



Senior School Policy

Curriculum Policy

Action	Policy to be reviewed annually		
	Committee	Date	Completed
Reviewed	Deputy Head (Academic)	June 2025	✓
Reported	Education	November 2025	✓
Approved	Board of Governors	December 2025	✓
Next review	Deputy Head (Academic)	June 2026	

General Ethos

The School's Curriculum Policy takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) and those who have been identified as Most Able.

Throughout Years 9 to 13, curriculum breadth and flexibility are important. This is demonstrated in the full programme of study encountered by pupils in Year 9, the breadth available in being able to study up to ten (or more) IGCSEs and GCSEs in Years 10 and 11, and the offering of A levels, BTECs and the IB Diploma in Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13).

Gresham's is a tolerant, diverse and international community in which the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are cherished and celebrated. A thorough subject audit has been conducted to ensure that these values are positively promoted throughout the curriculum.

Careers

Gresham's delivers a comprehensive programme of Careers education, aligned with the Gatsby Benchmarks and delivered by our OCR-qualified Careers Guidance Adviser, which provides pupils from Years 9-13 with information, guidance, connections and inspiration to explore future options. Two core principles sit at its heart:

- All pupils should be encouraged to understand their own skills and interests, enabling them to make informed choices;
- All pupils are given careers presentations, encouragement of work experience, together with careers 1:1 guidance and information to help them understand how their subject learning and skills work together to take them forward to pursue their potential and aspirations.

The Careers provision at Gresham's seeks an integrated approach across Years 7-13 and is guided by the 'Benchmarks' laid out in the Gatsby Report on 'Good Career Guidance', 2014. Gresham's Careers provision is laid out in full in the School's Careers Policy.

PSHE

Gresham's delivers a full programme of PSHE to Years 9-13. The core aims of this programme are:

- To provide the pupils of Gresham's School with an effective continuous, age appropriate programme of study for relationships and sex education, health education, economic wellbeing and citizenship, encompassing aspects of the world of work, with particular input from Gresham's Careers department.
- To enable pupils to develop the confidence and sense of responsibility to make healthy, safer lifestyle choices.
- To enable pupils to recognise what constitutes a healthy relationship and an unhealthy relationship and know how to access help, advice and support when needed.
- To provide effective relationships and sex education, in line with statutory guidance, ensuring young people are able to make responsible, informed and healthy decisions in their lives.
- To ensure pupils are fully informed of the dangers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco on their physical and mental wellbeing.
- To create an environment where pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of others in society.

- To foster a culture of inclusivity and acceptance of diversity where pupils have an understanding of the Protected Characteristics as detailed in The Equality Act (2010) and seek to challenge discrimination of any kind.
- To support the School's Anti-Bullying Policy in all respects.
- To foster in the individual an ability to handle uncertainty, respond to change and take responsibility for their own actions as part of a community.
- To assess and manage risk to themselves and others.

Year 9

All pupils are provided the opportunity to experience the full range of the Gresham's curriculum – linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative.

There is a taught curriculum of thirty-one 45 minute lessons per week. Pupils receive three or four prep (homework) slots per night covering all subject areas.

Pupils study in sets broadly based on ability according to entry assessment data.

Linguistic	<p>English (Language and Literature) is delivered in five lessons per week. Command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing is central to the curriculum, along with fostering a love of literature, poetry and creative writing.</p> <p>Year 9 pupils may also choose two Modern Foreign Languages from a choice of three (French, Spanish and Latin), either continuing acquisition of a known language or taking up a new language ab initio. Where pupils' first language is not English, they are also given additional lessons in English as a Second Language (ESL).</p>
Mathematical	<p>Maths is allocated four lessons per week in Year 9. All pupils have their knowledge and understanding developed in a variety of ways including practical activity, exploration and discussion.</p>
Scientific	<p>All pupils study the traditional three sciences as separate subjects in Year 9. Observation hypothesis testing, experiments and the recording of findings are key to all three sciences. Two lessons per week are allocated to each of Biology, Chemistry & Biology.</p>
Technological	<p>All pupils take part in Design Technology as part of a carousel, which explore both Resistant Materials and Graphic Products. ICT is also in this carousel.</p>

Human and Social	Human and social aspects of the curriculum are well covered in the Year 9 curriculum with all pupils receiving two lessons per week in each of Geography, History and Religious Studies.
Physical	Physical skills of control and co-ordination, tactical skills and evaluation of performance are delivered in one of the carousels. In addition, pupils receive coaching and instructing in Games three times a week (Tuesday afternoons, Thursday afternoons and Saturday afternoons). PSHE lessons (one lesson per fortnight) also touch on the basic principles of fitness and health.
Aesthetic and creative	All Year 9 pupils take part in a carousel of Art, Music and Drama. Many pupils have additional music instruction in instruments and voice. Year 9 pupils get the opportunity to show their work in an Art exhibition, perform in a drama production, and in a number of choirs, ensembles and orchestras.

Year 9 Enrichment Programme (90 minutes per week)

On a Wednesday afternoon from 2.50pm to 4.30pm pupils in Year 9 join an Outdoor Activity Programme. Split into groups pupils will be introduced to the principles of outdoor activities, leadership, the CCF and Service Programme and teamwork skills. This is to give pupils access to the Gresham's outdoor facilities and also to inspire pupils about their area around them.

Years 10 and 11

The School offers a mixed portfolio of GCSEs and IGCSEs. Departments are free to choose the qualification which best engages, stretches and stimulates the pupils in their care.

A great deal of flexibility is permitted in allowing pupils to choose the programme of subjects that best suits them and their skills and future aspirations.

Most pupils study a full programme of ten GCSE or IGCSE subjects which allows them to maintain curriculum breadth and keep future academic options as open as possible. Pupils may study fewer than ten subjects if necessitated by their individual needs. Similarly, Most Able pupils are permitted to study additional subjects 'off timetable' should they wish, chiefly Music or additional languages. Three or four prep (homework) tasks per night consolidate pupils' learning.

All pupils are expected to study a curriculum of:

- English (Language and Literature);
- Mathematics;
- All three sciences (as Separate Sciences or Dual Award);
- Options subjects which include a full range of the linguistic, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative.

Every year, a number of chiefly international pupils join the school in Year 11 to undertake a very successful one-year GCSE programme. These pupils normally study a reduced core of six or seven GCSE / IGCSE subjects.

Linguistic	<p>All pupils are instructed in English Language and Literature (CIE IGCSE, two qualifications) with four lessons per week allocated to their command of language in a variety of media. GCSE sets are created solely according to ability in English. Pupils for whom English is not a first language also study ESL, normally for two lessons per week.</p> <p>Language acquisition remains central to the ethos of Gresham's. French, Latin and Spanish are available to IGCSE or GCSE; all pupils study one language and there is the option of studying a second language too. Native speakers are also permitted to undertake GCSEs in their mother tongue.</p>
Mathematical	<p>All pupils study EdExcel IGCSE Maths on an allocation of four periods per week. Pupils are set based on their mathematical ability. Set 1 may take their IGCSE at the end of Year 10, freeing them to study Additional Maths in Year 11.</p>
Scientific	<p>All pupils who embark on the Year 10 curriculum continue their three sciences taught by specialist teachers. This ensure the foundations of scientific knowledge and principles are studied by all pupils. Pupils may choose to study the separate sciences or Dual Award science. Separate sciences are allocated three lessons per week; Dual Award sciences have two lessons per week. Pupils arriving in Year 11 are expected to study at least one Single Science.</p>
Technological	<p>Options available for study include Computer Science, Graphic Communication and 3D Design. All pupils have the opportunity to select these subjects which are allocated three lessons per week. A heavy emphasis is placed on practical work and production in these courses.</p>
Human and social	<p>The study of the human and social is encouraged at GCSE though it is not compulsory. Most pupils study one human and one social subject, though many study two or even three. All pupils are free to choose Geography, History and Religious Studies, each of which are allocated three periods a week.</p>
Physical	<p>GCSE Physical Education is available as an optional subject on three lessons a week. All pupils continue to experience coaching and performance advice with three sessions of taught Games per week.</p> <p>Compulsory lessons in PSHE continue to stress the basic principles of fitness and health.</p>
Aesthetic and creative	<p>Art, Drama and Music are all offered at GCSE with three lessons per week. Beyond this, the aesthetic and creative remain central to the ethos of the School, with many Year 10 and 11 pupils involved in artistic creativity with exhibitions of their work (such as house music), and involvement in school drama (from formal productions and house entertainments) and the rich musical life of the School (house music, choirs, ensembles, orchestras).</p>

PSHE is delivered through a carousel of specialist teachers who in one period a week tackle areas of expertise (SRE, Drug Sense, Financial Literacy, British Values, and Careers).

Sixth Form

- The Sixth Form curriculum at Gresham's aims to be as flexible as possible to allow pupils to maximise their future career options, whether at university or the world of work.
- All pupils are free to choose to study either A levels, BTECs or the IB Diploma Programme. All pupils are offered information, advice and guidance to ensure that their educational choices are sound and suitable for their aspirational goals.

A levels

- Pupils normally study three A-Level subjects. Four subjects are permissible for the most able. Pupils are free to study from any of the subjects offered, allowing either for specialism or breadth.
- Pupils are encouraged to complete Extended Essays on a subject and topic of their choice.
- Pupils are allocated 7 periods per week per A level subject over the course of two years.

BTEC

- We currently offer BTECs in Sport, Agriculture, Music Technology and Performing Arts.

IB Diploma

- Pupils normally study six IB Diploma subjects, at least three of which must be at Higher Level. In addition, all IB Diploma Pupils complete the core of Theory of Knowledge, CAS and Extended Essay.
- Pupils are allocated five periods per week for each Higher Level subject. For Standard Level subjects it is four per week in the Lower Sixth and three in the Upper Sixth.
- Pupils with learning support needs receive support based tailored to the programme they are following. Opportunities for academic enrichment are widely advertised to all pupils, including those who are AG&T.

Linguistic	A full range of languages is open to all pupils: English Literature, English Language and Literature, French, German, Latin and Spanish. Two languages are compulsory as part of the IB Diploma. For IB, languages are available as native (English, German and self-taught) alongside B and ab initio.
Mathematical	A large number of pupils take up Maths and Further Maths at A level. Mathematics is compulsory for IB Diploma pupils – at Higher Level or Standard Level.
Scientific	All three sciences are available at A level and IB Diploma. Science is compulsory for IB Diploma pupils, who must select at least one of Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Systems & Society or Physics.
Technological	Technological options available at A level include Computer Science, Graphic Communication and 3D Design. Technological options are not available to IB Diploma pupils but may be encountered as part of CAS or the Extended Essay.
Human and Social	Human and social disciplines are available to A level and IB pupils and are compulsory in Group 3 of the Diploma. Business Studies / Business and Management, Economics, Geography, History, Philosophy and Ethics and Psychology are all available.

Physical	Physical Education may be taken as an A level option. The compulsory well-being programme in the Year 12 stresses the importance the fitness, health and science. All Sixth Form pupils have three afternoons of timetable sport each week. IB Diploma pupils must reflect on physical activity as part of their CAS programme.
Aesthetic and creative	Art, Drama and Music are all offered at both A level and as part of the IB Diploma Group 6. Film Studies is also available to IB Diploma pupils in Group 6. Beyond this, the aesthetic and creative remain central to the ethos of the school, with many Sixth Form pupils involved in artistic creativity with exhibitions of their work (such as house music), and involvement in school drama (from formal productions and house entertainments) and the rich musical life of the school (house music, choirs, ensembles, orchestras). IB pupils must undertake aesthetic and creative activities and reflect upon them as part of their CAS programme.

In the Sixth Form, the curriculum extends beyond the classroom. Year 12 are engaged in a series of academic enrichment lectures which explore the widest range of curriculum areas and topics. Similarly, there are a large number of student academic societies which explore the linguistic (Auden and Modern Language Societies), Human and Social (History and Skiouros Societies) and scientific (Hodgkin Society).

PSHE is delivered through an extensive wellbeing programme delivered through staff volunteers and external professionals for Year 12 on Monday afternoons.

Careers education in Years 12 and 13 is based predominantly around key events related to university options and applications through regular exposure to careers events and talks, and through individual guidance from academic tutors and House staff.