



## Curriculum Policy

Date approved:	August 2024
Review cycle:	Every 2 years
Party responsible:	Student Committee
Linked Policies:	Academically More Able Student Policy; Assessment, Recording & Reporting Policy, Literacy Policy, Schemes of Work, SEND Policy

### Overview

The vision of The Swanage School is integrated into the design and structure of the curriculum and organisation of learning. The curriculum is aligned to our vision by enabling a human scale approach to learning; smaller than average class sizes, personalised tracking systems and the emphasis on relationships. There is a relentless emphasis on empowering all students to achieve at the highest levels academically, whilst developing positive relationships and a strong sense of responsibility in the school and wider community.

In order to fully meet the needs of all students, The Swanage School offers an innovative, broad and balanced curriculum providing a framework of academic challenge that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and become critical and reflective thinkers. The School largely follows the National Curriculum in terms of subject offer in each year group and aims to deliver this in an innovative way.

The Swanage School is committed to strengthening the link between the curriculum and the needs of industry and the employer. In this respect an initiative has begun to equip students with additional, 'employer led' skills and competencies that complement and link the core elements of subject knowledge. Examples of this approach could include supplementary training on 'communication in the workplace' which places English in the context of customer service or responding to the needs of a client. In time it is hoped that all students will build a 'portfolio' of skills and competencies that sit alongside the more traditional qualifications.

The curriculum is fully accessible to disabled students, those with special educational needs (SEN) but sufficiently challenging for the most able of students.

### The Aims of the Curriculum

- Provide an intellectually rigorous community where learning is central
- Ensure that students have the opportunity to develop skills of literacy, numeracy and communication across the curriculum
- Enable students to have ownership of their learning and their achievement
- Ensure that students develop self-belief and the resilience to achieve their ambitions

- Inspire a human-scale approach with relationships at the heart of learning
- Create an innovative and challenging learning experience
- Promote all aspects of students' personal development (PSHE), including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

## Curriculum and Qualifications

The Curriculum challenges students to engage in academic excellence, make a contribution to society, participate in their local community and be global students with strong leadership and teamwork skills. Local partnerships provide additional forms of learning that will be accessed by the school.

## The Learning Framework

The learning framework is intended to support high quality teaching and ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the students, supported by highly effective leadership, management, pastoral care and academic guidance.

The learning framework is designed to cater for each individual student's needs. Throughout the fortnightly cycle of lessons and the extended curriculum students are engaged in a flexible, broad and balanced entitlement that recognises each individual's strengths and weaknesses.

In line with human scale education principles we aim for each student in years 7 and 8 to have fewer teachers than is often the norm in secondary school.

Students at The Swanage School are expected to take part in four key elements of the learning framework throughout their time at The Swanage School.

- National Curriculum / English Baccalaureate
- Challenge Days
- Challenge Weeks
- Extended Curriculum

- I. National Curriculum:** Whilst The Swanage School does not have to comply with the requirements of the National Curriculum (NC), in general the NC forms the basis of the school curriculum.

In years 7 and 8 students are taught using a project-based learning approach for humanities subjects, with the aim to also develop literacy and independent learning skills.

In year 9 students are given the opportunity to gain additional relevant qualifications and experience, for example qualifications in CPR, First Aid, Health and Hygiene and Inclusion and Diversity.

In Key Stage four all students follow GCSEs in Maths, English and GCSE Science. It is an expectation that the majority of students will follow a 'separate science' program, resulting in separate GCSE qualifications in each science. Some students will follow the double science GCSE. All students are taught the sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) as separate subjects throughout KS3 and KS4

Students may follow courses to achieve the 'English Baccalaureate': GCSEs in English Literature and English Language, Maths, Science, History and/or Geography and French.

Students have a choice of 'option subjects'. Option choices may include:

Art, Food and Nutrition, Computer Science, Creative Media Production, Design Technology, Drama, French, Geography, History, Music, Physical Education (PE), Philosophy, Religion & Ethics (PRE).

In some circumstances personalised vocational pathways are put in place alongside this traditional curriculum offer for students if this is more appropriate, for example GCSE Further Mathematics or additional languages.

Students are predominantly taught in mixed attainment groups across all subjects across both key stages. However, each cohort is different and we allow ourselves the flexibility to respond to each cohort on an individual basis and needs of the cohort. Students' groups are reviewed every half term.

2. **Challenge Days:** These are days when the whole-school timetable is collapsed. They provide opportunities for learning within and beyond the classroom. Challenge days provide the flexibility to extend the school day, facilitate visits, participate in local crafts and activities (such as conservation work, enterprise activities, in-depth investigations).
  
3. **Challenge Week:** This occurs once a year – in the final week of the school year in July. The whole-school timetable is collapsed for the entire week. During this time students work across year groups. The challenge week gives an opportunity for deep learning, where students spend time really 'getting under the skin' of a subject or concept and often includes experiences that build character and resilience. With time comes the opportunity for independent learning, independent investigation and high-quality learning outcomes.  
  
Whilst the purpose for each challenge week varies and usually includes residential and non-residential learning opportunities, the common thread is that students hold a plenary day at the end of the week, where learning is shared.
  
4. **Extended Curriculum:** extra-curricular clubs and activities that take place every day after school, usually for an hour, but in some cases longer. The extended curriculum allows students to become inspired by something that might stay with them for the rest of their lives.

## The Swanage School Way

At every opportunity students are encouraged to demonstrate and celebrate 'The Swanage School Way'. Built on the 4 pillars of 'Character' 'Community' 'Productivity' and 'Ambition', The Swanage School Way is embedded in the curriculum through crew time, learning attitudes and behaviour.

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The effectiveness of the Curriculum Policy is monitored, evaluated and reviewed both day to day and more strategically:

- I. On-going monitoring:

- Formal lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Sampling of students' work
- Feedback from students
- Discussions between members of staff
- Feedback from parents.

2. Strategic monitoring and evaluation:

- Schemes of Work are reviewed at the end of the period of study, or annually as appropriate
- Analysis of student summative assessment data
- Feedback from students

The Governing Body will review the Curriculum policy every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.