

# Bedales School

# Curriculum Policy

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Author	Deputy Head (Academic)
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Approval Body	The Head
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*Tick relevant box(es) ✓ how this Policy should appear:*

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# Bedales School Curriculum Policy

The following policy details the underpinning philosophy and structure of the curriculum, containing an outline of its components at different stages, as well as the process for establishing and reviewing our curricular provision.

The driving principles behind our curriculum are the School aims as set out in the vision document of 2022:

- Bedales is a 'community of learners', who are ambitious and excited by the prospect of inculcating an intrinsic approach to learning.
- Where students leave Bedales with a confident understanding of their own capabilities, self, interests and potential.
- Where a culture of learning drives all members of the school community.
- Where the curriculum and assessment methods encourage a more adaptable and creative response to the individual and to the constantly changing world.
- Where divergent and creative ways of thinking are supported and encouraged, and the profound changes brought about by constant technological innovation are reflected in how we learn.

Flowing from these aims, we strive to deliver teaching and learning which:

- Inspires, engages and enthuses students about their learning, encouraging an appetite for discovery which affects students well beyond their Bedales experience
- Models such an appetite and attitude through the example of committed, enthusiastic teachers who communicate their own love of learning, and whose positive relationships with students encourage a similar outlook
- Creates an environment where questioning, critical, divergent thinking and the freedom to learn from mistakes are all encouraged
- Provides opportunities for students to express themselves creatively in a variety of different media, and to pursue their particular individual interests in a whole-hearted, yet rigorous manner
- Demands high standards of students, recognising that they have different starting points, but can all make significant progress in attainment through sustained effort, self-discipline, cooperation with peers and teachers, and effective attention to feedback; encourages a 'growth mindset'
- Expects students to take responsibility for their own learning by giving them numerous opportunities to work independently (with appropriate support)
- Differentiates in terms of activities in an innovative and imaginative way, depending on particular learning needs, ensuring that all are challenged. In particular, we are committed to making appropriate provision for SEND, EAL and G + T students, both in lessons and outside, as appropriate
- Rigorously prepares students for success in public examinations and for entry to higher education, whilst maintaining a strong understanding that examination success ought not to be the primary goal of education
- Reflects Badley's holistic emphasis on the education of 'head, hand and heart'.

In addition to this, the curriculum is designed to fulfil the regulatory requirements of a curriculum as outlined in the ISI documentation (Handbook for the Inspection of Schools – The Regulatory Requirements – September 2017 – page 7) and at: [The Independent School Standards - Guidance for independent schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/640412/The-Independent-School-Standards-Guidance-for-independent-schools.pdf). An edited version of this is reproduced below with

commentary and brief directions to further information:

- (a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, is drawn up and implemented effectively; these schemes of work are live documents, and stored on our T Drive, and
- (b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work –
  - (i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; it is the responsibility of Heads of Department to ensure that their provision takes these things into account; see our separate Learning Support Policy for further detail, and
  - (ii) 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.

Our overarching assumption in planning our curriculum is that we will ensure that Bedales fulfils the requirements below:

- (a) 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
- (b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills
- (c) where the principal language of instruction is a language other than English, lessons in written and spoken English, except that this matter does not apply in respect of a school which provides education for pupils who are all temporarily resident in England and which follows the curriculum of another country
- (d) personal, social, health and economic education which –
  - (i) reflects the School's aims and ethos, and
  - (ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act(a); this can be seen in the corresponding Wellbeing (PSHE) schemes
- (e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that –
  - (i) is presented in an impartial manner
  - (ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
  - (iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential
- (f) where the School has pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills
- (g) where the School has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs
- (h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress, and
- (i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

Any changes to the curriculum are determined by the Bedales Leadership Team, with other key stakeholders consulted, such as Heads of Department.

## Overview of the curriculum

The following is a brief overview of the curriculum. More detailed and regularly updated descriptions are to be found on the School website. These brochures are reviewed annually by the Deputy Head, Academic, to ensure they reflect any policy changes.

The more detailed schemes of work are 'live' documents, and so are not re-produced in this policy. They are available to all teaching staff and inspectors via the shared areas of each department.

### **Block 3 (Year 9)**

The first week of Bedales life is spent camping and engaging in outdoor pursuits at an activity centre away from the School. This, combined with the first couple of days prior, serves as their induction period.

The academic curriculum introduces and explores new areas of study. Some subjects (notably the sciences) begin to prepare them for GCSE work, which commences fully in Block 4. In addition to work in the classroom, students will be given prep to complete in their own time, or in designated study periods. Block 3 students have the opportunity to study Art, Biology, Chemistry, Design & Technology, Dance & Drama, English, Geography, Global Awareness, History, Mathematics, Outdoor Work, Physics, PRE (Philosophy, Religion and Ethics), Personal, Social & Health Education, Sport. In addition, they choose two or three languages from French, Spanish, Russian and Latin. Students may also choose to study Music.

Since autumn 2020, the Humanities subjects (Geography, Global Awareness, History, PRE) have been delivered through interdisciplinary project-based learning. However, this is under review and the intention from September 2023 is to teach those subjects as stand-alone subjects.

In September 2023, we will be introducing Digital Learning lessons to Block 3.

### **Blocks 4 & 5 (Years 10 and 11)**

Bedales has a unique curriculum in Years 10 & 11. The most innovative element is a range of internally designed Bedales Assessed Courses. These are intended to fulfil our central educational aim of developing inquisitive thinkers with a love of learning. The content of the courses is broad and stimulating, employing a range of assessment methods and offering a far richer educational experience, we believe, than their GCSE counterparts. Assessment includes a mixture of written assignments, presentations, projects and performances, together with terminal examinations as appropriate. Each course is moderated by external experts as a guarantee of academic standards.

Each student's programme is built up from four elements:

#### **Core examined subjects:**

IGCSEs in English, at least one GCSE in a Modern Language, IGCSEs in Mathematics and Science (Double or Triple Award).

#### **Core non-examined subjects:**

All students take part in the Sport programme and in addition can choose between Outdoor Work and more Sport. There is one double period per week of Personal, Social and Health Education, which includes aspects of Personal Development and Current Affairs. This is called 'Wellbeing time'.

**Bedales Assessed Courses:**

Ancient Civilisations; Art; Dance; Design; Digital Game Design; Drama; English Literature; Geography; Global Awareness; History; Outdoor Work; Music; PRE (Philosophy, Religion and Ethics); Sport Science.

**Other externally examined subjects:** GCSEs in Latin; a second modern language. Students who excel in the mock examinations in the January of Block 5, are encouraged to sit the AQA Level 2 qualification in Further Mathematics alongside IGCSE Mathematics at the end of Block 5.

**The Sixth Form**

Sixth Form students enjoy an unusually broad and stimulating environment at Bedales, in which they can combine serious academic responsibility and opportunities for leadership. For example, students help to run – or even initiate – activities and societies, from literature & philosophy to sport or the performing arts. Students in the lower sixth (6.1) share much of the responsibility for running the boarding houses, taking a pastoral role with the younger children and working closely with the house staff.

Each student's programme will include: academic study; physical education; service to the community; cultural and current affairs; moral, ethical and spiritual issues; and a programme of personal development. The normal academic expectation in 6.1 is three subjects. 6.1 students are asked to participate in our Enrichment Programme, which includes the opportunity to undertake a self-directed project (an accredited Extended Project) or Gold DofE, alongside our own short courses. These courses vary from year to year depending on student and staff interest and full details are available on the website.

In 6.2 (upper sixth), students live in the separate co-educational boarding house (although with boys and girls on different floors), which acts as a half-way house between school and the independent living they will face in higher education. They receive a great deal of advice and guidance on choosing, and gaining admission to, universities and colleges. Aside from the four Head Students, many 6.2s take on considerable positions of responsibility, including 'Dons' (subject prefects) and 'Badley Mentors' (mentoring Year 9 students).

The Bedales website gives a full and up-to-date description of subjects and combinations. The following subjects are available: Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Dance, Design (Product), Design (Fashion), Drama and Theatre Studies, Economics, English Literature, Geography, Global Perspectives and Research, Government and Politics, History, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Modern Languages: French or Spanish, Music, Music Technology, Photography, Physics, Psychology, Religious Studies: Philosophy of Religion and Ethics.

Fuller descriptions of the courses of study for each age group are maintained on the School's website at: <http://www.bedales.org.uk/bedales/approach-learning>

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NB: All School policies are available to staff and can be found here:

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