



## Curriculum Policy

September 2025

### SECTION 1: POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 At St Chris, our progressive educational philosophy underpins a curriculum designed to foster independence, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning. We are dedicated to developing well-rounded individuals who are intellectually curious, socially responsible, and emotionally resilient.
- 1.2 Our curriculum aims to:
  - 1.2.1 **Encourage Independent Thinking:** Cultivate critical and independent thought, preparing students for lifelong learning.
  - 1.2.2 **Promote Creativity:** Integrate opportunities for creative expression and innovation across all disciplines.
  - 1.2.3 **Support Emotional Wellbeing:** Embed practices that nurture students' mental and emotional health.
  - 1.2.4 **Foster Social Responsibility:** Instil a sense of responsibility towards the community and the wider world.
- 1.3 With over a century of pioneering educational practice, our distinctive approach inspires a passion for learning and personal growth. Our balanced and inclusive curriculum develops not only academic excellence but also compassion, creativity, and social responsibility.
- 1.4 Our Curriculum Policy aligns with the school's ethos, encouraging collaboration, responsibility, self-discipline, and self-motivation. We empower students to become independent learners, creative thinkers, and informed decision-makers.

### SECTION 2: CURRICULUM AIMS

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- 2.2 Our comprehensive curriculum is tailored to the needs of our students, promoting holistic development—spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental, and physical—alongside academic rigor. It prepares students for life in British society and equips them with essential skills in communication, literacy, numeracy, and life skills.
- 2.3 Across all key stages, the curriculum offers a broad range of experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, social, physical, and creative fields, appropriate to each student's age and aptitude. It also supports students' preparation for subsequent educational stages and adult life.



- 2.4 Through both curricular and co-curricular programmes, we promote safety, healthy relationships, inclusion, and respect. Our innovative approach ensures the curriculum is broad, balanced, and challenging, engaging students and encouraging ownership of their learning. We believe that outstanding academic results should naturally follow from a rich and inspiring educational experience, rather than being the sole focus.

### **SECTION 3: PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES**

- 3.1 St Chris places the dignity of the individual, personal freedom, equality, and inclusion at the core of our community. These fundamental values are embedded in every aspect of school life; among staff and students, and throughout our policies and practices, ensuring that individual liberty is exercised with respect for law and order. We actively embrace diversity in nationality, beliefs, and religions.
- 3.2 We are committed to promoting principles that:
- 3.2.1 Develop students' self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence.
  - 3.2.2 Teach students to distinguish right from wrong and respect the civil and criminal law of England.
  - 3.2.3 Encourage responsibility, initiative, and positive contributions to both the local community and society at large.
  - 3.2.4 Foster a broad understanding of, and respect for, public institutions and services in England.
  - 3.2.5 Promote tolerance and harmony among different cultural traditions by encouraging appreciation and respect for all cultures.
  - 3.2.6 Uphold respect for others, with particular regard to the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
  - 3.2.7 Encourage respect for democracy and active participation in the democratic process, including understanding the foundations of law in England.
- 3.3 Further information can be found in the SMSC Policy and the Fundamental British Values Policy.

### **SECTION 4: PSHE, RSE AND CAREERS RELATED LEARNING IN THE CURRICULUM**

- 4.1 We are aware that as an independent school we are required to teach Relationships Education in the Junior School and Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) in the Senior School. In the Junior School, this is taught in distinct RSE and PSHE lessons. In the Senior School, this is embedded in our PSHE programme (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education). PSHE Education is compulsory within St Chris.
- 4.2 PSHE includes our Career Related Learning programme (CRL). Whilst health education is not compulsory, we teach health education topics throughout the school. The PSHE programme follows the spiral curriculum recommended by the PSHE Association.
- 4.3 PSHE, RSE and CRL underpin our approach to wellbeing at St Chris, equipping our children and young people with the knowledge, skills and attributes to make healthy, safe and informed choices now and throughout their lives.
- 4.4 Further information can be found in the RSE, PSHE and CRL policies.



## SECTION 5: EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

- 5.1 Our curriculum is designed to:
  - 5.1.1 Meet the needs of individual students and to “expect the best of all”, including pupils with complex learning profiles, those with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), and those for whom English is an additional language.
  - 5.1.2 Provide a variety of learning experiences that offer breadth, depth, and balance.
  - 5.1.3 Ensure continuity and progression between Key Stages
  - 5.1.4 Recognise and celebrate the potential for growth in all children, regardless of age or gender.
  - 5.1.5 Develop moral courage and promote spiritual, social, and cultural values.
  - 5.1.6 Foster literacy and numeracy skills while preparing students for a global, digital future.
  - 5.1.7 Support the holistic development of every child, in line with current national guidance on safeguarding, inclusion, and wellbeing.
- 5.2 During their time in the Early Years, children are introduced to a range of activities and materials designed to nurture independence and self-esteem. Through these experiences, concentration, confidence, and perseverance develop naturally.
- 5.3 Our Nursery and Reception classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum, which is structured around seven areas of learning and development:
- 5.4 Three Prime Areas:
  - 5.4.1 Communication and Language
  - 5.4.2 Physical Development
  - 5.4.3 Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- 5.5 Four Specific Areas:
  - 5.5.1 Literacy
  - 5.5.2 Mathematics
  - 5.5.3 Understanding the World
  - 5.5.4 Expressive Arts and Design
- 5.6 These areas make up the Early Learning Goals, which outline the knowledge, skills, and understanding children are expected to achieve by the end of the Reception year. Each area of learning is delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Our adult-led provision follows a cross-curricular, thematic approach, providing real-world context to enhance learning.
- 5.7 In the Nursery and Reception learning is structured around half term or termly topics which offer greater depth and continuity. During child-initiated activities, children are encouraged to follow their own interests and explore independently.
- 5.8 The Characteristics of Effective Learning—Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Creating and Thinking Critically—underpin all areas of the EYFS curriculum and support deep, sustained learning.



## **SECTION 6: JUNIOR SCHOOL**

- 6.1 Our Junior School offers a challenging, broad, and balanced curriculum, with a strong emphasis on developing key skills in English, mathematics, and personal and social development. These core skills provide a solid foundation for future learning.
- 6.2 We place great importance on ensuring that children are both engaged and enjoy their learning. We believe that a balance of hard work and enjoyment enhances learning potential and helps children develop effective lifelong learning habits.
- 6.3 Each class is led by a class teacher, who holds both academic and pastoral responsibility for the children. From Year 1 to Year 4, each class benefits from the support of a full-time Learning Support Assistant (LSA) and in Year 5 and year 6 there is an LSA per year group.
- 6.4 Children's progress is carefully monitored through ongoing assessment and observation, ensuring that each child reaches their full potential. Teaching approaches are flexible and tailored to meet individual learning styles and needs.
- 6.5 Teachers plan thoughtfully to deliver a well-structured curriculum, aligned with national expectations, but presented in a stimulating, creative, and holistic way. Each term focuses on a different topic, allowing for cross-curricular links and rich, varied learning experiences. Extension and enrichment activities are always provided in class.
- 6.6 Specialist teachers deliver lessons in Music, PE, and French. In Year 5 & 6, students also receive specialist instruction in pottery, cookery, computing, and performing arts provided by Senior School staff. A Forest School specialist leads outdoor learning sessions for children from Nursery through to Year 4, supporting their development through nature-based exploration.
- 6.7 The Junior School is committed to supporting the physical development of every child. A structured Physical Education programme supports the development of fine and gross motor skills and ensures that all children experience a variety of sports, games, and physical activities. Emphasis is placed on both individual skill development and teamwork. All children also participate in weekly swimming lessons in the school's indoor pool.
- 6.8 The School provides access to a networked computer system and a range of digital learning resources. All classrooms are equipped with interactive displays, and there is a dedicated ICT suite that can accommodate a full class. A set of laptops and IPADS are also available to support learning. Pupils are also taught about online safety and responsible internet use.
- 6.9 For more detailed information about the curriculum and individual subjects, please refer to the Junior School Curriculum Booklets.

## **SECTION 7: SENIOR SCHOOL**

- 7.1 In the Senior School there is one registration period of 10 minutes; six teaching periods of 50 minutes; one company period of 20 minutes, with class changeover times in between to enable teachers and students, time to move to (and prepare for), one lesson to another. There is a morning break of 20 minutes and lunchtime of 55 minutes.



**7.2 Key Stage 3 (Years 7–9/I-III Group)**

Key Stage 3 marks students' initial years in Senior School, serving as a crucial transition from Junior School to the commencement of external examination courses after Year 9.

**7.3 Academic Curriculum**

The Key Stage 3 curriculum provides students with a broad foundation of subject knowledge and skills, preparing them for future GCSE choices. Core subjects, Mathematics, English, and Science, receive additional focus, while Personal, Social, and Health Education (PSHE) is also central, equipping students to become responsible and valued members of their community. Other subjects, including humanities, languages, creative disciplines, and PE, ensure a balanced and comprehensive education. The PSHE programme also incorporates career related learning, encouraging personal fulfilment and active engagement in society.

**7.4 Wider School Life**

Education at St Chris extends beyond academics. We encourage all students to engage in the school's diverse extra-curricular offerings, such as sports, drama, music, societies, and the School Council, in order to develop confidence, character, and citizenship. Active participation in school life fosters personal growth and enhances academic achievement.

**7.5 Preparation for Future Success**

Key Stage 3 is designed to build upon the skills developed in Junior School, preparing students for the increased academic demands of external examinations, and supporting their personal development as they mature.

KS3 Subject hours over a two-week period;

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	8	8	8
Maths	8	8	8
Science	7	7	8
Spanish	2	3	3
French	3	3	3
Geography	3	3	3
History	3	3	3
Rotation subjects: Food & Nutrition/ Environmental Studies (and Philosophy in Year 9)	2	2	2
Art	3	3	3
3D Design	3	3	3
Music	2	2	2
Drama	3	3	3
Computer Science	2	2	2
PSHE	2	2	2
Critical Thinking	1	1	1
Physical Education (Games)	4	4	4
Swimming (Year 7 & 8 only)	2	1	
Options Programme	2	2	2



Many lessons in I & II Group (Years 7 and 8) are taught in Company/Registration or other mixed ability groups. In Maths, classes are set according to ability at the beginning of the year. Science is set according to ability in III Group (Year 9). English introduce setting arrangements in later years based on the learning profile of the year group.

## 7.6 Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11/ IV-V Group)

### 7.6.1 Educational Philosophy

At St Chris, our Key Stage 4 curriculum reflects our progressive, holistic philosophy: prioritising student agency, personalisation, and flexibility. We are committed to meeting individual student needs, ensuring that our curriculum is accessible and leads to success for all.

### 7.6.2 Curriculum Structure

In Years 10 and 11 (IV & V Group), most students pursue eight or nine GCSEs. However, our flexible approach allows some students to take as few as seven or as many as twelve GCSEs, depending on their individual needs and aspirations.

### 7.6.3 Core Curriculum

All students follow a compulsory core curriculum comprising:

- 7.6.3.1 English Language and English Literature (2 GCSEs; in rare cases, students may drop English Literature at the end of Year 10)
- 7.6.3.2 Mathematics
- 7.6.3.3 Science (typically 2 or 3 GCSEs, depending on whether students take combined or individual sciences; some may opt for a single award)
- 7.6.3.4 PSHE and Games, which continue throughout Senior School

### 7.6.2 Holistic Development

To support broader skills and character development, all students complete:

- 7.6.2.1 **Year 10:** Higher Project Qualification (HPQ) Level 2 or Global Perspectives IGCSE
- 7.6.2.2 **Year 11:** One of the following—First Aid Level 1 and Mental Health Training, British Sign Language Level 1, or Sports Leaders Award

### 7.6.3 Subject Options

Students select three additional subjects from a wide range of options. They are encouraged to choose subjects they enjoy and excel in, while also considering future educational and career goals. PSHE and career related learning are integral to the Key Stage 4 curriculum.

### 7.6.4 Personalised Pathways

While a balanced programme is recommended, students are not required to select subjects from all curriculum areas. This flexibility enables them to tailor their studies to their interests and strengths.

### 7.6.5 Guidance and Support

The subject selection process begins in Year 9, with comprehensive advice and consultation provided to students and parents to support informed decision-making. The process of choosing subjects may take some time. We recommend that students and parents start to think about this at the start of Year 9.



7.6.6 Key Stage 4 Subject hours over a two-week period:

	Year 10	Year 11
English	9	9
Maths	9	9
Science	12	12
GCSE Option 1	6	6
GCSE Option 2	6	6
GCSE Option 3	6	6
HPQ or Global Perspectives	4	4
PSHE	2	2
Physical Education (Games)	4	4
Options Programme	2	2

7.6.7 GCSE option subjects:

Art & Design	Drama	History
3D Design	Film Studies	Music
Animal Care (BTEC)	Food Preparation & Nutrition	Philosophy, Religion, & Ethics
Astronomy *	French	Physical Education
Business Studies	Further Maths *	Spanish
Computer Science	Geography	<i>* subject taken after-school</i>

7.7 Sixth Form (Years 12-13/ Lower & Upper 6th)

7.7.1 Educational Approach

The Key Stage 5 curriculum is centred on a personalised, flexible, and holistic educational experience, continuing the ethos established in earlier stages.

7.7.2 Entry Requirements

Prospective Sixth Form students are generally expected to achieve at least five GCSEs at grade 5 or above to pursue a standard A Level programme. A minimum of grade 6 is required in chosen A Level subjects, or in relevant subjects for new disciplines such as Psychology or Business. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis. Students without GCSEs must demonstrate appropriate aptitude in their intended subjects.

7.7.3 Academic Programme

Most students undertake three or four A Levels. However, programmes are tailored to individual needs, allowing options such as two A Levels with an EPQ, or a combination of A Levels and Level 3 BTECs.

7.7.4 Subject Selection Process



For internal candidates, the A Level selection process begins in October of V Group (Year 11) with a Sixth Form Information Evening, subject presentations, initial interviews, and a personal careers guidance interview. This process introduces students to available options and encourages thoughtful consideration of their choices.

**7.7.5 Subject Choice Considerations**

Students are encouraged to select subjects that align with their interests and strengths, while also considering future university and career aspirations. For example, Chemistry is essential for those intending to study medicine.

**7.7.6 Support and Preparation**

Taster lessons and Sixth Form orientation activities are offered throughout the Spring and Summer terms to assist students in making informed decisions.

**7.7.7 Induction and Final Choices**

A Lower Sixth Form Induction Conference is held the day before the academic year begins, after GCSE results are released. This event provides further guidance and an opportunity to meet subject teachers. New students receive additional support during this time, and final subject choices are made within the constraints of the established timetable blocks.

**7.7.8 Sixth Form Subjects offered:**

A Level Subjects			
Art & Design: Art, Craft & Design	Business	French	Physical Education
Art & Design: Fine Art	Chemistry	Further Mathematics	Physics
Art & Design: Graphic Communication	Computer Science	Geography	Politics
Art & Design: Photography	Drama & Theatre Studies	History	Psychology
Art & Design: Textile Design	Economics	Mathematics	Spanish
Art & Design: 3-D Design	English Literature	Music	Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) *
Biology	Film Studies	Philosophy	Core Maths *
Level 3 BTEC/ Diploma Subjects			
Food Science and Nutrition Applied Diploma	BTEC Level 3 National Certificate in Sport	BTEC Level 3 National Certificate in Music Technology	BTEC Level 3 National Certificate in Performing Arts (Acting)
CREST Award			

\* Worth half an A level



#### 7.7.9 Subject Combinations and Option Blocks

The school strives to accommodate the subject preferences of prospective Sixth Form students. Option blocks are only finalised after provisional choices are submitted post-Easter, enabling the vast majority of students to pursue their top three subject choices.

#### 7.7.10 Sixth Form Curriculum Enrichment

In addition to their academic studies, all Sixth Form students participate in weekly Futures lessons, which includes PSHE, and are required to complete 10 hours of community service during Year 12. Sixth Formers also play a key leadership role in the school, running the School Council and serving as Major Officials. Many students volunteer as peer mentors, providing support across the school community. All Sixth Form students are expected to engage actively with the wider school, serving as role models and motivators for younger students.

#### 7.7.11 Broadening Interests

The Sixth Form experience encourages students to broaden their interests. The school's commitment to local engagement, global issues such as environmentalism and globalisation, and the development of independent thinkers ensures that students can combine academic pursuits with meaningful involvement in major contemporary issues.

### SECTION 8: ASSOCIATED POLICIES

The Curriculum Policy should be read in conjunction with PSHE Policy, RSE Policy, Career Related Learning Policy, Fundamental British Values Policy, Individual Needs Policy, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy. Further information about each Key Stage can be found in:

- Junior School Information Booklet
- KS3 Information Booklet
- KS4 Information Booklet
- Sixth Form Information Booklet

Responsible and Accountable Persons	Name	Position
Responsible	Nat Baker	Deputy Head
Accountable	Rich Jones	Head
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