



## ST IVO SCHOOL

# Curriculum Policy

To be approved: January 2013, Governors Curriculum Committee

Next review due: January 2016

The policy should be read in conjunction with the Aims of the School and the values articulated in the document 'Guiding Principles'. In particular, the policy seeks to support the school's academic aims but its implementation will also promote the fulfilment of many of the personal aims and social aims. Within 'Guiding Principles', the curriculum policy supports the framework of St Ivo School as being 'comprehensive, non-selective and demanding'. It actively promotes the principles of 'individual human worth, achievement, equal value, co-operation, openness and respecting differences'. This policy expresses a key way in which the school can fulfil its role as 'a child-centred school - concerned with the whole child - which works at being inclusive'.

### Curriculum aims

The aims of the curriculum of St Ivo School are to enable students to develop

- A sense of enquiry, the ability to question, solve problems and argue rationally;
- A willingness to apply themselves and an aptitude for learning;
- Knowledge and skills relevant to adult life and employment in a changing world;
- Literacy, numeracy and competence in the use of information technology;
- Their creativity, critical awareness, empathy and sensitivity;
- A recognition of their own and others' achievements, in school and beyond;
- Self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence;
- The skills of working as an individual and as a member of a group or team;
- Appropriate moral and spiritual values and tolerance of others, to value each individual and to learn to live together in an atmosphere of mutual respect;
- An awareness of the student's place in the community and opportunities for service to each other, to the community, and the wider world.

### Student entitlement

As a fully comprehensive, 11 - 18 school, we are committed to the principle that all students, regardless of ability, race, cultural background or gender, have a right to the highest quality of education we can provide. This means that we seek to ensure breadth and balance for all, appropriate levels of expectation and genuine challenge, and relevance, continuity and progression in learning.

Courses of study and teaching methods are tailored to the wide range of needs, interests and aspirations of our students. It also means that many features of the curriculum are common to all students.

### Access

The principle above presents us with a responsibility to find ways of ensuring that all students are engaged in their learning, motivated and enabled to succeed. Teaching staff are expected to ensure that, wherever possible, students who are having difficulty or becoming demotivated are identified early and provided with appropriate support, encouragement, guidance and (if necessary) different teaching styles and work, so that they might continue to participate at the most appropriate level for

them. The responsibility of finding means of access to the curriculum for all is a result of our stated intention to include, not exclude.

### **Expectations of staff**

Staff are expected actively to promote and seek to secure the curriculum aims (above) and, in particular to

- Have high expectations of students;
- Employ a variety of appropriate teaching and learning methods;
- • Ensure that, wherever possible, students are found means of access to the curriculum and given opportunities to succeed;
- • Deliver programmes of study which build upon students' previous experiences, providing progression and continuity, and which conform to the requirements of the national curriculum;
- Provide work which meets their students' needs and aspirations, which offers depth and challenge, and which motivates and inspires them;
- • Involve the learner in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular feedback, through assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging students to evaluate their own achievements;
- Develop students' skills to become independent learners;
- Encourage, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally, through praise in the learning environment;
- • Work in partnership with other staff, parents/carers and the wider community to achieve shared goals;
- • Keep parents/carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their sons and daughters.

### **The timetable**

The school operates a 25 period week. There are 5 periods per day, each of which lasts for one hour. In addition there are 5 fifteen minute registration period each morning, one of which is used for Year group assembly. There is a short registration period at the start of each afternoon for Years 7-11.

### **Curriculum structure**

St Ivo's broad and balanced curriculum provides all students with a wide range of both challenging and rewarding learning experiences.

Our students come to us from five main junior/primary schools in this area, with additional numbers coming to us regularly from further afield. This intake provides a good mix of student ability and aspiration, and we seek to secure a positive working relationship with our cluster of local schools in order to achieve the necessary continuity between phases. Each student is allocated to a tutor group on entering the school. These groups are carefully put together to ensure that each group is balanced in gender and ability. A student's form tutor is the first point of contact between home and school if any concerns arise.

*Able, Gifted and Talented:* We recognise that some of our students have a high ability in a range of different areas. Whilst this may be subject specific, showing academic giftedness, others may show a particular social skill, or talent in areas such as music, sport or dance. Special provision is made for these students through the G-Team which runs across the school. Further information can be found in the Able, Gifted and Talented policy.

*Student Support* offers a wide range of services. This includes preparing resources, specialist material and tutors, extra literacy and numeracy support throughout the key stages and in Year 9 a small group follow the Foundation Learning Pathways which progress to Key Stage 4 as appropriate.

### **Key Stage 3 - Years 7 to 9**

All students follow a broad balanced curriculum, with the following subjects being studied: English, Maths, Science, ICT, a Modern Foreign Language, Design & Technology, History, Geography, RE, Art, Music, Drama and PE. In Year 8 and Year 9 there are slight variations on the allocation of time given to each subject. All lessons are one hour long and we operate a two week timetable.

In Years 7 and 8, students are taught for most subjects in their tutor groups. Students are put into ability groups for Maths in Year 7 and for languages and science at the beginning of Year 8. Technology is taught in smaller mixed-ability groups. Similarly in PE or games, where there is a need for some single sex groups, smaller groups are formed.

In Year 9, smaller mixed ability groups are created for all subject areas.

### **Key Stage 4 – Years 10 and 11**

All students take English, mathematics, science, ICT and PE. PSHE includes careers work, RE and health education. They choose four further options from a wide choice of over twenty five subjects.

Study Plus, a programme which scaffolds the learning of Maths and English to secure A\* - C passes at GCSE, has proved to be very successful for small groups of students each year and now makes a significant contribution in ensuring that these students can progress to Level 3 study at post-16.

A small group of students join/continue Level 1 Foundation Learning Pathway with guided option choices. St Ivo also works closely with other partner institutions to be able to offer more vocational choice including car mechanics and hair & beauty courses, with good progression for post-16.

Students are guided to choose from different areas so that they have a broad base for further/higher education choices. All subjects reflect an element of citizenship. For most students, this curriculum will result in their obtaining 9 or 10 GCSEs. Details of the Key Stage 4 curriculum are summarised in the Key Stage 4 prospectus, which can be accessed through the correspondence page.

In Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11), students are grouped by ability for Maths, English and Science. Groupings for other subjects are largely dictated by option choices. Students remain in the same tutor groups as in Years 7 to 9. The Head of Year will also move through with them.

### **Post 16 - The Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13)**

The majority of St Ivo students return after GCSEs to the St Ivo Sixth Form. The school offers AS/A2 levels, Applied Advanced GCEs and a range of Level 2 qualifications including BTEC, OCR and Cambridge Nationals. Due to the size of the school, most combinations are possible. The Sixth Form prospectus can be accessed through the correspondence page. Courses available include over 30 AS/A2 Level, 5 Applied A Level and 5 vocational Level 2 courses.

In addition, all students follow a course in personal and social education, attend a weekly assembly/tutorial session and able to take part in physical education. They are expected to do community service. Many students following vocational styled courses participate in a work-related

activity or work placement related to the subject they are studying. A Level and Applied A level students can undertake a work placement in which they develop a piece of research related to their A Level studies.

To take account of these differences and the range of ability in any class, all staff have a responsibility, when planning work, to meet the needs of all students. This will involve, at different times, adapting tasks, providing different resources, developing extension work, providing a variety of learning styles and environments, setting individual goals, giving different levels of support, and offering a variety of ways to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.

### **The learning environment**

The school is aware that a lively, purposeful and structured learning environment is essential in promoting high standards and good working practices. Displays of students' work, stimulus materials and appropriate resources are very important in setting standards and raising expectations. All departments are expected to emphasise good display in their areas and contribute to displays in public areas of the school. The structure and organisation of the classroom is also an important factor in developing effective working methods and a positive ethos. Whilst this is left to individual teachers and departments, it is expected that classrooms are orderly environments where students can work effectively and in comfort, that adequate resources are provided and are accessible, and that students treat classrooms, workshops, study rooms and the resource centre with respect.

### **Schemes of work and lesson planning**

Each department is required to have schemes of work for all of its courses/programmes related, where appropriate, to the national curriculum and or examination board requirements. These schemes of work are followed by all departmental staff and their delivery monitored by heads of department. Schemes of work set out how the content of the course is structured, so that students' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed progressively, and how the teaching is organised. These schemes of work are supported by assessment strategies and methods for ensuring standardisation of expectation and assessment. Departments also have marking policies which all staff follow. Teachers may plan individual lessons, or sequences of lessons, in different ways.

### **Homework**

St Ivo School recognises the importance and value of homework as an extension of classwork, and a vehicle to practice skills, acquire new ones and develop good study habits. The school has a separate, detailed Homework policy.

### **Learning Support**

The role of the special needs department is to support the right which all students have to access the curriculum, regardless of their ability. Students with special educational needs are encouraged to become independent and take responsibility within the school.

The school adopts the staged procedure recommended by Cambridgeshire LEA for the identification of provision for students with special educational needs. The advice of specialists is taken at all stages. The Special Education Needs policy is available for perusal.

### **Examinations**

It is expected that all students who embark on a course leading to a public examination are entered for that examination, unless they fail to fulfil the Awarding Body's requirements in relation to assessments, attendance or other criteria. Departments are expected to identify, at an early stage, students who are in danger of failing to meet the requirements, so that they can be supported, guided and encouraged. To this end, a 'mentoring' system exists for key stage 4 students. Those

who, despite the best efforts of staff, are not entered for the examination are nonetheless expected to complete the course of study, alongside other students.

The school pays for all examination entries for courses for which it has prepared students. In the sixth form, students who change course after registration or entry fees have been paid by the school are liable to repay those fees to the school. Entries made under the auspices of community education are charged to the student.

### **Personal, Social and Health Education (including sex and relationships education)**

Personal, social and health education is an integral part of the philosophy and ethos of the school. Across the whole curriculum, we aim to develop students' knowledge, values, personal and social skills to help them benefit from their school experience and prepare them to take their place as responsible citizens in society. Many aspects of the school and its work contribute to personal, social and health education, the ways in which members of the school community behave towards one another, the links between the school and the wider community, our many extracurricular activities such as sport, drama, music and a wide range of trips and activities out of school. The PSHE curriculum throughout Years 7 - 13 addresses areas including personal organisation and study skills, health education (including drugs education, sex education and personal safety), education for citizenship, environmental education, economic and industrial awareness and careers education. This delivery is supported by specialist staff and outside speakers.

Section 241 of the Education Act 1993 gives parents and carers the right to withdraw their children from any part of a school's sex and relationships programme, apart from those required under the National Curriculum for science. This right applies to all students, including those over compulsory school age.

There is a session for collective worship weekly for each year group –see the Collective Worship policy give further details.

### **Work related curriculum**

An effective work related programme lies at the centre of the necessary experience of all students. The programme seeks to raise aspirations and help all students achieve their potential. As adults, they will need to be able to adapt to changing patterns of employment, operate in a climate of competition and be willing to develop new knowledge, skills and competences throughout their working lives. Through a structured and progressive programme of learning, we expect students to develop an understanding of the demands, challenges and rewards of the workplace, and knowledge of the requirements of employers and educational institutions and sources of information and guidance. Across the curriculum students are given opportunities to develop relevant skills, including research, problem-solving and decision-making skills, presentational and communication skills, planning and self-management skills and the confidence needed to operate in the employment market place. All Year 10 students currently take part in a two-week work experience placement in the summer term.

There is a separate Careers policy.

### **Curriculum complaints procedure**

The 1988 Education Reform Act requires the governing body to have in place procedures for the consideration of complaints that the school is failing to meet its statutory obligations in relation to the national curriculum and various other matters. Full details of the curriculum complaints procedure are obtainable from the Head's PA at the school.