



BIRKENHEAD SCHOOL

Curriculum

The curriculum is the means by which the School achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives. We emphasise the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.

Our curriculum is the sum total of all of the experiences that we plan for students. It includes timetabled lessons, assemblies and Chapel services, sporting fixtures, choir tours, private study, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, careers interviews, drama productions, visits to galleries, musical productions, form tutor time, science clubs, the School Council and everything else that we do. In short, the curriculum encompasses the three main 'Pillars' on which our school stands – the Academic, the Pastoral and the Co-Curricular.

The Curriculum works at its best only with help and support from students and their parents. To experience the breadth of what we offer, pupils need to develop real commitment – to lessons, homework, teams and school life as a whole.

The wide range of off-timetable activities on offer means that even the youngest students have some choice in what they do, although we do ensure that up to the end of Year 8, all pupils follow a common timetabled curriculum. Older students are offered increasing flexibility as their interests and talents become clear.

Our curriculum is in part based upon the enthusiasms and talents of our teachers – which is why we take advantage of our independence to offer something we consider to be superior to the National Curriculum. As part of this, an increasing 'skills' focus at Key Stages 3 and 5 is delivered weekly through our Beyond the Curriculum (BtC) programme. We believe this to be an integral offering to best support and prepare students for A Level study and beyond.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Our School fully supports the principle that young children learn through play and by engaging in well planned, structured activities.

Our Foundation Stage curriculum planning focuses on the EYFS areas of learning and development:

Prime areas of Learning

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Specific areas of learning

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and design

Teachers in the Foundation Stage use a baseline assessment to record the skills of each of the children. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child.

In our curriculum planning, we highlight these skills so that the children's progress in all these areas can be identified and monitored. All areas of the EYFS contribute to a child's progress and our school believes that all children need to experience and develop each of these skill areas in order to develop their true potential.

Tom Whitworth 3rd October 2024. To be reviewed October 2025