



# Policy

## Curriculum

Our purpose is to teach our pupils knowledge, skills, and values to thrive and confidently contribute at Oakham School and beyond. We will provide exceptional, contemporary co-education with a global outlook, offering experiences to learn in a caring and inspiring boarding and day community.

We encourage all pupils and staff to articulate and embody our core values, which shape our curriculum. *Care* lies at the heart of everything we do. *Courage* and *contribution* are behaviours we wish to inspire, while we want pupils to seek and find *connection* in all aspects of their education and future lives.

Our strategic objective is to deliver an innovative, ambitious, and challenging education fit for the 21st Century; one that fosters a love of learning through a broad, balanced, and connected curriculum underpinned by our core values. We believe this objective is already well met with our current curriculum but will improve further as curriculum design continues.

### 1. Academic curriculum

In the **Lower School** (Lower 1, Forms 1 and 2), students study a full range of subjects, including Mathematics, English, Modern and Classical Languages, Science, Humanities, Computer Science and Creative and Performing Arts. In **Forms 1 and 2** the curriculum balance, as well as explicit delivery of ATL skills, meets the requirements of the IB MYP (notably, 50 hours per subject group per year).

The individual subject curricula are set by departments and, whilst there are broad similarities between these and the requirements for Common Entrance and the National Curriculum, there is no formal alignment. However, the curricula must tie in with Middle School work and IB MYP.

Inquiry skills are developed through the explicit use of the FOSIL (Framework Of Skills for Inquiry Learning, see link [here](#) for details), with elements of the FOSIL cycle considered either separately as appropriate, or together with the production of a research project.

Whilst **Lower 1** is not, formally, an IB MYP year, the curriculum is designed and taught in line with the MYP approach.

The **Middle School** (Forms 3, 4 and 5) curriculum is designed to be broad and balanced, and to widen students' knowledge, understanding and experiences.

In **Form 3**, students continue to study a full range of subjects. This develops their academic skills and allows them to explore their own specific interests and strengths and provides a sound basis from which they will be able to choose their GCSE courses. Alongside the core academic curriculum, students are provided with a FOSIL research skills course; additionally, the Form 3 Individual Project and the Community Project provide opportunities to work outside the classroom, to tackle problems in teams, and to develop and improve communication and leadership skills.

As part of the implementation of IB MYP, the entire Form 3 academic curriculum will include the delivery of each of the subject groups for the required time, as well as the development of ATL skills.

In **Forms 4 and 5**, students follow either the GCSE or IGCSE courses. They are required to study Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Biology, Chemistry and Physics, a Modern Foreign Language, plus a selection of optional subjects, making up ten GCSEs in total. It is possible

for students to take Dual Award Science or the three Separate Sciences at GCSE. Withdrawal from a language or a reduction in the number of optional subjects pursued may be considered based on the aptitude or total academic load of the individual student.

The available subjects ensure that students maintain a broad range of skills and subjects, whilst allowing some specialisation, in a fashion that enables their successful progression to the Upper School.

Independent learning and research skills are developed with reference to the FOSIL framework and will, as students graduate from the IB MYP in Forms 1 to 3, aim to refer to and maintain ATL skills.

In the **Upper School** (Forms 6 and 7), students may choose between the IB Diploma Programme or from a selection of standalone courses (including A-level, Pre-U and BTEC), and the range of subject choices exceeds that required by universities. The options available are reviewed annually to ensure that this remains the case. The provision of academic enhancement activities, such as Extended Projects and other department-based opportunities, are reviewed regularly. This includes provision for elite students aiming for Oxbridge or other competitive institutions or courses.

Detailed curricula for all academic courses, are the responsibility of the Head of Department. The different needs of a diverse cohort of pupil are met by employing effective contemporary pedagogies, enabling all pupils to be as academically successful as possible.

We are mindful not to undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We consider this in our academic, pastoral, and co-curricular activities, and are aware of where in pupil's learning these values might be challenged, and how to address them with sensitivity and clarity.

### 1.1. Form 4/5 options

Students select one option from each of the following option blocks:

<b>Block A</b>	French, German, Spanish
<b>Block B</b>	Geography, History, Latin, Religion and Philosophy, Triple Science
<b>Block C</b>	French, History, French, Religion and Philosophy
<b>Block D</b>	Art (Painting and Mixed Media), Art (3D Design), Art (Textiles), Design and Technology, Drama, Music, Computer Science, Latin, Greek and Latin ('Gratin'), Physical Education (IGCSE), Triple Science
<b>Block E</b>	Art (Painting and Mixed Media), Art (Textiles), Design and Technology, Drama, Music, Citizenship, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Geography, History, Physical Education (GCSE)

## 1.2. IB Diploma options

Subjects are organized according to the IB Diploma subject groups. IB students should select one subject from each of the six columns, choosing 3 subjects at Higher Level (HL) and 3 at Standard Level (SL). These subjects will be studied for the duration of the two-year course.

Subjects in the same vertical column are taught at the same time, hence only one subject from each column can be chosen

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Language A	Language (Other)	Individuals & Societies	Sciences	Mathematics	Arts/ Electives
English A Literature HL/SL	German A Language & Literature HL	Business Management HL	Biology HL/SL	Mathematics: Analysis & Approaches (AA) HL/SL	Chemistry HL
		Economics HL/SL	Chemistry SL		Economics HL/SL
	French B HL/SL	Geography HL/SL	Computer Science SL	Mathematics: Applications & Interpretations (AI) SL	French B HL
		Global Politics HL/SL	Design Technology HL/SL		Geography HL/SL
	German B HL/SL	History HL/SL	Environmental Systems & Societies SL		History HL/SL
		Philosophy HL/SL			Italian <i>ab initio</i> SL
	Spanish B HL/SL	Psychology HL/SL	Physics HL/SL		Latin* HL/SL
		Italian <i>ab initio</i> SL			Sports, Exercise & Health Science HL
	Spanish <i>ab initio</i> SL			Visual Arts HL/SL	
	Classical Greek* HL/SL				

Notes: For timetable reasons, selecting HL Mathematics with HL English is not possible.

\* Classical Greek HL/SL and \*Latin HL/SL has some flexibility in placement (Group 6 or Group 2 dependent on numbers)

+Theatre may only be offered if a sufficient number of students choose it.

All students must choose Mathematics at either HL or SL. For SL, common core courses will run before students decide on one of two options: Applications & Interpretation (AI) or Analysis & Approaches (AA). HL students will follow the Analysis and Approaches (AA) course.

**German students** wishing to comply with KMK regulations should confirm with their local authority, but they will need to take Mathematics OR Bio/Chem/Phys at HL. They should take German A Lang & Lit HL and English A Lit SL at Oakham, but do not need to take another language (though possible). They may choose either option of Maths at SL provided that there is a science at HL and university options have been checked. All subjects listed above in Group 3 are accepted.

### 1.3. A-level/Pre-U/BTEC Options

Students should generally choose four subjects, no more than one subject from each column below.

A	B	C	D	E
Business	Biology	Biology	Biology	Art & Design
Chemistry	Business	Business	Chemistry	Business
Design & Technology	Critical & Contextual Studies	Classical Civilisation	Economics	Design & Technology
Economics	Economics	Computer Science	French	Economics
Geography	Maths & Further Maths+	English Literature	Latin*	English Literature
German	History	French	Maths & Further Maths+	Geography
Classical Greek*	Mathematics	Geography	History	Music
Physics	Physical Education	History	Mathematics	Physics
Politics	Politics	Mathematics	Psychology	Politics
Psychology	Psychology	Philosophy		
Spanish	Religion and Philosophy	Psychology		
Drama and Theatre	Spanish	Physical Education		
	BTEC Sport and Exercise Science^	BTEC Sport and Exercise Science^	BTEC Business Management~	

+If pupils wish to study **A-level Further Mathematics**, they select 'Maths and Further Maths' in both columns B and D.

^BTEC Sport and Exercise Science must be selected in both columns B and C, as it is the equivalent to two A-level courses.

~BTEC Business Management may be chosen as the equivalent to one A-level subject.

\*Latin A level has some flexibility in placement.

## **2. Wider curricula**

Oakham aims to provide pupils with a curriculum that encourages their development through a broad range of activities and skills, envisaging one curriculum through which the range of school activities is delivered.

The wider curriculum exists to provide the pupils with a variety of challenging and fulfilling experiences, to stimulate their interests and skills - perhaps some of which they did not previously know they had - to encourage them on occasions to put their energies to the service of others, and to develop aptitudes of teamwork and leadership. Sport, Music, Drama and Activities all have priority time within the school day to prevent pupils from being forced down a particular path too early.

As pupils go through the school and start to develop their specialism some may need to spend more time in a particular area, this is supported through various elite programmes, great care is always taken to ensure both the short- and longer-term views are taken to support pupils in their aspirations.

## **3. PSHE including RSE and Tutorial programme**

The aim of our pastoral care is to provide a supportive, safe, and challenging environment for every pupil. Houses are the focal point of pastoral support, and should be places in which pupils feel safe, confident, and happy.

Virtually all members of staff are responsible for a tutor group, and it is through these meetings that the PSHE program is primarily delivered.

Tutor groups are arranged by year group by house to help ensure appropriate topics are being covered at the right time for each pupil, with PSHE including RSE delivered in the Lower School and Form 3 through Form Time/Perspectives, delivered by trained teachers. There are a range of external specialist speakers to support the tutorial program and days off-timetable allow deeper exploration in topics such as e-Safety, adolescent mental health, developing resilience and the understanding of others, with particular regard to protected characteristics.

The PSHE including RSE policy gives greater details on this topic.

## **4. Careers**

The school's Careers provision, described in more detail in the Careers Education policy, ensures that impartial and broad advice and information is given to all students, in order that they have the best possible opportunity to access post-school options; this provision is also available to students after they have left the school.

## **5. SAEN**

The provision for students with EAL or Learning Support needs is detailed in the Inclusion policy and in the Language policy and requires that all students are facilitated to access the curriculum and its delivery at all levels.

## **6. Scholarship**

The provision for our most able and enthusiastic students occurs formally and/or informally across all year groups, as scholarship – the curiosity to ask questions, the insight and inspiration to think broadly, and the drive to seek answers - is encouraged for all.

Formally, academic scholars' seminars run throughout the academic year, challenging each year group to consider off-syllabus questions, and learn to critically challenge their own ideas, as well as others.

Informally, there is a wider range of opportunities for pupils who want to enhance their learning and engage with subjects outside of the classroom. These include external competitions and preparation for competitive universities (such as Oxbridge) or competitive courses (such as medicine and related courses, and for engineering).

## **7. ICT**

The School uses Microsoft Teams as our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) across all year groups, allowing pupils and staff ready access from any device.

All homework details are shared via Teams Assignments, helping pupils to manage their workflow effectively. Live online teaching and learning, as well as Self-Managed Learning lessons (SMLs) – video recordings from teachers using Microsoft Teams in combination with other programmes such as Microsoft OneNote, Microsoft Forms, or other apps – were developed as part of our response to Covid, enabling pupils to access bespoke lessons from their class teacher throughout lockdowns. Microsoft Teams continues to play a central role in delivering ‘blended’ learning, where pupils absent due to Covid-related issues can dial into live classroom lessons, with teachers co-teaching both as required.

Software packages are used across the School to help pupils access high-quality resources and to develop their academic knowledge and skills, and pupils use Microsoft Office to prepare written documents or presentations.

## **8. Future curriculum development**

Across the School, there will be an increased focus on the explicit teaching of knowledge, skills and values, and the development of healthy habits. We are mindful of the growing importance of quality of grades versus quantity of grades, as well as the benefits of providing pragmatic choices for pupils in the number of subjects studied. It is hoped that this combination should lead to greater academic progress by pupils, while also promoting their emotional and physical development.

These changes will encompass academic, pastoral, and co-curricular learning, and are designed with purpose to enable positive outcomes for all pupils; a holistic approach mindful of promoting pupil mental health and wellbeing throughout, enabled through a connected curriculum.

The Lower School programme of MYP (Form 1 and 2, continuing into Middle School Form 3) will continue to embed, following successful verification in Summer 2021 of the first two years of the course. This foundational course will prepare pupils for future studies, while also challenging the School and teachers to evolve existing Middle and Upper School programmes.

The Middle School programme (Form 4 and 5) will evolve to meet the evolving academic and emotional needs of 14-16 year olds. There will be increased choice and a tailored offering with distinct levels of support and challenge, as we strive to ensure pupils are best prepared for further learning in school, university, and work. This will be enabled by incorporating core MYP values, bridging Lower School and Upper School experiences, and embracing the best of the IB philosophy.

The Upper School programme (Form 6 and 7) will continue to offer two complementary academic pathways (A levels/BTEC and IB DP), with changes to the A level/BTEC pathway to increase value and pupil interest, without impacting IB DP attractiveness.

In addition to curriculum redesign, teacher expertise will be developed and used in the most effective manner possible, as schemes of work evolve through teamwork, and a focus on pedagogical development continues, aligned with greater instruction for staff and pupils on contemporary evidence into how learning happens. This will be underpinned by the effective use of evolving technologies, as learning in lessons, and outside, is expertly facilitated through appropriate application of hardware and software.

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