SUTTON VALENCE SCHOOL
SINCE 1576

Curriculum Policy

(Senior School)

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The curriculum at Sutton Valence is broad and balanced, offering all pupils the opportunity to study an extensive range of subjects appropriate to their age and ability. We cater for a wide range of academic aptitudes, so our curriculum is necessarily diverse and flexible. Lessons are taught by specialist teachers in a stimulating and challenging environment that is conducive to a positive, enjoyable learning experience for the pupils.

Morning lessons are 55 minutes long, with three afternoon lessons of 50 minutes each. There are 34 periods per week including PE, games and activities which are timetabled during this time with most sports fixtures being on Saturday morning. We run a very extensive sporting programme and offer a comprehensive selection of clubs and societies to enrich the quality and breadth of the pupils' education; we timetable these to maximise the benefit to the pupils by ensuring an equitable spread of resources and specialist teaching staff.

The Digital Strategy means we use OneNote as repository for all schoolwork which includes pupils' work, electronic textbooks, teaching resources and on-line mark books.

The Lower School: First and Second Forms

Approximately half of our pupils enter the First Form at the age of eleven; the majority come from our Prep School whilst the rest enroll from a diverse range of other feeder schools. Our junior curriculum is a broad and varied programme, where we aim to educate the whole child and provide them with experiences, inside and outside of the classroom, that will develop the skills required for success at GCSE and beyond.

For the majority of their subjects, pupils are streamed into classes of 24 or fewer. In these classes, the pupils study Geography, History, Religious Studies, ICT and Science. The exceptions are English and Mathematics where pupils are set by ability and Modern Foreign Languages where they are set according to language choice. The First, Second and Third Forms will study either Spanish or French. The development of leadership, teamwork and personal skills are promoted via the Junior Leadership Course and our PSHE programme. The First and Second Forms also study Art, Design and Technology, Drama and Music. The Third Form study two or three of the creative subjects of their choosing with those who opted for two creative subjects also having a prep session during the week.

First and Second Form pupils have lessons in Online Safety and the Prevent Strategy as part of the curriculum.

The pupils are housed in separate accommodation to foster a sense of identity and purpose in a safe environment. They are assigned to one of four Houses at this stage where they will remain until they leave the School.

Pupils with specific learning difficulties and overseas pupils requiring additional English lessons receive extra support as appropriate. Pupils on our learning support register have the opportunity to have learning support lessons instead of a modern foreign language lesson in the First to Third Forms. In the GCSE year, pupils can choose to receive learning support as an option choice. A special programme of activities for our gifted and talented scholars runs throughout all year groups. In addition to their timetabled classes, a large number of pupils, of all ages, take Music and Drama lessons.

The Middle School: Third Form

We have a second large intake of pupils at the age of thirteen from our local prep schools; these pupils are carefully mixed with those who have been with us for two years into streamed classes for most of their subjects. The exceptions are the same as for the younger years, namely Mathematics, English and Modern Languages. We introduce the CCF to the Third Form curriculum on Wednesday afternoons and teach the three science specialisms separately. In the Michaelmas Term pupils are taught for a 'Discovery Term' which will enable them to study exciting aspects of the different subjects in each of their timetabled lessons. The teachers have produced a curriculum which will not only prepare pupils for GCSE study but also really inspire and engage them. Pupils are also encouraged to complete their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award through CCF.

From the start of the Lent Term of the Third Form, pupils will begin most of their GCSE courses. This will enable classes to complete the course content well before the start of the Summer Term of their GCSE year and offer plenty of opportunity for consolidation, examination technique practice and revision. By starting some GCSEs courses slightly early, we also allow pupils to have a taste of the subjects on offer and this will help them to decide which to continue, alongside the core subjects, into the Fourth Form. Some new subjects will be started in September of the Fourth Form where applicable.

Most pupils will study for nine GCSE subjects and top set mathematicians will gain one more (and a few take additional GCSEs out of the main curriculum). A stream mathematicians are given the opportunity to study for GCSE Further Mathematics alongside IGCSE Mathematics. Pupils who receive Learning Support within the curriculum work towards eight GCSEs whilst those who choose CCF on a Wednesday afternoon will take a Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) CVQO leadership qualification. Some of the GCSEs we offer are IGCSE qualifications and these have been chosen very deliberately by our Heads of Department because of the course content. They have exactly the same academic value as GCSEs.

The Middle School: Fourth and Fifth Forms

It is the firm policy of the School that a bespoke programme of subjects should be studied to GCSE which plays to pupils' strengths and enjoyment and enables them to pursue either a traditional, baccalaureate-style curriculum or a curriculum which enables pupils to specialise, whilst also having a wide range of choice. We can accommodate those who would like to take three sciences just as easily as our linguists; those who want three humanities; our creative pupils and those who may need a very bespoke curriculum. This individualised approach enables us to support each pupil. Pupils choose their options following conversations with parents, tutors and pupils. Those pupils who need a very bespoke curriculum due to their special educational needs will be advised by the Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning), the Assistant Head (Academic) and the Head of SEN. English, Mathematics, at least one Science subject either Biology, Physics or Chemistry or double award must be taken.

The options taken by the current Fourth Form are:

Art and Design	Design and Technology
Drama	Religious Studies
French	History
Media Studies	Geography
Photography	ICT
Spanish	Music

On Wednesday afternoons, in the final option block, approximately half of the Fourth Form will opt to continue in the CCF. The remainder of the year group can opt for academic subjects giving all our pupils considerable scope to tailor their timetables to their talents and aspirations.

The Sixth Form: Upper and Lower Sixth

The School follows the HMC recommended scheme of study with the majority of pupils taking three subjects for A Level. Those pupils who choose Further Mathematics may take four A Levels.

Pupils are asked to express their subject preferences before the option blocks are constructed so that as many combinations of subjects are offered as possible; the School aims to run any course that is economically viable. This gives a great deal of flexibility and does not restrict subject combinations unduly.

The following subjects are offered at A Level:

Art and Design	Biology
Business	Cambridge Technical Sport
AAQ Cambridge ICT	Cambridge Technical Business
Economics B	Chemistry
Design and Technology	English Literature
Geography	French
Mathematics	History
Media Studies	Mathematics (Further)
Photography	Music
Physics	Physical Education
Religion, Philosophy, and Ethics	Psychology
Theatre Studies	Spanish

In addition to their A levels, pupils also have the opportunity to add to their curriculum by choosing the Crest Award. An enrichment programme adds breadth and interest to individual programmes. In addition, there are many lectures and other activities of an academic nature to enhance and broaden pupils' Sixth Form experience. Pupils are also able to opt to take the Extended Project in the Lower Sixth which is usually completed in the Upper Sixth. The CISI Finance level 2 qualification is also offered. The EPQ is delivered by a team of experienced supervisors and the EPQ Coordinator. Pupils applying for Oxbridge are monitored and supported by the Head of Academic Enrichment and departments and interview practices are provided as appropriate. All pupils receive extensive careers guidance throughout the two years of study. In addition, we also have a subscription to UniFrog allowing pupils to access information and support for university and further study.

The Whole School

All pupils receive PSHE delivered weekly and teaching involves the use of a variety of dedicated resources provided by the Assistant Head, Wellbeing. Topics covered are wide, including sexting; anti bullying; self-esteem and self-image. Outside speakers come in to talk to all year groups on a variety of topics in the PSHE curriculum. The First to Lower Sixth Form Pupils have a dedicated PSHE lesson

once a week. The Upper Sixth receive PSHE content through the Wednesday afternoon programme.

Further information

There is a series of online booklets to help pupils and their parents understand how our curriculum operates throughout the School. These are available as downloadable PDFs which can be accessed through our website.