

Curriculum Policy (Senior)



CATERHAM
SCHOOL

ISI Code:

2a Curriculum Policy

Policy Authors:

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CATERHAM SCHOOL PURPOSE STATEMENT

Inspiring Education for Life

Caterham School is one of the leading co-educational schools in the country. We are committed to providing an environment in which all pupils are challenged to be the best they can be and one in which pastoral care and wellbeing underpin academic, co-curricular and sporting excellence. The majority of our pupils are day pupils but we are also a thriving boarding community, which enriches the educational opportunity and experience for all. We believe in providing an education for life for all Caterhamians and we seek to ensure that the learning experience at our school blends the best of tradition with the exciting opportunities provided by new technology. Learning how to learn is a key facet of a Caterham education and is in our view an essential skill for life in the twenty-first century. We believe that a truly excellent school is about more than academic achievement alone: it is also about developing a passion for learning, a capacity for independent and critical thinking, self-awareness and resilience, self-confidence without arrogance and genuine interests that extend beyond the confines of the classroom.

At Caterham School we focus on developing the whole person, aiming to ensure that each pupil leaves here ready for the challenges of life at university and beyond and understanding their responsibilities towards others. We want our pupils to leave Caterham well equipped to engage positively with a rapidly changing world as accomplished problem solvers and innovators, confident in their ability to lead and with a clear appreciation of and respect for the views and potential of others. In so doing we remain true to our founding Christian principles and values.

Curriculum Policy Statement

Responsibility for this policy's effective implementation rests with the Headmaster, who delegates to the Principal Deputy Head, Deputy Head (Director of Studies), Deputy Head (Innovation) and the Director of Learning and Teaching. Heads of Department, Heads of Year, tutors and individual subject teachers also have a key role to play, as do the pupils themselves. The policy is supported by schemes of work developed by individual departments.

This policy, the School's schemes of work and other plans take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan and do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Caterham affords full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. We ensure:

- that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills

- that Caterham provides personal, social, health and economic education (through our Wellbeing programme) which reflects the School's aims and ethos (purpose statements) and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act(a)
- that Caterham provides access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner; enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential
- that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress
- that there is effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

The School is committed to providing a rigorous academic and intellectual education which will challenge and engage pupils, offer continuity and progression of learning to foster a lifelong love of learning for its own sake and provide them with a secure foundation on which to continue into Higher Education and into the careers of their choice.

The Curriculum

In the Senior School, in Key Stages Three and Four, the core curriculum of subjects provides the opportunity for pupils to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy. These are further developed in their other subjects. Pupils are taught 40 periods per week (35, 40 or 45 minute periods) below the Sixth Form.

For pupils in First to Fifth Years, the curriculum contains compulsory subjects which provide experience in the following areas:

Linguistic: English Language, English Literature and at least one modern foreign language are studied throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. A second modern foreign language, Latin and Mandarin are studied compulsorily in First and Second Years and optionally thereafter to GCSE. Greek is studied optionally from the Third Year.

Mathematical: Mathematics and Science are studied throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. Computer Science is studied in First and Second Years and optionally thereafter to GCSE.

Scientific: sciences (taught separately as Physics, Chemistry and Biology) are studied throughout Key Stages 3 and 4.

Technological: all pupils in First and Second Years follow courses in Computer Science and Design & Technology (including CAD) and many continue one or both of these in Third Year and to GCSE.

Human & Social: all pupils study History, Geography and Philosophy and Theology in First, Second and Third Years and all pupils take at least one of these subjects to GCSE. Additionally, all pupils follow a course in Wellbeing and Edge which run throughout KS3 and 4.

Aesthetic & Creative: in addition to creative writing in English, all pupils in First and Second Years follow courses in Music, Drama, Art, 3D Design & Technology and Computer Science. Many continue with at least one of these to GCSE. For those that do not there is a wide range of cultural activities and events to attend – participation is monitored by tutors and via a regular co-curricular audit. Many pupils learn a musical instrument and/or take LAMDA lessons. The Edge course also addresses issues of creativity.

Physical: all pupils have timetabled PE and Games in First to Fourth Years, and timetabled Games in Fifth Year.

Spiritual: all pupils have lessons in Philosophy and Theology during First, Second and Third Years and attend regular assemblies, which collectively provide a key means of developing human and social education and promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Timetabled Wellbeing lessons are provided in First to Fifth Years.

It should be emphasised that many of the subjects listed above help to develop more than the key area of experience to which they have been attached. For example, linguistic skills are developed in almost all subjects, not merely in English or in Modern or Ancient Languages.

All curriculum subject matter is tailored to the age and aptitudes of the pupils in each school year, including any pupils with an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan whose needs are reviewed annually. Our curriculum provision enables all pupils to have the opportunity to learn and make progress, including those with special educational needs. Every opportunity, for all pupils, is provided to enable them to develop their speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills, as set out in the schemes of work for each curriculum area.

The curriculum provides for the teaching of Wellbeing which is taught to class groups as a timetabled discrete subject, working concurrently with the Wellbeing Policy and schemes of work where further details can be found. The Wellbeing curriculum reflects the School's aims and ethos (Purpose Statement). These documents should be read in conjunction with one another, along with Teaching and Learning, Special Educational Needs/Disabilities and the provision for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education.

Lesson Disposition

All pupils study a core curriculum of Mathematics, English, Science, a Modern Language and a Humanity until the end of Key Stage 4, and there is also the opportunity for them to build around that a combination of other optional subjects. Quite deliberately, the school chooses each year to construct Third, Fourth and Fifth Year timetables around pupils' choices, and not the other way around; thus there are no predetermined 'Option Blocks'. The School aims to run any course for which there is sufficient demand.

First and Second Years

A full timetable of 40 x 35-45 minute lessons, distributed as follows:

Mathematics (4 in the First Year; 5 in the Second Year)
English (4)
Science (5) (taught by subject specialists in Biology, Chemistry and Physics in half-termly rotations)
Two European Modern Languages (2 x 3 in the First Year; 2 x 2 in the Second Year)
Mandarin (1)
Latin (2 in the First Year; 3 in the Second Year)
History (2)
Geography (2)
Philosophy and Theology (2)
Art (1.5 in the First Year; 2 in the Second Year)
Design & Technology (1.5 in the First Year; 2 in the Second Year – inc. Edge)
Music (1)
Drama (1)
PE and Games (4)
Wellbeing (1)
Computer Science (1)
Edge (1 in the First Year; 2 for one term in the Second Year as part of D&T)

NB The Edge course consists of three strands – Learning to Learn, Big Ideas and Problem-solving in Action. It seeks to develop pupils' collaborative, creative and digital skills, culminating in an extended group project with a defined outcome.

Third Year

A full timetable of 40 x 35-45 minute lessons. An element of choice is introduced to enable pupils to explore those subjects more fully for which they have a natural enthusiasm and/or aptitude. All pupils study the core curriculum of the following subjects:

English (5)
Mathematics (5)
Science (9) (taught separately as Physics, Chemistry and Biology)
History (2)
Geography (2)
Philosophy and Theology (2)
At least one Modern Language (3)
PE and Games (3)
Wellbeing/Edge (1) (termly rotation with two terms of Wellbeing and one term of Edge)

This curriculum is supplemented by a choice of three further subjects (2 or 3 lessons per week for each option) from Latin, Greek, Modern Languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian), Art, Design & Technology, Computer Science, Music and Drama. An options booklet is provided to help pupils and their parents to make informed choices.

Fourth and Fifth Years

A full timetable of 40 x 35-45 minute lessons, in which subjects falling into three categories are studied. A mixture of GCSEs and IGCSEs are taken.

Compulsory examination subjects:

English Language and English Literature (5ppw in Fourth Year, 6 in Fifth Year)

Maths (5)

Science (9) (taught as Physics, Chemistry and Biology throughout, with approximately 15% of the year taking Double Award Science in the Fifth Year)

A Modern Foreign Language (4) (chosen from French, German, Spanish or Italian as a continuation from Third Year study)

A Humanity (4) (chosen from Geography, History or Philosophy and Theology)

Optional examination subjects:

Two further subjects are chosen from the following (4ppw for each):

Latin

Greek

Modern Languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian)

Geography

History

Philosophy and Theology

Art

Fashion Textiles

Design & Technology

Business Studies

Computer Science

Drama

Music

GCSE PE

Non-examined compulsory subjects:

Wellbeing (1ppw)

Games and PE (3 – one lesson of which is replaced by Edge in the autumn term of the Fifth Year)

The Sixth Form

At Sixth Form, a similar open policy applies to pupils' choice of A Level subjects. Pupils have a free choice of any four - or in some cases five - A Levels, and the School aims to run any course in which numbers are viable.

The following 24 subjects are offered:

Art: Fine Art

Art: Textiles

Biology

Business
Chemistry
Drama and Theatre
Economics
English Literature
French
German
Geography
Greek
History
Latin
Mathematics
Further Mathematics
Music
P.E.
Philosophy, Ethics and Theology
Photography
Physics
Politics
Product Design
Psychology
Spanish

Advice is given to all pupils regarding their A Level choices and in the Fifth Year this advice includes an individual interview with the Head of Year, their Assistant or a member of the Senior or pastoral team. An options booklet is provided to help pupils and their parents to make informed choices, and a Sixth Form Open Evening allows them to experience first-hand the flavour of different A Level lessons before committing themselves to specific subjects.

All pupils initially study at least four A Level subjects. An in-house course, the L6 Edge course, is also followed in the Lower Sixth. It consists of three strands – Learning to Learn, Big Ideas and Problem-solving in Action. It seeks to develop pupils' collaborative, creative and digital skills, culminating in an extended group project with a defined outcome. This runs alongside academic enrichment, and our Independent Research Project programme. The IRP is not unlike an EPQ, and pupils can elect to undertake one on a topic of their choice, leading to the creation of an academic paper or artefact; those who make the shortlist then present to an independent panel of judges at the IRP finals evening, where awards are decided. The Sixth Form curriculum of examination subjects is further supplemented by an innovative non-examined 'Forum' programme, including expert-led lectures and seminars on topics such as drug abuse, sexual health and safe driving. This programme is designed to prepare pupils for the responsibilities and opportunities of adult life.

Appropriateness

At each level the School seeks to ensure that the subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of the pupils. Opportunities exist to acquire and develop skills in speaking and listening (most obviously in modern languages, at least one of which is compulsory to GCSE), literacy (most obviously in English) and numeracy (most obviously in Mathematics and the sciences). The principal language of instruction is English, except in some Modern Language lessons where the target language is used as appropriate.

The curriculum requires the majority of pupils to take GCSEs or IGCSEs in 9 to 11 subjects. Sixth Form pupils typically start A Level courses in 4 subjects. A majority of pupils drop a subject by the end of the first term of the Lower Sixth. Typically, around 10% continue with all 4 subjects through to the end of the course.

All pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress through the ways in which tasks are matched to the needs of the individual. Where possible and appropriate, setting by ability in certain subjects aids the provision of subject matter at a suitable pace.

English as an Additional Language

Pupils whose first language is not English are assessed prior to entry into Caterham School and again upon arrival during their induction programme to ascertain their individual English language capabilities and needs. Extra support is provided as necessary through timetabled EAL (English as an Additional Language) lessons. These lessons aim to develop the pupils' English language skills and communicative ability and to build the pupils' confidence to succeed in an English-speaking environment.

In the First, Second and Third Years, pupils may receive up to three periods a week of EAL in addition to their main English classes, in place of one of their Option choices or MFLs. In the Fourth Year, pupils have the opportunity to follow either the IGCSE English as a First Language or IGCSE English as a Second Language. Pupils in the Fourth and Fifth Years may receive five or six timetabled lessons of EAL respectively.

In the Sixth Form, international pupils attend an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) preparation course of two periods a week conducted on Saturday mornings. They remain on this course until they secure a high enough IELTS score to enter their preferred university.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Gifted and Talented

We aim to screen new pupils for learning difficulties and disabilities during their first half term at Caterham, as well as acting upon any information passed on by the pupil's previous school. The screening tests highlight those pupils who are gifted and those who have specific learning difficulties. Pupils who have been assessed as having a specific learning difficulty or disability have their needs considered individually by qualified specialist staff. The provision for a pupil with a specific learning difficulty depends on that pupil's needs having been formally diagnosed; it may include such help as group support within the classroom. Teaching staff are well informed, have up-to-date knowledge of effective learning and

teaching strategies and are skilled at teaching pupils with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Differentiated work offers all children the opportunity to extend their knowledge in the classroom and in small group activities. There are also innumerable clubs and societies to stretch and challenge our able, gifted and talented pupils, together with enrichment classes for Sixth Formers.

Careers

Careers guidance is provided by the Head of Careers, who provides support and advice as well as organising an extensive programme of additional talks, seminars and events by outside agencies, speakers and advisers. The Head of Careers also supports the organisation of work experience for Fifth Year pupils. For university application, there is a rigorous process which is overseen by the Director of Sixth Form.

Private Study

Sixth Form pupils have provision for Private Study which includes use of the Pye Sixth Form Centre, the Maggs Library and the Sixth Form Study Room. Boarders may return to their Houses after lunch to study privately if they do not have scheduled lessons. In some cases, the Sixth Form Team may insist that a pupil attends Supervised Private Study.

Games

The Games programme involves the use of facilities at the Old Caterhamians Sports Ground and on the main school site. The multi-gym, Sports Hall, Astroturf and various indoor facilities are used for a variety of sporting activities during Senior Games afternoons. In the Senior School, each pupil, regardless of age, participates in a full Games programme on one afternoon of the week.

Academic Ethos

In the Senior School, considerable emphasis is placed upon examination success (most pupils will obtain between 9 or 10 GCSEs and 3 or 4 A Levels) though it is important that as much attention is given to those who find academic work challenging as to the high-fliers. Colleagues are expected to monitor academic performance closely and take remedial action promptly in the case of those pupils who are struggling. All pupils are expected to give of their best and to be encouraged to develop their natural talents to the full. Modest results for pupils who may find academic work challenging are as worthy of recognition as those pupils who attain a suite of top grades.

Options Booklets

These information booklets set out the key information necessary to make option choices for the Third Year, GCSE and A Level. They can be accessed and downloaded from the main curriculum section of the School website.