

CURRICULUM POLICY

The aim of the St Helen and St Katharine curriculum is to enable every student to discover and develop her own strengths in order to achieve academically and beyond the classroom while developing the self-belief and confidence that will equip her for life. We aim to provide teaching of the highest standard to support intellectual curiosity and initiative such that students approach their learning with confidence and are able to contribute positively to society.

We offer a broad range of subjects to enable students to develop their interests, abilities and ambitions as they move through the School and increasingly choose an individual programme of study. The curriculum is reviewed regularly with regard to statutory requirements, changes to the National Curriculum and qualifications and the needs of all students. The Education committee (Headmistress, Deputy Headmistress and 2 Governors) meets every term to discuss curriculum provision and development and resource requirements. Schemes of work are reviewed regularly by subject staff to ensure the subject matter and skills are age appropriate and reflect the abilities of all students enabling them to learn effectively and make progress.

Where possible teaching takes place in subject areas so specialist facilities such as the Language Learning Centre, laboratories, computer science, 3D building and art rooms are used to best enhance learning. The library supports the development of skills and knowledge of subject curriculum and enrichment and the librarians collaborate with subject staff, to support learning and teaching, and with students to develop their independent learning skills. Study periods take place in the library for Middle School students to facilitate this and the Sixth Form room and library study areas are designed so older students become familiar with a university style working environment. Learning skills in Year 7, General Studies and Critical Thinking and pre-university skills in Lower Sixth aim to further develop study skills taught across the curriculum and in the Personal Development (PD) course. PD time is embedded in the curriculum and form time enables pastoral staff to discuss academic progress and effort and other pastoral issues with students. The timetable is suspended on St. Kate's Day each year for the school community to celebrate the traditions and history of the school.

In order to challenge and stretch our students, differentiation and teaching beyond the syllabus is encouraged and expected as students move through the School. The curriculum is enhanced through student participation in a range of activities which seek to broaden and enrich the curriculum, for example subject Olympiad competitions, Crest project based work and an annual trip to the World War One battlefields. A broad and accessible range of extra-curricular activities (as detailed in the Beyond and Going Beyond programme) provide the opportunity to enrich curriculum experience, to develop leadership skills and to celebrate student success in their chosen activities.

The school day comprises seven forty minute periods and one thirty five minute period, making a total number of periods in the curriculum of 40 per week. All students in Years 5 to 9 have a full timetable. When students in Years 10 and 11 have a study period they are expected to sign in and work in the library unless they have a supervised activity elsewhere in school such as an individual music lesson.

Areas of experience:**Linguistic**

Students develop their communication skills and increase their command of language primarily through English teaching, which is the principal language of instruction. Linguistic skills are also developed in Modern Foreign Languages (with at least one of French, German, Italian (in current Years 10 and 11 only), Mandarin or Spanish studied to IGCSE and linguistic and cultural courses offered in Mandarin and Arabic for the Sixth Form), the classics (Latin is compulsory in Years 7 and 8 and, with Greek, is then offered as an option from Year 9) and the humanities subjects.

Mathematical

Many subjects contribute to the development of numeracy skills and mathematics is compulsory to IGCSE. Mathematics is taught in ability sets from Year 6 to IGCSE in order to support and stretch a range of abilities.

Scientific

Science is taught in Years 5 and 6 with biology, chemistry and physics taught as separate sciences from Year 7, it is compulsory to IGCSE. A level biology, chemistry and physics are Sixth Form options.

Technological

Students study computing in Years 5 and 6 and Computer Science (CS) in Years 7 – 9 as a discrete subject. Computer Science is taught as an optional subject at GCSE and members of the Sixth Form can also opt to study a two year coding course as part of their 'breadth and depth' options. Cross curricular ICT is supported throughout the school curriculum. A general provision of devices and software is available in the ICT rooms, Library, Lecture Theatre and via a set of iPads. Specialist provision is made though the Language Learning Centre and Music Technology Room as well as specific devices in Art/DT, Geography, the Junior Department, PE and Science. The School supports the Sixth Form to bring their own device for independent study as well as giving them dedicated resources in the Sixth Form Centre, Sixth Form Study and Sixth Form area in the Library. Pupils study design technology to Year 8 (in rotation with food studies) and it is then an option for Years 9 to 11. Subject to demand and blocking, A Level DT may be studied at Abingdon School.

Human and social

Students study history, geography and religion, philosophy and ethics (RPE) to Year 9. In addition subjects across the curriculum and the extra-curricular provision contribute to the understanding of people, their environment and the impact of human action. The curriculum reflects the nature of the world we live in and in their delivery of the curriculum teachers are expected to respect the rights of others and present balanced and appropriate views. Leadership opportunities, available in each Section of the school, in subjects and extra-curricular activities also help to develop an understanding of human and social interaction.

Physical

All students have a compulsory Physical Education curriculum to Lower Sixth with optional PE in Upper Sixth. PE is offered as an option for GCSE and A Level. An extensive range of extra-curricular PE and fixtures is offered with biology, food studies and PD contributing to the understanding of the principles of health and fitness.



Aesthetic and creative

Art (including ceramics), drama and music are studied in Years 5 to 8. In Years 7 and 8 the teaching of art is divided into art and ceramics and all students study art and ceramics for half a year. In Years 7 and 8 students study music and drama all year. They are then offered as options in Year 9 when students are required to study at least one of art, ceramics, drama, Design Technology (DT) or music. Art, ceramics, drama or music are then offered as options for GCSE and A Level. The aesthetic and creative timetabled curriculum is enhanced by extensive extra-curricular opportunities in art, drama and music, some offered in conjunction with Abingdon School. Food Studies and DT are also studied in Year 6. In Years 7 and 8 Food Studies and DT are studied in rotation. DT may then be chosen for GCSE.

The curriculum also offers:

Subject matter appropriate for the ages, and needs aptitudes of students, including those with an Education Health Care Plan

The curriculum is designed to be accessible for all students who meet the criteria for admission, in order to foster effective learning, self-belief and confidence. The curriculum is designed to be broad and balanced in Years 5 to 9 and is informed by the National Curriculum in outline while not being bound by it. In Years 10 and 11 St. Helen's follows I/GCSE courses and linear A Level courses in the Sixth Form. AS mathematics and Spanish, the Extended Project Qualification and Cambridge PreU Global Perspectives are also part of our Sixth Form offer. Homework also encourages independent learning and supports students to develop the skills, confidence and motivation to study effectively on their own.

The School has a SEN policy for students with a learning difficulty or disability and students for whom English is an additional language. This adopts a graduated approach to SEN support in the form of the four part cycle: assess, plan, do, review. Disabled students will not be treated less favourably and reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities and learning difficulties. These will be agreed in consultation with specialist staff, parents and the student concerned and in relation to a student's statement or EHC plan.

The school is academically selective and many of our students fall into the category of most able. Staff are expected to meet the needs of all the students in their class through appropriate differentiation and some smaller teaching groups and setting is used to facilitate this (e.g. in mathematics and lead modern foreign language in Year 9). The Going Beyond programme and academic enrichment activities such as competitions and qualifications (e.g. Additional Mathematics in Year 11 and ARTiculation in the Sixth Form), while not the preserve of the most able, also provide additional challenge. Where a student has a significantly different level of attainment from her peers (e.g. because she is a native speaker of a foreign language) we endeavour to offer an individual curriculum more suited to her needs.

Students acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills

The development of these skills is an integral part of the formal curriculum supported by collaborative learning in lessons, our academic enrichment and extracurricular provision.

Where a student has an Education Health Care Plan (EHC) or a statement, education which fulfils the requirements of their EHC or statement

Provision for students with an Education Health Care Plan (EHC), or statement, will include an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and will require involvement of the LEA, parents and the child or young person. The IEP/EHC plan will record progress and support; ensure that procedures take account of students' needs and inform curriculum provision. The Learning Support Co-ordinator will inform staff who plan, teach, assess and monitor progress with regard to the IEP/EHC plan content as appropriate to ensure students make 'good' progress according to their ability. The IEP/EHC plan will be kept securely so that unauthorised persons do not have access to it. It will be reviewed regularly (at least once a year) and the school will



co-operate with the LEA and other parties as required. It is the school's ethos that all students develop the values, skills and behaviours needed to get on in life. All students will receive careers advice to help choose GCSE and post-16 courses.

Personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education which reflects the school's aims and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010

Personal Development (PD) at St. Helen's reflects the school's aims and ethos and contributes to the development of each student as detailed in the PD and General Studies programme (and PD and Equal Opportunities for Pupils policies). Years 5 and 6 PD scheme of work and delivery is monitored by the Head of the Junior Department. The Head of PD is responsible for the schemes of work and monitoring the effectiveness of the timetabled single lesson for Years 7 to 11. PD is delivered in tutor group lessons by form tutors, year group lectures by specialist speakers and individual discussions with students and their tutor, support tutor and other pastoral staff as appropriate. The Sixth Form have a timetabled double General Studies lesson, this is a non-examined course with a varied programme including, for Lower Sixth, a critical thinking course and a programme of life skills.

Opportunities for teaching children how to keep safe

PD contributes to the education of students' awareness of how to adjust their behaviour in order to reduce risks including the safe use of electronic equipment and access to the internet.

Accurate, up-to-date careers guidance for pupil's receiving secondary education

Careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) at St. Helen's has a designated Head of Department, specialist staff and a subject area within the school library. The department provides impartial and up-to-date careers guidance to enable each individual student to make informed decisions about their future education and help encourage them to fulfil their potential. Careers education begins in Year 8 and is carried through to Upper Sixth, the curriculum links to the National Framework for CIAG and the programme is delivered through PD and General Studies. Students are supported to find appropriate work experience placements and Year 11 students are encouraged to complete at least one week. All students are interviewed individually by a member of the Careers and Higher Education team in Year 11 and Lower Sixth and there is a Higher Education evening for Sixth Form students and parents. Morrisby psychometric testing and a follow up interview with a member of the careers department is offered to students. A careers convention is held annually and hosted with 2 other local independent schools. Additionally an outreach event is held annually with a different focus each year.

Where the school has students above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs

St. Helen's offers a broad range of courses as appropriate to the ability and interests of the students and the timetable is written each year around individual student choices. Subjects are offered which best prepare students for university application and study, examination success and for this age group in particular to foster a positive approach to life-long learning and the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life in modern British society. Subject staff are expected to enrich their courses beyond the examination syllabus and foster independent learning skills. The Sixth Form curriculum is further enriched with the breadth and depth options, skills building and ethos and leadership opportunities.



All students have the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and make good progress

All students are supported to learn and make good progress through the formal academic curriculum and our extracurricular activities beyond their timetabled lessons. Student progress is measured in relation to external baseline assessments, GLProgress tests in Years 5 and 6, MIDYIS in Year 7 and ALIS in Lower Sixth and internal whole school assessments which measure attainment and effort at regular intervals in each academic year. Attainment and effort grades are shared with students and parents as well as progress and guidance comments in reports with the opportunity to discuss individual progress at parents' meetings. Whole school assessment information is available in the school management system to enable staff to monitor progress in their academic and pastoral roles particularly as Heads of Department in their subjects and as Heads of Section/Junior Department for students in their year groups. Heads of Department monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their departments, encourage the sharing of good practice and analyse examination results with a particular focus on Year 10 upwards.

Effective preparation of students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern British society

The curriculum and extracurricular programme at St. Helen's is focused on helping to effectively prepare students for adult life and the nature of the world we live in. Their intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is ensured through their academic and pastoral experiences and enhanced by assemblies, chapel services, charitable activities, exchanges and the extensive programme of concerts, productions, competitions and trips which take place each academic year. Leadership opportunities such as Form Leaders, House Leaders, Sports Captains, sacristans, School Council representatives, Young Enterprise companies, subject club and clinics leaders, Lower Sixth school responsibilities, House Captains and the prefect team also encourage students to develop their leadership qualities. Your St. Helen's is a resource for current and prospective Sixth Form students, to use to help plan their subject choices and extracurricular activities.

The curriculum and extracurricular programme encourages students to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Content in PD and General Studies complements subject specific work for example in RPE and history. Mock elections and referendums as appropriate also contribute to students' understanding of fundamental British values. Extracurricular activities for example DEMOS and MUN seek to further develop this understanding also seen in the pastoral life of the School with School Council, assemblies and chapel services. The school community also comes together for an annual Remembrance Service. The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School is not allowed (Reference: Education Act 1996). Political issues are introduced in a number of courses and extra-curricular activities and are presented in a balanced manner.

Subjects offered

The Junior Department (Years 5 and 6)

The subjects studied in the Junior Department are as follows:

Year 5

Subject	Number of lessons
English	7
Maths	7
Science	4
PE	6
MFL	2
History	2
Geography	2
Religious Studies	1
Personal Development	1
Art/DT	3
Drama	1
Music	1
Computer Science	2
Chapel	1
Singing	8.45-9.10 lesson

Year 6

Subject	Number of lessons
English	8
Maths	7
Science	4
PE	5
MFL	2
History	2
Geography	2
Religious Studies	1
Personal Development	1
Art/DT (Food in Lent term)	3
Drama	1
Music	1
Computer Science	2
Chapel	1
Singing	8.45-9.10 lesson

Currently in modern foreign languages, Year 5 and 6 students will spend half of the year studying one language, before moving on to a different language in the second half of the year. In Year 5, these languages are French and Spanish, with Year 6 studying German and Mandarin. This introduces students to the concept of studying a modern foreign language, with an emphasis on the pleasure of language acquisition.

The majority of these subjects are delivered by members of the Junior Department teaching staff. However, the PE, MFL and some of the art and DT curriculum is delivered by specialist teachers from the Senior School. This helps facilitate the transition between Year 6 and 7 and ensures the most appropriate curriculum delivery.



Year 6 mathematics is taught in two sets, while Year 6 art and DT lessons are taught in two mixed ability groups. The Head of the Junior Department has oversight of tracking academic progress across Years 5 and 6.

Years 7, 8 and 9

The aim of the curriculum in Years 7, 8 and 9 is to offer a balanced and broad experience that helps students to develop as effective learners, acquire subject understanding and knowledge for their choices for Years 9 and 10 and provide a sound preparation for I/GCSE courses. The Head of Lower School is responsible for tracking academic progress in Years 7 and 8 and the Head of Middle School has responsibility for Year 9.

Year 7	Lessons	Year 8	Lessons	Year 9	Lessons
Maths*	5	Maths*	4	Maths*	4
English	4	English	4	English	5
Science (bio chem phys)	4 (2 double lessons taught as 3 blocks, 1 for each science)	Science (bio chem phys)	4 (2 double lessons taught on rotation of 3 sciences)	Biology Chemistry Physics	6 (2 for each science)
PD	1	PD	1	PD	1
History	2	History	2	History	2
Geography	2	Geography	2	Geography	2
RPE	2	RPE	2	RPE	2
Latin	2	Latin	2	Option	See below
PE	4	PE	4	PE	4
Spanish*	3	Spanish*	3	French*	3
Learning skills	1	2 nd MFL (French, German or Mandarin)	3	2 nd MFL (German Mandarin or Spanish)	3
CS	2	CS/drama/music rotation (study all 3 all year in 2 doubles and 1 single)	5	CS	2
Drama	2			Option	See below
Music	2			Option	See below
Art and ceramics#	2	Art and ceramics#	2	Option	See below
Home Econ/DT	2 (1/2 year of each)	Home Econ/DT	2 (1/2 year of each)	Option	See below

Notes:

Maths* is taught in sets

MFL*: upon entry to the school information is collected from students regarding their past experience of Modern Foreign Languages. In year 7 and 8 students are taught in mixed ability groups for **Spanish**. Spanish is taught in sets in year 9. **French** is still taught as the first foreign language in year 9 (as Spanish moves through the curriculum as our first language). Pupils are taught in sets. **German** is taught as a second foreign language in years 8 and 9. Pupils are taught in mixed ability sets. **Mandarin** is taught as a second foreign language in year 8 and 9. Pupils are taught in a mixed ability set.



Art and ceramics# in Years 7 and 8 the teaching of art is divided into art and ceramics. All students study art for the first half of the year and ceramics for the second half or the other way around.

Year 9 option block of 6 lessons (3 subjects of 2 lessons each).

This ensures all students have a creative subject they will study all year and be able to choose both Latin and Greek. With the exception of Latin and Greek students may still choose these subjects for GCSE if they have not studied them in Year 9.

Students will choose one subject from each of the following blocks (and one further reserve subject):

Art	Art	Ceramics
Ceramics	Drama (2 groups)	Drama
Drama	DT	DT
H Economics	Latin (2 groups)	H Economics
DT		Greek
Music		Latin (2 groups)

Years 10 and 11

All students have the opportunity to take 10 subjects to I/ GCSE level. The core subjects include English, English Literature, mathematics, science and a modern foreign language as well as PD and PE. In addition pupils are given the option to choose a further four or occasionally five IGCSE or GCSE subjects. A small number of students opt for a joint Greek and Latin course, taught in 4 periods a week, and so study for 11 I/GCSEs. Students are encouraged to opt for subjects they have a particular interest in, have an aptitude for and may wish to study for A Level.

The most able mathematicians have the opportunity to take the Additional Mathematics qualification. Computer Science GCSE was added to our GCSE offer from September 2016. ICT in Years 10 and 11 is delivered across the curriculum and is mapped and monitored by the Head of Computer Science. All students are expected to complete the school's career education and guidance programme and are encouraged to undertake work experience in Year 11.

Year 10 and 11 students have individual study periods on their timetable which are used for independent work. Students are required to register in the library and work there. These periods are allocated a member of staff if numbers require supervision in addition to that provided by the library staff.

The choice of syllabus for each subject is made by the Head of Department who ensures the chosen course provides appropriate challenge for students and prepares them for further study. This has been a factor in the decision to move to IGCSE in English, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, (home economics for 2016-18 cohort) and the sciences. Our offer of IGCSEs in English and mathematics should be noted for any students considering transfer to a maintained sector Sixth Form which may require a GCSE qualification in these subjects. Students are not allowed to take IGCSE or GCSEs before Year 11, except in individual and exceptional circumstances, to provide the opportunity to explore each subject in detail and beyond the syllabus across the two years. The Head of Middle School is responsible for tracking the academic progress of students across Years 10 and 11.

Full details of options and the timetable for choosing them are available in a separate booklet, but the basic structure is as follows:



Core IGCSE or GCSE subjects		Number of lessons
English Language and Literature	4	(rising to 5 in Year 11)
Mathematics	5	(4 in Year 11)
Double Award Science (2 IGCSEs)	9	(taught in sets)

Core non IGCSE or GCSE subjects		Number of lessons
PD	1	
Physical Education	2	

Pupils must choose a Modern Foreign Language from Block L and 4 other subjects from Blocks A - D. Opting for Science converts Double Award into 3 separate sciences with 12 periods.

Option blocks are amended each year to give as many girls as possible their preferred choice of subjects. A **typical** I/GCSE option block is as follows:

BLOCK L	BLOCK A	BLOCK B	BLOCK C	BLOCK D
4 lessons	4 lessons	4 lessons (except ceramics, geography, history, Latin and science, and which have 3)	3 lessons	3 lessons
French	Art	Art	Computer Science	French
German	Drama	Drama	Geography	Geography
Italian	Home Economics	Geography	History	History
Spanish	DT	History	Music	Latin
	Greek/Latin	Latin	PE	
	History	Ceramics	RPE	RPE
	Separate sciences	Separate sciences		

Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13)

The Sixth Form curriculum is based around A levels and nearly all of our pupils go on to Higher Education. In 2017-2018 the L6 will be studying personalised programmes drawn from linear A levels, optional AS maths or Spanish over two years, alongside further breadth and depth options of Mandarin, Arabic and coding. . Linear A levels will be taught across the 2 Sixth Form years and examined at the end of U6. Alongside the EPQ, the Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives course is also available for study over either one or two years.

In 2017-2018 the U6 will be completing their study of a mixture of unreformed A levels and reformed A levels.

A range of 21 different subjects is offered in sets of a maximum of 16 pupils although many are taught in smaller sets. Students are encouraged to study a programme which encompasses breadth and gives them a range of options at university. Each A Level course has 7 lessons per week. A Level art and drama and theatre have 8 in recognition of the



predominantly practical nature of these subjects. Drama and theatre and government and politics are taught in mixed sets with boys from Abingdon School. AS level courses have the equivalent of 7 lessons over the 2 years.

A programme of non-examined general studies is compulsory for Sixth Form students and comprises a varied programme including, for example, personal safety (including internet safety), presentation, pre-university skills, critical thinking, specialist lectures with outside speakers and preparation for Higher Education. As part of their general studies programme, all Lower Sixth students have a series of double lessons of critical thinking. The lessons cover aspects of the critical thinking in university admissions tests and help all students develop their ability to analyse arguments critically combined with developing their understanding of how we acquire knowledge and the differences between scientific and artistic knowledge. The Upper Sixth general studies course is a lecture programme covering such issues as, for example, sexual health, drugs awareness and driving safety as well as topics of more general interest to broaden the student's understanding of the world around them.

Sixth Formers are encouraged to pursue their studies beyond the confines of their A Level subjects. They are given the opportunity to study university level courses, offered by a variety of institutions. These courses are intended either to deepen their understanding of a topic studied within their core curriculum, or to complement their examined subjects. A considerable number of courses are provided free of charge online by providers such as Coursera and FutureLearn. They are also encouraged to take part in subject related competitions, such as Oxbridge Essay Prizes and the ARTiculation Prize, which is a public speaking competition about the arts for school students. Students are offered these opportunities as educationally valuable in their own right, and as opportunities to develop their independence of thought, self-discipline, motivation and research skills.

Each student in the Sixth Form develops her own bespoke physical education programme, choosing options from a wide range of competitive, non-competitive, team, individual, indoor and outdoor activities. PE remains a timetabled lesson for all students in the Sixth Form and the emphasis is on developing fitness and sport for life with an imaginative curriculum, including activities from group cycling classes, trampolining and tennis to yoga. PE lessons are compulsory for L6 students and optional for those in the U6. In addition, large numbers of Sixth Form students continue to be involved in a wide range of extra-curricular sport and physical activity sessions each week.

The Head of Sixth Form is responsible for tracking the academic progress of students in L6 and U6.

Subjects currently offered:

Art and Design	French	Latin
Biology	Geography	Mathematics
Chemistry	German	Music
Drama and Theatre*	Greek	Physical Education
Economics*	Government and Politics *	Physics
English Literature	History	Psychology
Further mathematics		Religious Studies
		Spanish

*starred subjects indicate joint lessons with Abingdon School students either at Abingdon or St. Helen's for some or all lessons. This collaboration has enabled both schools to meet subject requests from students and so subject involvement may differ from year to year in addition to those starred subjects above.



ST HELEN &
ST KATHARINE

Relevant policies and documents:

Assemblies and School Services policy

Assessment policy

Beyond (curriculum and extra-curricular enrichment booklet)

Careers Education and Guidance policy

Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils

General Studies programme

Homework policy

ICT Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils

Most Able policy

Option booklets for Year 9, I/GCSE and information on A Level, via 'Your St. Helen's'

PD Policy

SEN policy

Sex and Relationships Education policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

Policy last reviewed Trinity 2017

Next review due Trinity 2018

Person responsible for review Deputy Head

Audience..... Staff/pupils/parents