



CURRICULUM POLICY 2024-25

This policy meets the Independent School Standards, which can be referenced [here](#), and mainly Part 1: Quality of Education, although additionally Part 2: Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupils (SMSC).

Hereford Cathedral School is committed to providing a rigorous academic and intellectual education that will challenge and engage pupils. We aim to offer continuity and progression of learning to foster a life-long love of learning for its own sake and provide our pupils with a secure foundation on which to continue into Higher Education and into the careers of their choice. In accordance with the Department for Education's (DfE) *Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers* (2015, updated 2023), our aim is that every pupil should leave our school effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. We seek to actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

All pupils of compulsory school age receive a full-time supervised education that allows them to learn and make progress. The education provided by the school takes into account the age, aptitude and needs of each pupil, including those with an Education and Health or Care (EHC) plan. Hereford Cathedral School, as an independent school, offers a balanced curriculum broadly based upon the National Curriculum, and one which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. This education is intended to give pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative aspects. The contribution of each curriculum subject to these educational areas is outlined in detail in the subject-specific documentation and the School expects homework to be set as appropriate, and in accordance with the school's homework policy. A summary of the curriculum for each year is provided in the Curriculum Guide for Parents.

Each pupil participates in a full Games programme one day per week.

Entry to all programmes of study is based on academic suitability and appropriateness, regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief.

In accordance with the statutory requirements, the school aims to make the curriculum accessible to all pupils as far as is reasonably practicable. The school has an Accessibility Plan which is available to parents on request. Statutory guidance also prohibits the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school. Political issues are introduced in a number of courses and are presented in a balanced manner.

The Deputy Head (Academic) will monitor this policy, and report to the Governing Body Education Committee on the progress of the policy and will recommend any changes.

Years 7 – 9

In Years 7 - 9, all pupils receive a broad introductory curriculum, which gives them experience in all of the aspects outlined above and ensures that pupils are well prepared for the programme of study in Years 10 -11. The curriculum is not only broad and balanced but also differentiated and, as such, recognises that each individual has differing educational needs, strengths and weakness.

Allocation of Curriculum Time in Years 7 – 9 (based around our 45 periods per week)

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	5	5	5
Mathematics	5	5	5
Science	5	6	6
Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE)	2	2	2
French	4 ^A	3	3 ^B
Spanish		3	3
Geography	3	3	2
History	3	3	2
Art	2	2	2
DT	2	2	2
Music	4 ^C	2	2 ^D (or Drama)
Latin/Classics	0	1	2
Physical Education (PE)^E	2	2	2
Computer Science	2	2 ^F (or Drama)	2
Drama	2	2 (or Computer Science)	2 (or Music)
Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)	1	1	1
Combined Cadet Force (CCF)/ Activities	0	0	1
Games	3	3	3
Total	45	45	45

Setting: The School looks carefully at factors such as the number of pupils within a cohort, the ability range of the pupils and the particular needs of individuals in determining precise arrangements for setting within each year group. Initial information that is used in reaching these decisions when pupils enter the Senior School includes their entrance examination profile if appropriate, information from previous school reports and, if available, Key Stage 2 SAT examination results.

In Years 7 and 8 pupils are taught in mixed ability groups in most subjects. However, pupils are set, according to mathematical and linguistic ability, in both Maths (Year 7 onwards) and Modern Foreign Languages (Year 8 onwards). There is considerable overlap of ability between sets and set changes occur whenever it is clear that this will be beneficial. In English some pupils receive extra support, either being taught separately in a smaller group, or by being part of a group that has specialist additional

^A In Year 7, 4 periods are allocated to MFL, which rotates between French and Spanish

^B In Year 9 pupils and where appropriate, pupils with SEND may study only one MFL, EAL or attend Study Support

^C In Year 7, 4 periods allocated to Music include 2 periods of Junior Choir, in addition to 2 periods of Music lessons as a class

^D In Year 9, pupils study Drama and Music in half-termly rotation

^E PE and also Games are taught by gender

^F In Year 8, pupils study Drama and Computer Science in half-termly rotation

learning support working alongside the main subject teacher. Latin is introduced to all pupils in Year 8. In Year 9, after parental consultation, pupils are set by ability across the year group for Maths and Modern Languages.

Years 10 – 11

For Years 10 – 11, our core curriculum of academic subjects includes: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, and a Modern Foreign Language (MFL) (for the majority of our pupils; either French or Spanish). PSHE, Games and CCF/Activities are compulsory and non-examined parts of our curriculum. Students may study English as an Additional Language (EAL) as an alternative to English Language and Literature, where appropriate.

Pupils study a further three subjects, from the following options: Art, Computer Science, Design and Technology, Drama, Economics, French (as a second MFL), Geography, History, Latin, Music, Physical Education, RPE, Spanish (as a second MFL). Computer Science was newly offered for the 2021-2022 academic year. In September 2023, our bespoke 'Horizons' course, which focusses upon personal development, was introduced into Year 10 (replacing the GCSE short course in RS); in September 2024 our pupils gained an extra (sixth) weekly period of English and Mathematics.

The School constructs the timetables of Years 10 and 11 around pupils' choices and thus there are no predetermined 'Option Blocks'. We aim to run any course in which there is sufficient demand.

Allocation of Curriculum Time in Years 10 – 11 (based around our 45 periods per week)

Subject	Lessons in Year 10	Lessons in Year 11	Notes
English	5	6	Including English and English Literature; EAL where an appropriate alternative
Mathematics	5	6	Set 1 also follow the AQA Further Maths course
Science	12	12	4 in each Science; either Double Award or separate GCSEs in each Science
Horizons	2	0	Horizons focussed upon pupils' personal development
MFL	4	4	Either French or Spanish
PSHE	1	1	
CCF/Activities	1	1	
Games	3	3	
Options	12	12	3 options selected; 4 periods per week per subject

Years 12 – 13

At A level, a similar policy applies to pupils' choice of A level subjects as with GCSE options. The school aims to run any course in which numbers are economically viable. Advice is given to all students regarding their A level choices by their Form Tutors which is supported by the A level Options Evening, their use of the sector leading 'Unifrog' platform, and/or through attending an interview with the Head of Futures. Most pupils start on four subjects in Year 12 and take three subjects at A-Level although other combinations are quite common. In September 2023 the HCS Diploma was introduced as a weekly period focussing upon pupils' real-world readiness. In September 2024, Sociology (A Level) was added to the curriculum in Year 12 and Enterprise & Entrepreneurship BTEC replaced Business Studies A Level.

Sixth Form pupils have provision for private study, which includes the use of the Gilbert Library, the Cathedral Room, the Sixth Form Centre and subject specialist areas (with the permission of the appropriate Head of Department). In some cases, the Deputy Head (Academic) or Head of Sixth Form may insist that a pupil attends Supervised Private Study.

Allocation of Curriculum Time in Years 12 – 13 (based around our 45 (46 in Year 12) periods per week)

Subject	Lessons in Year 12	Lessons in Year 13
Games	3	3
PSHE	1	0
CCF ^G	1	1
Subjects	24 (32) ^H	24 (32)
HCS Diploma ^I	1	1
Study Periods	8 - 17	8 -17

^G Optional

^H Pupils studying 3 subjects would attend 24 lessons per week, and those studying for would attend 32. Since Further Maths occupies only 4 extra periods per week (on top of A level Maths but as a fourth subject) those students would attend 28 periods per week

^I New in the 2022-23 academic year, on a rotation our students follow a number courses which will ensure that they leave the school real-world ready

Futures

Our well-resourced Futures Department, provides support and advice as well as organising additional visits by outside agencies, speakers and advisers. We recognise the importance of accurate, independent and up-to-date careers guidance for all pupils from Years 7-13 to allow them both to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and to fulfil their potential. Pupils receive timely and impartial advice to help them choose GCSE and post-16 courses. For university applications, there is a rigorous process which is organised by the Head of Futures and UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) co-ordinators, and overseen by the Head of Sixth Form and Deputy Head (Academic).

Learning Skills and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Our Learning Skills department is responsible for screening all new entrants to the school for SEND. Parents of pupils who are identified as requiring support are informed and can arrange additional support by private agreement. The appropriate information is passed to the Tutor, Head of Year and to subject teachers. Tutors and the Learning Support department assemble Individual Education Plans for these students. In the small number of cases in which one of our pupils has an EHC plan, we review this annually to ensure that the pupil is receiving the specified provision. We recognise too that very able pupils can sometimes require special provision.

For those pupils for whom English is not their first language, the School determines whether additional tuition in English is necessary and the level of tuition required. All such tuition comes under the English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy, which itself is subject to regular review by the School's Learning Skills Department and overseen by the Governing Body Education Committee. The School's SEND and EAL Policies are available to parents on the website.

A Hartley, September 2024

Next review September 2025