

Herschel Grammar School - Curriculum Summary

October 2021

As stated by OFSTED in September 2012:

"The curriculum is broad and provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop personal qualities and skills."

"The curriculum in the main school and sixth form includes a good breadth of subjects and provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development."

Since receiving our outstanding judgment in 2012 we have continued to refine our curriculum offer to ensure our learners have the very best opportunities to achieve academic success, develop personal responsibility all within a caring environment.

We review our curriculum every year through our governing body, senior leadership team, faculty and staff meetings. Learners are also consulted on their views to ensure our curriculum meets their needs. This year our senior prefect for the curriculum will take a lead on learner voice pertaining to the curriculum.

Whilst the last 18 months have seen significant changes and challenges both in school and in our wider community, subject leaders have been responsive to adapting the curriculum to ensure learners can build on their prior learning, have much needed continuity and allow space and time to review and reflect.

Every subject is continuing the process of refining their curriculum visions, implementing when and how knowledge and skills are passed on and remembered, embedding strong cross and wider curriculum links and ensuring each curriculum area is sequenced well, providing our learners with fantastic and memorable opportunities resulting in the best possible outcomes.

Above all we want to enthuse all young people to love learning, embrace challenge, succeed and enjoy coming to school, due in part, to what and how they learn.

Summary of our curriculum

All learners in years 7 - 9 (Key Stage 3) follow the new revised national curriculum for KS3 in core and foundation subjects. On entry, Year 7 specialise in either French or Spanish and continue to study that throughout KS3 & 4. We also recognise the importance of home or community languages and wherever possible aim to facilitate examinations in these subjects.

Where appropriate, Heads of Department have modified the curriculum to reflect a local context and enabling all learners to develop relevant skills to ensure progression to Key Stage 4. For example, in Year 7 learners look at Indian music, Historians in study the Empire and India and Windsor Castle. Geographers study crime statistics for Slough.

Towards the end of Year 9 learners in core subjects begin preparation for GCSEs. Assessment in Key Stage 3 takes the form of 'grades'. See our revised Assessment Policy (currently under review). Each subject has grade descriptors broken down into "what you need to know" and "what skills you need to show".

Year 9 learners make their GCSE choices in March and study two optional GCSE subjects in Years 10 and 11 alongside compulsory subjects. The careers process continues early in Year 9 and runs throughout the academic year, helping to support young people with their choices.

We have refined our curriculum offer in September 2019. Our aim was to increase the number studying either French or Spanish to GCSE level and beyond. We recognise the benefits that studying a language brings. We also expect learners to study either Geography or History to GCSE level.

Please refer to our KS4 options information booklet for detailed information on our KS4 programme. This can be found [here](#). The KS4 curriculum is built around the needs to our learners. Option blocks are bespoke to our learners' preferences and we have a very high satisfaction rate.

At KS3 and KS4 all learners have two hours of PE per week.

From September 2021 Year 10 option subjects will have 2.5 hours per week. We hope this will give learners a good grounding in these new subjects and have the opportunity to complete any NEA work in Year 10. In order to keep as much flexibility in the curriculum we decided learners should have the option to study, GCSE Technology and GCSE Religious Studies. We currently have

The Sixth Form curriculum is built around the needs to our learners. As with Year 9, option blocks are bespoke to our learners' preferences and we have a very high satisfaction rate. There is a very wide range of courses on offer through our consortium partnership with Baylis Court School.

Please visit <http://www.herschel.slough.sch.uk/School-Information/Sixth-Form> for more information.

In the Sixth Form, students study a minimum of 3 subjects. Now all A level subjects have been reformed into linear qualifications, AS qualifications are not taken at Herschel. Each year a large number of learners take the EPQ qualification. This allows them to deepen and further their knowledge and understanding of fascinating and highly complex issues and concepts.

We truly value to importance of student mental health & wellbeing. One way to reduce stress and anxiety is by not insisting learners study four A levels. From September 2018 we have developed an enrichment / Wellbeing block. Across the academic year, Year 12 will have lessons in sport & fitness, wellbeing, food and nutrition, lifesaving and healthy living. As part of the enrichment Year 12 can opt to study Level 3 Core Mathematics and/or the Extended Project qualification.

Below is our current curriculum diagram for 2021/22

