



Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation

Curriculum Policy, 3-18

1.1 Aims: General

Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation (hereafter called The Foundation) 3-18 curriculum is intended to provide breadth, balance and choice while at the same time promoting academic excellence and personal development in compliance with [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014.](#)

This reflects The Foundation's strategic visions:

Durham Cathedral School Foundation's Mission

To provide its students with a complete education; one which instils in them an aspiration for achievement, a respect for others and a confidence for life.

Strategic Plan Vision

To provide outstanding boarding and day education to pupils from 3-18 in a challenging, happy, supportive and forward-looking environment, based on a clear set of moral principles which will shape the ethos of the School.

Strategic Plan Aim [Academic]

To provide an outstanding educational experience which promotes equality of opportunity for all our pupils, 3-18, allows them to fulfil their potential, and fully prepares them for further education and the global environment beyond.

This policy adheres to the philosophy underlying the Equalities Act 2010. The School commits to observing its principles and does not discriminate on any grounds.

1.2 Aims: Specific

This policy ensures that the regulatory requirements of The Foundation's curriculum are met according to Schedule Part 1, Paragraph (2)(1)(a) of the ***Independent School Standards*** as referenced below:

Aim 1: The School will provide full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age [construed in accordance with Section 8 of the Education Act 1996], which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. [Standards Paragraph (2)(1)(a)(a)]

Provision:

The School provides a broad academic programme from Pre-school to Year 13 designed to give pupils full access to all the educational experiences listed in Aim 1. Full details can be found in the Durham School ***Curriculum Plan, The Chorister School Curriculum Statement*** and in the curriculum booklets which form part of the Foundation's prospectus packages. All give details about:

- period allocation per subject
- teaching groups/sets
- class size
- subject choices

Choice:

Pupils are given advice about curriculum choice at every relevant stage of their school life. This is led by the Deputy Head [Academic] and the relevant Heads of Section and involves parents, House staff, heads of academic departments and the careers adviser where appropriate. Full details are contained in the *curriculum booklets* listed below which all pupils and parents are given at the relevant stage in their school life. Further information and guidance are also provided by academic briefings and parents' evenings.

- *The Chorister School Curriculum Statement*
- *The Year 7-9 Curriculum*
- *GCSE Courses*
- *Durham School Sixth Form Course Booklet*

Options:

The creation of option blocks at GCSE and A Level follows the collation of preliminary choices to ensure that maximum choice is offered. The timetable is designed where possible to maximise this choice for all pupils.

Aim 2: The School will ensure that the curriculum plan and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan. [Standards Paragraph (2)(1)(b)(i)]

Curriculum content:

From pre-school to Year 8 all pupils have access to the full range of subjects provided with content and skills appropriate to those age groups. All subjects may well draw on the content and skills outlined in the National Curriculum but there is no requirement to adopt it fully. Subject Leads and Heads of Departments are therefore free to choose which aspects of the National Curriculum they wish to teach. In Year 9 many subjects will introduce the skills and content of the GCSE courses. Years 10 and 11 focus fully on GCSE courses, with all public GCSE and IGCSE examinations being sat in Year 11. In Year 12 and 13 a Sixth Form programme is offered that includes A levels, the EPQ and BTEC courses.

Departmental schemes of work should ensure that programmes of study are appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils and are progressive in terms of skills and development. Further details can be found in departmental teaching and learning policies and schemes of work.

Setting:

Setting is used in Years 5 to 11 in some subjects to ensure that the pace and delivery of the curriculum are appropriate. Further details can be found in the ***Curriculum Plan, the Chorister School Curriculum Statement*** and the ***Setting and Grouping Policy***.

Assessment and Reporting:

Assessment is a continuous process and should provide effective strategies for learning. Reporting – either informally to pupils or formally to parents – should be both summative in terms of what has been achieved and formative in terms of what should be done to improve. Further details can be found in the ***Assessment and Reporting Policy*** and ***Homework and Marking Policy***.

Learning Support:

The School accepts pupils with learning difficulties including those with an EHC plan and has a specialist Learning Support department for this purpose. The procedures for identifying pupils with special needs and methods of supporting and evaluating them are contained in the ***Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy*** and ***The Learning Support Department Handbook*** which act in compliance with the 2014 *SEN and Disability Code of Practice*.

More able pupils:

Pupils recognised as more able are identified on a school wide level using a range of data indicators. Departments also identify those who are more able in their subject area. Departments provide a range of activities both within and outside lessons. Most provision is aimed at all pupils. On very rare occasions pupils might be entered early for public examinations. Procedures for identifying more able pupils and provision for them are outlined in the ***More Able Pupils Policy***.

Disapplication:

In accordance with the law, the School has the right to respond to individual needs by modifying the curriculum programme to allow a pupil with individual strengths to emphasise a particular curriculum area, or to allow a pupil making significantly less progress than other pupils of his/her age to consolidate his/her learning and progress across the curriculum. Typical instances would

be: permitting a pupil on the SEND register to follow a reduced curriculum to allow for Learning Support, allowing a pupil (e.g. talented sports player or musician) to follow a reduced programme of GCSEs/A Levels. Decisions about any of the above will only be made after discussion with the pupil and parent.

Aim 3: The School will ensure that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills [Standards Paragraph (2)(1)(a)(b)]

Literacy and Numeracy:

The quality of spoken and written communication and numeracy skills are the responsibility of all subject areas, and departments should ensure that they support both literacy and numeracy in both lessons and through their marking and feedback. Further information can be found in the both the ***Durham School Teaching Standards*** and ***Literacy Policy***. In all subjects the principal language of instruction is English. The School seeks to meet the needs of pupils whose principal language is not English with its ***EAL Policy***.

Information and Communication Technology:

Subjects should use and support the development of ICT skills in their lessons, alongside the normal teaching of ICT.

Aim 4: The School will provide personal, social, health and economic education, reflecting the school's aims and ethos and which encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in Part 2, Chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010. [Standards Paragraph (2)(1)(a)(d)]

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (Life and Wellbeing Education)

Teachers should take every opportunity to take advantage of topics or approaches to learning that have potential for promoting pupils' LWE awareness. Specific PSHEE issues are covered in PSHEE lessons [Years 3–6] and LWE lessons [Years 7–11] and are also supplemented by tutorial time – further details can be found in the ***Curriculum Plan, the Chorister School Curriculum Statement*** and the ***LWE schemes of work***. The schemes ensure that all aspects of the PSHEE/LWE programme are covered such as relationships, emotional and physical wellbeing, financial wellbeing, citizenship, etc. Pupils are also taught to respect other people, their lifestyles, faiths, etc., within a broad culture of acceptance, tolerance and diversity in accordance with the ***Foundation's Mission*** and in line with the Equality Act 2010 and protected characteristics.

Sex and Relationships Education (SRE)

The School provides sex education in the basic curriculum for all pupils, in which pupils are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life. In accordance with the law, the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all pupils, and are taught in science lessons; parents may withdraw their children from any other part of the sex education delivered via the PSHEE/LWE programme in lessons or tutorials, without giving reasons.

Spiritual education:

Religious education is provided in Years 1–9. All Senior School pupils attend chapel on Wednesday morning and Friday evening. Monday Assembly also has a spiritual and moral dimension, including a hymn and prayers. Worship is Church of England in character but chapel is intended to include pupils of any faith or none. House assemblies should also promote wider social, moral and cultural development. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious education and chapel. EYFS and Chorister School pupils (FS2 – Year 6) attend assemblies with both religious and moral themes.

Aim 5: The School will provide access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner, enables pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential . [Standards Paragraph (2)(1)(a)(e)]

Subjects options

All pupils are given advice on their GCSE and post-16 options in an impartial way which allows them to make informed choices. Specific guidance is available from a range of individuals within the School – subject teachers, Heads of Section, Housemasters, Tutors, etc.

Information about options is also available via the option booklets, at the sixth-form information evening, and at parents' evenings – specifically those for Year 8, 9 and 11. One-to-one individual sessions are also arranged for Year 11 for help with course choices and to ensure that any decisions made enable them to fulfil their potential. The Elite Course co-ordinator provides specific guidance for those interested in Oxbridge, veterinary and medical applications, etc.

Careers

In Chorister School and in Years 7–8 information about careers is delivered through the LWE programme and as part of the wider curriculum and co-curriculum programme. Pupils from Year 9 onwards are given individual careers guidance in an impartial and informed way by the Careers Adviser as well as through careers fairs, support with work experience etc.

Aim 6: The School will organise a programme of activities for pupils below compulsory school age, which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills. [Standards Paragraph (2)(1)(a)(f)]

Alongside the academic programme followed from EYFS to Year 11 there are a wide range of activities and societies organised in addition to the normal programme of games and timetabled activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, World Challenge, Outdoor Club, etc. Full details can found in the **Activities Handbook/School Calendar**. External trips, in the local area, in the wider

UK and abroad, are managed by the **Educational Visits Policy**. All activities are coordinated by the Director of Co-Curriculum.

Aim 7: The School will organise a programme of activities for pupils above the compulsory school age, which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills. [Standards Paragraph (2)(1)(a)(g)]

Alongside the academic programme post-16 there is a wide range of activities and societies organised in addition to the normal programme of games and timetabled activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, World Challenge, etc. Full details can found in the **Activities Handbook** as well as the **Sixth Form Courses Booklet**. External trips, both within the UK and abroad, are managed by the **Educational Visits Policy**.

Aim 8: The School will ensure that pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress. [Standards Paragraph (2)(1)(a)(h)]

Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to maximize opportunity and choice as stated in Aims 1 and 2. In addition, all departments have an obligation to ensure all pupils learn and make progress relative to their abilities. For further detail see the Departmental Handbooks.

Tracking of Progress

All pupils are effectively tracked in relation to their ability through a range of measures. All pupils entering the school are required to take entrance papers for the purpose of assessment that could include Mathematics, English, Verbal and Non-Verbal reasoning. For further details see the **Foundation Admissions Policy**.

Chorister School and EYFS

At Chorister School, we use Testbase Standardised Assessments to provide formal academic testing and to monitor pupil progress. For children in Years 1 to 6, these assessments are conducted during the Summer Term, evaluating their skills in English and Mathematics. Additionally, children in Years 3 to 6 are also assessed in Science. Regular formative assessments take place throughout the year and all progress is routinely fed back to parents through reports, parents' evenings, and individual feedback by teachers or Form Tutors. Our assessments help us to compare our school's overall academic profile against national benchmarks and inform the development of targeted strategies for each child's improvement. For more detailed information, please refer to our Assessment and Reporting Policy and Tracking Policy.

Durham School

At Durham School baseline testing takes place in Years 7 and 9 [Midyis], Year 10 [Yellis] and Year 12 [Alis] from which Minimum Expected Grades [MEG] are calculated for Years 9–13. Regular assessment, which generates a Current Attainment Level [CAL], ensures that progress is tracked

against the MEG. Internal exams in the summer [Years 7–10, 12] and mocks in January [Year 11] and February [Year 13] also support tracking of progress. All progress is regularly fed back to parents through reports, parents' evenings and individual feedback by either Housemasters or Heads of Section. Those underperforming are targeted via intervention strategies. External examination results are fully analysed by both departments and the Deputy Head [Academic] and reported on to the Education Committee in their November meeting. A range of measures are analysed based on value added– ability band, gender, ethnicity, gifted and talented, learning support etc. For further detailed information see the **Assessment and Reporting Policy**.

English as an Additional Language:

In all subjects the principal language of instruction is English. The school seeks to meet the needs of pupils whose principal language is not English with its **EAL Policy**.

Disability:

Special measures will be taken by the Deputy Head [Academic], Head of Learning Support and Finance Office to ensure that any pupil with a disability has access to all parts of the curriculum.

Learning Support:

The School accepts pupils with learning difficulties including those with an EHC plans and has a specialist Learning Support department for this purpose. The procedures for identifying pupils with special needs and methods of supporting and evaluating them are contained in the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy** which acts in compliance with the 2014 *SEN and Disability Code of Practice*.

More able pupils:

Pupils recognized as more able are identified on a school wide level using a range of data indicators. Departments also identify those who are more able in their subject area. Departments provide a range of activities both within and outside lessons. Most provision is aimed at all pupils. On very rare occasions pupils might be entered early for examinations. Procedures for identifying more able pupils and provision for them are outlined in the **More Able Pupils Policy**.

Aim 9: The School will ensure that pupils have effective preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British Society. [Standards Paragraph (2)(1)(a)(i)]

Whole School Life

The Foundation, in all its daily activities, actively encourages its pupils to make a positive contribution to society and seeks to foster a respect for the fundamental values of British Society such as respect for democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, through a range of initiatives and activities. The School will not accept or tolerate any forms of discrimination (paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in Part 2, Chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010) or forms of political indoctrination and will challenge opinions or behaviours that are contrary to fundamental British values. Further details can found in the **Equality and Diversity Policy**.

Equality and Diversity:

The Foundation does not discriminate on any grounds and seeks to provide equality of opportunity for all pupils. The Foundation aims to allow social development including opportunities for interaction with opposite sex, preparation for adult life, availability to pupils of real and meaningful choice and to avoid stereotyping of any kind through curriculum design. The social and cultural mores of the school should be accessible to all, and all should have equal access to academic options and co-curricular activities.

There should be no impact on the quality of education which pupils would receive but for their respective sex, racial background or religion or other protected characteristics.

Classroom Teaching:

Teachers should promote collaborative working and self-reflection through their normal classroom teaching to promote adult skills. Good behaviour and courtesy should be actively promoted at all times. Teachers should also take every opportunity to take advantage of topics or approaches to learning that have potential for promoting pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural awareness [SMSC].

Spiritual education:

Religious education is compulsory in Years 7–9. All pupils attend chapel on Monday and Wednesday morning and Friday evening. House assemblies should also promote wider social, moral and cultural development. Worship is Church of England in character but chapel is intended to include pupils of any faith or none. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious education and chapel.

Careers

In Years 7–8 information about careers is delivered through the LWE programme and as part of the wider curriculum and co-curriculum programme. Pupils from Year 9 onwards are given individual careers guidance in an impartial and informed way by the Careers Adviser as well as through careers fairs, support with work experience etc. Further details can be found in the **Careers Handbook**.

Citizenship:

Citizenship and economic well-being lessons are part of the PSHEE programme. Further details can be found in the **LWE schemes of work**. Other aspects of citizenship are supported through the co-curricular programme.

Activities:

Many of the timetabled, lunch and afternoon school activities promote responsibility and active citizenship. Games and PE also contribute to physical well-being and provide opportunities for responsibility.

House and Tutor time:

The House and tutor system foster responsibility and wider citizenship and are used to promote SMSC

3. Procedure

Full details on all procedures can be found in the individual policies cited above in italics.

4. Responsibilities

Responsibility for the overall Curriculum Policy lies with the Deputy Head [Academic] and the Head of Chorister School. Specific policies named in this policy, and their implementation lie, with the relevant head of department/manager as below:

Principal	Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation Mission
Chorister School Deputy Head [Academic]	Chorister School Curriculum Statement
Deputy Head [Academic]:	Curriculum Policy [Foundation] Curriculum Plan Year 7–13 Assessment and Reporting Policy [Foundation] Homework and Marking Policy [Foundation] Curriculum Guidance Booklets More Able Pupils Policy [Foundation] Durham School Teaching Standards [Foundation] Appraisal Policy [Foundation] Literacy Policy Admissions Policy [Foundation] Tracking Policy Setting and Banding Policy
Deputy Head [Pastoral]	Behaviour Policy School Rules Inclusion Policy
Head of EAL	EAL Policy & Handbook
Head of Learning Support	Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy Handbook [Foundation]
Head of Sixth Form/Careers Adviser	Careers Handbook
Head of LWE	LWE schemes of work
Director of Co-Curriculum	Activities Handbook Educational Visits Policy

Heads of Department

Subject schemes of work, departmental handbooks, marking and assessment policy etc.

All staff have a responsibility to understand and act on the policies and procedures as listed above to ensure full compliance with the *Curriculum Policy* and the *Independent School Standards* which underpins it.

5. Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with

Curriculum Plan
Chorister School Curriculum Statement
Assessment and Reporting Policy [Foundation]
Homework and Marking Policy [Foundation]
Curriculum Guidance Booklets
More Able Pupils Policy [Foundation]
Durham School Teaching Standards [Foundation]
Appraisal Policy [Foundation]
Literacy Policy
Admissions Policy [Foundation]
Tracking Policy
Setting and Banding Policy
Careers Policy
Relationships Sex Education Policy

5. Oversight

The Deputy Head [Academic] is line managed by the Principal and will meet with him/her on a regular basis to discuss curriculum policy.

Oversight of the Curriculum Policy is undertaken by the Governors' Education Committee. The policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Head [Academic].

Policy last reviewed:

19/10/2017
01/11/2018
11/11/2019
19/11/2020
26/11/21
24/11/22
23/11/23
21/11/24

02/10/25

Mr A Pearson, Deputy Head [Academic]