



TAUNTON
— SCHOOL —

Curriculum Policy

Policy Lead	Deputy Head Academic
Committee	Education
Adopted by Governors	Autumn 2023
Last Amended	August 2023
Last Review	August 2023
Review schedule	Annual

1. Curricular aims

The overall aim of Taunton School is to challenge, inspire and nurture young people to succeed in a global community. Our outstanding teachers inspire pupils and instil in them a desire to learn. We provide an educational environment that adds value and maximises every pupil's academic achievement.

It is our goal to develop personable, self-confident and articulate young adults with excellent academic qualifications, who are well prepared for life in this country or abroad.

All Taunton School pupils are given a broad, balanced and relevant education, which ensures continuity and progression, and takes individual differences into account, so that all can flourish.

The Taunton School curriculum is not restricted to what goes on in the classroom.

In our curriculum we undertake:

- To realise the potential within each pupil and to encourage all pupils to aim high despite difficulties
- To foster a spirit of enquiry amongst pupils and inspire them to engage with a range of contrasting viewpoints
 - To improve academic results continually across our broad subject range
 - To increase pupil participation in a variety of challenging activities
 - To provide a safe school environment for all pupils with an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect
 - To provide teaching and facilities of the highest quality, to stimulate pupils' curiosity
 - To promote independent learning and appropriate use of Information Technology

2. Regulatory matters relating to the curriculum

Taunton School satisfies the regulatory requirements for the quality of education we provide in the following ways:

The school has a written curriculum policy which is laid out in this document and supplemented by various further academic policies detailed in section 3 below. Section 4 below explains how the curriculum is structured. Further documentation regarding the planning of our curriculum, such as schemes of work, is contained within individual Departmental handbooks.

The school's written curriculum policy, curriculum plans, schemes of work and lesson plans are carefully constructed and refined over time to take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all our pupils, including those with an Education and Health Care (EHC) plan. Currently 1 pupil has an EHC plan. Provision for pupils with an EHC plan is detailed in our Academic Development Policy (see section 3).

As stated in our curricular aims above, Taunton School's curriculum promotes fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. As an IB World School, we subscribe to the IB philosophy "to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world", and encourage our pupils to embody the characteristics of the IB learner profile: "inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, reflective".

The school provides full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age. We give pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education, as detailed in section 4.

All our pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills through the subjects we teach, such as English, Maths, Modern Foreign Languages and Science, also English as an Additional Language. Departmental schemes of work are set up to ensure that lessons are well planned, and that instruction proceeds at an appropriate pace.

The language of instruction at Taunton School is English but we do also support mother tongues as detailed in our Language policy in section 3.

As befits our school aims and ethos, we have a full programme of personal, social, health and economic education. The PSHEE programme encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act(a). More detail is given about our PSHEE programme in section 3.

The school is fortunate to possess an excellent Careers department which provides accurate, up-to-date university admissions and careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner, enables students to make informed choices about a broad range of Higher Education and career options and encourages them to fulfil their potential. The Careers Department is staffed by a full time Head of Careers plus an administrative assistant, who curates the Department's team pages with their wealth of resources as well as the abundant printed material contained within the Careers centre. The university admissions and Careers advice process begins with GCSE options advice in Y9 and moves onwards via individual consultations and research, through to large Universities and Careers Fairs with external guests in Year 11 and Sixth Form. Students thinking of applying to Oxbridge are catered for by a separate programme run by the Head of Oxbridge Admissions. We also run a Pre-Med programme for students applying to read Medicine. Please see the Careers Department Information (CEIAG) in section 3 for more detail.

The school has no pupils below compulsory school age but in Sixth Form pupils above compulsory school age are provided for by a full programme of activities appropriate to their needs, including academic and co-curricular programmes. See sections 4 and 6 below.

All Taunton School pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress. Differentiation is at the heart of our Teaching & Learning policy which is linked in section 4 below. Our reporting and tracking practice allows us to make appropriate interventions and adapt pupils' programmes to suit their needs. We use baseline assessment data to inform these interventions and pride ourselves on our success with providing bespoke programmes for difficult cases. We incorporate PASS (provided by GL Assessment) into our evaluation of pupil progress to identify and support pupils who are struggling to engage with the curriculum.

Taunton School provides effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society through the content of our lessons and activities, our Academic Enrichment programme, our many clubs and societies, including CCF (Combined Cadet Force), our numerous offsite trips and visiting speakers who address the pupils in our regular Assemblies and Chapel services.

4. Organisation of the curriculum

Year 9

All students study the 'core' subjects: Art, Biology, Chemistry, English, Geography, History, Computing and ICT, Maths, Personal Social and Health Education, Physical Education, Physics and Religious Studies.

Each student then chooses one subject from the block below:

Language Option: French; German; Spanish; German for Beginners

Each student then chooses **2** options from the list below:

Options: Classical Civilisation; Design and Technology; Drama; French; Latin; Music

Students also study 'School of Thought' a unique Taunton syllabus which focuses on metacognition, research skills and oracy.

Years 10 + 11

Core Subjects:

- English Language (GCSE)
- English Literature (IGCSE) - there are some pupils for whom this exam is not appropriate. They study English Language only from Year 11 onwards.
- Mathematics (IGCSE)
- PSHEE (non-examined)
- PE (Y10 only)

Pupils may then choose 3 or 4 further option subjects, leading to a total of 8 or 9 (I)GCSEs:

Science:

All three science disciplines are taught to GCSE, but there are two routes to follow:

Trilogy combined science means studying the **core content** in each science and leads to **two** grades at GCSE calculated from the combined performance in all three sciences. Trilogy combined science occupies less timetable space, leaving more time for other subjects.

Triple award science involves studying **the core and additional content** in each science to lead to **three** grades at GCSE, each science subject being graded independently of the other two. This option occupies more periods in the timetable (the equivalent of one option subject), leaving less time for other subjects.

There is **no** difference in difficulty of the core content shared by the two routes. Strong mathematical skills are required throughout GCSE science, especially for the Triple Award. The overall level of demand is higher in all the new GCSE science specifications.

Trilogy combined science is the GCSE starting point upon which sixth form sciences syllabuses are designed to build and is therefore sufficient foundation to continue to study science subjects in the Sixth Form. It is the national standard for entry to sixth form science courses and for Universities, who expect all students to have studied GCSE science at least at trilogy combined science.

Students wishing to pursue the additional content at triple award do so at the discretion of the Head of Science.

Those pupils who opt to study trilogy science will have one hour of RS a fortnight to develop critical thinking and reasoning skills.

Modern Foreign Languages

The majority of students will also choose a Modern Foreign Language (French, German or Spanish). However, we recognise that this may not be an appropriate choice for all pupils and hence pupils may study an option subject in place of a Modern Foreign Language.

There is provision in the curriculum for those pupils who wish to study two modern foreign languages.

Humanities and Arts

- Whilst Humanities and Arts subjects are not compulsory, Taunton School recommends very strongly that all pupils choose at least one Humanities subject (Geography, History, Classical Civilisation or RS) and at least one Creative Arts subject (Art, Design and Technology, Drama or Music).

(I)GCSE Options Choices

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Art | <input type="checkbox"/> | History |
| • Business Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> | ICT (Cambridge National) |
| • Classical Civilisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Latin |
| • Computer Science | <input type="checkbox"/> | Music |
| • Design & Technology - Product Design | <input type="checkbox"/> | Physical Education |
| • Drama | <input type="checkbox"/> | RS |
| • Economics | <input type="checkbox"/> | Study Skills and HPQ * |
| • Geography | | |
| • Global Perspectives | | |

**Study Skill is available for those who do not wish to take a full range of academic options and will involve supported study time alongside working towards an HPQ (Higher Project Qualification).

Sixth Form

A Level September 2021

There are 4 subject blocks available – students choose one subject from each block.

The majority of students will start with 4 A-levels before settling on their final 3 A-levels in the October of Year 12. Pupils who wish to continue with 4 A-levels will be allowed to if they are maintaining a high academic standard.

Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
Art			
Biology			Biology
	Business BTEC	Business BTEC	
Business	Business		
	Chemistry	Chemistry	
Classical Civilisation			
	Computer Science		
	Design & Technology		Design & Technology
Economics			
English Literature		English Literature	
			French

		Further Maths & Maths	Further Maths & Maths
Geography	Geography		
	History Late	History Early	
			Information Technology
	Latin		
Maths		Maths	
AS Maths			AS Maths
		Music	
			Philosophy of Religion
			Photography
			Physical Education
Physics			Physics
	Psychology	Psychology	
	Theatre Studies		
Sports Science BTEC	Sports Science BTEC		Sports Science BTEC
IELTS (EAL)	IELTS (EAL)	IELTS (EAL)	IELTS (EAL)

EPQ, Native Language A-Levels and Critical thinking (non-examined) are available alongside these options.

All courses are linear with no AS except Maths AS and Theatre Studies.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP)

Students study six subjects, one from each block, 3 at Higher Level (HL) and 3 at Standard Level (SL), also the compulsory 'core' components of Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) and the Extended Essay (EE).

Block	Subject and Level	
1	English A - Literature	HL/SL
	German A - Language & Literature	HL/SL
	Italian A - Literature	HL/SL
	French A - Literature	HL/SL
2	English B (EAL)	HL/SL (also in Group 6)
	French B	HL/SL
	German B	HL/SL
	Spanish B	HL/SL
	Italian ab initio (not available in Y12 2023)	SL
	Spanish ab initio	SL
	Latin (not available in Y12 2023)	HL/SL
3	Business Management	HL/SL
	Geography	HL/SL

	History	HL/SL
	Psychology	HL/SL
4	Biology	HL/SL (also in Group 6)
	Chemistry	HL/SL
	Design & Technology	HL/SL
	Physics	HL/SL (also in Group 6)
5	Maths	HL/SL
6	Music	HL/SL
	Visual Arts	HL/SL
	English B (EAL)	HL/SL
	Economics	HL/SL
	Biology	HL/SL
	Philosophy	HL/SL
	Physics	HL/SL

BTEC

Students study for the BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sport and Exercise Sciences. This occupies three out of the four A level 'blocks' above. Students may take a supplementary subject to AS/AL in the empty block if they are judged able to cope. Business BTEC is also available, as a Level 3 Diploma and most students will take an AL subject in addition to this.

Extended Project Qualification

A dozen or so students every year take on the EPQ which straddles Year 12 and Year 13.

5. Inclusion

Entry to programmes of study at Taunton School is determined solely by academic suitability with no heed to race, gender or other factors. Academic suitability is judged by the Deputy Head Academic in consultation with the Admissions office, Heads of Department, the Heads of Educational Progress and EAL. Our co-curricular programme, as laid out in section 6 below, is open to all without prejudice.

6. Co-curricular activities

AUTUMN TERM

MAJOR GAMES

BOYS: RUGBY

GIRLS: HOCKEY

GAMES OPTIONS

FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL, BADMINTON, BOXING, SWIMMING, TENNIS, NETBALL, SQUASH, DANCE, GOLF, HORSE RIDING, ROWING, RUN CLUB, FITNESS. *Additional options are sometimes provided depending on student interest.*

SPRING TERM

MAJOR GAMES	BOYS: RUGBY	GIRLS: HOCKEY
GAMES OPTIONS	FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL, BADMINTON, BOXING, SWIMMING, TENNIS, NETBALL, SQUASH, DANCE, GOLF, HORSE RIDING, ROWING, RUN CLUB, FITNESS. <i>Additional options are sometimes provided depending on student interest.</i>	

SUMMER TERM

MAJOR GAMES	BOYS: CRICKET	GIRLS: TENNIS
GAMES OPTIONS	FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL, BADMINTON, BOXING, SWIMMING, TENNIS, NETBALL, SQUASH, DANCE, GOLF, HORSE RIDING, ROWING, RUN CLUB, FITNESS. <i>Additional options are sometimes provided depending on student interest.</i>	

In addition to the major games, there are matches/competitions in: Football, Basketball, Lacrosse, Badminton, Athletics, Swimming, Cross Country, Golf, Horse Riding, Boys' Tennis and Squash.

CCF & DofE	These activities take place during weekly sessions throughout the year. With additional opportunities to attend Field Days, camps and expeditions throughout the annual calendar programme.
MUSIC	Music activities follow termly programmes throughout the school with a variety of different assembles, choirs and orchestras. Pupils can perform in a variety of concerts and productions throughout the school year, both from small scale weekly teatime concerts to full scale Concerto Concerts.
DRAMA	Drama activities follow termly programmes throughout the school with a variety of different activities that the pupils can attend throughout each term. The current pattern is for a play in the Autumn Term followed by a musical in the Spring Term. There is an additional, small-scale production in the Summer Term.
DANCE	Dance activities follow termly programmes throughout the school with a variety of

different activities that the pupils can attend throughout each term.

CLUBS & SOCIETIES A wide variety of clubs and societies are offered via our Horizons programme. Full details of these can be found in the termly Horizons brochure.

7. Communication about the curriculum

The school communicates with its stakeholders about its written curriculum by means of a variety of electronic material available from our Admissions Department or our website. There is also plentiful supplementary information available on our website. We hold regular parents' evenings and curriculum information evenings to update parents and guardians on how their children are doing, and how their prospects are for the future. Parents and guardians are also freely invited to consult with teachers and House staff in person, on the telephone or via email with the tutor being the primary point of contact for parents.