



WYCOMBE
ABBAY

Curriculum Policy

Aims and Background

Wycombe Abbey was founded in 1896 to provide girls with an holistic education in a Church of England setting. Its curriculum is informed by this background and framed by its three principal values of trust, encouragement and mutual respect. In particular, we actively promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The School aims to provide a sound base in core academic subjects whilst treating every girl as an individual. We endeavour to cultivate key learning skills which will allow pupils to thrive at school and university, in their careers and in life generally: resourcefulness, resilience, intellectual curiosity, an ability to work as part of a team, a willingness to take risks, and independence of thought. A broad range of rigorously academic disciplines are offered, with greater choice as pupils move through the year groups. The School achieves excellent results in public examinations and adds considerable value. All its pupils go on to higher education, generally at top-performing universities in the UK, the USA and elsewhere. A comprehensive programme of Careers Guidance is offered throughout the school, appropriate to the needs of each year group and also tailored to pupils' individual needs.

Breadth and Balance of the Curriculum

The Wycombe Abbey curriculum provides all pupils with the opportunity to learn and make progress, delivering subject matter which is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of its pupils.

U111 to UV

The Keystage 3 (U111 to U1V) and 4 (LV and UV) curriculum at Wycombe Abbey is designed to ensure that pupils experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education.

In U111-U1V (Years 7-9) pupils take a wide variety of subjects, with the only option being the number and combination of Modern Foreign Languages which they study in U1V. They select two or three languages from French, Spanish, German and Chinese. In LV-UV (Years 10-11) most pupils study 10 or 11 subjects, which are a mixture of GCSE and IGCSE courses. English, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics are compulsory subjects. In addition, pupils select four or five from the range of optional subjects, including at least one Modern Foreign Language and one Humanities subject. This ensures pupils complete this element of their schooling with well-developed speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils are given extensive individual guidance when choosing options and emphasis is placed on breadth.

Pupils in U111-LV attend weekly lessons in personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education (Wellbeing). The course reflects the School's Anglican ethos and lays emphasis upon our three principal values. Within this context pupils are given the opportunity to discuss the issues facing all children of their age. Wycombe Abbey subscribes to the 'healthy body, healthy mind' maxim, and so all pupils attend weekly lessons in Physical Education. Pupils may pursue their own interests in PE as they move up the School.

Sixth Form

In the Sixth Form we believe pupils should have a free choice and have the opportunity to specialise or retain breadth. Again, pupils are given significant individual guidance with particular focus on the entry requirements and expectations of universities and on pupils' higher education and career aspirations. Pupils choose four subjects from a range of up to 24. In addition, all Sixth Form pupils follow an enrichment programme entitled the Carrington Award; as part of this they all write an extended essay which may lead to an Extended Project Qualification.

The Carrington Award includes a programme of weekly Sixth Form lectures; a LVI Management, Leadership and Communication Conferences; UVI Community Service; and an extensive and carefully planned programme to

support Higher Education applications. There is a series of Wellbeing events, focusing on topics such as self-defence, careers education and drugs and alcohol education.

Prep

The curriculum at all levels is supported by the setting of regular prep (homework). Teachers are expected to set prep which enhances and furthers the learning that takes place in the classroom. For UIII-UIV pupils there is a weekly prep timetable. In the UIII there are timetabled and supervised prep sessions, but all other pupils are expected to take a great deal of responsibility for managing their own time. Extra support is given for pupils who need it to complete their prep.

Beyond the Academic Curriculum

The academic curriculum at all levels is supported by a comprehensive programme of co-curricular activities which encompasses sport, music, drama, dance, art, engineering, debating, Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, Young Enterprise, Model United Nations and much more. There are more than 30 sports on offer to pupils and the School aims to provide competitive opportunities for all pupils whatever their level of skill. The choices provide opportunities for pupils to develop their skills as an individual and as part of the team. Even in the case of sports such as fencing and squash an emphasis is placed on team ethos. Equally, in music and drama the School caters for all abilities. All pupils have access to instrumental music lessons whether they are just starting out or have already gained their Diploma, and the Music department provides a wide range of occasions to perform, from small lunchtime concerts to grand performances at venues both in the UK and elsewhere. The Drama department offers performance opportunities in most year groups. An annual dance show, called Highlights, presents performances from more than 120 pupils.

All pupils attend regular Chapel services. These services not only contribute to the School's spiritual education but are also closely linked with its charity work. Chapel appeals are often designated to House charities, while the Chaplain, as chair of the Charities Committee, directs operations for whole-school causes. Wycombe Abbey has strong links with schools both near and far as part of its community outreach programme, including Cressex Community College in High Wycombe and St Patrick's College in Vanuatu.

Educational trips are a regular part of life at Wycombe Abbey. Most residential trips, especially overseas trips, take place during school holidays; while academic departments often take year groups on day trips during term time to museums, theatrical performances, outdoor education centres and the like. Pupils are also encouraged by their teachers to enter local and national competitions (e.g. Maths Challenge, Salters' Chemistry Competition), and some departments offer competitions within School (e.g. the English Department runs several creative writing competitions). Many departments offer societies such as the Business Breakfast Club (Economics department), Debating Society (Pupil led) or Medical Society (Science department).

Careers advice and guidance plays a central role at Wycombe Abbey and is delivered across all years through a combination of Wellbeing sessions for lower school and the for UV Carrington Award programme for LVI-UVI, year-specific events such as the UIII Fifteen Pound Challenge, LIV Careers Day, talks open to the whole school, such as the 'Breaking the Mould' events designed to introduce pupils to unusual or unfamiliar career paths and university courses, and career insight events, for example a LVI visit to a law firm. In UV all pupils sit the Morrisby Test and review their results and aspirations with an independent careers adviser. All UV-UVI pupils attend an annual Opportunities Fair and Careers Seminar. Careers guidance is also integrated within the curriculum, for example engineering challenges in Physics and author visits in English. Work experience is encouraged and all pupils are supported in order to gain suitable work experience placements, usually in the summer following UV or LVI years.

These provisions and activities are a central part of our holistic education which prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They are important, in tandem with the academic curriculum, in ensuring that pupils' educational, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills are appropriately developed.

Monitoring Learning and Progress

Learning and progress are carefully monitored by teachers, Housemistresses, Tutors, Heads of Year and Senior Leadership, who all take an active role in ensuring pupils develop and reach their potential.

Wycombe Abbey subscribes to the view that pupils should gradually take more responsibility for their own learning as they progress through the School.

Monitoring takes the form of regular class work, prep and tests, as well as annual School examinations.

Progress Reports

Wycombe Abbey has an annual cycle of reporting which ensures parents are kept informed of the academic and co-curricular progress of their daughter. The aim is to provide incisive, relevant and up-to-date comments and data which assess a pupil's current performance and determine how she can continue to make progress. Given this aim, the information is also of significant importance to pupils and to the staff who support them: Housemistresses, Tutors, Heads of Year, etc. The School will usually share reporting with a pupil, undertaking to ensure that she is given guidance on how to interpret it.

The cycle of reporting includes formal written reports, tracking grades for achievement and effort, School examination results and parents' meetings.

(See **Reports and References for Pupils Policy** for further information)

Learning Enhancement and Differentiation

The School is able to support fully pupils with mild Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including those with a Statement or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC). It is also able to assist pupils who have English as an Additional Language (EAL), as long as they have good fluency in English. Most SEND pupils have a basic individual education plan (called a 'Yellow Form') which sets out for staff the difficulties an individual faces and what they should do to support the pupil. All the School's policies, including the Admissions Policy and the Behaviour, Discipline and Rewards Policy, take account of pupils with SEND. See our SEND Policy, EAL Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils for further details.

Teachers use a variety of methods to differentiate where necessary, and certain subjects and at certain levels are divisioned (set) by ability to ensure all pupils are fully supported and stretched. University preparation lessons are optional in the Sixth Form and encourage pupils to stretch themselves academically in preparation for the more independent learning style at university.

Able, Gifted and Talented Pupils

Pupils at Wycombe are identified as able, gifted and talented if they work at a level that is above most of their peers in their context, and if they demonstrate creative thinking, intuition, initiative and inquisitiveness.

Pupils are identified as able, gifted and talented following recommendations from subject staff. Subject teachers are expected to use their professional judgement when identifying pupils. Recommendations are reviewed each academic year for all pupils.

Member of staff	Deputy Head (Academic)
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