

Curriculum Intent at The Piggott School

Our curriculum offer provides a caring environment based on our Christian Vision and Values. Children are encouraged to help each other and receive help when they need it, as exemplified by our school's Christian Vision to

'Go and do Likewise', Luke 10:37, The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Our school aims are:

- To provide a caring environment based on our Christian Vision and Values
- To develop enquiring minds capable of independent thought
- To promote the value of lifelong learning
- To be open to new ideas
- To encourage respect and tolerance

At The Piggott School, we provide a curriculum which:

- Is as rich, inspiring and broad as possible and includes student led choice, to allow students to widen their horizons in each subject.
- Provides the depth that enables students to master the key knowledge and skills essential for each subject and covers all areas of the National Curriculum.
- Is well designed, inclusive and carefully sequenced to provide all students with a rigorous foundation for success and future progression.
- Fosters the development of students' spirituality, character, personal development, health and wellbeing, preparing them to make a valuable contribution to society and to keep healthy and safe.
- Engenders high expectations and challenge, together with support and resilience, in order to build perseverance and self-belief.
- Provides students with opportunities to take their learning beyond the classroom to develop their advocacy, character, cultural capital, love of learning, independence and creative thinking.
- Offers students a wide range of opportunities to own and personalise their curriculum in order to develop existing talents and interests, and discover new ones.
- Enables students to maximise their potential, achieving the highest levels of academic success widening future pathways and instilling a lifelong love of learning.
- Raises students' aspirations and equips them with the knowledge and skills to flourish in their future careers as responsible citizens.
- Supports all students to become confident, articulate and erudite, and are able to lead, persuade, inspire and challenge others.

Delivery of our curriculum:

- Embraces the concept of 'quality first teaching' with teachers having freedom to use their professional expertise.
- Places trust in our teachers and carefully manages their workload.
- Carefully planned and sequenced learning which focuses on building knowledge and skills over time.

- Engenders high expectations of all students.
- Builds students' resilience, confidence, wisdom and self-belief.
- Is delivered by subject experts, many of whom are examiners or moderators, and is underpinned by evidence-based practice.
- Recognises that making mistakes is part of learning; we all need help to grow.
- Self-reflection and seeking help is an important part of developing. Students are encouraged to be courageous in seeking, and giving, help.
- Uses assessment to help students embed and use knowledge fluently, check understanding and inform future teaching and learning.
- Ensures feedback is regular, and in a variety of forms (verbal, non-verbal, written, digital, smiley stamps etc), so that students know their strengths, areas for development, and next steps, and are given opportunities to address these whilst also recognising staff workload.
- Utilises the latest technology to support learning and reduce staff workload, and ensure all students develop their digital literacy.
- Develops students' literacy and numeracy skills.

Curriculum Implementation

Key Stage 3

All students follow a broad and balanced curriculum at KS3. There is complete coverage of the National Curriculum. Students have lessons in RE, PSHCE including RSHE, mathematics, English, reading, science, PE, computing, history, geography, drama, music, art, French, an additional modern language (from a choice of German, Spanish and Mandarin), Design Technology and Food technology.

The school teaches a broad range of subjects (exemplified by the national curriculum) throughout Years 7 to 9. Our schemes of work are continuously reviewed to ensure at least the entirety of the national curriculum statutory content is covered during Years 7 & 8; our curriculum model, specialist teachers, high prior attainment of pupils and small class sizes facilitate this. We operate a unique curriculum model in KS3 whereby average class sizes are small for all subjects. Foundation subjects have class sizes of 21 in the creative block (Art, French, DT & Food) and the second MFL block (German, Spanish and Mandarin). The core subjects and the remaining foundation subjects have average class sizes of 26 in the linear block (History, Geography, RE, Computing, Drama). This model of small class sizes also reduces workload for staff, benefiting their mental health and work life balance.

We focus extra staffing resources at all year groups rather than a focus solely on examination years. Ours is a school which strives for excellence from day one. Our PAN of 206¹ gives us eight tutor groups, rather than the traditional seven, giving teachers smaller classes and, consequently, children more time with their teachers. Our policy of overstaffing seeks to ensure that all children are taught by a subject specialist, and if we have long term staff absence this can then be covered internally. We also have assistant heads of year attached to Years 7 to 11 who support the pastoral team and have a particular focus on supporting disadvantaged children.

¹ In 2021, due to exceptional local demand, we have increased the number of children entering our school in Year 7 to 231, and thus had nine form groups in Year 7 of 2021/22. In 2022/23 we admitted 252 children into Year 7 to meet this local demand, and plan to admit 252 into Year 7 of 2023/24.

Advice and guidance for children in choosing their options is comprehensive and universal. All children have an options interview with a senior member of staff and have the opportunity to discuss their choices in detail. Parents are also included in this process. There is always the facility for children to change their option choices at any point during the course of study, and there are specific points when this is raised to the whole year group and to individuals.

It is for these reasons, and more, that The Piggott School firmly believes in a two year KS3 and three year KS4 programme of study. The breadth of opportunity, both in and outside of the classroom more than satisfies the requirement for a broad and rich curriculum and that the school provides the opportunity for all children to study, and be taught, a broad range of subjects, commensurate with the national curriculum, in Years 7 to 9.

Key Stage 4

The Piggott School has been operating a three year Key Stage 4 for over a decade. It is firmly established and very successful. It best prepares children for their examinations, future choices and gives them the opportunity to choose a good number of subjects from a wide range of options. We feel that a three year KS4 is also beneficial to our children's mental health by staggering the content elements of GCSE over a longer period of time. Our three year KS4 improves our ability to offer a broad and rich curriculum which exceeds the national curriculum. It provides a seamless transition from KS3 into KS4 for all children.

By operating a three year KS4 we can give children four GCSE option choices, rather than three.² This means there are more subjects available to choose and therefore the range on offer is much broader than in other schools. Children choose their options from a free choice pool and we build the unique curriculum model around their choices every year.

We always run subjects, even if uptake is low, for a particular year group. For the small number of children for whom four GCSE options may be too much, they are also offered additional support and guidance throughout KS4 through our Green Room provision.

EBacc

The school supports the government's ambition in regards to the EBacc. Students are very strongly advised and encouraged to continue to study a range of EBacc subjects, especially a modern foreign language in KS4, and the majority do so.

In recent years we have significantly increased our staffing and upgraded our physical and digital resourcing in MFL. This has enabled very small class sizes in KS3, improving students' access and engagement with languages. This had led to even more students studying MFL at KS4 and KS5. We have an increasing number of dual linguists in KS4. One of our specialist French staff teaches Years 3, 4, 5, and 6 in our primary site each week.

Uptake for other EBacc subjects is strong. We typically run six or seven Geography classes in each year group, two history, three computer science and nine or ten MFL. All children study English language, English Literature, mathematics and at least combined (double) science.

² We operate a 4|4|5 model Years 9,10,11 as opposed to a 5|5 model in Years 10, 11.

Our broad offer, facilitated by the three year KS4, means we always run all of our courses at GCSE (and A level). Indeed, in recent years we have added Photography, Creative iMedia, Further Maths and also Statistics to our GCSE offer. Thus, our curriculum offer is evolving based on student choice and expanding for the more academic and more vocational alike. Uptake for the foundation subjects at GCSE is exceptional. This broad choice, which includes EBacc and many non-EBacc subjects, ensures our curriculum meets the needs and aspirations of all learners.

There are always several options classes of each of the EBacc (foundation) subjects of Art, music, design technology, food technology, computing, history and geography, in addition to the other subjects on offer. We always have four MFL subjects: German, Spanish, French and Mandarin, with multiple classes in the European languages each year. We are also a DfE funded Mandarin Excellence Programme school. We always run classes of triple (separate) science and this is part of the core curriculum, not as an option choice.

We are all aware of the pressures children are under in our modern world. Our three year KS4 enables children to approach their GCSE studies over a longer period of time, covering content gradually. It is also beneficial for any students who miss large chunks of Year 10 or 11 through illness or for personal reasons. It was especially supportive during the Covid pandemic. The feedback we receive from staff, children and parents is that this approach significantly helps children in managing their workload at GCSE. Children have reported that they are ready to choose their options and feel lucky that we offer a three year KS4 when comparing themselves to friends in other schools.

Our curriculum allows children to take RE GCSE at the end of Year 10. This frees up some curriculum time for them to undertake revision, reflection and review, social advocacy, and the statutory content for PSHCE and RE lessons during Year 11. It gives children an experience of revising for, and taking, a GCSE examination in Year 10, prior to their many exams in Summer of Year 11. Children also have the opportunity to take a level 2 qualification in Dance during their core PE lessons.

Our school has been peer and externally assessed by the SSAT Leading Edge Programme. We have been awarded 'Transforming' in a number of strands, including Principled Curriculum Design, Climate for Learning, Well-Being and Leadership with a Moral Purpose.

Key Stage 5

Our sixth form provision is outstanding with over thirty different subjects on offer. Our curriculum is built around the choices of our students rather than from predefined option block choices.

We offer pathways in A levels, vocational subjects, hybrid A level and vocational and a coaching academy. We also have a highly successful girls' football academy choice as an extra-curricular offer.

Students also have PE, RE, tutor and assemblies time built into their curriculum together with academic support and mentoring. We employ advice and guidance mentors to assist students with their pastoral needs and academic aspirations as well as more and most able advisors to assist with EPQ, Oxbridge, medical, veterinary science and dental applications. Curriculum enrichment sessions further support pupils in KS5. Mandarin HSK qualifications are also available.

Our full sixth form offer can be found in our sixth form prospectus.

Curriculum Impact

Our full range of examination results can be found on our website.

Destinations and attendance data is available on request.

Please also view our website for examples of how we promote cultural capital and character education.

To demonstrate the impact of our curriculum please see the selection of quotes below from OfSTED, The Minister of State for School Standards, and SIAMS inspectors.

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent at this school.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners.
- Pupils make superb progress.
- Pupils at key stages 3 and 4 make exceptional progress.
- They make accelerated progress, gaining exceptionally strong outcomes in A levels, vocational subjects and technical awards.
- 16-19 Study Programmes ... outstanding
- Value added was significantly above average for the qualification types: academic, GCE A level, GCE AS Level.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are exceptional.
- The strong relationships between staff and pupils ensure behaviour is typically superb.
- Behaviour is outstanding
- Your school's results ... show that you are amongst the top five percent of schools ...
- A culture of keeping pupils safe stretches across the school.
- Effectiveness of Leadership and Management: Outstanding.

The school also holds SSAT Transforming School Status in the following areas:

- Principled Curriculum Design
- Climate for Learning
- Leadership with a Moral Purpose
- Well-Being