



# **Northampton School** *for Boys*

# **Curriculum Policy**

**Approved by:**            **Governors Curriculum Committee**  
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## **1. PRINCIPLES**

The curriculum is the formal means by which the school translates its aims and values into practice. It comprises all the planned activities and experiences which the school provides to help students to learn.

We believe that our curriculum provides a base that enables all boys in Year 7 through to Year 13 and girls in Year 12 and 13 to maximise their choices throughout the school and beyond.

The aims of our curriculum are to:

- provide a variety of activities which bring about effective learning, provide appropriate challenges for all students and lead to achievement for all students in order for them to reach their full potential;
- provide equal opportunities for all students regardless of gender, aptitude or cultural, ethnic or religious background;
- offer a broad and balanced entitlement to all students;
- prepare students for further study, the world of work and to become active citizens;
- develop positive personal and social values;
- provide continuity and progression from the point of transfer to the time of leaving school.

## **2. CURRICULUM STRUCTURE**

The curriculum is planned in a coherent manner ensuring it meets our pupils' needs, aspirations and interests. Despite having the freedoms of Academy Status, the curriculum has regard to the National Curriculum, but also embraces cross-curricular themes (including careers education and guidance, citizenship, economic and industrial understanding, environmental, health and sex education) and cross-curricular skills, in particular those of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Specific details are set out in our funding agreement.

The development of students' personal and social skills and their spiritual and cultural development are addressed specifically through the Citizenship and Guidance programme and school assemblies, as well as permeating the whole curriculum, both formal and hidden.

The importance of developing ICT, literacy, numeracy and oracy is recognised by the allocation of discrete lesson time at KS3 and a continuing emphasis on the further development of these skills across the whole curriculum.

In Year 7, students study a common curriculum comprising timetabled lessons in: Citizenship, Design Technology, English, Expressive Arts (Art, Dance, Drama and Music), a Modern Foreign Language (French, German or Spanish), Geography, History, ICT, Mathematics, PE, RE and Science.

In Year 8 the same common curriculum is followed.

In Year 9 students have the opportunity to express a limited preference to study two of the following four Expressive Arts disciplines; Visual Art, Drama, Dance or Music. Otherwise, the same common curriculum is followed.

In Years 10 and 11 students continue to study a broad core of subjects including English and English Literature, Mathematics, Science, a Modern Language, a Humanity subject (Geography or History), a Technology based subject, Citizenship and PE. All bar Citizenship and PE will be studied to GCSE standard.

In addition they are able to express a preference to study all three Sciences separately and then two further GCSE options from Humanities, Expressive Arts, or PE based subject areas.

In Year 12 and Year 13, to reflect the changes to the curriculum nationally, the vast majority of students will study three subjects over two years to A Level standard. In addition to this students must also participate in Citizenship and Guidance, Sport and Recreation, the pre-university skills course, 1 to 1 mentoring with their Form Tutor, Study Group sessions, work experience and an extra-curricular activity. Some students may also have the opportunity to work towards other qualifications such as: The Extended Project Qualification, General Studies, Life Saving, First Aid or Preliminary Coaching Certificates.

### 3. DISAPPLICATION FROM THE CURRICULUM

Some students may be disappplied from particular subjects in order to concentrate on other specific areas of weakness. Reasons for disapplication will vary, but are usually linked to a strong medical or educational need (including a disability or Statement of Educational Need) that a student has.

Any decisions relating to disapplication will be discussed with the student's Year Team Leader, the Curriculum Team Leader of the subject in question, SENDCo, Deputy Headmaster i/c of Pupil Welfare and any other professionals involved with the student. Parents will also be involved in discussions, but will not be involved in making a final decision. The ultimate decision will rest with the Headmaster.

### 4. CURRICULUM TIME

The taught school week comprises thirty-five 45 minute periods. Teaching time per subject reflects the need to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum. A generous time allocation is made in particular for English, Maths and Science reflecting the importance of these subjects for all students at KS3 and KS4 and the development of vital basic skills. Additional time has also been provided for subjects in Y10 to reflect the demands of the new curriculum.

A table of curriculum time allocations can be found below.

Year	7	8	9	10	11
English	3h	3h	3h45m	3h45m	3h
Maths	3h	3h	3h	3h45m	3h45m
Science	3h	3h	3h45m	4h30m	4h30m
DT	2h15m	2h15m	2h15m		
ICT/Computing	1h30m	1h30m	45m		
Geography	1h30m	1h30m	1h30m		
History	1h30m	1h30m	1h30m		
RE	1h30m	1h30m	1h30m		
Humanity				3h	3h
Languages	2h15m	2h15m	2h15m	2h15m	3h
Ex Arts	3h45m	3h45m	3h		
Citizenship	45m	45m	45m	45m	45m
PE	2h15m	2h15m	2h15m	2h15m	2h15m
Additional subject 1				3h	3h
Additional subject 2				3h	3h
TOTAL	26h15m	26h15m	26h15m	26h15m	26h15m

## **Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance**

This essential area of the school curriculum will mainly be delivered through enrichment activities to our Year 10 and 11 students during our Enterprise Week. This will, however, also be in addition to other opportunities for students elsewhere in the curriculum through their academic subjects.

The school also has an impartial Careers Adviser who is a professionally trained, qualified practitioner in careers guidance. The Careers Adviser is an expert in specialist careers advice and guidance and has an understanding of the labour market, including up to date knowledge of legislation and the breadth of vocational and academic developments. This expertise is used in one to one interviews with students, groupwork and occasionally larger presentations.

## **5. SCHEMES OF WORK**

A scheme of work for each subject is essential in helping to plan teaching and learning within and across subjects, as well as documenting the curricular activities planned for groups of students and coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study and GCSE syllabuses. Schemes of work also provide a basis for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum.

Each subject team will produce a scheme of work for each year group and will review this, each year and update it as necessary. Schemes of work should address the following common themes:

- planned teaching and learning activities;
- timelines for delivery;
- cross-curricular aspects and links to ICT and other subjects;
- differentiation;
- assessment;
- homework;
- resources.

## **6. DIFFERENTIATION**

Students need to work at a level and pace appropriate to their potential. Students are largely taught in classes grouped by broad ability and prior attainment, however, in some subjects students are taught in classes of mixed ability.

Whatever the form of grouping a differentiated approach is required to ensure that the range of abilities and interests of students is taken into account, so enabling them to experience success.

## **7. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Students learn through their experiences and by being taught. They learn most effectively when they feel valued, when they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and when they are actively involved in the learning process.

A range of teaching and learning strategies needs to be employed with students of all ages in order to increase and maintain their motivation and to create a challenging, stimulating and rewarding learning environment in which they can succeed. Strategies will include working individually, in pairs and small groups, whole class teaching, practical work, problem solving, role play and the use of ICT and video.

## **8. HOME LEARNING**

Regular and appropriate Home Learning set according to the published timetable agreed by Curriculum Teams is an integral part of students' curricular entitlement. Home Learning enables students to consolidate and extend work covered in lessons, to carry out private study and research and to develop good study habits. Further information about this can be found in the school Learning policy.

## **9. TRANSITION**

Students join us in Year 7 at the beginning of KS3. Teaching programmes are carefully planned to take into account students' previous work and achievements at KS2.

The importance of transition from KS3 to KS4 courses also needs to be recognised in the planning of schemes of work and the level of demands made of students.

Where the timetable permits, many KS4 courses will start in Term 6 of Year 9, following the outcomes of the Preferences process.

## **10. STUDENT ENTITLEMENT**

Within, and beyond, the curriculum, the school will attempt to provide many different opportunities and experiences for all students including:

- a pleasant, civilised and stimulating working environment, where all cultures are valued.
- respectful treatment from every person, within the Code of Behaviour.
- equal opportunities in every form, including the discouragement of sexism, racism, homophobia and bullying.
- a supportive Form Tutor and welfare structure.
- an educational experience which promotes life-long education.
- the opportunity to experience and learn about world-wide cultures.
- access to a common core curriculum.
- an appropriate level of support for their needs in all areas.
- a wide ranging programme of Home Learning.

- rigorously assessed work, normally returned within two weeks (unless required for exam moderation or part of Controlled Assessment).
- termly reports which record progress made against targets in each subject area.
- regular review of progress with subject teachers.
- close links between students, parents and teachers.
- shared responsibility for success.
- knowledge and training in the latest developments in Technology.
- arts and cultural visits.
- a variety of sporting activities supported by expert teaching.
- specialist music tuition and membership of a musical group.
- research facilities from 8.00 am to 4.00 p.m. in term time.
- an understanding of economic and industrial structures.
- choice, within a structured framework.
- differentiated learning whether in sets or mixed ability groups.
- Residential Education.
- a programme of differentiated study skills.
- work within the wider community.
- a range of extra-curricular activities.
- a Year Council and the House Council.
- grants from the Northampton Old Grammar School Foundation.
- religious, spiritual and moral education.
- impartial Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance.
- counselling
- Further and Higher Education advice
- enrichment, including PE and recreational activities
- work shadowing/placements/Work Experience

The Governors seek a seven-year commitment to education from all students who enrol at the school. The academic entry criteria do not currently allow every student to remain a full-time student until age 18, however. Thus, the school works with other organisations and the College of Further Education to provide pathways to age 18 to all students who enrol at Northampton School *for Boys* at age 11.

## **11. MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Overall responsibility for the curriculum at Northampton School *for Boys* rests with the governing body in consultation with the Curriculum Committee. The governing body's further curriculum responsibilities are:

- to work with the Headmaster in ensuring the Curriculum and its assessment procedures are carried out in line with our Academy funding agreement;
- to agree a sex education policy for the school;
- to ensure suitable provision of RE;



- to ensure the special educational needs policy is being carried out in identifying and helping students with special needs;
- to hear any complaints from parents concerning the curriculum.

## **12. COMPLAINTS**

Parents/Carers may complain to the school if they believe that the governing body is failing to:

- provide a curriculum in line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance
- offer qualifications or syllabuses that have been approved by Ofqual
- provide religious education or collective worship
- operate a charging policy properly
- provide the information that they are required to provide to parents and others (eg attendance, achievement at key stages, examination results, etc.)

Complaints about staff or admissions are not covered by this procedure, only those items covered by the five points above. Other complaints must be dealt with using the School Complaints Policy by the Headmaster.

This complaints procedure has three stages:-

1. Initial Approach
2. Formal Complaint (to headmaster or Chair of Governors)
3. Appeal (to Governor Committee)

### **INITIAL APPROACH**

#### **Guidelines**

- The vast majority of concerns and complaints can be resolved informally, often straight away by the class teacher, Curriculum or Year Team Leader or a member of the Leadership Team.
- We aim to ensure that as parents you feel able to raise concerns with staff without undue formality in person, by telephone or in writing.
- You may not be clear at first whether you wish to make a complaint. You may simply ask a question or express an opinion. A preliminary discussion will usually clarify the issue and help you decide whether you wish to take the matter further.

#### **Procedure**

1. You will have an opportunity for informal discussion of your concerns with an appropriate member of staff. This discussion will aim to clarify both the nature

of the concern and the intended outcome. We will assure you that we wish to hear about it.

2. If the member of staff first contacted cannot deal with the matter immediately, s/he should **either** make a firm arrangement to deal with it by a specific future date **or** refer the matter to an appropriate person. A note of your name, the date and contact details will be taken. The first contact should check to make sure the referral has been successful.
3. If the concern relates to the headmaster and you feel unable to raise it with the head, you should contact the chair of governors.
4. The person dealing with the complaint should make sure you are clear about what will happen next. This may later be put in writing in order to make the next steps or outcome clear.
5. If no satisfactory solution is found, you will be informed about how to proceed if you wish to take your complaint further.
6. You must complete the Complaints Form (Annex A) together with a more detailed written submission of the exact nature and details of the complaint.

## **STAGE 2 - FORMAL COMPLAINT TO THE HEADMASTER OR CHAIR OF GOVERNORS**

### **Guidelines**

- The headmaster will determine who will respond to a formal complaint.
- If your complaint is about the headmaster (or the headmaster has been closely involved in Stage 1) the chair of governors will carry out the Stage 2 procedures, with support if necessary from another governor.
- The rest of the governing body will not become involved in discussing the complaint at this stage.

### **Procedure**

1. If you are issuing a stage 2 Formal Complaint you must put the complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors or headmaster on the appropriate form (see Annex A). The chair of governors, headmaster or person investigating your complaint should acknowledge the complaint orally or in writing within three days of receipt and set a target date for providing a response. Ideally, this should be within ten working days. If it is not possible to deal with the matter in this time, you should be informed of when it is likely to be concluded.
2. The person investigating your complaint may offer you an opportunity to meet him/her. You can be accompanied by a friend or relative who can speak on your behalf if you so wish.

3. If necessary the person investigating will take statements from those involved.
4. The person investigating will keep written records of meetings, telephone conversations and other documentation. Once the relevant facts have been established, the person investigating will either write to you or arrange a meeting to resolve the matter. This meeting will be followed up with a letter summarising the outcome of the meeting.
5. You will be advised in this letter that if you remain unhappy with the outcome, you may appeal to a panel of governors. You must notify the chair of governors of your intention to appeal within two weeks of receiving the letter detailing the outcome of your complaint.

### **STAGE 3 – APPEAL TO GOVERNORS**

#### **Guidelines**

- Complaints rarely reach the appeal stage, but it is important that our governing body is prepared to deal with them. Professional advice may be sought.
- The aim of the appeal is to resolve your complaint and achieve reconciliation between yourself and the school. This is not always possible. It may only be possible for governors to hear the facts and views of a situation, make recommendations about future action, and satisfy you that your complaint has been taken seriously.
- The governing body must be impartial and independent and be seen to be. Your individual complaint will not be considered by the full governing body. The governing body will establish a panel to deal with your complaint, having nominated a pool of governors from which three can be drawn for your hearing.
- Panel members should have had no prior involvement with your complaint. The chair of governors will not be on the panel if they have been involved at an earlier stage. Governors will have regard, where possible, to having a mix of types of governor on the panel and be sensitive to issues of equal opportunity in the composition of the panel.
- Individual governors should not get involved in looking into your complaint before this stage to avoid prejudicing their potential involvement. If you approach an individual governor regarding your complaint, they should refer you to the schools complaints procedure, making the necessary introduction to a member of staff or headmaster if appropriate.
- If your complaint reaches the appeal stage it is because you are not satisfied with our response so far. In this situation it is perhaps helpful for the governing body to view your complaint as being against the school rather than an individual staff member whose actions may have led to the original complaint.

## Procedure

Upon receipt of your written request for the complaint to proceed to Stage Three, the following procedure will be followed.

A suitable clerk to the panel will be appointed by the Chair of Governors, who will also determine the membership of the complaints panel of three governors.

1. The clerk will write to you acknowledging receipt of your written request, and informing you that it will be heard by a panel of the governing body within 15 working days of receipt.
2. The clerk will convene a meeting of the complaints panel at a time which is convenient for you, the panel and the school.
3. The clerk will ensure that you, the headmaster and any other witnesses are given at least five working days notice in writing of the date, time and place of the hearing or otherwise are in full agreement of a shorter timescale. The letter of notification to you will also inform you of your right to be accompanied by a friend/relative who can speak on your behalf. The letter should establish whether there are communications issues – such as language, hearing impairment – and the clerk should make suitable arrangements as required. The letter will set out the procedure for the conduct of the hearing and your right to submit further written evidence to the committee.
4. The clerk will invite the Headmaster and/or the person investigating your complaint to attend the hearing and to submit a written report for the panel in response to your complaint. The Headmaster may also invite the chair of governors or any other members of staff directly involved in matters raised by you to respond in writing and/or in person to your complaint. Any involvement of other staff is at the discretion of the chair of the panel.
5. All relevant documents should be received by all parties at least five days before the meeting of the panel. This provides adequate opportunity to read them prior to the start of the meeting.
6. The chair of the panel should ensure that proper minutes of the meeting are taken.
7. The chair of the panel should try to ensure that the proceedings are sufficiently informal that all participants feel at ease.
8. At the conclusion of the representations and questions, the chair should explain that the panel will consider the issues and write to both parties with their decision or judgement within 3 days.
9. All except for the governors' panel and any advisers should then withdraw and the panel should consider the evidence. This should include: a judgement about the validity of your complaint; appropriate action to be taken by the school and/or you; and where appropriate, recommendations on changes to the

school's systems or procedures to ensure similar problems do not arise in the future.

10. The school will keep a copy of all correspondence and notes confidentially on file. This should be separate from pupils' personal records.
11. The broad outcomes recommended by the panel can be reported to the next full governing body or appropriate committee with the identity of all those taking part kept confidential. The governing body should monitor implementation of the recommendations.

ANNEX A

**Stage 2 - Formal Complaint**

*Part One* – to be completed by the complainant

**Your Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

**Date:** ..... **Contact Phone number:** .....

**Name of son/daughter:** ..... **Form:** .....  
(if applicable)

**Brief statement of the nature of complaint** (a summary of the complaint only):

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Was the complaint raised informally?**                      **Yes/No**

**If so, with whom?** .....

**When?** .....

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*Part Two* – to be completed by the school:

**Person to deal with complaint:** .....

**Has the complainant put their full complaint in writing? Yes / No / Not yet**

**Date complaint received** ..... **Signed:** .....

**Once the complaint is in writing, this pro-forma and full written complaint must be forwarded to the Headmaster (unless the complaint is against the Headmaster) who will decide who will conduct the investigation.**