

WEST HATCH HIGH SCHOOL



THE BEST THAT I CAN BE

Curriculum Policy

Policy reviewed

October 2025

Signed
Headteacher

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'A. Schaefer.', followed by a large checkmark.

West Hatch School Vision

We are a **family** dedicated to all our students excelling **academically** and **personally** in our school and beyond by seizing the opportunities we provide.

We **unlock potential** for all to thrive and **open doors** for all to achieve.

Purpose And Scope Of The Curriculum And This Policy

The Governors, Headteacher, teachers, pupils, parents and all staff with responsibility for learning at West Hatch believe that our curriculum aims:

To develop **confident, resilient** and **ambitious** learners who are well prepared for their futures **academically** and **personally**.

We recognise our considerable responsibility in ensuring that every individual is offered the opportunity, challenge and encouragement to achieve these outcomes through our curriculum offer. The purpose of our Curriculum Policy is to define what is meant by our aim and to ensure that all of those who are responsible for the curriculum organise teaching and learning to achieve this.

All young people are entitled to a broad, ambitious school curriculum, but also one that is relevant to their learning needs. At West Hatch we place an emphasis on a progressive curriculum, focused on the learner and aimed to raise standards. We believe that students are more empowered to achieve within a curriculum model that emphasises specialist teaching and learning in discrete subject areas so our curriculum is mainly organised this way. Whilst preparing our students for higher education and the world of work is important, we see our curriculum as the totality of experiences which we plan for our students through their time in education; so our curriculum also includes elements that educate our young people towards a safe, rich and fulfilling life, and offers opportunities for them to develop through a diverse range of extra-curricular activities.

Key Principles Underpinning The Curriculum

We believe in a curriculum which:

- Is broad and inspires our pupils to learn,
- Promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development,
- Promotes and develops their functional skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT as well as their personal, learning and thinking skills in preparing them to be successful in their future education and at work,
- Prepares pupils positively for life in modern Britain and promotes fundamental British values,
- Offers pupils the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills in all aspects of their education across a broad range of subject areas and to deepen this knowledge progressively through electives as they develop their personal areas of interest.
- Develops pupils knowledge, skills and understanding through specific subject disciplines,
- Recognises & celebrates their own achievements,
- Motivates, challenges & raises students expectations; instilling in them a positive disposition to learning and a commitment to learn,
- Provide subject choices that support pupils' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards their interests and achieving their goals,
- Spans from 11 to 18 years of age and offers progression at each stage.

Through this curriculum, we encourage and develop our students to be:

- Thoughtful, responsible citizens, ready to contribute positively to their community
- Good listeners and communicators
- Flexible and able to respond to new opportunities
- Independent thinkers and lifelong learners
- Honest, reliable and dependable
- Able to accept and handle responsibility
- Able to work with minimum supervision
- Able to solve personal and work problems themselves

Legislation

This Policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of Governing Boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this Policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Governing Body will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for developing and setting curriculum priorities.
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, Maths, and Science, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement.
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN).
- All courses provided for pupils below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, give wide support towards students' future careers and choices.
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements.
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- Pupils are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

Headteacher

The Headteacher through the Deputy Head is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives, which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met.

- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Governing Body.
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN.
- The Headteacher, along with the senior team, anticipates curriculum needs and staffing requirements to inform about teacher recruitment and retention and recruits appropriate staff to meet the needs of the curriculum.

Other Leaders

Subject leaders and their line managers are responsible for developing an engaging and challenging curriculum for students.

At KS3, they are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum is at least as broad and challenging as the National Curriculum.

Subject leaders are responsible for ensuring teachers and support staff deliver the curriculum to the highest standards.

Subject leaders are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum is adapted sufficiently so that students can access knowledge and skills and are challenged and supported in doing so

Subject leaders have responsibility for advising the Headteacher about resources and time requirements for subjects and the deployment of staff

Curriculum Design and Content

Our curriculum invests in a wide set of academic disciplines which provides a broad platform in the first years of learning. It is indicative of the importance that we place on the development of the whole student, academically, physically and personally. This broad curriculum in Years 7 & 8 closely follows the National Curriculum, with electives from Year 9 to facilitate students building academic confidence, expressing themselves and excelling as their interests. Supported by a varied choice of extracurricular and enrichment activities, students have that all-important wide platform to step off in any direction from.

Transparency in our learning programmes is a key element that supports student progress. Our curriculum is organised to allow students to identify core knowledge and skills to be learned, retained and recalled over time. In Key Stages 3 and 4 we make this core knowledge transparent through our key objectives and ensure that it is easily accessible to the students, teachers and parents through the web-based Dynamic Progress Reporting platform (DPR).

We carefully identify components of learning and sequence these across different years, which leads to students being able to access composite knowledge later on in their learning journey.

Important knowledge and skills which we call 'key learning objectives' (KOs) is built on progressively, with increased difficulty, throughout the school years. Through the DPR platform we offer a holistic approach to curriculum design by integrating learning, assessment, feedback and resources into cycles of learning based on 10 key objectives in each year of KS3 and KS4. Our curriculum places emphasis on the importance of independent learning skills and supports students' independence with teacher expertise and through our use of DPR.

Teachers are encouraged to adapt learning plans to match students progress based on pathways that students are placed into. These pathways are flexible in that they are initially based on a student's starting point but students who can make faster than usual progress will be placed in higher pathways as this progress is secured. Learning can also be personalised a truly personalised curriculum. This is done through differentiated 'pathways' for different groups of learners who join the school with different KS2 outcomes.

Learning can be further personalised for individual students by their class teachers through the DPR 'Personalised Key Objectives' tab.

We support students with essential skills for memory recall. We help students develop a knowledge and understanding of the curriculum by:

- explicitly identifying knowledge and facts students need to be able to recall.
- providing homework linked to memory-based knowledge and tracking the progress of this through the DPR memory tab.
- deliberately revisiting previously taught key learning objectives, for example through lesson starters called do now activities.
- providing frequent low stakes tests for students to demonstrate their ability to recall.

We create independent learners who can self-regulate. One of the ways we do this is through the DPR 'resources portal' where teachers upload resources linked to a specific KO. These resources can be categorised as 'learning' or 'testing' resources, encouraging students to take ownership of their learning by embracing the processes of 'diagnosis, therapy and testing'. This is a process all student are encouraged to engage with to self-diagnose their misconceptions, re-visit and learn the affected components of learning and finally re-assess their understanding until they can demonstrate competency.

We develop behaviour and attitudes reflective of responsible citizens, able to read, write and communicate well, to allow them to play a positive role in British life. For example, our PSEC programme develops cultural capital in all our students. Culture days, drop-down days, assemblies, competitions, etc. alongside school trips and visits, broadens our students' experience beyond their programme of study. Financial Literacy lessons are a relatively unique aspect of our curriculum but we believe it is a vital aspect of student's wider development. We support students with programmes to support those with low reading ages to catch up so that they can access as much of the curriculum as possible.

Year 7 and 8

Students study a wide range of academic and creative subjects, which are designed to give them a comprehensive range of experiences and a broad base of knowledge, and skills that they develop with specialist teachers in each subject (see below). In Year 7 & 8 students are placed into one of three groups – WEST, HATCH or CHIGWELL. In most cases there are 3 classes in each of these groups. One of these classes will comprise of the most able students and all other classes are mixed ability. Only Mathematics sets all groups according to ability. We also have an accelerated reader programme in place to support students that join us from primary school with a low reading age.

The 7 & 8 curriculum model is set out below:

English	Maths	Science	MFL	Hist	Geog	Tech	PE	Art	RS	Music	Drama	Computing	PSEC
3hrs Per week	3hrs Per week	3hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	1hr Per week	1hr Per week	1hr Per week	1hr Per week	1hr Per week	1hr Per week

Year 9

Students will study a core curriculum of English, Maths and Science in more depth. In addition, they will begin to make some important option choices about which subjects they enjoy learning best and study these over different timescales. We arrange the curriculum this way to provide students with a focus in each year and allow them to build their academic confidence over a three year period whilst continuing to provide a broad range of choice for them. Focussing the

curriculum this way prevents limiting students' academic progress in subjects they find challenging, places emphasis on supporting all students to access the EBACC qualification and also introduces them to deeper learning in particular subjects they enjoy – e.g. students can study engineering for a year to extend their experience of product design in Years 7 & 8.

In the aftermath of the COVID pandemic, we are still seeing low attendance, aspiration and confidence in many of our students. This is proving to have a detrimental effect on students' futures if left unaddressed. Students taking ownership over their learning as they mature academically is key to combatting this as it helps to create the right environment for independent, aspirational, engaged learners. We think it is important to sequence our curriculum so that there is both flexibility and flow throughout. By the end of Year 8, the vast majority of our students are ready and keen to place some emphasis on the parts of our optional curriculum that they are most engaged with. The EBACC suite of subjects is at the core of the school's academic curriculum and therefore in Year 9, students can establish more depth of learning by studying these subjects further. They also elect to study two out of a very wide range of subject areas they have particular interest in as they move towards their GCSE years. Apart from English Maths and Science, the optional curriculum we offer in Year 9 lasts for one year, has links to previous learning, but increases in academic rigour and enrichment. In some cases, these courses might offer some form of industrial or academic certification that students can achieve, building their confidence in their abilities before beginning GCSE's.

Using the DPR is also a part of this strategy to help students to grow in confidence and explicitly see the progress they are making over time. Along with direct and clear feedback, by adjusting each students status in the classroom/peer setting, they are supported in taking ownership of the learning.

Students will begin by developing key disciplinary skills in Year 9 in three EBACC subjects – History, Geography and Spanish/French. Alongside this they will also study Computer Science and RS as compulsory elements of the year 9 curriculum. The intention of developing disciplinary skills and knowledge in key EBACC subjects is to give students more time to mature and develop experience of these core academic subjects before choosing which to continue with when they start their GCSE's in year 10. The intention is to also support each student to gain academic confidence by experiencing learning in Year 9 through a limited number of electives which they can make from a wide choice of subjects. They also study a qualification in Financial Literacy which we feel is a key missing element of our National Curriculum but vital for students to learn about as part of their personal development.

The Year 9 curriculum model is set out below:

English	Maths	Science	PE	History	Geography	Spanish	Option 1 (for one year)	Option 2 (for one year)	Computer Science	RE	PSEC
4hrs Per week	3hrs Per week	4hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	1hr Per week	1hr Per week	1hr Per week	1hr Per week

Year 10 & 11

At the end of Year 9 most students make two level 2 option choices to study examination subjects in Years 10 and 11. They choose from a wide offer of subjects based on their levels of progress to date. This is supported with high quality careers advice led by our full-time careers advisor. Recognising the pressure that students can sometimes feel, we also have a high-quality pastoral support system, including mentoring, tailored study and a qualified counselling service where there is a need. For more information on our option choices please visit the 'options' tab under the parent's section of the website.

In Year 10, students are expected to begin full GCSE programmes of study. For the EBACC group of subjects, students will study the core subjects in more depth and the EBACC choices they made

in Year 9 will either continue or they will continue with at least one EBACC subject and make other choices. We offer a complete free choice again so students can continue to deepen their learning in the same areas of interest from year 9 or they can choose to take a completely different path at GCSE in Year 10, if their interests have moved into other areas. The single limitation we make is that students who wish to study Economics must be studying for the higher GCSE mathematics qualification. Foundation students historically have struggled to access this course due to the more challenging mathematics content of Economics.

The Year 10 and 11 curriculum model is set out below:

Year 10

English	Maths	Science	PE	EBACC Choice	Free Option Choice	Free Option Choice	PSEC	Financial Literacy
5hrs Per week	4hrs Per week	6hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	1hr Per week	1hr Per week

Year 11

English	Maths	Science	PE	EBACC Choice	Free Option Choice (cont.)	Free Option Choice (cont.)	PSEC
5hrs Per week	5hrs Per week	6hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	2hrs Per week	1hr Per week

YEAR 12 & 13

All the way through West Hatch, our curriculum emphasises the importance of subjects as individual disciplines. Our Heads of subjects are supported and given the freedom to develop a relevant curriculum within their area of specialism. All students are more empowered to achieve within a curriculum model that emphasises specialist teaching and learning in discrete subject areas. It prioritises and facilitates the best teaching of specific vocabulary, knowledge, skills and enrichment activities over the teaching of generic skills or topics and is rooted in rigorous research. This continues into the Sixth Form where students can specialise further by opting to study at least 3 A Levels or their equivalent for two years.

In order to meet the needs of our students, at KS5 students are able to follow a number of routes; A Levels, a mixture of A Level and BTEC courses or a fully vocational programme (equivalent to 3 A Levels). Each of these courses is at Level 3 and is part of a study programme, which includes scheduled independent study, pastoral activities, PSEC days as well as any extra-curricular activities students pursue. Students who did not achieve the base standard on English or Mathematics at GCSE are also expected to follow these courses again during Year 12. Finally, students wishing to challenge themselves further have the option of taking the Extended Project. We employ an experienced KS5 team who offer full support for careers advice, university applications, and apprenticeships as well as a dedicated study centre and common room.

To see more information on our curriculum offer at Key Stage 5 please visit our website.

Our Students Future

Schools are an important influence on a child's development, and as a result both students and their parents have a right to expect that education will play its part in helping them to grow up to become competent, confident, rational and self-reliant adults who can manage their own lives and play their part in society.

The specific approach of each subject discipline also offers opportunities for students to develop life skills and learn more about the world we live in. We capture these as a set of basic platforms which we recognise as key to a student being able to thrive.

Our basic platform means providing our students with:

- the ability to read with meaning to enable access to the vast library of collected knowledge;
- introduce a basic understanding of the language of the universe (Mathematics)
- how the universe and life works (Science, Economics)
- how our physical earth works and how we impact it (Geography)
- how we struggled to become what we are (History)
- how society works (Social Sciences, Business Studies)
- how we experience existence (The Arts)
- how we should live (PSEC, RS, Ethics)
- how we use our basic tools (Technology)
- how we look after ourselves (PE & Financial Literacy)
- and those close to us (Food and textiles)

Monitoring:

Teaching, learning, assessment and feedback of the curriculum and students' progress is monitored regularly and thoroughly. Use of DPR analytics, moderation between teachers, scrutiny of books and assessments, observation, student voice, learning walks, quality of marking, assessment analysis, presentation and level of challenge are all monitored on an ongoing basis throughout each year. Each Department agrees with their line manager areas to focus on improving and target these areas for monitoring, giving regular feedback to teachers.

The Leadership Team continuously monitors the implementation of the curriculum to ensure that:

- Curriculum is appropriate, challenging and relevant whilst following guidance from the DFE and Examination bodies.
- The curriculum is delivered successfully through the monitoring and development of good and outstanding teaching and learning.
- The PMR and Capability Policies are used to ensure that standards in all areas of this Policy are implemented to a high level.
- This Policy is reviewed annually.