Ffynone House School

Curriculum policy

Approved by:	M Boulding	**Date:** 14/01/2022
Last reviewed on:	14/01/2023	
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General

Ffynone House School aims to provide all pupils with a curriculum that is broad, balanced, relevant and broadly in accordance with the English Curriculum. As an Independent school, FHS can adjust the curriculum as circumstances demand, and we have chosen not to follow the curriculum specified by the Welsh Assembly Government. Nevertheless, we aim to provide sufficient opportunity to respond to pupils' interests, aptitudes, and aspirations.

We aspire to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life. We endeavour to develop spiritual, moral, and social values alongside, and in harmony with, the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills.

Each pupil is regarded as being of equal worth, regardless of race, creed, gender, ability, or background and is entitled to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

Our aim is to give pupils the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Pupils are encouraged and challenged in academic curricular areas, as well as through extra-curricular opportunities.

We value all pupils equally and provide balanced programmes of study in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 that are broadly traditional.

We allow students returning to our sixth form to study a variety of AS / A2 subjects, always being mindful of career aspirations / university places.

We aim to provide each pupil with realistic choices in terms of courses on offer.

Pupils will have experience in the areas of:

- Linguistics – French, German, Latin
- Mathematics
- Science – Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- Humanities – Geography, History, Business Studies, Economics
- Technology – Digital Technology or Computing
- Moral, spiritual & social education through PSHE lessons, assemblies, and pastoral days
- Physical Education – Games, P.E. and adventurous activity days
- Aesthetic and creative – Art, Music, Dance, Drama, and school productions

The curriculum takes account of previous learning and pupils' readiness for new experiences. Departmental schemes of work are designed so that all pupils can learn and make progress (see Teaching and Learning policy).

Pupil progress is monitored regularly and recorded through the school reporting procedures (see Assessment, Marking, Recording and Reporting policy).

It is recognised that some pupils need additional support or a reduced curriculum to enable them to make progress in their learning (see ALN policy).

The Headteacher and Trustees regularly review the curriculum in conjunction with subject teachers to ensure it meets the continued needs of the pupils.

All departments are aware of the need to develop pupils' key skills, particularly speaking and listening, literacy, numeracy, and digital competence.

Key stage 3 - Years 7 to 9

All pupils follow a core curriculum of English, Mathematics, Science, French, German, History, Geography, Music, Art, Drama, Latin, ICT, PE and games. A PSHE curriculum is delivered with specific time dedicated on the timetable regularly throughout the year. This core curriculum provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, moral, social and spiritual, physical and creative education.

Pupils for whom English is a second language or who have a special educational need may follow an amended curriculum as their needs dictate (see ALN Policy). Those students who join the school late in Key Stage 3 may not study all the languages on offer. In this instance they will be offered an alternative curriculum.

Key stage 4 - Years 10 and 11

Six core subjects are taught in Year 10: English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Pupils express an interest in a further four optional subjects leading to a total of 10 GCSEs. Pupils do not study the Welsh Baccalaureate or Welsh language.

Optional subjects include History, Geography, Business Studies, Digital Technology, and an accelerated maths course. Languages available are German and Latin, and the creative arts: Music, Art, Drama and Dance. Our classes are small, but we require enough pupils in each subject to ensure that all will have a positive learning experience with their peers.

All students participate in Games lessons every week. Careers and PSHE are delivered during form periods and through talks by visiting speakers, in assemblies and on pastoral days.

Key stage 5 - Years 12 and 13

Pupils usually start Year 12 by studying three or four subjects, and almost always reducing to three subjects in Year 13. Subject teachers have the freedom of choice to select from either English or Welsh specifications. The decision to enter students for an AS-level qualification at the end of Year 12 rests with the teacher.

The list of subjects available includes all subjects studied at GCSE with the addition of Psychology and Economics A-level. We do not require pupils to study the Welsh Baccalaureate.

We endeavour to timetable five lessons per subject every week or sometimes six lessons if the timetable permits it. We expect our students to spend non-teaching time productively.

Independent learning skills are essential for a successful outcome and all sixth formers have timetabled lessons in study skills. Students can opt to study an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and are supported in preparing for admissions tests such as UCAT and TSA assessments for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Sciences, and Oxbridge preparation. All students have practice interviews and the opportunity to attend internships at the end of Year 12. Careers guidance is supported by senior tutors and having access to the Unifrog database.

The Hidden Curriculum

Many activities take place outside of formal lessons that are key to students' personal experience of education and their all-round development. All subject teachers are encouraged to arrange external trips and activities, and to invite visiting speakers to school that will enhance our curriculum.

Teachers make themselves available to students before and after the school day, and during break and lunchtimes to offer individual support for those with additional needs or challenging those who are more able and talented.

Enrichment Activities

As a small school, Ffynone has the luxury of being able to respond to available opportunities and in any academic year, such events include trips abroad for language tasters, Geography tours and ski trips. We are keen to maintain our close links with Swansea University including their departments of Mathematics, Engineering, Medicine, Classics, Physics and Psychology. Student trips to the University, and reciprocal visits from lecturers to Ffynone are encouraged.

Personal Development

All pupils are strongly encouraged to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities offered in school, and to engage in adventurous activities delivered by external providers across all year groups.

Older students are role models for the younger pupils and are expected to set an excellent example. Membership of the school council and mentoring younger pupils in academic, sporting or musical activities all adds to leadership experiences that are offered at Ffynone. We support student initiatives to improve either their own lives or the work of the school.

All students receive in-house First Aid training, including use of a defibrillator. Healthy lifestyles are promoted in PSHE lessons but also more practically in the provision of healthy school meals and access to the school gym and multi-gym. Senior students are encouraged to participate in regular, weekly circuit training, weight training and yoga. Extra-curricular sporting activities are made available to pupils at lunchtimes on a regular basis.

Music and Performing Arts

Drama, Music, and public speaking are central to our philosophy of encouraging all pupils to participate in one of the confidence-building arts. Peripatetic tuition is available for singing and musical instruments, along with speaking lessons leading to LAMDA qualifications. The transferrable skills learned through these activities are fundamental to good discipline, cooperation, and teamwork, which will last a lifetime.

Charitable fund-raising

Fund-raising events take place frequently throughout the year to heighten awareness of those in need, and to respond to national and world events as they arise.