



**Highlands School**

# Curriculum Policy

Date of Last Review	February 2021
Next Review Due	November 2021
Governors Committee	Curriculum and Standards

## Contents

1. Highlands curriculum intent	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. Roles and responsibilities	2
3.1 The governing board	2
3.2 Headteacher	3
3.3 Other senior leaders	3
3.4 Curriculum middle leaders	3
4. Curriculum Implementation	3
4.1 Changes made in the last curriculum review	3
4.2 Current subject provision by year group	4
4.3 How the curriculum meets local needs	5
4.4 PSHE and careers guidance	7
4.5 Learning beyond the classroom	7
4.6 Short, medium and long-term planning expectations	7
5. Inclusion	8
6. Monitoring arrangements	8
7. Links with other policies	9

### 1. Highlands curriculum intent

The Highlands, faculty, department, tutor-time curriculum:

- Is carefully constructed, with clear intent
- Is knowledge rich, promotes skills and leads to secure understanding
- Develops our values (DARE) and good character in our students
- Prepares students for life
- Teaches students to understand and contribute to society and the world
- Provides opportunities, enrichment and memorable experiences
- Is challenging and meets the needs of all learners.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#), which all maintained schools in England must teach.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

#### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Enough teaching time is provided for students to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements
- All courses provided for students below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are approved by the secretary of state
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum

- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply students from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals
- Students from year 8 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced.

### **3.2 Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some students are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Proper provision is in place for students with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN
- The governors are kept informed of changes to curriculum requirements and for annually reviewing, consulting on and suggesting amendments to this policy.

### **3.3 Other senior leaders**

Senior leaders who line manage subject areas will ensure that the curriculum is implemented in their subjects in accordance with this policy.

### **3.4 Curriculum middle leaders**

Curriculum middle leaders are responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to in their subject by:

- Establishing the curriculum intent in their subject in line with the school's curriculum intent
- Developing and maintaining high quality long, medium and short term plans for their subject
- Ensuring they keep abreast of the latest curriculum developments in their subject.

## **4. Curriculum Implementation**

### **4.1 Changes made in the last curriculum review**

Highlands' curriculum is reviewed each year to ensure it is fit for purpose. As a result of the most recent analysis there have been some significant changes. In particular, the previous two-year key stage three has been lengthened to ensure that all students continue to study important subjects into year 9, such as history, geography, a modern foreign language, computer science, continue to follow at least one arts subject and most continue with a design and technology subject. Following overwhelming parental and student support for the previous program of early exam entry, the previous approach of year nine students starting to study two GCSEs has been retained. Students make indicative choices during year eight for both their year 9 & 10 options and their three year 10 & 11 options. These are reviewed during year 9 to ensure that students are following the most appropriate additional option subject from the start of year 10.

This latest review also resulted in the length of lessons being amended to ensure that students always have time to independently test and demonstrate their understanding of the content of each lesson. The amount of curriculum time devoted to each subject was also carefully inspected and adjusted. The new time allocation for each subject can be seen below. Note that the new allocation is in place for current years 7 to 9 but current year 10 and 11 are following a bridging curriculum which matches the allocation in the previous curriculum so that they can continue to follow their chosen options under the new timetable structure. In future, the bridging curriculum will be phased out.

Students' personal development is supported through a PSHE programme which is delivered through assemblies, tutor time and drop-down days in key stage four and through Citizenship and PSHE lessons in key stage three. A specialist Highlands team of expert teachers and external facilitators are used to cover significant aspects of this program such as the relationship and sex education programme.

#### **4.2 Current subject provision by year group**

**In year 7** all students take:

English, maths\*, science\*, history, geography, religious education, citizenship & PSHE, a modern foreign language (French or Spanish), computer science, design and technology subjects (in rotation: food technology/resistant materials/textiles), art, drama, dance, music, physical education. Some students with SEN or hearing impairment are withdrawn from their modern foreign language for additional support in English, maths or British Sign Language.

\*Indicates that setting is introduced in these subjects which is based on the aspirational targets set for students which takes account of their prior attainment, national expectations (eg using Fisher Family Trust expectations) and the school's baseline testing in these subjects.

**In year 8**, students take the same subjects but broad setting is also introduced for modern foreign languages and for English.

**In Year 9**, students continue with:

English\*, maths\*, science\*, history, geography, computer science and a modern foreign language\*. They also take a foundation arts subject (one chosen from art, dance, drama, music), chose one GCSE or BTEC option and citizenship or religious education GCSE. The latter two qualifications are studied over years 9 and 10. The majority of students take a technology subject for their year 9/10 option.

**In year 10**, the core subjects of English\*, maths\*, science\* continue, as do both of students' year 9/10 options. In addition, students start three more options chosen from a wide range of GCSEs and BTEC qualifications. Students are required to take at least one English Baccalaureate subject chosen from:

- geography
- history
- a modern foreign language
- the separate sciences of biology, chemistry and physics (in place of combined science)
- computer science.

**In Year 11**, the year 9/10 options have already ended which allows students to focus on fewer subjects in year 11: the core subjects and their three options.

Highlands students are expected to follow a broad curriculum and are guided in their options over years 9, 10 and 11 to take one subject from the humanities, one from the arts, a modern foreign language and a technology subject. These options include at least two BTEC subjects, digital media production and enterprise which are offered as a level two course in years 9 to 11 and as a level three course in key stage 5. This provides a good pathway for students to go on to higher or further education or employment.

AS Psychology is included as a year 9/10 option and is the only option with an entrance requirement of a target of level 7 or above in a humanities GCSE subject. It provides an appropriately challenging course for more able students.

**In year 12 and 13**, students follow a two-year programme of level three qualifications, either:

- Three (rarely four) A levels chosen from a wide range of subjects, or
- A BTEC in Digital Creative Media or Enterprise, or rarely
- A mixed A level and BTEC curriculum (only if the sixth form team consider it suitable for the needs of a particular student).

All students follow a PHSE programme delivered through tutor time and assemblies. Individual careers advice continues and guidance for application for higher study is given through a variety of trips; career and degree specific support, visits and lectures; and drop down days. All year 12 students are expected and supported to take up relevant work experience.

In addition, students in the sixth form are expected to develop their leadership and other so-called 'soft skills' through contributing to the school community for example by leading sporting or other activities for younger students, or mentoring, or taking part in buddy reading or other academic support for younger students. All year 12 students are also expected to complete the silver Duke of Edinburgh Award.

### **4.3 How the curriculum meets local needs**

#### **Highlands School's Context**

Highlands School has an intake which approximately matches the national average in terms of key stage two prior attainment. There are slightly more girls than boys. The majority of students come from four local primary schools but its intake includes students from dozens of different schools. The school has relatively low levels of students with disadvantage (about 1 in 6) but relatively high levels of students with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and those categorised as Looked After and both figures are the highest in the local authority for a community school. In addition, there are small numbers of students with a hearing impairment who are supported through the school's Hearing Support Unit. About half of Highlands' students come from an ethnic minority but very few have English as an additional language. The school population is relatively stable with a low turnover rate.

The curriculum supports the range of students with differing prior attainments through the use of setting in many subjects which have smaller group sizes for students in lower sets. Setting is based on aspirational target grades and students are not put into lower sets for behavioural reasons or because of a performance dipping. Disadvantaged students are supported by being given priority for being put into higher sets; they are prioritised for out of lesson interventions (after school, during holidays); they are given additional revision materials; they are identified on seating plans (not seen by students) and teachers are required to prioritise them and their books for attention and marking.

All students follow a rigorous and challenging curriculum which has only minor modifications for students with lower prior attainment to ensure they have a rigorous education. For example, using a shorter but still appropriately challenging text 'Of Mice and Men' in year 8 English, which covers the same themes as the book used with other sets, 'To Kill a Mockingbird'. A small number of students with special educational needs and hearing impairment are withdrawn from modern foreign languages to receive small group support for English and maths or to improve their British Sign Language as appropriate. The learning support faculty supports students with EHCPs in lessons with learning support assistants and through withdrawals and small group work.

A very small number of students with EHCPs are withdrawn from other lessons such as PE for reasons of physical disability or from MFL to receive additional support, at the direction of the head of special educational needs. A very small number of students also receive some alternative education at local colleges if they are not able to access the school curriculum.

Students categorised as Looked After receive individualised support and a tailored programme to address their individual circumstances. This ranges from one-to-one tuition to counselling and behaviour mentoring.

The school responds flexibly and appropriately to changes in intake: the school has previously run an intervention or Acorn group when it had a large influx of students with high levels of special educational needs and low prior attainment but this has now ended.

The fact that the school has high retention rates means that the school's innovative early entry of students to exam programmes in year 9 is appropriate and it is popular with students and parents: in a recent consultation process of those who had been through it, the overwhelming majority of parents and students were in favour of retaining it.

The school recognises that students have a range of background or general knowledge and different depths of vocabulary. Hence the curriculum makes explicit the knowledge and specialist academic (tier 3) vocabulary required in each subject.

### Local Need

1. The school has considered the curriculum of its four main feeder primary schools and of its students on intake and does not see any widespread or obvious gaps to be addressed in either their knowledge or cultural capital.
2. Personal development and safeguarding
  - a. Many of Highlands' students largely come from a relatively affluent background and so there is a need to ensure that they understand that across Enfield there are students who do not have their advantages, to develop their empathy for people and ensure that Highlands' students are caring of others.
  - b. There is a high level of knife crime and drug activity in some parts of Enfield and whilst Highlands is only on the edge of this, some students are affected by it.
  - c. There is a small but unacceptable level of intolerance expressed by a minority of students.

These issues are addressed through the school's emphasis on its DARE values, including Respect and Equality. These are explicitly developed through the PSHE, assembly and form time programme and implicitly through the way staff and students treat each other.

3. There is a high uptake of students attending higher education and so it is important that students are well-prepared for it. The school has a comprehensive programme in Year 12 and 13 to support students' entry to Higher Education. This includes a Pathways Programme which explicitly supports entry into subjects such as medicine, law and accountancy. There is also an effective careers guidance programme in key stages four and five to ensure that students going to FE or apprenticeships or other destinations are equally well supported.
4. Highlands has some very able students and a disproportionate number of students with EHCPs. All students have access to a wide range of courses and able students can even take an AS in Psychology instead of a GCSE if they wish. Almost all students with an ECHP attend a full range of lessons and there is no guiding of students away from academic subjects.

### **4.4 PSHE and careers guidance**

Students' personal development is supported through a PSHE programme which is delivered through citizenship lessons, assemblies, tutor time, and drop-down days. A specialist Highlands School team of expert teachers and external facilitators are used to cover significant aspects of this program such as the relationship and sex education programme. British values are embedded in this programme and through the attention given to the school's DARE values, which significantly overlap with British values and underpin all the work of Highlands' staff.

Students receive careers guidance as part of the options process, through careers interviews for small groups or individuals, through a programme of employer engagement experiences and work experience. This starts in year 8 with a drop down half day covering options and careers, making use of an online careers guidance website. Students receive individual careers guidance by the school's careers guide; disadvantaged students and students at danger of becoming NEETs are given priority in this process. Work experience is now arranged for all year 12 students and for targeted year 10 or 11 students who are unlikely to reach the entry requirements for Highlands' key stage five offer or who would otherwise benefit from it.

#### **4.5 Learning beyond the classroom**

Highlands School places a strong emphasis on good behaviour and on developing students' character. Excellent learning is underpinned by excellent behaviour. Students are expected to show respect when interacting with other members of the school community and to uphold the reputation of the school in the local area. This is addressed explicitly through the PSHE programme but also implicitly by staff who act to develop this respectful behaviour in students by the way students are treated in all their interactions with adults both in and out of lessons.

The school recognises that students can learn and develop outside of the classroom and so subjects organise a range of trips and visits to support and enhance the learning in a range of subjects, for example, with trips to parliament.

The school's vibrant extracurricular programme called EdExtra provides students with opportunities to take their curriculum beyond the classroom to develop their love of sports, learning, independence and creative thinking. This is a compulsory part of the curriculum for year 7 students but currently optional for other year groups.

#### **4.6 Short, medium and long-term planning expectations**

Curriculum middle leaders are expected to establish and maintain accurate and coherent long term plans which cover the entirety of students' journey through their subject at Highlands. These must match the school's curriculum intent and be based on the subject leaders own curriculum intent as agreed with the curriculum deputy and match the DPR statements shared with students.

Their medium term plans must indicate the topics to be taught each half term at least and include the assessments which must cover the same DPR statements, allowing them to be robustly assessed.

Curriculum middle leaders are expected to develop or lead the development over time of the necessary short term teaching resources to enable teachers to effectively deliver high quality lessons to meet their medium term and long term plans

### **5. Inclusion**

Teachers set high expectations for all students. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

More able students

Students with low prior attainment

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds

Students with SEN

Students with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that students with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every student achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of students whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help students to develop their English, and to support students to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in the school's statement of equality information and objectives, and SEN policy and information report.

## **6. Monitoring arrangements**

Governors monitor coverage of National Curriculum subjects and compliance with other statutory requirements through:

- Meeting and questioning randomly selected groups of students during quality assurance monitoring of teaching and learning
- Annually reviewing the curriculum, including the time allocated to National Curriculum subjects through the governors' curriculum and standards committee
- Annually reviewing the school's careers education through the governors' curriculum and standards committee
- Monitoring the outcomes and progress of students and groups of students, including those more able students, those with low prior attainment, from disadvantaged backgrounds, with SEN or with English as an additional language (EAL) through the governors' curriculum and standards committee

The senior leadership team monitor the way subjects are taught by:

- Leading on thrice yearly subject quality assurance periods which include learning walks (at least two to each teacher, book scrutiny and speaking to students)
- Conducting student surveys
- Fortnightly line management meetings with curriculum middle leaders which focus on the quality of teaching and learning
- Constant informal monitoring through lesson visits made during their 'On Call' tours of the school

Curriculum middle leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- Taking part in thrice yearly subject quality assurance periods which include learning walks (at least two to each teacher, book scrutiny and speaking to students)
- Conducting student surveys in their areas
- Fortnightly line management meetings
- Analysing the outcomes and progress for students and groups of students

Curriculum middle leaders also have responsibility in their subject, for:

- monitoring the quality of teaching resources deployed by teachers
- ensuring high quality teaching resources are available to teachers
- the way in which resources are stored and managed, ensuring they are organised in such a way as to make them easy to access by teaching staff.

The deputy headteacher (curriculum) and the governors' curriculum and standards committee will review this policy annually. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

## **7. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:



- Equal opportunities policy
- Highlands School CAEIG policy
- Relationship and sex education policy
- Feedback, marking and assessment policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Equality information and objectives

### 8. Appendix – lesson allocation by year group

	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11 (20/21)	Y11 (from 21/22)
1	En 1	En 1	En 1	En 1	En 1	En 1
2	En 2	En 2	En 2	En 2	En 2	En 2
3	En 3	En 3	En 3	En 3	En 3	En 3
4	En 4	En 4	En 4	En 4	En 4	En 4
5	En 5	En 5	En 5	En 5	En 5	En 5
6	En 6	En 6	En 6	En 6	En 6	En 6
7	Ma 1	Ma 1	En 7	En 7	Ma 1	En 7
8	Ma 2	Ma 2	Ma 1	Ma 1	Ma 2	Ma 1
9	Ma 3	Ma 3	Ma 2	Ma 2	Ma 3	Ma 2
10	Ma 4	Ma 4	Ma 3	Ma 3	Ma 4	Ma 3
11	Ma 5	Ma 5	Ma 4	Ma 4	Ma 5	Ma 4
12	Ma 6	Ma 6	Ma 5	Ma 5	Ma 6	Ma 5
13	Sc 1	Sc 1	Ma 6	Ma 6	Sc 1	Ma 6
14	Sc 2	Sc 2	Sc 1	Sc 1	Sc 2	Ma 7
15	Sc 3	Sc 3	Sc 2	Sc 2	Sc 3	Sc 1
16	Sc 4	Sc 4	Sc 3	Sc 3	Sc 4	Sc 2
17	Sc 5	Sc 5	Sc 4	Sc 4	Sc 5	Sc 3
18	Sc 6	Sc 6	Sc 5	Sc 5	Sc 6	Sc 4
19	Pe 1	Sc 7	Sc 6	Sc 6	Sc 7	Sc 5
20	Pe 2	Pe 1	Sc 7	Sc 7	Sc 8	Sc 6
21	Pe 3	Pe 2	Pe 1	Pe 1	Pe 1	Sc 7
22	RE/Ci	Pe 3	Pe 2	Pe 2	Pe 2	Sc 8
23	RE/Ci	RE/Ci	Pe 3	RE/Ci	Pe 3 / Sc	Sc 9
24	RE/Ci	RE/Ci	RE/Ci	RE/Ci	Pe 4 / Sc	Pe 1
25	RE/Ci	RE/Ci	RE/Ci	RE/Ci	MFL 1	Pe 2
26	MFL 1	RE/Ci	RE/Ci	Opt1 1	MFL 2	Opt2 1
27	MFL 2	MFL 1	RE/Ci	Opt1 2	MFL 3	Opt2 2
28	MFL 3	MFL 2	MFL 1	Opt1 3	MFL 4	Opt2 3
29	MFL 4	MFL 3	MFL 2	Opt1 4	MFL 5	Opt2 4
30	Cp 1	MFL 4	MFL 3	Opt1 5	RE/Ci/Cp	Opt2 5
31	Cp 2	Cp 1	MFL 4	Opt1 6	RE/Ci/Cp	Opt2 6
32	Arts	Cp 2	Cp 1	Opt2 1	RE/Ci/Cp	Opt2 7
33	Arts	Arts	Cp 2	Opt2 2	RE/Ci/Cp	Opt3 1
34	Arts	Arts	Arts	Opt2 3	Opt 1	Opt3 2
35	Arts	Arts	Arts	Opt2 4	Opt 2	Opt3 3
36	Arts	Arts	Arts	Opt2 5	Opt 3	Opt3 4
37	Arts	Arts	Hi	Opt3 1	Opt 4	Opt3 5
38	Hi	Hi	Hi	Opt3 2	Opt 5	Opt3 6
39	Hi	Hi	Ge	Opt3 3	Opt 6	Opt3 7
40	Hi	Hi	Ge	Opt3 4	Opt 7	Opt4 1
41	Ge	Ge	Opt1 1	Opt3 5	Opt 8	Opt4 2
42	Ge	Ge	Opt1 2	Opt4 1	Opt 9	Opt4 3

43	Ge	Ge	Opt1 3	Opt4 2	Opt 10	Opt4 4
44	Tech	Tech	Opt1 4	Opt4 3	Opt 11	Opt4 5
45	Tech	Tech	Opt1 5	Opt4 4	Opt 12	Opt4 6
46	Tech	Tech	Opt1 6	Opt4 5	Opt 13	Opt4 7