

Gordano School - Whole School Curriculum Rationale

Aims of our Curriculum

At Gordano school, we are ambitious for all students to experience, develop and secure the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will allow them to progress with curiosity and confidence through school and beyond. Our definition of the curriculum is *'the entire planned learning experience'*¹ Our aim therefore in planning and implementing both the taught and wider curriculum is to develop lifelong learners, with the agency and desire to positively contribute to the various communities to which they belong.

In designing our curriculum, we subscribe to the following shared strategic aims with the other Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) schools:

LSP Curriculum Aims

1	One which is broad allowing students to acquire a wide body of knowledge across a range of different subjects & extra-curricular activities	All students will be given the opportunity to experience a wide range of different subjects and disciplines.
2	One where students acquire the most powerful knowledge	Each subject will carefully consider and include the most important and challenging content within their discipline.
3	Enabling progress through a carefully sequenced curriculum	This allows key concepts, knowledge and themes to be revisited and built upon with whilst being increasingly challenging. This will need deliberate mapping within each curriculum area
4	One which builds upon prior learning ensuring that students gain incrementally more complex understanding	With KS2 now being more challenging, our KS3 curriculum needs to reflect this in terms of its demands on students. This requires understanding of what is covered at primary school and how subjects can build upon this
5	One in which knowledge is remembered long term and which is transferable across differing contexts	Knowing more + remembering more = progress. Subjects have a responsibility to support each other in the delivery of knowledge e.g. maths in science or drama in English.
6	One which is bold and exciting and one in which teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve	We want students and their teachers to enjoy learning and be ambitious about what they can achieve. This will lead to better outcomes.
7	One which prepares students for life in modern Britain allowing them to make safe, informed and responsible decisions	Ultimately this goal and can be seen as acquiring the best qualifications possible however it is also about the wider benefits of a well-constructed curriculum such as effective CIAG, SMSC & PSHE
8	One which develops students into responsible, healthy, kind and ambitious young adults.	We want students to be ready to take an active role as citizens, armed with the resilience, self-respect, tolerance and drive to live a full, successful and positive life.
9	One which enhances the cultural capital of all students.	We want all students to be exposed to some of the key cultural, social and functional knowledge and skills to allow them to fully partake in our modern society.

Curriculum Principles

We cannot predict the knowledge and skills that will be needed in the future. We can however equip students with essential, 'powerful' knowledge across a breadth of subject discipline, along with the skills, attitudes and dispositions that will enable them to apply, adapt and build on this knowledge in the future.

We have summarised key curriculum components into ten principles; seven academic and three personal, that together, inform the planning and delivery of the curriculum our students experience, within the classroom and beyond.

Academic Principles (1-7)

Each subject area has a unique role to play in moulding our young people; we celebrate and value the specific skills and traditions within each area of study. With the curriculum principles as a foundation, our subject specialists are trusted to decide on the curriculum 'entitlement' for every student within that subject, informed by but not limited to the National Curriculum and exam specifications. Subject teams consider carefully curriculum pacing and sequencing to ensure that the curriculum progressively builds in cognitive complexity across the years, whilst supporting knowledge understanding, retention and application. Curriculum review and development is ongoing, informed by learner needs, learner progress and in response to local, national and global circumstances.

The academic curriculum is delivered through [GORDANO LEARNING](#)

1. The core, foundation knowledge in each discipline				
2.				
2. Opportunities for reading and development of Tier 2/3 vocabulary, writing styles and text types				
3.				
3 The numerical concepts used within each discipline.	4 The practical and cognitive skills inherent to each discipline.	5 The key timelines, theories and figures within each discipline	6 Exposure to and consideration of diverse perspectives	7 Knowledge of how each discipline has impact on the modern and future world.

Personal Curriculum Principles (8-10)

Our personal principles encompass the wider awareness, attitudes, habits and dispositions that will develop students' kindness, responsibility, ambition and their happiness. In other words, principles that will enable them to Dream big, Do your Best and Give Back.

8 Learning to be responsible for ourselves and our futures.	9 Learning to be responsible for our community.	10 Learning to consider our global and environmental responsibilities.
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We take great pride in the range of curricular, extra-curricular, pastoral, social and developmental experiences that students are given throughout their time at school to foster these attributes. These are delivered in a range of ways - through the PSHE curriculum, through our tutor and assembly programme and as members of a tutor group and a House, through the 'Gordano Extra' and 'Gordano Aspire' programmes, through student leadership roles and forums, and through Activities Week, Performing, Visual Arts and Design events, through CEIAG and work experience and embedded into our academic curriculum. We are continually working to involve all students in the wider curriculum offer.

The Academic Curriculum at Key Stage 3 and 4

The Curriculum at Key Stage 3

Students study a very wide range of subjects at Key Stage 3 (Year 7 and 8) in order to give them a broad and balanced base to their secondary education prior to personalisation. These include:

- Maths
- English
- Science
- Humanities (Geography, History, Ethics & Philosophy)
- Modern Language (French or Spanish)
- Design Technology (including a Carousel of Product Design, Textiles and Food Technology)
- Computing
- Creative Arts (Art, Music, Drama & Dance)
- PE
- A library-based reading lesson

The Academic Curriculum at Key Stage 4

Guided Choices at Key Stage 4

We ensure careful and appropriate subject choices are made at Key Stage 4 through a comprehensive Guided Choices Programme (see separate documentation) in the Spring of Year 8, including very strong IAG based on academic profile, subject input, taster sessions, special assemblies, links to careers advice and careful matching of students to appropriate Guided Choices pathways.

Core Curriculum

- All students enter for GCSE **English** Language and Literature
- All students enter GCSE **Maths**
- All students enter GCSE Combined **Science** OR separate Sciences in Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- All students take part in Core PE
- All students choose a Creative option (from the Creatives Arts/DT)
- All students study a non-examined Ethics / PSHE course for all students throughout Years 9 and 10, tailored specifically to the context of Gordano students. In Year 11 students study key elements of PSHE alongside comprehensive preparation for their next steps.

Guided Choices Pathways and The 'Ebacc'

- We believe that an 'Ebacc pathway' is appropriate for the majority of our students. We also recognise that for some students, an alternative suite of subjects will better prepare them for the future.
- In particular we believe that studying a **Language** is a valuable part of a student's education. We live in an increasingly globalised world and we see it as our responsibility to prepare students for that in terms of the process of learning a language and developing an understanding of other cultures and values, especially in a community that is not as culturally diverse as many. We also value the benefits of language learning in relation to understanding of grammar and improved cognitive function, particularly in relation to memory and flexible/creative thinking. The vast majority of students therefore will study a language to GCSE level. For a very small number of students, a more bespoke pathway may be more suitable as determined by SEND needs or other external professional guidance, such as guidance from CAMHS. This will be discussed on an individual basis.
- We also encourage students to study a GCSE in **Humanities** (History or Geography) to maintain breadth and as a 'facilitating' subject.
- Computing is the other subject that is optional, but part of the Ebacc group. It is particularly suited to students who are mathematically minded.

Other Guided Choices Subjects at Key Stage 4

- **Creative Arts** (GCSE Art, GCSE Art Photography, GCSE Dance, GCSE Drama, GCSE Music)
- **Technology** (GCSE Design Technology (including Textiles option), GCSE Food and Nutrition, GCSE Computer Science, Cambridge National Creative iMedia, WJEC Construction)
- **Social Science** (GCSE Business Studies, GCSE Psychology, BTEC Health & Social Care)
- **Physical Education** (GCSE PE, Cambridge National Sport Studies)
- **Aspire Pathway Support** (BTEC Travel and Tourism, BTEC Uniformed Services, Core Support in English / Maths)
- **GCSE Religious Studies** is offered as a twilight course in Year 9 and 10.

Ultimately, we believe that students should be given significant opportunity to choose (under careful guidance) a combination of subjects at Key Stage 4 that suits their individual skills, interests and potential future pathways, whilst ensuring they are equipped with a suite of subjects that opens doors both academically and professionally.

The Academic Curriculum at Key Stage 5

The Key Stage 5 curriculum aims to build on the academic and wider experience developed at Key Stages 3 and 4, offering a broad range of academic pathways and a very rich broader curriculum.

Most students study three subject options from a wide range of subject disciplines:

- English Faculty (A Levels in English Language, English Literature, Media Studies)
- Maths Faculty (A Levels in Maths, Further Maths, Level 2 Core Maths)
- Science Faculty (A Levels in Biology Chemistry, Physics)
- Humanities Faculty (A Levels in Geography, Government & Politics, History and Religious Studies)
- Languages Faculty (A Levels in French, Spanish)
- Technology Faculty (A Levels in Product Design, Textiles, Cambridge Technical in IT)

- Social Science Faculty (A Levels in Business Studies, Economics, Psychology, Sociology, Level 3 BTECs in Business Studies, Health & Social Care)
- Creative Arts Faculty (A Levels in Art, Music)
- Physical Education Faculty (A Level PE, Cambridge Technical in Sport Studies)

Most students study three Level 3 subjects, with the option (under careful guidance) for students to complete four.

We also seek to offer an opportunity for students to add further breadth to their academic profile and develop high level academic research skills through offering the Extended Project Qualification. This is encouraged for approximately the upper 40% of the Year 12 cohort.