equal opportunities

- Holywell ensures that all students, regardless of gender, learning ability, physical ability, ethnicity, linguistic ability and/or cultural circumstances, will have equal access to the curriculum.
- We ensure that our curriculum does not disenfranchise students who have some form of disadvantage and we aim to have equity of access and opportunity for all. Our curriculum is designed to raise aspirations and raise expectations for all – and especially for disadvantaged and SEND students.
- Where it is inappropriate for a student to participate in a lesson because of reasons related to any of the factors outlined above, the lessons will be adapted to meet the student's needs and alternative arrangements involving extra support will be provided where necessary.
- All efforts will be made to ensure that cultural and gender differences will be positively reflected in all lessons.

Curriculum Impact

- The impact of the curriculum is seen in terms of outcomes in external assessments (inc. SATs and GL Tests), outcomes recognised and measured by Teacher Assessments and wider outcomes such as student confidence, student engagement and student feedback. The latest outcomes are available on the

school website - please see Outcomes section on Home Page which includes links to:

- Exams and Assessment Results
 - DfE Performance Tables
 - Reports (Ofsted, SIAMS And DfE link)
 - Values Champions
 - GCSE results (from August 2029 onwards)
- Quality work produced across the curriculum demonstrating an interest and commitment to learning
 - Students leave our school as confident, resilient and ready young people with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for future success in sixth forms, colleges, apprenticeships or employment. Students demonstrate strong literacy, numeracy and communication skills, alongside increasing independence, organisation and self-management.
 - Excellent take-up of curriculum clubs and opportunities
 - Students who are well-prepared for their next stage of learning – Historically, Wootton School colleagues comment on how well-prepared Holywell students are for GCSE courses and KS4 results demonstrate excellent achievement for former students.
 - Parental Feedback

"I want to say a huge thank you to the school. Both our boys were really nervous about starting a new school but came home really happy last night and could not wait to get to school this morning" (Year 5 parent).

"I feel that my daughter has settled really well into the school. She loves coming into school. I have seen a big difference in her and she is definitely developing well."; "Really pleased how much the teachers care. Very impressed so far." (Year 5 parents);

"I cannot thank you enough for all you and your team do. Our experience of Holywell has been so very special. The love, care, teaching, encouragement and generosity of compassion our children have been blessed with has meant the world to us. So, a huge thank you! Keep doing what you are doing because you are doing an amazing job!!! And you are making an eternal difference!" (Year 8 parents)
 - Student Feedback

"Holywell is friendly and full of people (children and adults) who make your day amazing. People don't judge you no matter how unique you are. Can't is not an option." (Yr 6 student). "Holywell is a school where everyone feels safe. Everyone is one big, happy family where everyone is willing to help each other out." (Yr 8 student). "Holywell is very welcoming; everyone feels happy when they're here and safe. Anyone can learn just as well as anyone else. (Yr 8).

During some recent staff interviews, visiting candidates asked our student panel some questions – here are the questions and the students' responses:

1. What makes you proud to be a Holywell student?
"Having amazing teachers, teaching assistants and staff around us. We feel safe at all times. We feel like we can be who we truly are and that this is accepted. We are proud to wear our school uniform to represent our amazing school. We can be open and honest without having to worry. We love how all staff put so much effort into making the school the best place it can be."

2. Do you feel the importance of the values?
"Yes. The sense of community at our school is great. We feel like the values teach us to be the best we can be within the school community and also outside of school."

3. What do you like best about your school?

"The teachers and staff who help us. They make lessons fun and engaging. You can tell that they must work long hours to create these resources! We also think the school community is the best. We can have fun, be open but most importantly we feel safe at all times".

Review

- i. The Curriculum Committee of the Board of Governors will monitor and review the Curriculum policy.
- ii. The Curriculum Committee of the Board of Governors will contribute to the school's annual self-evaluation processes in relation to the delivery of this policy
- iii. The Curriculum Committee of the Board of Governors will work with SLT and key school leaders on the strategic direction and implementation of the curriculum policy through the identification of priorities for improving further the delivery of the policy, practice and procedures.

Cross reference this policy with the following policies

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Homework
- PSHE (inc RSE)
- Assessment and Written Feedback
- Equal opportunities
- Acceptable Use
- e-safety and ICT Policy
- Remote Learning Contingency Plan
- Safeguarding Policy