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Curriculum Policy

Preamble

At King Edward VII College, we are working from the perspectives of students' aspirations, workforce demands, and progression routes to further and higher education. To this end, we have strong links with local and regional FE colleges, universities and employers. We have grown the curriculum with the intention of offering students a useful, appropriate and relevant suite of qualifications that provides a platform upon which their futures are established.

However, integral to our curriculum is developing our students into well rounded individuals, who are confident, ambitious and have an appetite for success. Together with parents and students, we encourage, support and engineer opportunities and experiences through the curriculum that enables students to prosper both socially and economically as they journey into adulthood. Through the 'Art of Brilliance' positive psychology programme, we concentrate on developing students' sense of self-worth, individual abilities and confidence, encouraging each student to recognise that their voice is welcomed and valued.

We are keen to ensure that students receive a broad and balanced education, which equips them for their futures. We aim to provide a curriculum that will enable each student to achieve their full potential, with enthusiasm and enjoyment whilst becoming a skilled and independent learner with an intellectual curiosity that enables them to impact upon their world. We expect students to fully participate in the wide range of available educational experiences and activities aimed at enriching and extending their abilities and understanding

Although the curriculum is much more than simply the subjects studied, at King Edward VII College we are very mindful of expectations of higher and further educational institutions and the preferred subjects and combinations they require for entry to their various courses. Whilst experience through work placements, internships and work experience has definite advantages in exposing students to the realities and expectations of the working environment, it is no substitute for a broad, balanced and highly regarded suite of qualifications.

Aims

To offer students a broad and balanced curriculum providing continuity and progression that meets their needs and enables them to achieve their academic potential:

Breadth

- Over the past six years, alongside the requirements of the National Curriculum at KS4, the College has continuously reviewed its provision to ensure that students have a broad range of subjects and qualification types from which to choose. In addition to the main menu of subjects, which at KS4 includes 26 options, the College also operates a flexible, personalised offer of accredited programmes through a range of fully vetted and approved providers which meet the requirements. The College endeavours to ensure that students undertaking these programmes still access the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science as well as some of their option subjects. This is reflected in the numbers of students attaining 5 A*-G and 1 A*-G.
- In KS5, students have over 32 courses of study available, as well as the opportunity to study for a resit in English or Mathematics. Students also have further opportunities to enhance and extend their learning through 'Making the Grade' sessions, Easter and summer revision sessions, Sports Teams, College theatrical productions and musical bands, Design exhibitions, field visits and many more. Students are also offered the opportunity to undertake work experience during the summer holidays and other students have opportunities to do internships, work shadowing, YASS (Young Applicants in School System) University modules and Nuffield Bursaries.

Balance

- Although, since converting to an academy, we have more autonomy over the curriculum, we continue to follow national curriculum guidance. In KS4, all students receive their entitlement curriculum, including Citizenship, PE, ICT and Religious Education. In addition, students must choose one option from Core Social Studies comprising Geography, History, Business Studies, Media Studies, Psychology and Sociology. Students have two further free choice options (including Art and Design Subjects, Languages, additional Sport, additional Social Studies subjects, Scania Motor Vehicle Engineering, Hair and Beauty, Music and Performing Arts). Throughout the options process, students are guided to choose combinations of subjects based upon their potential career pathways, their aptitudes and interests. Students' completed forms are scrutinised to ensure that no students' choices lean toward a particular curriculum area or type of qualification. Our message is 'what you want, isn't always what you need' and vice versa. With regard to the English Baccalaureate, whilst we do not make it compulsory for students, we do inform students that studying and gaining qualifications in subjects acknowledged for their academic rigour will support them in pursuing higher and further education courses.
- In KS5, prior to being accepted into the Sixth Form, individual student interviews are held to discuss their choices and their future plans. Students are made aware of potential university or college course requirements, as well as subject specific requirements of the College. Subject teacher recommendations also inform this process of deciding what an appropriate, realistic course of study is. Along with traditional A' Levels, the College also offers a range of vocational study options and the Extended Project Qualification. There are also further enrichment options to select from such as the 'Right to Read' primary school link programme.

Continuity and Progression

- To ensure a seamless transition from KS3 into KS4, there is much work undertaken with High School students, staff and parents from June in Year 8 onwards. 'Open Evening' at the College, individual High School 'Options Assemblies' and 'Options Evenings' Meetings, small group and one to one surgeries, College 'Open Mornings' and attendance at High School 'Year 9 Parents' Evening' are amongst many of the opportunities we provide to support our College community in making important decisions about the next steps.
- Transition from our Feeder High Schools is carefully managed with Options meetings for students and parents taking place early in Year 9. By giving students the opportunity to select their KS4 options in the Autumn term, we endeavour to make transition and progress as seamless as possible. We work with High School colleagues to ensure students continue to study a relevant and meaningful curriculum in Year 9.
- With different qualification types available to young people at Key Stage 4, there is an increasing need to provide Key Stage 3 students with taster experiences of their potential choices, and their teachers with current pedagogic insight to support them in guiding students in making more informed choices. With regard to subjects that are not taught explicitly at KS3 such as Media Studies, Health and Social Care, Business Studies, Sociology, Psychology, Performing Arts and the specialist discrete areas of Design, the College is committed to providing taster sessions and expert talks.
- With the exception of Scania Motor Vehicle Engineering, all subjects available at KS4 offer continuity of study in KS5. However, some subjects such as Sociology, Psychology, Business Studies and some Design subjects may be studied in KS5 for the first time. However, students overall GCSE performance and results will be one of the determining factors in students suitability for certain courses. There are specific entry requirements for the Sixth Form, which must be met. In particular, any student who has not achieved a grade C in English or Mathematics must resit those subjects as a priority. This may require them to change their option choices depending on where the resit group is scheduled.
- All students are provided with independent, impartial advice and guidance regardless if they are applying to the College Sixth Form or if they wish to apply to other institutions. All students' destinations are valued and these are monitored from early in November. The College ensures that all students are supported in making applications for different courses at the appropriate level.

The purpose of the curriculum is to enable students to:

- Acquire knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and a world of rapid and continuous technological change
- Develop a life-long love of learning
- Develop personal and moral values, respect for shared values and for other cultures, religions and ways of life
- Have sound reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills to function in the world of work and their community. .

Main principles that underpin curriculum decisions:

- The curriculum should have breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation and allow progression

- Provide equality of access for all students
- Provide students with skills in English and Mathematics as a priority
- Aspirational expectations of all students
- A curriculum that offers both academic and vocational qualifications appropriate to individual student ability, interest and preferred learning style

Outcomes:

The curriculum should:

- Deliver the current and future statutory requirements, including appropriate, impartial careers information, advice and guidance
- Be broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated in order to meet the needs of the full range of abilities within the college
- Enable and support students to achieve their potential
- Ensure continuity, help support and enable progression within the College and between phases of education and employment
- Help students develop enquiring, independent minds and a love of learning
- Help students acquire understanding, knowledge of key skills relevant to College, adult life and employment
- Help students develop personal moral values, respect for religious values and tolerance of other races, religions and ways of life
- Support and sustain raising standards of achievement
- Provide a range of opportunities to students which best meet their needs and interests

Key Stage 4 and Option Choices 2015/2016

The College operates on a two-week timetable. There are 25 academic periods each week and one period of PSE. All lessons are 60 minute duration with the exception of Tuesdays which have six 50 minute periods.

In KS4, the majority of students receive the core entitlement of:

- 15% English
- 15% Mathematics
- 30% Options (three subjects)
- 20% Science
- 10% Social Studies
- 10% Sport

KS4

This cohort has been split into three divisions by ability in English and Mathematics on entry. Regardless of teaching division, students are in mixed ability tutor groups, and “option subjects” across the entire year group. It is expected that this curriculum model will continue for the 2016 cohort.

High Attainers

These are students identified by their KS2 SATs, High School TA data and FFT estimates as students most likely to meet government targets of expected and more than expected levels of progress. There are two or three classes in this division, so there are opportunities for fine setting within these groups to address variation between Maths, English and Science. Most will be expected to do the English Baccalaureate, but it is not compulsory. They do not have additional English lessons and therefore they have an

additional option block that facilitates the English Baccalaureate without affecting their original option choices.

All Other Students

Again, using the same data sets, these students are expected to meet government targets and many are expected to exceed them. There are eight groups in these divisions. Due to the large number of students, there is great flexibility to set across these groups. This is particularly important for Mathematics. In English, they teach broadly mixed ability, targeting all students for grade C or above.

Many of these students will opt to do the English Baccalaureate. They are broadly set in Science. They are set by ability in Mathematics and PE. They have additional English and Mathematics. This gives the students 20% curriculum time for each subject over the two years. Also students are expected to take GCSE English Literature and Language within English time.

Higher ability students in these bands may be offered GCSE Further Maths alongside regular Mathematics GCSE to add additional challenge and to prepare them for Maths and Science A'Levels should they wish to study them.

Alternative Provision

Students for whom the above applies, but with the addition of alternative provision to ensure their optimum engagement, attendance and behaviour; equally for students whom have specific and significant medical needs and problems additional alternative education will be explored

Sixth Form Curriculum and Options Choices

Introduction

We have expanded the curriculum with the intention of offering students a useful, appropriate and relevant suite of qualifications. This will provide a platform upon which their futures can be established. We encourage, support and engineer opportunities and experiences through the curriculum that enable students to prosper both socially and economically as they journey into adulthood. It is one of our foremost aims to encourage all students to set themselves high expectations in their future education and career.

We offer a broad suite of qualifications including AS and A2 levels, BTEC Level 3 Diplomas and the Extended Project Qualification. In addition, GCSE English and/or Maths resits help to ensure that all learners leave with at least a full level 2 qualification (5 A*-C including English and Maths). All Sixth Form students take part in the tutorial programme and extra-curricular activities.

There is a natural progression from Year 11 into the Sixth Form and entry to the Sixth Form is open to all Year 11 students with appropriate GCSE grades. Having experienced one transition at 14 it benefits most students to avoid further upheaval at 16. Detailed information on each of the subjects offered will be given to students at the subject talks, which take place on our open evening and in Sixth Form information week.

In recent years the progress students our students make placed us 3rd highest in the county out of 40 schools (including private/independent schools) who offer post-16 qualifications.

Groups sizes and lesson timings

The normal allocation of lessons for AS/A2 is ten lessons within a fortnight. However, this allocation cannot be guaranteed where a subject attracts a small number of students. The group may not be economically and educationally viable and therefore, we may have to reduce the number of lessons per fortnight. This is in line with other Post 16 providers.

Please note that the College reserves the right to amend this curriculum offer and we may not be able to run courses that attract eight students or fewer. The College may have other constraints that may affect our curriculum offer.

Working in partnership with parents

Parents will always be made to feel welcome. We believe in having a three way partnership between students, parents and teachers. There are frequent consultation evenings for parents including tutor evenings, progress review evenings and parents' evenings. We have a system for contacting parents when a student's work or behaviour gives cause for concern. In addition, we also organise parents' evenings for underachieving and pupil premium students. Our experience shows that establishing and nurturing close links with parents is the cornerstone to building better futures for our young people through effective communication and shared vision.

AS Level Entry Requirements

To study for level three courses at King Edward VII Sixth Form, a student must achieve the following qualifications:

- Five GCSE grades A* - C in five different subjects
- Or BTEC Level 2 First Diploma or Extended Certificate at Merit plus four GCSE grades A* - C

In addition, the subjects of AS level Maths and AS level Sciences have a more specific entry requirement. Please read the subject descriptions for the details.

Students who fail to gain a grade C in either GCSE English or Maths are required to retake these subjects. This is vital as you cannot gain entry to most university courses without these qualifications and the same is true for Apprenticeships and most employment. Students must retake English and /or Maths alongside their other subjects and so we may have to replace one of your option choices with a resit course. Our decision about the timetabling of these classes is final.

Please note to study

- Four level 3 qualifications; students will need at least eight GCSE passes at grades A and B
- Three level 3 qualifications; students will need at least five Grade A* - C passes

In addition, some students will have the option to undertake an E.P.Q (Extended Project Qualification). This qualification develops their knowledge and independent working in a subject of their own choice. It is a formal qualification and as such does gain UCAS points.

It is expected that students applying to study at Post 16 will have a good record of both behaviour and attendance.

Alternative Provision at King Edward VII College

'The range of subjects taught is broad and balanced, and prepares pupils and students well for employment, or further education and training.'

OFSTED 2013

Definition

'the definition of alternative provision is as follows: education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour.'

Key points

- Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such arrangements being made.
- Governing bodies of schools are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education from the sixth day of a fixed period exclusion.
- Schools may also direct pupils off-site for education, to help improve their behaviour.
- Statutory guidance sets out the Government's expectations of local authorities and maintained schools who commission alternative provision and pupil referral units. The Government expects those who are not legally required to have regard to the statutory guidance to still use it as a guide to good practice.

DfE Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance January 2013.

Preamble

As a Leicestershire Upper school we provide education for students from Year 10 through to Year 13. This late transition in secondary phase places very demanding challenges on College staff and requires the following very thorough preparation in Year 9:

- Collecting and analysing performance and attainment data to ensure that alternative provision is pitched at the appropriate level in line with how we construct the ability bands (this is explained in the main policy above).
- Compiling databases for attendance, medical needs, specific behavioural, emotional and learning needs and disabilities
- Understanding of different group needs which may be one or more of the following– LAC, adopted, pupil premium, forces, traveller, EAL and LGBT
- Gathering information about which students have been referred to the Behaviour Partnership and what provision has already been put in place and, or achieved.
- Similarly, knowing which students have received only part-time education; or been permanently excluded at KS3 or who have missed significant periods of time from school due to regular exclusions

- Knowing which students have been disapplied from KS3 National Curriculum subjects or have been withdrawn from across subjects for internal pastoral programmes for significant periods of time.

All of the above requires the College staff working at all levels to have a very strong focus on identifying and removing any barriers to ensuring that these students needs are appropriately so that they are enabled to achieve good educational attainment on par with their peers.

How are students identified and assessed as requiring alternative provision.

The College is a key member of the Coalville Behaviour Partnership. Through this and its leadership panel, high profile students are identified from as early as Year 7. However, due to funding reductions and their age range (safeguarding, employment law, health and safety, qualifications restrictions on entries, continuity of curriculum) the most appropriate alternative curriculum experiences are offered within and between schools, for example, the use of the College's Hair Salon by High School students and staff.

Liaison with the pastoral teams at the High Schools is regular and robust. Liaison meetings are scheduled throughout the year for the sharing of important academic and pastoral information. From as early as the start of Year 8, we are planning programmes of support for the most high profile students.

In Year 9, the options process has been brought forward from January to September/ October. One key purpose of this is to enable the High Schools to deliver some option choice experiences of subjects they wish to study in KS4 and to prepare them for the learning challenges. A team of key staff attend Year 9 parents and options evenings. They also deliver options assemblies for both whole cohorts and small groups including vulnerable students, those at risk of exclusion before transition and SEND students. This list is neither exhaustive nor exclusive.

Another is that we can identify much earlier those students who will need varying levels of alternative provision not available through the main options process. JB and LN along with the pastoral and faculty leaders provide very thorough guidance to High School staff, parents and students about varying routes available.

In January, the pastoral staff and SENco visit students and their parents in their respective High Schools. Key staff interview students to develop rapport and to gain an understanding first hand of the student's needs. This is then reviewed in light of their option choices and decisions are begun to be made about what individual students need – in house/ on site, off site, part-time or full time. Our ultimate aim is to keep students in mainstream school as far as is effective for their progression and engagement. Our 'mix and match' highly personalised approach is focused on students accessing as much of their core curriculum and any other qualifications possible. Our belief **that there is no such thing as a disengaged, difficult student, there is not yet the most fit for purpose curriculum for this student** underpins our relentless efforts to continue to seek different provision, where one fails to inspire the student, is reflected in the changing timetables students have across the two years. The College is very proud of our **0 % permanent exclusions since 2005 and above average % of 5 A*-C.**

How do we procure and commission provision.

Prior to induction, any in-house alternative provision is organised. Pastoral staff will work with JB/LN to explore available qualifications and programmes. We will look at the students first choice options and arrange other provision around this. Enjoyment is very important.

Setting up external providers at this stage is also underway. The school works in partnership with LEBC and the Local Authority to commission AP that meets all the statutory requirements. These are all safeguard checked. Leicestershire is working in 5 area partnerships: Coalville, Hinckley

Bosworth, Melton, Loughborough and South Charnwood. Leicestershire behaviour partnerships and LEBC audit all provisions on an annual or biannual basis, depending on the level of risk. In addition to this, the school uses a Quality Assurance framework and a member of SLT and the academic mentor visit the provider annually. Our 'Eyes on the Ground' approach as part of the regular monitoring of students on alternative provision ensures a cohesive system. Issues identified are shared within the Coalville partnership and across the Leicestershire Behaviour Partnerships. The Leicestershire Behaviour Partnership has created directories of alternative provision for both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. These are currently being uploaded for all members of the partnership to access.

Monitoring and Attainment of students on Alternative provision.

Regular visits are made by the academic mentor to check on behaviour, welfare and attendance. Providers are required to assess students' academic progress and to inform schools about this and any concerns arising. They will also provide an annual formal academic report and are invited to attend parents' evenings and options evenings; however, this is dependent on the numbers of students they teach. The academic mentor informs SLT of any concerns with regard to all of the above. This will result in a visit to the provider by a member of SLT to address the issues.

The examinations officers, SLT and pastoral staff at different points liaise and will contact providers about courses, qualifications and accreditations.

These students are tracked as part of the Colleges overall progress monitoring, but their performance is also isolated within the targeted groups – pupil premium, SEND, vulnerable, LAC/ adopted etc.

If we deem, through analysis, that the provision is having insufficient impact on the students' social development or academic prospects for the future, then we may seek a different provision.

We have for the academic year 2013-2014, reviewing best practice guidance from the DfE, introduced PLPs (personal Learning Plans). These are in addition to the students' annual school reports, tutor evenings, underachieving students evening which includes targeted students and IEPs. The Head of Year, student manager, academic mentor and the student set, agree and review the PLPs. This places the students' self assessment about their performance in the provision at the heart of the review and gives them greater responsibility for their own learning. We regard this as emerging good practice, while we have always done these activities, but we have not recorded them as systematically as this.

Contracting with the students and parents

Prior to the placement, various meetings will be held with the student and parent(s) and amongst key staff about the individual needs of a student. This can involve Heads of Year, Student Managers, the College Principal/ SLT, Social Services, YISP (Young Inclusion Support Panel), LSF (Leicestershire Supporting Families) and High School Headteachers. This is usually to determine the extent of the need and how best to meet it.

On a more personal level, College staff will hold meetings with parents to explain the nature of the provision, the qualifications and the benefits to his/ her child. The academic mentor will take the student for an initial visit and provide parents with any other relevant information, which has not already been provided.

Parents are made aware of the expectations for off-site behaviour and of the commitment required by the student. They are also made aware that any deviation from agreed targets may result in the provider withdrawing the placement.

Future Pathways Post 16

We regard our stage in all our students' secondary education as pivotal in terms of enabling students to path find their way to their future careers and prospects. To this end, we consider our responsibilities to our students as part of a much wider continuum of their lifelong learning. We have long standing partnerships with Prospects (formerly Connexions), local Colleges, Special Schools, Employers and Business Alliances. Working together, we secure and broker course placements and further training and employment. (See destinations spread sheet).

IAG begins early in Year 11, alongside our general curriculum guidance for Post 16. However, Prospects will already be aware of the most high profile cases, particularly those with medical needs who may require more specialist provision such as Autism Spectrum and visual impairment. These students may wish to stay on into Post 16, but they may also seek other courses. Our job is to ensure that all agencies work as seamlessly as possible, on behalf of the students, to secure relevant, accredited courses that will offer clear progression to further education or employment.

IAG assemblies will be held for all students in November. Then Prospects and College staff will set up individual interviews for students at which they will start to develop a plan their next steps. This work continues throughout the remainder of the academic year and beyond. On results day, there are many staff, including Prospects staff, to support students if they have not gained the grades required for their courses. The College continues to liaise with Prospectus throughout the start of the term. Our success on this work is reflected in our outstanding NEET figures over the past 7 years.