

Thornton Grammar School

Curriculum Policy

Aims of the Curriculum: What are we trying to achieve?

In keeping with national goals, the curriculum at Thornton Grammar School aims to enable students to become:

- **Successful learners** who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- **Confident Individuals** who are able to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- **Responsible citizens** who make a positive contribution to society

Through these aims, the school seeks to secure Every Child Matters outcomes, so that all students can:

- **Be healthy**
- **Stay safe**
- **Enjoy and achieve**
- **Make a positive contribution**
- **Achieve economic well-being**

The focus for Learning will be:

- **Attitudes and attributes** eg determination, adaptability, confidence, risk-taking, enterprise, creativity, personal, social and emotional development, physical development
- **Skills** eg communication, literacy, numeracy, ICT, personal learning and thinking skills, problem-solving, reasoning
- **Knowledge and understanding** eg big ideas that shape the world

Structure of the Curriculum: How do we organise learning?

The curriculum at Thornton Grammar School is organised to achieve its aims. It:

- helps every learner make progress, building on their experiences both within and outside school
- is based on a clear and shared understanding of how young people learn and provides for the full range of capabilities or aspirations
- provides a coherent and relevant set of learning experiences
- provides opportunities to learn in a range of places and uses expertise from outside the teaching staff to enrich learning
- uses time flexibly to meet learning needs
- provides opportunities for learners to experience different learning approaches, including through subject disciplines, thematic approaches and areas of study of their own choice
- provides opportunities for learners to learn on their own, in a team and in a large group
- includes global, national, local and personal dimensions

The curriculum at Thornton Grammar School is an entire planned learning experience underpinned by the broad set of common values and purposes outlined above.

Components

The curriculum is delivered through the following components:

- **Lessons** – series of activities planned to meet learning objectives
- **Locations** – where learning takes place, including classroom-based learning, use of specialist facilities, learning in and around the school buildings and grounds, learning outside the school site (both the immediate area and further afield)
- **Environment** – the culture or climate for learning in the school and the physical aspects of the classroom, the school and its immediate surroundings, eg playing fields
- **Events** – activities that provide significant learning opportunities, either planned or unplanned, such as sports days, productions and concerts, and community events and activities that involve people and places outside the school
- **Routines** – regular aspects and procedures of the school day such as waiting for school to start, break and lunchtimes, assemblies, getting ready for PE and sport and moving between lessons
- **Extended hours** – the use of time at the end of the school day to offer opportunities to learners, families and communities
- **Out-of-school learning** – building on the learning, knowledge, understanding and skills that students bring with them to the school setting from the learning situations and experiences that they have outside school

Approaches to Learning

Approaches to learning ensure that it is:

- **varied and matched to learning need**, including active, practical and theoretical learning, enquiry, instruction
- instrumental in fostering **spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional, intellectual and physical development**
- **in tune with human development**
- **personalised**, offering challenge and support to enable all learners to make progress and achieve
- **relevant, purposeful and for a range of audiences**
- **involves learners proactively** in their own learning

that Assessment:

- is **fit for purpose and integral to learning and teaching**
- develops **learners' self-esteem and commitment** to their learning
- uses a **wide range of evidence** to encourage learners to reflect on their own learning

and that:

- Resources are **well matched to learning need**, eg use of time, space, people materials

Whole curriculum dimensions

The curriculum delivers overarching themes which have a significance for individuals and society, and which themselves provide relevant learning contexts:

- **Identity and cultural diversity**
- **Healthy lifestyles**
- **Community participation**
- **Enterprise**
- **Global dimension and sustainable development**
- **Technology and the media**
- **Creativity and critical thinking**

Statutory Expectations

The curriculum enables statutory expectations embodied in the National Curriculum to be delivered:

- **Communication, language and literacy**
- **Creative development**
- **Knowledge and understanding of the world**
- **Personal, social and emotional development**
- **Physical development**
- **Problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy**

Curriculum Model

The curriculum model adopted for implementation from 2008 is outlined in the accompanying diagram.

Evaluation of the Curriculum – How do we know how well we are achieving our aims?

The curriculum is evaluated to make learning and teaching more effective so that learners understand quality and how to improve.

Evaluating impact

Evaluation of the impact of the curriculum will:

- Look at the **whole child** in relation to curriculum aims, progress in skills, subjects and dimensions
- Use **information intelligently** to identify trends and clear goals for improvement
- Use '**critical friends**' to offer insights and challenge assumptions
- Create a **continuous improvement cycle**
- Use a **variety of techniques** to collect and analyse information
- Be based on **assessment that is fit for purpose**
- **Involve the whole school community** eg learners, parents, teachers, employers, governors

to secure the accountability measures in the following fields:

- **Standards and achievement**
- **Behaviour and attendance**
- **Civic participation**
- **Healthy lifestyle choices**
- **Further involvement in education, employment or training**

that enable us to further develop the curriculum as an entire planned learning experience

'The curriculum should be treasured. There should be real pride in our curriculum: the learning that the nation has decided to set before its young. Teachers, parents, employers, the media and the public should all see the curriculum as something to embrace, support and celebrate. Most of all, young people should relish the opportunity for discovery and achievement that the curriculum offers.'

Mick waters, Director of Curriculum, QCA

Thornton Grammar School

Curriculum Model adopted for implementation from 2008

This model allows for the personalisation of the Core curriculum at Key Stage 4 by giving departments the flexibility to enter students for SATS in Year 8 or Year 9, and tailoring provision to need in subsequent years. The model approximates to the current situation in terms of Year 9 time allocation and provision except Drama has been allocated 1 period and with a corresponding 0.5 reduction in History and Geography

Area	Year 9 PPW	Year 9	Year10 (Existing Periods)	Year 11 Existing Periods)
Mathematics	3	Flexibility to enter groups for SATS in Year 8. Then GCSE Maths, FS, ALAN; for some enriched alongside by OCR Additional maths, Statistics or AS modules (or following early entry)		
English	3	Flexibility to enter groups for SATS in Year 8. Then GCSE Lang and Lit (or Media), FS, ALAN; for some enriched alongside by Media (or following early entry)		
Science	3	Flexibility to enter groups for SATS in Year 8. Then some groups GCSE in 3 Sciences, others Double Science, some enriched alongside by Rural Sc; Environmental Sc; Astronomy; Geology; lab tech (or alongside Single Sc?)		
PE	2	Flexibility for GCSE PE (or other)to begin in Year 9		
RS	1	Short course GCSE		Full course completed
Citizenship	1	GCSE or equivalent		
ICT	2	First element of KS4 course / stand alone	4 Options of 2.5 periods each, organised into 'Pathways', as currently. If 3 Science adopted in Science Core time third Science removed from options. Similarly, those studying Media in English Core time could not choose here as well. Arrangement for ICT after school as existing.	
Languages	3	GCSE in Language (or Basic Skills)		
Product Des	1	All Foundation subjects able to begin GCSE courses in Year 9		
Food & Tex	1			
History	1			
Geography	1			
Art	1			
Music	1			
Drama	1			

Under this model Years 7 and 8 will continue with similar arrangements to those existing, with the expectation that departments will take the opportunity to co-operate on developing common themes for delivery. In addition the possibility of providing some groups in Year 7 with a single teacher and base for some subjects which could be then delivered in project form to provide a 'transition' experience from primary will be further explored, as will the 'collapsing' of the timetable in all years to facilitate the delivery of cross-curricular dimensions. In Year 9 this will include the opportunity to learn about Key Stage 4 courses not experienced in Key Stage 3.

