



CURRICULUM POLICY 2023-24

Considered by	Teaching and Learning Committee
Approved by the FGB:	6 th December 2023
Date of next review:	November 2024 or as appropriate
Responsible Officer:	R Lawrence

Curriculum Rationale

Comberton Village College is firmly committed to offering our pupils a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. We see the curriculum as our most fundamental tool in ensuring that pupils are introduced to the best that has been thought and said, and that they gain an appreciation of human creativity and achievement that will see them succeed throughout their lives, including - but not limited to - at examination points. We endeavour to use our curriculum to address knowledge gaps, thereby removing the barriers that some pupils face, whether as a result of SEND, social disadvantage or prior learning.

Our curriculum is central to our commitment to enable children to succeed. We therefore offer a range of meaningful courses and qualifications to suit all our pupils, which is under continuing review. We believe fundamentally that children deserve to study a wide range of disciplines throughout a three-year Key Stage 3. Key Stage 4 options choices are made in Spring of Year 9, for study during a two-year Key Stage 4. We wholeheartedly embrace, for all pupils, the study of the arts (Music, Art and Drama), humanities (including Religion, Philosophy and Ethics), the sciences (including Computer Science), Modern Foreign Languages, Design Technology, PE and PSHE, alongside an appropriate allocation of time to Maths and English fully to teach these subjects in an academically rigorous way.

Not only do we provide strong academic challenge through the disciplines we teach, we also aim to develop our pupils into **confident** and **capable** members of society and **caring** members of our community. Through suitable challenge to achieve as highly as they can, we want our pupils to become resilient and develop a love of learning that will last a lifetime. Through our academic and pastoral curriculum and the extensive experiences from our wide range of after school activities, trips and visits, we aim to enthuse, inspire and motivate and provide our pupils with the skills to enable them to stay safe and thrive in the modern world.

Subject leaders are asked to take as their principles of curriculum design the following:

- The curriculum should build coherently from pupils' knowledge and capabilities at the end of Year 6 towards what is required of them in external examinations in Key Stage 4, and, beyond this, to what they would need to access further study of the subject or to succeed in the world outside the classroom. Where possible, curriculum-based liaison with primary school subject leaders should help to ensure this is as coherent and systematic as it can be.
- The curriculum should take account of what is considered 'powerful knowledge' in that discipline, ensuring that pupils from all backgrounds are given the opportunity to succeed. (Powerful knowledge being specialised knowledge that gives 'power' to pupils to ability to think about, and do things, that otherwise they couldn't, taking them beyond their everyday experiences by giving them access to knowledge from key academic disciplines).
- The curriculum should take account of the knowledge gaps displayed by pupils with low prior attainment or from disadvantaged backgrounds and should provide opportunities to redress these.
- The curriculum should challenge our most able pupils and offer opportunities to learn beyond any prescribed knowledge.
- The curriculum should, where appropriate, give pupils cultural capital – in particular, to pupils who might not encounter such knowledge or concepts elsewhere.



Equality of access

We consider ourselves an inclusive school. Our intention is that our broad curriculum, including not only our academic subjects, but our pastoral curriculum and all that we offer beyond the classroom contribute to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion. We want our curriculum to have a positive impact on pupils of all races, disabilities, religions, sexual orientation and gender. We believe that all pupils of all kinds are entitled to a high-quality education, which includes preparing our pupils for life in modern Britain. Through our curriculum, we aim to develop our pupils into citizens who understand and appreciate diversity and who are respectful of difference.

Our curriculum for those pupils who have SEND is ambitious, with the vast majority supported to follow a full curriculum where possible but amended where appropriate to suit those with particularly high individual need. For all our pupils to access the curriculum, we also ensure that reasonable adjustments are made, for example, when applying our behaviour policy.

We prepare our pupils for life in modern British society by providing a broad curriculum which teaches pupils about different religions. We do not disadvantage against pupils who hold particular beliefs. Our Heads of Department and Subject Leads ensure that their curriculum draws on examples from all racial groups, including those which are traditionally under-represented, and provides an inclusive, relevant education for our LGBTQ+ pupils.

Curriculum Content:

The staff responsible for each curriculum area are responsible for planning the content, progression and implementation of the curriculum. Our Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum content may be viewed here ([link to whole school curriculum map](#)).

Curriculum Organisation:

Grouping of pupils:

In years 7 and 8, pupils are taught in their form groups for most subjects, with ability groups in Maths and MFL. In year 9, the form groups are re-arranged into mixed ability 'teaching groups'. At KS4, students are set according to their ability in English, Maths, Science and MFL, with the remainder of their KS4 choices determining their teaching group.

Key Stage 3 Offer:

All pupils in years 7 to 9 study English (language and literature), Maths, Science, Modern Foreign Languages, Design and Technology, Computer Science, Geography, History, Expressive Arts (Art, Drama and Music), Physical Education, RPE (Religion, Philosophy and Ethics) and PSHE. Where a pupil is unable to access the full curriculum for reasons such as SEND or medical reasons, a personalised curriculum is devised that may not include all the above subjects. Full details of what is taught to each year in each subject is available on the school website.

Key Stage 4 Offer:

All pupils in Key Stage 4 study GCSE courses in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Combined Sciences (unless taking Separate Sciences).

All pupils have the opportunity to study GCSE examinations (and other qualifications at an equivalent level) in a range of subjects. Pupils can also study additional GCSEs, for example Psychology, through our extra-curricular provision. The most able mathematicians may also be entered for further qualifications including GCSE Statistics. Those pupils who wish to improve their mathematical skills may also access free tutoring outside of the school day. Every pupil has access to a curriculum that is broad, balanced and provides a wide variety of choice for Post 16 Education.



There is a strong and supportive pupil guidance process to assist pupils in making the best choices for courses to study in KS4. The school has a clear expectation that students should continue to study a Modern Foreign Language at KS4 unless there are exceptional reasons why that would not be appropriate; for a small number of KS4 pupils, additional literacy lessons are provided. Pupils opt for three subjects in addition to their MFL choice.

The school does not insist that every pupil chooses subjects to meet “EBacc” requirements, although a significant majority of students do this through their choices. The full details regarding the KS4 curriculum provision are set out each year in the options guidance booklet, which is available on our school website.

Each Department is supported by the Centre, which is responsible for coordinating provision for pupils with special educational needs.

In addition to their examined courses, pupils study a curriculum in the following areas:

- Careers education, information, advice and guidance, including work related learning: This is covered via our pastoral curriculum through assemblies and tutorial activities and through collapsed days.
- Computing: Our Key Stage 4 Computing curriculum is covered during tutor time, when pupils complete the IDEA (Inspiring Digital Excellence Award) badges. Further elements are covered in a cross-curricular way, through PE, English, Maths and Science, with additional content covered on our collapsed days.
- Physical Education: Core PE is delivered through timetabled weekly lessons.
- PSHE: All Key Stage 4 pupils receive a discreet PSHE curriculum taught by our Head of PSHE.
- Relationships and Sex Education: All aspects of our RSE curriculum are addressed through our dedicated PSHE lessons and our pastoral curriculum.
- Religion, Philosophy and Ethics: All pupils benefit from 24 sessions over 6 days across Key Stage 4 for their core RPE entitlement.
- Within the year 7 to 11 pastoral curriculum, pupils follow a programme of activities that includes Active Form Time (learning about health, diet and exercise) and work related to the Rights Respecting School.

Homework is given to all years in every subject area and is a very important extension of the school's curriculum. The school has an assessment policy that sets out the expectations with regards to homework, its setting and marking.

Comberton Sixth Form (CSF)

Students applying to the CSF are able to access a wide range of A-level subjects and four Level 3 BTEC courses. Most students study three A-levels but there is the opportunity to take four A-levels for suitably qualified students. As well as the A-levels or BTEC, students are encouraged to take courses such as Core Maths, Global Perspectives (pre-U) and the Extended Project Qualification as well as an enrichment programme which includes many sporting activities. All students are assigned to a tutor group and receive regular support from the tutor through a combination of one-to-one tutorials and fortnightly group meetings. In addition, all students partake in a Personal Development programme that includes aspects such as healthy lifestyles, relationships and driving awareness, as well as careers and university support.

Extended Curriculum

The school is committed to offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Extra-curricular activities are on offer within most departments of the school, together with the opportunity to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and the timetable of available activities is published termly to both pupils and parents and is available on the school website. Where there are appropriate visits/trips, the school will endeavour to make it possible for all relevant pupils to attend. The Trips policy sets out our aims.

Curriculum delivery:

Number of School Periods per Subject per fortnight (60 period fortnight)

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
English	8	8	8	9	10
Maths	8	8	8	10	9
Science	8	8	8	12 (18 if triple science taken as an option)	12 (18 if triple science taken as an option)
Art	3	3	3		
Music	3	3	3		
Drama	2	2	2		
Languages (Spanish, French and German)	8	7	6	6	6
History	3	4	3		
Geography	3	3	4		
R.P.E.	2	3	3		
Physical Education	5	5	5	4	4
Technology	4	3	3		
Computing	2	2	3		
PSHE	1	1	1	1	1
Option Subjects (3 subjects X 6 periods)				18	18

Key Stage 4 Options subjects:

GCSE Art and Design	GCSE Business Studies	GCSE Computer Science
GCSE Drama	GCSE Film Studies	GCSE French, German or Spanish – pupils may opt for a second MFL
GCSE in Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)	GCSE Geography	GCSE Graphic Communication
GCSE History	GCSE Music	GCSE Religion, Philosophy and Ethics
GCSE Photography	GCSE Physical Education	Level 1/2 Health and Social Care
Level 1/2 Hospitality and Catering	Level 1/2 CIDA – Creative iMedia	Level 1/2 Constructing the Built Environment
Level 1/2 Engineering Design	Level 1/2 Sport	



After School Options

GCSE Art	GCSE Dance	GCSE Economics
GCSE Psychology	GCSE Spanish	GCSE Statistics

Literacy:

All teachers have a shared responsibility to teach reading, writing, and communication within their subject. We have a literacy strategy and teachers use a common approach to the marking of literacy within pupils' work.

Subject specific approach to improving Literacy:

At Comberton Village College, we have a sequential approach to improving literacy, which involves all teachers across all areas of our curriculum. We support and develop this in the following ways:

1 Improving Disciplinary Literacy

- Improving literacy is one of our school priorities, as it is the key to learning across all subjects and a strong predictor of GCSE outcomes.
- All teachers are supported and trained by HODs to understand how to teach pupils to read, write and communicate effectively in their subject.
- Through the academic year, we provide literacy focussed CPD for all staff (through in-school training, cross-Trust working and, where possible, from external specialists).

2 Targeted Vocabulary Instruction

- Subject teachers teach specific subject vocabulary to enable our pupils to use academic language.
- Subject teachers use a variety of approaches to teach vocabulary, including those relating words to their etymology and morphology, to help pupils remember new words and make connections between words.
- Teachers prioritise teaching Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which pupils are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech.
- Teachers and subject leaders integrate words which must be learnt into schemes of work.

3 Developing Reading of Complex Texts

- Departments use some of their meeting time to share best practice in teaching reading in their subject, e.g. use of questioning, modelling and prediction.
- Departments across the Trust collaborate regularly to discuss best practice in how to teach reading and comprehension in their subject.

4 Breaking down complex writing tasks

- Teachers explicitly teach writing skills for their subject, e.g. collaborative and paired writing, detailed planning and modelling of each step.
- Targeted support is provided for pupils who struggle to write fluently, either by the teacher or by The Centre (SEND department).
- Teachers use a variety of approaches, including, to motivate pupils to write.

5 Combining writing instruction with reading

- Pupils are taught to recognise features, aims and conventions of good writing within each subject.
- In their marking, teachers address spelling, grammar and punctuation explicitly in order to improve pupils' writing.



6 Opportunities for structured talk

- Teachers provide opportunities for high quality, well-structured and guided talk.
- Teachers support pupils by modelling high quality talk, for example including key vocabulary and metacognitive reflection within lessons.

7 Providing high quality literacy intervention

- Pupils with the weakest levels of literacy are supported through a tiered intervention system by the English department, the Centre and the Cabin.
- The English department assess students on entry to the school, and then subsequently, in order to match pupils to appropriate types of intervention, and to monitor the impact of interventions.
- The Centre and the Cabin offer intensive intervention programmes tailored to the needs of individual pupils with EHCPs.

Please view our separate literacy strategy document and literacy development plan for further details.

Numeracy

All teachers have a shared responsibility to contribute, where appropriate, to:

- ensuring that pupils receive positive messages about numeracy when used across the curriculum
- securing high standards in numeracy across the school

What is Numeracy?

Numeracy is much more than just knowing about numbers and number operations. It requires practical understanding and encourages the inclination to problem solve. Numeracy develops and enhances an analytical approach in dealing with measurement and handling data which in turn helps pupils make sense of the world around them. Many subjects naturally incorporate aspects of numeracy in their teaching. However, attempts to incorporate numeracy into subjects where it fits less well should be avoided. There is no expectation that all lessons should contain elements of numeracy, only that, where it occurs naturally, it is treated with care and consistency.

General principles

- Mental arithmetic should be recommended as a first resort. Teachers are encouraged to seek and compare a range of calculation methods, by asking pupils how they worked out a calculation and insisting everyone listens and responds positively to the responses.
- As a result of changes to primary assessment, pupils can be less flexible in their written calculation methods. Allowing discussion of calculations can help pupils to see other ways of approaching problems.
- Pupils will gain more and remember much more if understanding is given prominence.
- Pupils should be helped to develop their own methods of calculation, rather than be taught different procedures, particularly if different departments are encouraging the use of different procedures.
- Pupils are expected to have their own calculator in all lessons. The use of these should be encouraged where the act of calculating interferes with a pupil's understanding of the problem in hand.