

Curriculum Intent

Dorothy Stringer is a vibrant and happy community where it is safe to learn and where everyone is encouraged to excel both inside and outside the classroom. We believe learning should be stimulating and exciting. We encourage curiosity in our students and want everyone to develop a positive attitude to learning within an inclusive and diverse community. We aim to develop young people who are responsible and independent and are able to achieve their potential and develop as individuals.

Our staff are curriculum specialists who actively communicate a passion for their subjects. Time and care has been taken by curriculum teams to craft Schemes of Learning that consider varied experiences of learners from KS2 feeder schools and build on this platform of knowledge and skills through KS3 and KS4, ensuring our students are both ready to continue learning when they leave us and to be fully prepared to achieve their potential in national exams and qualifications.

At Dorothy Stringer School, we believe that improving literacy and numeracy is the key to improving student outcomes and narrowing the disadvantage gap; it enables students to access to the curriculum, to read for information and pleasure, and to express themselves articulately and effectively. Levels of communication have a major influence on students' self-esteem and their ability to become independent, life-long learners. Improving literacy is not just about academic success; it enables students to develop the skills they will need in their adult lives: creativity, ambition, resilience, self-confidence and the ability to work with others. Literate students can engage with texts and ideas that challenge preconceptions and develop understanding beyond the personal and immediate; they can use talk and writing as a means of exploring a range of views and perspectives on the world. To that end all of our teachers are teachers of literacy.

In the 21st century any definition of literacy must be a fluid and expanding one; the landscape of communication is changing and we must ensure our students are fluent in both the traditional literacies of oracy and the written word whilst considering the implications of the new visual and digital literacies of media and technology. To participate fully in our society and its culture means to be as confident in the use and understanding of digital technologies as of the printed word.

We acknowledge that different students often learn at a different pace and that outside influences and SEND can impact on how and what they achieve in school. To that end our programme of interventions are intended to help students make progress towards their targets and expected outcomes:

- Our specialist-type interventions include literacy, autistic spectrum condition, speech and language and SEMH interventions. These are evidence-based and informed by national best-practice guidelines and follow a cycle of 'assess, plan, do, review'. Student progress against agreed measures and outcomes is reviewed to confirm progress and completion of the intervention or engagement in new provision. Additional oversight of these interventions is provided by our Educational Psychologist and other specialist outside professionals that support the school
- Curriculum-based interventions are led by specialist subject teachers and are delivered to students requiring a bespoke level of curriculum support or those that are re-integrating back to school. The success of these is both reviewed against school progress measures and qualitative outcomes such as improved attitude to learning and attendance.

Our staff have carefully considered the National Curriculum's claim that, "It is the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement." Whenever the opportunities arise, we aim to support our students to explore the cultural capital that will enhance their lives and lived experiences.

Dorothy Stringer's careers education programme provides our students with the opportunity to plan and manage their careers effectively, ensuring progression which is ambitious and aspirational. It promotes equality of opportunity, celebrates diversity and challenges stereotypes. It is designed to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks and conforms to statutory requirements.

We want all our students to be involved, to enjoy and contribute to the many opportunities that the school offers them, including a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. It is the students who involve themselves most in these opportunities that perform the best in school. To this end, we actively encourage students to involve themselves in everything the school has to offer, and run clubs fairs for students at the start of Year 7 and again in Year 8. These inclusive opportunities embrace and celebrate: participation in sport and outdoor and adventurous activities, thereby promoting healthy lifestyles; the performing and creative arts; sustainability and biodiversity activities that support our commitment to being an eco-school. We pride ourselves in providing an enriched provision within and outside the curriculum which encourages students to have aspirational goals and to expand their horizons.

KS3 (Years 7 to 9)

At KS3 our focus is on progress gained through well-constructed schemes of learning which focus on knowledge progression through carefully sequenced lessons. These are supported by teacher use of review and retrieval strategies which enable students to ensure knowledge is retained.

For students, the key measures are those of Attitude to Learning and Attendance; these are the best indicators of successful progress. Our Attitude to Learning criteria encompass learning behaviours around Respect, Responsibility, Engagement and Determination. Instilling these qualities from the start of Year 7 helps to develop independent learners.

In Year 9, students start to develop their interests with some early preferences, allowing most students to select their preferred first modern language for GCSE as well as gain a deeper experience of two practical options. The latter has resulted in an increased take-up of practical options at GCSE, with students making more informed choices. At Dorothy Stringer School the arts subjects thrive. In Science, students have a GCSE foundation year to enable students to choose between Combined Science and Triple Science for GCSE.

KS4 (Years 10 and 11)

At KS4, with the exception of higher level qualifications, options do not have entry requirements, as we believe that all students should be able to challenge themselves to study the subjects that interest them. Some students are supported to help them make choices which will allow them to succeed.

For those students who will complete Year 11 in 2023 and onwards, we have introduced a revised curriculum which allows the majority of students to study the full EBacc suite of subjects whilst maintaining two free choice options. As a school we are committed to maintaining a breadth of study and are growing the number of students who opt for the practical/creative subjects. Our Year 9 curriculum in this area has been developed to allow students to gain a solid background in two creative subjects as well as build a foundation in the language they will study to GCSE.

Curriculum Implementation

Our Curriculum

* Note that where classes are grouped by attainment, groupings are fluid and students are moved when their attainment suggests that they would be better suited to a different group.

Year 7:

Subject	Hours Per Fortnight	Classes
English	7	Mixed Attainment. 1 hour a fortnight for Reading
Maths	6	Grouped by Attainment * Includes a nurture group
Science	6	Mixed Attainment
French and Spanish	3 each	Mixed Attainment
History, Geography and RS	3 each	Mixed Attainment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)	1	Mixed Attainment
Performing Arts: Drama Music	2 2	Mixed Attainment
Creative Arts: Art Design Technology	2 2	Mixed Attainment
Computing	1	Mixed Attainment
Physical Education	4	Mixed Attainment
PSHE (personal, Social and Health Education)	2	Mixed Attainment

Year 8:

Subject	Hours Per Fortnight	Classes
English	7	Largely Mixed Attainment but separate nurture group. 1 hour a fortnight for Reading
Maths	6	Grouped by Attainment * Includes a nurture group
Science	6	Largely Mixed Attainment but separate stretch and nurture groups
French and Spanish For a small number of students French and Spanish are replaced by: Extra English Modern Language Studies Presentation and Research Skills	3 each 3 2 1	Mixed Attainment
History, Geography and RS	3 each	Mixed Attainment
Performing Arts : Drama Music	2 2	Mixed Attainment
Creative Arts : Art Design Technology	2 3	Mixed Attainment
Computing	1	Mixed Attainment
Physical Education	4	Mixed Attainment
PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education)	2	Mixed Attainment

Year 9:

Note that GCSE courses start for students in Year 9 for English, Maths, Science and Languages

Subject	Hours Per Fortnight	Classes
English	7	Largely Mixed Attainment but separate nurture group

Maths	8	Grouped by Attainment * Includes a nurture group
Science	6	Largely Mixed Attainment but separate stretch and nurture groups
Languages	5	Largely Mixed Attainment except Sets 2 and 3
Most students will study either French or Spanish Set 2 Set 3	Modern Language Studies 2, Cultural Studies 3 Extra English 5	
History, Geography and RS	3 each	Mixed Attainment
Performing and Creative Arts Students will submit preferences and will be allocated two of Art, Drama, Food Technology, Music and Product Design	4 each including a double lesson. This allows students more time to investigate two subjects to encourage uptake of the arts at KS4	Mixed Attainment
Computing	1	Mixed Attainment
Physical Education	4	In each half: 2 high attainment classes 3 mixed attainment classes 1 dance/aesthetic groups
PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education)	2	Mixed Attainment

Year 10 and 11

Subject	Hours Per Fortnight	
English	8 in Year 10 7 in Year 11	Largely Mixed Attainment but separate nurture group
Maths	7 in Year 10 8 in Year 11	Grouped by Attainment * Includes a nurture group
Science	9	Grouped by Attainment *
Students will study 4 options. For the majority of students this will be: - French or Spanish - History or Geography - 2 free options. (See Option Book) (Students who do not study a language will be offered a limited set of alternative options)	5 each	Mostly Mixed Attainment Varies by subject, dependent on the specific students taking the option
Ethical and Religious Studies	2	Mixed Attainment
Practical PE	3	For each 3 form groups, one higher attaining group and two mixed attainment groups
PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education)	1	Mixed Attainment