

The Coombe Dean School

Curriculum



Curriculum Intent

“Children need powerful knowledge to understand and interpret the world. Without it they remain dependent upon those who have it” Michael Young.

The school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that we, as a school, plan for and provide for our pupils. Our vision is to deliver on a curriculum that excites young people and helps them to see the world in new ways, beyond the sometimes-limiting confines of their own experience. This commitment is particularly vital in our school context: through our inclusive teaching strategies and a carefully designed curriculum, we aim to widen horizons, break down barriers, and ensure that every pupil can access the knowledge, skills and experiences that help to overcome disadvantage.

We offer an academic curriculum that is planned with the requirements of the national curriculum at its heart and that:

- introduces pupils to the best that has been thought, said and created;
- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils;
- prepares our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life;
- provides our pupils with access to knowledge that enables them to pursue their academic interests as well as unlock future opportunities as adults who can understand, cooperate and shape the world.

Curriculum design at subject level conforms to what we already know about human cognition and how people learn. Principles of curriculum design such as scaffolding, interleaving and retrieval practice are embedded, aiding pupils to know more and remember more.

Learning experiences are not limited to the classroom and are supported by opportunities to undertake exciting and stimulating enrichment activities as part of our Coombe Dean Commitment. In addition to visits to and from school, our pupils are able to experience:

- Enrichment week in Years 7-9;
- Work experience week in Years 10 and 12;
- Personal Development incorporating Relationships and Sex Education with careers;
- A vast array of extra-curricular clubs during the school day and beyond.



Academic curriculum

What is curriculum?

In its broadest sense, curriculum is perhaps helpfully described as the '*daily lived experience*' of a child.

The national curriculum document cites: '*the school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that each school plans for its pupils*'. Curriculum is a process rather than a product. A curriculum is never finished. A curriculum is the product of thinking and discourse and is developed through careful design of content and sequence – it is a blueprint for process and action. The thinking, planning and investigation into the fundamental questions about what we teach and how we sequence and represent it for students to learn is a significant responsibility given the impact that curriculum can have on the life chances of children.

A high-quality curriculum is described as being based on proactive thinking that will be the product of clear consideration of the sequence of content necessary for children to make progress. A high-quality curriculum will provide children with the knowledge they need for subsequent learning – transferable knowledge that builds deeper understanding and the capacity for skilful performance. Knowledge is 'sticky', so the more you know, the easier it is to learn.

Curriculum as an entitlement for all pupils

A school's curriculum should be broad and balanced and is more likely to be if the full intent and extent of the national curriculum is taught. A school curriculum should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school, and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The national curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said; it helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

Schools must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage. All schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE – now incorporating Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and health education), drawing on good practice. Schools are also free to include other subjects or topics of their choice in planning and designing their own programme of education.

The national curriculum is just one element in the education of every child. There is time and space in the school day and in each week, term and year to range beyond the national curriculum specifications. The national curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum.

Academic Curriculum Structure for 2025-26

Allocations are in hours per fortnight (hpf) unless stated otherwise (pw).

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Core 1							
Maths	8	8	8	8	8	Options usually 10 hpf	Options usually 10 hpf
English	8	8	8	8	8		
Science	6	6	8	9	9	GCSE retake	GCSE retake
EBacc							
Geography	4	4	4	4x Option 5 hpf	4x Option 5 hpf	Options usually 10 hpf	Options usually 10 hpf
History	4	4	4				
MFL	4	4	4				
Open							
IT	1	1	1	4x Option 5 hpf	4x Option 5 hpf	Options usually 10 hpf	Options usually 10 hpf
Food	1	1	1				
DT	1	1	1				
Drama	2	2	1				
Music	2	2	1				
Art	2	2	2				
Core 2							
RE / Personal Development	3	3	3	2	2	2 hpf Critical Thinking 2hpf Supervised Study	-
PE	4	4	3	3	3		
	50	50	50	50	50		

Curriculum review

A full review of the school curriculum was undertaken in 2021. The review took in research and writing from a number of sources, interviews with middle leaders, student and parent surveys were completed and the school's curriculum offer was cross-referenced against the national curriculum for entitlement. Following the review, curriculum choices for GCSE level study are made during year 9 allowing the appropriate balance between a broad base of knowledge and skills across the entirety of key stage 3 (year 7-9) and preparation for qualifications in Years 10 and 11.

Quality-assuring the curriculum

Quality assurance of the curriculum takes place as part of our review processes and involves leadership at all levels, from trust-level support, through senior and middle leadership to classroom teachers, pupils and their families. We use evidence of the impact of the curriculum as well as pupil and staff voice to inform curriculum priorities and time for collaborative (departmental) precision planning, through what we call 'Look Back/Look Forward' meetings is prioritised to support the ongoing development of the curriculum.

Key Stage 3

Compulsory elements of the national curriculum at key stage 3 for both Core subjects and Foundation subjects are delivered in curriculum Years 7, 8 and 9. Planning by curriculum leaders in foundation subjects is focused on ensuring that pupils have access to the range of experiences and knowledge that follow the intent of the national curriculum at their core, building on foundations laid during key stage 2. English, Maths and Science deliver a 5-year journey developing knowledge supported by skills, also building on learning during key stage 2. We offer three languages from which students select one in Year 7 from French, German and Spanish.

Progression to key stage 4

Pupils and their families are supported in making choices for GCSE/Vocational GCSE courses through:

- CIAG delivered through tutor contact and support and our developing in-house carers support;
- options events/information materials that are complemented by a parents' evening;
- written and presented information and guidance provided by the school including DfE information.

Independent advice and guidance is provided through strong links with Careers South West and Next Steps South West as well as our own internally developing provision.

Option 'blocks' are formed in such a way to allow **all pupils** access to an EBacc curriculum, to allow pupils to specialise and build on the broad foundations laid in Years 7, 8 and 9. This allows pupils who wish to do so to pursue a love for the arts, technology or sport alongside an academic core of subjects, with the requirement to include at least one humanity. Each year we refine our curriculum structure for Key Stage 4 in an attempt to best fit demand and ensure all students have access to courses of choice. We have successfully introduced new GCSE subjects in recent years as a result of curriculum review and response to the changing context of our school.

Pupils currently make choices based around three foundation subjects alongside core provision in key stage 4. The pupils with appropriate prior attainment are guided to pursue the triple science route, and careful attention is given to ensuring students from a range of backgrounds access this route. Students facing educational disadvantage of any kind do not see their curriculum choices or opportunities curtailed or guided to a reduced provision at Coombe Dean School.

Progression to key stage 5

Key stage 5 Curriculum (Years 12 and 13)

Students in our Post 16 provision follow a full-time programme of three Level 3 courses (A-level, BTEC, CTEC and CNAT), comprising of at least 580 taught hours per year, 15.25 hours per week plus independent study. Students' choices are supported by independent careers advice and guidance and there is a careful transition and induction process to ensure they are on the right courses to suit their future plans and current interests and strengths. Some students may take on an additional course such as another full time A level or BTEC, or a part-time course such as Level 3 Mathematics or the Extended Project Qualification.

Students without the required grade in Maths GCSE and English Language GCSE **or** English Literature GCSE have an additional 3-4 hours towards achieving level 4 at GCSE English and/or Maths. We do our best to try to ensure that this does not interfere with level 3 choices using twilight sessions, enrichment/tutorial and independent study time, however it is important to understand that the government requires all students to study Maths and English to at least grade 4 and that this may clash with some lessons in other courses.

Students in year 12 have an additional hour per week (38 hours per year) of Study Skills/Critical Thinking and supervised independent study in addition to an average of 2.5 hours per week of tutorial programme or other enrichment such as careers events, work experience/employability skills and applied learning days. The tutorial programme comprises a structured programme covering:

- Personal Development and Cultural Studies
- News, Debate and Oracy
- Self-management, Leadership and Wellbeing;
- Careers, University and Apprenticeship Guidance;
- Academic Mentoring/Independent Study Support.

The school's ethos of 'community – integrity – opportunity' is further embedded within Key Stage 5 through our personal tutor support and the opportunities available to students to volunteer and play a role in our school community and beyond. All students are expected to be involved in our wider participation and volunteering programme for a minimum of one hour per week in year 12. This requirement is relaxed in year 13 to allow students to focus on exam preparation, but they are still able to take on leadership roles in the Post 16 Senate or continue to volunteer in the school or the wider community.

Subjects offered at Coombe Dean	Subjects offered within the Plym Consortium (Coombe Dean, Plymstock and Hele's School)
A Level: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, English Literature, Further Maths, Geography, History, Maths, Physics, Psychology, Sociology EPQ	Alongside our own offer, we are able to broaden the range of subjects available to our students through our consortium partners, in subject areas such as:
BTEC: Sport, Criminology CNAT: Business	Health and Social Care; Travel and Tourism; Media Studies; Computer Science; Religious Studies; Photography; Drama and Theatre Studies; Fine Art.
Level 3 Cert: Maths	There is agreement between the 3 schools to offer a Modern Foreign Language at KS5.
RSL Foundation Diploma: Music	

Whole School Provision

Careers Information, Advice and Guidance and Inclusion

We are a fully inclusive school. We provide opportunities and we advise and guide pupils to make choices in line with their areas of interest and career aspirations. Pupils are supported to pursue a curriculum that meets the needs of their aspiration and interest regardless of prior attainment, disadvantage, special educational need or disability or having English as an additional language. Where appropriate, additional support is provided in a bespoke manner for a small minority of pupils.

Literacy

Literacy is the ability to think, talk, listen, read and write in order to communicate effectively. It is the process that enables pupils to access learning across the curriculum, is key to academic success and is therefore central to a young person's life chances. Literacy in secondary school is not a basket of general skills; instead, it must be grounded in the specifics of each subject. Every teacher therefore communicates their subject through academic language and through various reading and writing strategies which unlock the subject-specific curriculum. Reading, writing, speaking and listening are at the heart of knowing and doing Science, Art, History and every other subject at Coombe Dean School.

COOMBE DEAN - APPROACHES TO LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AND DISCIPLINARY LITERACY

Universal offer	Enrichment	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	12&13
		Transition reading – a book is gifted to Year 6 pupils with supporting activities which then feature in induction activities and English lessons					
		Tutor reading programme (The Coombe Dean Canon) Students participate in guided reading during tutor time on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (except Term 1 for Year 7)					
		The library support worker works once a week, 1-2-1 with a small group of identified readers to encourage and develop their reading for pleasure					
		The Library as a facility to encourage reading for pleasure					

Universal offer	Curriculum	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12&13
		The library – fortnightly reading sessions take place in the library centred around accelerate reader and STAR testing. This is monitored by the English teacher and the library support worker					
		Vocabulary instruction – key tiers 2&3 vocabulary is identified in subject areas and is taught explicitly and revisited to interrupt forgetting. Teachers prioritise teaching Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which students are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech. Teachers and subject leaders consider which words and phrases to teach as part of curriculum planning.					
		Disciplinary reading – identification of key texts/extracts for use in lessons					
		Oracy – focus on accountable talk. Accountable talk is a useful framework to ensure talk is high quality, and emphasises how talk can be subject specific. Teachers support students by modelling high quality talk, for example including key vocabulary and metacognitive reflection.					
		Writing – CPD on writing strategies for staff. Teachers break writing down into planning, monitoring and evaluation, and support students by modelling each step.					
		Set texts to support reflection and development – Alex Quigley – the writing gap – Katherine Mortimore – Disciplinary Literacy and explicit vocabulary teaching					

Personalised offer	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12&13
	NGRT testing takes place twice per year for students in Years 7-10 and once for Year 11.					NGRT testing is used for EAL students new to the 6 th form
	Data from NGRT are used to identify students in Stanines 1-3 (SAS <89) which are monitored and given access to Lexia. Students with SC and PC scores >2 apart have access to further testing with YARC and LASS as appropriate					
	Read Write Inc. and Lexia are our current main tools of intervention					
	We expect and proactively plan to support students with the weakest levels of literacy, particularly in Years 7&8. We have developed a model of tiered support, which increases in intensity in line with need and reducing disruption to access of the curriculum. Assessment is used to match students to appropriate types of intervention, and to monitor the impact of interventions.					

Numeracy and Mathematics

Use of maths is reinforced and supported through work between departments. We support pupils to use and compliment skills delivered in maths lessons to make better progress as a result of making links between learning and applying key concepts in other contexts. As curriculum maps and schemes of learning are increasingly aligned across WeST, ongoing work centres around strengthening links across departments to support staff awareness of curriculum areas other than their own in order to exploit opportunities to build on prior learning that has not necessarily taken place in their own classroom.

Personal Development

Statutory teaching of religious education and relationships and sex education and health education

The intent of our Personal Development curriculum is to cultivate a community rooted in our core values of community, integrity and opportunity. We are committed to fostering an environment where every student feels valued and empowered to thrive both academically and personally. Our curriculum is built on a spiral approach, where key knowledge, skills, and attributes are revisited and deepened as students' progress through each key stage, ensuring a coherent and cumulative learning experience.

The Personal Development curriculum is delivered in a dedicated one-hour lesson per fortnight in KS3 and 4, and through a weekly 30-minute tutorial session at KS5. Personal development is also interleaved throughout our assembly program, ensuring that students receive continuous support in their growth beyond the academic curriculum. This has been carefully designed to reinforce the knowledge, skills, and attributes emphasized across our broader curriculum, while also addressing the unique challenges and opportunities that students may encounter in their personal lives.

The Personal Development curriculum's impact will ensure that our young people understand how they are developing personally and socially, as well as tackle many of the moral and cultural issues that are part of our students' world. Students will learn about a range of topics including personal safety both on and offline, discrimination, first aid, drug education, healthy eating, physical activity, mental and emotional health and wellbeing, sex and relationships, citizenship, employment and careers. The planning of the curriculum is cross-referenced against PSHE statutory requirements and planning each year considers local priorities in a responsive manner.

The Core Religious Studies curriculum is delivered as a standalone subject within the curriculum from KS3 - 4 and during tutorial sessions at KS5. It is aligned with the principles set out by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) and is designed to develop students' understanding of diverse beliefs, cultures, and worldviews.

Subject Curriculum Intent

Departments have developed their statement of curriculum intent which encapsulates the specific aims of each curriculum within the overarching aims of the school curriculum. Curriculum overviews have been developed alongside statements of intent and these map out clearly the sequencing of the implementation of curriculum content and knowledge. The core knowledge taught is shared with students and stakeholders through Curriculum Intent Organisers (CIOs).

Additionally, 'roadmaps' are provided for parents and students to chart the journey of a student in terms of identified knowledge from Years 7-13.

Curriculum Implementation

Pedagogy

We believe that all pupils deserve access to the best possible education and the opportunity to thrive in all that they set out to do, regardless of background and circumstance. As a team of trusted professionals, we will never compromise on these high expectations.

Our approach to teaching is to expose students to expert instruction and plan for significant dedicated time for students to practise and develop skills independently. Our schemes of learning are structured to ensure that students are exposed to regular retrieval and connection of prior knowledge, as well as expert questioning to check their understanding. Students will be aware of the school-wide expectations of 'independent practice' where opportunity is given for deep thought and practise of core skills and knowledge – within independent practice phases of learning, students benefit from personalised coaching and feedback from teachers who circulate the classroom.

The effective deployment of these strategies and techniques, alongside teachers' own intelligent adaptation, will promote progress and challenge for all pupils, through active engagement in purposeful activity. We want to see evidence of this through the quality of teaching and learning in lessons, our pupils' own reflections and insights, the content of pupils' books and in examination results.

For effective teaching and learning to take place, teachers and pupils need to be confident that lessons are always conducted in a safe, calm, learning environment. Consistency is key. Our taught behaviour curriculum and our in-depth inclusive teaching strategies work hand in hand to provide this. It provides a strong framework for learning together – the core characteristics that every member of our community should demonstrate. It creates a space where teachers are able to deliver the curriculum in a manner that engages pupils and encourages on-task behaviour. It enables all staff to support one another and our pupils to develop excellent behaviour for learning. Further detail on this can be found later in this document in the behaviour curriculum section.



At Coombe Dean School we have adopted an approach to teaching and learning which is partly inspired by Barack Rosenshine's *Principles of Instruction* and Doug Lemov's *Teach Like A Champion* (TLAC) techniques. We have developed our own approaches to teaching and learning which is based around our '*preferred learning cycle*' – **Teach, Check, Practice**. Our curriculum is enacted in the classroom through explicit teacher instruction, systematic checking of student understanding (with clear mechanisms for ensuring that participation and thinking ratios are high and teachers adapt learning activity according to response where appropriate) and procurement of time for students to practice skills and develop knowledge independently.

Our teachers utilise a series of school-wide codified models which create high expectations, consistency and predictability for all learners which enables cognition to be focused on the core skills and knowledges of the discipline, rather than on understanding and remembering a variety of routines/approaches in different lessons. For example, we have a common framework for the beginning of lessons and how mini-whiteboards are used to check student understanding as well as the conditions in which independent learning takes place.

Our approach is underpinned by NASEN and EEF SEND best practice guidance and we train staff regularly on inclusive teaching methods and strategies in the classroom. We believe strongly in a universal provision that meets the needs of all learners and minimal contextual adaptations for those who require something additional to/different from the norm. Our approach to inclusion is to ensure that students facing educational disadvantage are included by being in the classroom, taught by experts who adapt the teaching and learning appropriately for them – not extracted and taken out of the curriculum experience for multiple interventions which lead to gaps in knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

Lessons are taught to the highest level, with scaffolding to help all abilities and backgrounds work to the top. We do not seek to 'differentiate down' or to create learning objectives which preclude any learners from aiming for the top. All abilities are supported with constant reinforcement of their curriculum journey, reviewing what they have learnt and what they will learn, through their Curriculum Intent Organisers.

Feedback and Assessment

When pupils' work is marked by teachers, it is marked in pink pen in all departments. Live and dialogue marking is personalised and caters to the needs of the pupils addressed in their writing. Dedicated Improvement Time is used to provide a framework of reflection for pupils. When pupils have completed an assessed piece of work, they are given the opportunity to reflect (in purple pen) and to improve their outcome.

Often pupils' work is shown under a visualiser and the class explore how further improvements can be made. In addition, live modelling is key to helping pupils see how to make progress. This is a crucial element of the expert/explicit instruction aspect of our teaching and learning framework. In all areas, pupils are shown what to do- shown the metacognitive process of production- before having a go themselves. During independent practice, teachers circulate the classroom to support learners and offer bespoke coaching where required as well as building a picture of how the curriculum is landing in the short term. This process informs next steps – is there a need to support individuals or small groups? Is there a need to pause and re-teach? Is there a need to make an adaptation to curriculum planning for the future (this would form part of the discussion at regular subject curriculum 'look back/look forward meetings')?

SISRA Data is monitored for pupils that are underperforming. The Disadvantaged/ SEN/ gender status of underperforming children is considered within this data to monitor patterns/ anomalies across the departments and discussed in department meetings. Disadvantaged/ SEN pupils are challenged through a variety of questioning techniques and our approach of '**warm invitation**' and '**no opt out**', as are all of our pupils, with scaffolding opportunities if they do not know the answer.

Children who are tested frequently learn the benefits of testing and learn what to do to maximise their chances of success. They also learn to not give up when they are not successful the first time. They develop strategies to overcome challenges. They develop self-confidence and they learn to harness stress. This is why all pupils will be tested- because testing aids later retention; testing identifies gaps in knowledge; testing causes pupils to learn more from the next learning episode; testing improves transfer of knowledge to new concepts and frequent testing encourages pupils to study.



Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development at Coombe Dean is based around a belief that *“Students deserve better than simply being lucky if their teachers know the best way to meet their needs. Teachers deserve better than having to guess how to do the best for their students.”* Clay and Weston 2018, *Unleashing Great Teaching*.

At Coombe Dean School:

1. Professional development will have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.
2. Professional development will be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.
3. Professional development will include collaboration and expert challenge.
4. Professional development programmes will be sustained over time.

All of this is underpinned by, and requires that:

5. Professional development is prioritised by school leadership.

To this end, this CPD programme, which takes us through the 2025-26 academic year, should be viewed as a toolkit and a springboard for teachers’ own professional development. It is not to be seen as restrictive in terms of access. In simple, it can be conceived of as *“a product of both externally provided and job-embedded activities that increase teachers’ knowledge and help them change their instructional practice in ways that support student learning”*. Darling–Hammond et al (2017).

The focus of CPD at Coombe Dean is understanding and improvement focusing on the core aspects of the school’s development plan (see below) and the embedding of inclusive teaching across the school to ensure the very best opportunities for all of our learners, with a focus on inclusive teaching. To this end, our staff partake in a wide range of professional development activity as individuals, within their subject departments and as part of the whole school staff body. Our staff continuing professional development is under constant review for adaptation and improvement (we remain nimble to respond to what we see in classrooms through our quality assurance mechanisms) as we seek to ensure our staff are provided with the best educational research and modelling in order to provide continually improved teaching and learning experiences for our students.

Monitoring through the Department Curriculum and Literacy Review

Monitoring by Middle Leaders (MLs) is ongoing and MLs monitor implementation and impact in their curriculum areas using the following sources of evidence:

- A record of classroom visits/ learning walks and the key WWW and EBI points
- Resulting departmental improvements
- Personal Development Review Goals set and pursued
- Progress data reviews – discussed with SLT link

- Curriculum Frame Documents/Preferred Learning Cycle Materials
- Any notes related to evaluation of curriculum intent, implementation and impact
- Any notes of training received in curriculum intent, implementation and impact

The work of middle leaders is in turn monitored by link senior leaders and middle leaders meet fortnightly with senior leaders to discuss leadership of the department (including personnel) and detailed aspects of the curriculum and literacy review activities of the subject. Senior Leaders guide and partake in elements of the curriculum and literacy review for subjects as well as supporting middle leaders' planning for curriculum look back/look forward meetings.

Curriculum Impact

The impact of curriculum intent and implementation from the previous year is assessed using collaborative data systems (SISRA and the iDash) and this information is shared with WeST, PTSA and SWIFT South to allow for Trust, local and regional comparisons as well as comparisons with the national dataset when this becomes available. Subject reviews conducted by middle leaders in conjunction with their SLT department links seek to identify areas of the curriculum which are contributing to performance being above expectations, in line with or below so that these can be recognised to inform ongoing curriculum review and development.

Across the academic year, curriculum impact is assessed 'live' using internally-generated data based upon a mixed constitution of assessment through two data collection points, both of which are staggered to support staff workload. These data collections are designed to gain maximum information from minimal teacher input and in turn inform stakeholders of the progress of each pupil in the school. The data gathered seeks to reflect a learner's journey through the curriculum through its focus on current working levels.

We use nationally benchmarked data to support our understanding of learner progress through the curriculum and to diagnose areas in need of development/support compared to expectations such that these can be addressed through time-limited interventions which are assessed for impact. The tests include NGRT and PASS

All staff have access to SISRA to support their analysis of the progress of their class, the pupils in a curriculum area and individuals across the school and guidance is given as to how to access this information and how it should be used to inform planning and teaching.

Target-setting

The school uses Expected Performance Bands (EPBs) to frame expected progress for all stakeholders and not restrict pupils to one grade but encourage aspiration. These are generated based on performance in key stage 2 national tests (where these take place) for Year 11 as well as on the NGRT GL that students take when they start and as they progress through Coombe Dean.



Reporting

The Expected Performance Band is published with Learning Overviews (y7-13) twice per academic year to support parents and pupils in their understanding of the progress they are making learning the planned curriculum. Judgements are provided on effort, conduct and independent learning. At post-16 this also

includes attendance. Learning Overviews also provide data on attendance (for Years 7-13) and reading age (for Years 7-11).

This data-sourced information is provided with a progress statement which compares progress through the curriculum with expected progress and an indication of 'current working grade' from Years 10-13 and is accompanied by teacher judgements on effort, independent learning and conduct.

Research, Reports and Books – literature underpinning our curriculum thinking

Academic Curriculum

Teach to the top - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Mansworth-Megan/Teach-to-the-Top-Aiming-High-for-Every-Learner/9781913622756>

The what, why and how of assessment : a guide for teachers and school leaders - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Child-Simon/The-what-why-and-how-of-assessment---a-guide-for-teachers/9781529752540>

Memorable Teaching : Leveraging memory to build deep and durable learning in the classroom - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/McCrea-Peps/Memorable-Teaching--Leveraging-memory-to-build-deep-and-d/9781532707797>

Symbiosis : The Curriculum And The Classroom - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Howard-Kat/Symbiosis---the-curriculum-and-the-classroom/9781913622084>

Christine Counsell – better conversations with subject leaders - How secondary senior leaders can see a curriculum more clearly. - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Sealy-Clare/The-researchED-guide-to-the-curriculum---an-evidence-info/9781912906383>

Ruth Ashbee – A culture of curriculum - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Ashbee-Ruth/Curriculum---theory-culture-and-the-subject-specialisms/9780367483777>

Myatt and Tomsett – Huh Curriculum conversations between subject and senior leaders - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Tomsett-John/Huh-Curriculum-conversations-between-subject-and-senior-leaders/9781913622732>

Christine Counsell Blog (2018) [senior-curriculum-leadership-1-the-indirect-manifestation-of-knowledge-a-curriculum-as-narrative/](https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Sealy-Clare/The-researchED-guide-to-the-curriculum---an-evidence-info/9781912906383)

Curriculum – Research Ed - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Sealy-Clare/The-researchED-guide-to-the-curriculum---an-evidence-info/9781912906383>

Gallimaufry to Coherence – Myatt: <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Myatt-Mary/The-curriculum---Gallimaufry-to-coherence/9781911382836>

The Lone SENDCo – Aubin - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Aubin-Gary/The-Lone-SENDCO-Questions-and-answers-for-the-busy-SENDCO/9781913622589>

Addressing Educational Disadvantage in Schools and Colleges: The Essex Way – Rowland - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Rowland-Marc/Addressing-Educational-Disadvantage-in-Schools-and-Colleges-The-Essex-Way/9781913622459>

The researchED guide to assessment: an evidence-informed guide for teachers - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Donarski-Sarah/The-researchED-guide-to-assessment---an-evidence-informed/9781913622138>

High challenge, low threat: finding the balance

<https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Myatt-Mary/High-challenge-low-threat---finding-the-balance/9781909717862>

Responsive teaching: cognitive science and formative assessment in practice

<https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Fletcher-Wood-Harry-Institute-for-Teaching-UK/Responsive-teaching---cognitive-science-and-formative-ass/9781138296893>

SEND huh: curriculum conversations with SEND leaders

<https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Myatt-Mary/SEND-huh---curriculum-conversations-with-SEND-leaders/9781398372733>

Motivated Teaching: Harnessing the science of motivation to boost attention and effort in the classroom

<https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/McCrea-Peps/Motivated-Teaching--Harnessing-the-science-of-motivation-/9781717367204>

To complement the academic curriculum, we also deliver a behaviour curriculum.

Community, Integrity, Opportunity

Our school values are inextricably linked to our behaviour curriculum.

Community- we have a responsibility to teach all students, staff and parents

- Ensuring better behaviour is everyone's responsibility
- We want students to behave consistently well and to demonstrate high levels of self-control
- We want students to actively support the wellbeing of other students
- We want students to make a highly positive, tangible contribution to the life of the school and wider community
- We want students to leave Coombe Dean School with academic knowledge and with knowledge of how to conduct themselves in the real world- we want to prepare our learners for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

Integrity- we want students, staff and parents to do the right thing even when no one is looking

- We want students to have strong moral principles
- We want students to be honest
- We want students to act, to react and to do the right thing

Opportunity- we know that students' life chances will be greatly increased if they are self-disciplined, self-motivated and can self-regulate

- We expect students to behave consistently well, demonstrating high levels of self-control
- We will monitor behaviour constantly and use hard and soft resets, reminders, re-teaching to ensure students are supported to get things right



Behaviour Curriculum

‘Children are not born with an understanding of the rules of acceptable behaviour – they have to learn them, and need adults’ help to do this.’

Curriculum is the result of high-quality proactive thinking, the product of clear consideration of the sequence of content necessary for children to make progress. Our approach to behaviour is the same- we consider that behaviour is a curriculum and subsequently we have given the teaching of this some considerable thought. As Tom Bennett would say, ‘being well-behaved is a combination of skills, aptitudes, values and knowledge. These can be taught.’ We have used evidenced-based research, recent reports and the latest thinking to inform our approach to teaching staff, students and parents about behaviour.

Good behaviour is not simply the absence of ‘bad behaviour’ (swearing, fighting, or retreating from classroom tasks). Good behaviour includes aiming towards students’ flourishing as scholars and human beings. So, while good behaviour does include the absence of, for example, vandalism, rudeness and indolence, it also describes behaviour as more broadly desirable. This could mean helping students to learn good habits of study, or reasoning, or interacting with adults, coping with adversity, or intellectual challenges (*positive* good behaviour). This could also describe the learning behaviour we wish to see develop in students such as behaving as a scientist, an artist, a mathematician.

Research and Reading:

As professionals, we realise that learning behaviours must be understood to be taught, enacted and encouraged. The five EEF learning behaviours (2019) stipulate that staff:

1. Know and understand your pupils and their influences
2. Teach learning behaviours alongside managing behaviours
3. Use classroom management strategies to support good classroom behaviour
4. Use simple approaches to meet the needs of individual students
5. Tailor targeted approaches to meet the needs of individual students

Tom Bennett’s behaviour report and his book *Running the Room* outline very clearly that these learning behaviours can be taught and must be taught.

Being well behaved is not an accident at birth. Students do not create themselves. We are all products of our circumstances. Students who behave well have been taught these things already. If they have not, the teacher must try to do so...*anyone* who works with our students must teach them how to behave.

Don’t assume that all students can behave. Assume that many cannot. Yet.

Teaching is not just standing in front of a room and talking at people. It’s a relational activity. It is dialogic. And it involves directing not just students’ academic habits but also their social habits. In short, teachers have to understand not only their subject with detail and fluidity of recall but also how to ‘run the room’.

- We, as adults, need to make sure that our conduct is of a high standard, otherwise how can we expect children to change their behaviour?
- Classes will not run smoothly unless we think clearly and explicitly about what behaviour we need to succeed, and how to direct the minds of children towards it
- The classroom project is a microcosm of the great project of society and civilization. Because they are both communities. And they both need to be run. Leaders and teachers need to make the weather

Managing behaviour means getting in front of it

Proactive and reactive strategies:

- Proactive means creating an environment where students know how they are expected to behave in advance of them having to do so; where they perfectly understand the behaviours you want from them, how to do them, and why they are important.
- Reactive means responding to student behaviour when it happens so they understand if what they did was correct, and how to correct it if it was not.

We have designed a behaviour curriculum which teaches to do both of these behaviour management strategies- we teach students, regularly, how to get things right and we respond when they do and when they don't.

- Children are all different. Their different backgrounds mean they will all have different beliefs about what good behaviour is. They will also have different capacities to perform the behaviours they will need to succeed in classrooms.
- So all students need to be taught how to behave in school. Some need a lot more teaching than others and this is why our behaviour curriculum needs to be taught with as much care and effort as any academic curriculum. It will not be learned automatically and it is not self-taught.

The golden rule of behaviour: make it easy for them to behave and hard for them not to.

- We understand that we have to plan what we want to teach our students. That means knowing exactly how we want them to behave, in lots of different circumstances that may seem easy or obvious.
- We then deliver this curriculum. In other words, there is a clear process by which the details of 'good behaviour' are transmitted to students and this is, firstly, at the start of a year through an extended tutor time session. Students get taught how to:
 - prepare for a school day
 - travel to work, particularly how to behave on a bus
 - conduct themselves in tutor time
 - walk during lesson changeover and how to line up ready for their lesson
 - enter a classroom and begin a silent starter activity
 - speak appropriately during a lesson
 - line up for break times in the canteen
 - behave in their social areas during break times
 - wear their uniform
 - complete their independent learning
- Teaching behaviour is as complex as any other form of teaching so that means everything about teaching a subject must be applied to their behaviour. We understand that we must be:
 - checking their baseline understanding
 - delivering an ability-appropriate curriculum
 - checking for understanding
 - repeating instructions if necessary
 - doing this as many times as necessary
 - encouraging them to revise this learning so that it becomes embedded.

The most important part of managing behaviour? Teaching it

How do we motivate children to behave well and learn?

- Many actions are value-driven as opposed to reason-driven

So what do students value?

- We should tap into their values as well as shape their values; teach them to value their behaviour:
 - Help them to be or feel successful at school
 - Teach them how to focus and try hard
 - Teach them that school is an important place where they can feel valued and be noticed
 - Help them to discover ways to find satisfaction by behaving well

Norms

- Children pick up on norms fast. It is easy to see what the normal acceptable behaviour actually is, and it is often not what the teacher would want the norm to be. Norms are demonstrated by actions, not our hopes. They are not the rules on the classroom wall- they're what happens, not what we wish to happen. They are what we see and hear and touch.
- We ask staff to spend time considering the norms they want to build:
 - **Know** what norms you want to build- what values do you want to see demonstrated?
 - **Teach** them
 - **Maintain** them
- If the teacher chooses not to address what the norms of the classroom should be, then norms will still exist only this time they won't necessarily be the ideal ones.
- We understand the importance of monitoring our norms. It is very, very easy to start to let things slide. Consistency and excellence are hard. It is the easiest thing in the world to cut corners. There are a million other pressures and demands on our time and standards, and it often feels the right thing to do in the moment to lower them. However, we support each other to maintain, to monitor and to praise so that we are consistent in our pursuit of high standards and excellent behaviour.

Routines

- A routine is a sequence of behaviour that you need to use frequently in order to achieve a goal
- To this end, we understand the importance of teaching behaviour, not telling. Staff identify the routines they want to see; communicate in detail their expectations; practise the routines until everyone can do them; reinforce, maintain and patrol the routines constantly.
- There is one ingredient in developing a routine that cannot be missed out: practise. Behaviour is a practical matter and practical matters are grounded in practise.
- We teach them how to perform a routine. Then we expect them to do it. Then we hold them to account for it and expect them to do it for themselves. Then we monitor that they are doing it right. And we do that forever.

Beginnings are important for teachers

The two most important beginnings for teachers are:

- the start of every lesson
- but especially the start of the very first lesson

Our behaviour curriculum makes very clear the importance of laying the foundations at the start of every year with every class. We teach each other how to prepare for a new class: what to prepare prior to meeting

the students; how to prepare for the first face to face; how to set out expectations and we teach students that:

- the classroom is a learning space
- we have high expectations for them
- what they do matters to us
- everyone in the class is part of a community
- the community succeeds together
- this success is achieved through a set of behaviours
- we will teach them these behaviours

Final Thoughts from Tom Bennett:

One of the best motivators for a teacher is to remember how important this all is. If you do not do this, then the job is so much harder, learning deteriorates, safety evaporates, and no one flourishes as they might have done, including the teacher.

It is hard to be resolute about something you do not believe in. But if you believe in education and what it can do, if you believe in your subject, if you believe that knowledge and learning are transformative powers in children's lives, if you know in your heart that education is one of the jewels of human accomplishment- if you believe all this, then you get out of bed in the morning and you punch in and you do your best even when you don't feel like it. Because it matters. It matters more than anything else I have ever done. You matter.

So demand. Demand that they try. Demand that they reach out to what is possible. Demand because it matters if they do, and it matters if they don't.

Do the same small good thing for a very long time.

One last thing- professional warmth goes a lot further with a lot more students than aggression.

Research, Reports and Books – literature underpinning our curriculum thinking

Behaviour Curriculum

EEF Improving Behaviour in Schools:

- <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/behaviour>

Summary:

- https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/behaviour/EEF_Improving_behaviour_in_schools_Summary.pdf?v=1635355216

Guidance Report:

- https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/eef-guidance-reports/behaviour/EEF_Improving_behaviour_in_schools_Report.pdf?v=1635355216

Tom Bennett's Behaviour Report- *Creating a Culture*:

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/602487/Tom_Bennett_Independent_Review_of_Behaviour_in_Schools.pdf

Tom Bennett's *Running the Room* and *The Companion* - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Bennett-Tom/Running-the-room---the-teachers-guide-to-behaviour/9781913622145>

<https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Bennett-Tom/Running-the-Room-Companion-Issues-in-classroom-management/9781913808983>

Doug Lemov's *Teach Like A Champion* - <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Lemov-Doug/Teach-like-a-champion---the-complete-handbook-to-master-the-art-of-teaching/9781118116821>

Classroom behaviour: a practical guide to effective teaching, behaviour management and colleague support (4th edition) -

<https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Rogers-Bill/Classroom-behaviour---a-practical-guide-to-effective-teac/9781446295335>

Trauma-informed

Nicola Morgan's **Blame My Brain**

<https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Morgan-Nicola/Blame-my-brain---the-amazing-teenage-brain-revealed/9781406346930>

Louise Bomber's **What About Me?**

<https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Bomber-Louise-Michelle/What-About-Me--Inclusive-Strategies-to-Support-Pupils-wit/9781903269183>

Louise Bomber's **Inside I'm Hurting**

<https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Bomber-Louise/Inside-Im-hurting---practical-strategies-for-supporting-c/9781903269114>

DfE **Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Karen Triesman's work on Trauma Informed Practice – a summary of her work **Safe Hands and Thinking Minds** can be found at <https://www.sigmateachingschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Trauma-informed-organisations-by-Karen-Treisman.pdf>

Updated September 2026