

Curriculum & Assessment Policy

Date of Policy: September 2017

Date of Review: September 2019

1. Aims

- 1.1. The curriculum at Thomas Gainsborough School is designed to provide all students with opportunities to pursue a range of personalised pathways, suited to their ambitions and developing skills. Decisions on which pathway to follow and subjects to study are taken by parents and students with the school's advice and guidance arrangements at ages 11, 14 and 16.
- 1.2. Our assessment systems are designed to support outstanding outcomes for all students by recognising achievement, progress and most importantly identifying next steps for improvement.

2. Our curriculum

- 2.1. A key feature of Thomas Gainsborough School is that on entry to the school in year 7 students and their parents choose from three pathways, Grammar, STEM and Broad for their KS3 curriculum. These pathways contain different elements to allow students to develop expertise in a range of subjects. The exact proportion of time spent on each subject changes slightly from year to year, but essentially the Grammar pathway provides more time to develop languages, classics and humanities. The STEM pathway provides more time to develop and enrich knowledge and skills in science and technology. The Broad pathway provides access to a typical secondary school curriculum with breadth through inclusion of discrete Humanities, Arts, MFL and Technology. For a few students a curriculum rich in personalised social and emotional support as well as the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills, known as Access is provided. Each of the main three curriculum pathways contains a number of classes that are grouped by ability, thereby ensuring students of all abilities can follow the curriculum pathway of their choice at an appropriate level.
- 2.2. All three pathways prepare students to make further choices at age 14. Thomas Gainsborough School has taken the decision to retain a three year KS3 curriculum model. Some students **may** refine their curriculum at the end of Year 8, depending on the pathway that they are following.
- 2.3. Choice of pathway is not dependent on prior attainment, although the information advice and guidance provided by school will take prior attainment, and future ambition into account when advising about the appropriateness of a particular pathway for a particular student.
- 2.4. The school regularly reviews the experience of students on the different pathways (a major review was carried out in 2016-17) and considers whether the range of pathways remains appropriate. For example, in the autumn of 2017 a potential "Arts" pathway will be investigated for introduction in 2018.
- 2.5. At age 14 students have to decide between a Grammar or a STEM pathway for KS4. Both pathways provide access to the full range of courses but have different requirements. For example, students on the Grammar pathway have to pick a Modern Foreign Language (including Latin) and a Humanity subject and or Computer Science. Students on a STEM pathway have to select one "EBacc" subject and two subjects from Media Studies, a Technology subject and an ICT based course. These selections will then be combined with Maths, English, Triple or Double Science (dependent on teaching group) and PE. All Students will also be required to take at least one subject from History, Geography, Computer Science or Modern Foreign Languages. In this way, all students retain a broad and balanced curriculum but one that plays to their strengths, interests and aptitudes and builds on the experience that they have had in KS3.
- 2.6. Sixth Form: The majority of students in who start Year 12 take three A levels plus EPQ over two years. A small number of very able students are allowed to take four A levels. Some students in Year 12 study a mix of A levels and Level Three Vocational subjects. Some students can study three Level Three Vocational subjects.
- 2.7. In year 13 the majority of students continue with their three subjects to A level plus EPQ, or A level/Level Three Vocational, or Level Three Vocational combinations. A very small number of students continue with 2 full subjects.
- 2.8. Year 12 students prepare for the EPQ in July and continue this into Year 13, with most completing their EPQ in

the Spring term. Students not studying an EPQ complete a period of relevant Work Experience to support their application Post 18. In year 12 the time after the final AS exam in May is used for UCAS preparation, with most students completing this process during the Autumn term.

- 3.9. Personal Social Health Education, RE, Citizenship and Careers Education is delivered in a variety of ways:- explicit Philosophy lessons at Key Stage 3; Philosophy & Ethics option at GCSE and A Level; Enrichment Days; Tutor time and assemblies based on a fortnightly theme; regular guest speakers; cross - curricular mapping and the Careers Hub.

3. Assessments

- 3.1. Annual examinations for each year group are planned in the school's assessment calendar. These include mock exams for students in the school year that they are due to take public GCSE, BTEC and A level examinations.
- 3.2. Regular assessments are also planned by each subject leader to support preparation for public exams, recognise student achievement, demonstrate progress, provide feedback to students and to assist in planning further learning.
- 3.3. **Assessment for Learning (AfL)**

AfL has been identified as the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by students and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. AfL forms part of effective planning and assessment opportunities and will be integrated into all Schemes of Work. Teachers will consider prior attainment of all pupils when planning lessons. Teachers will generally share learning objectives and success criteria with pupils as a way of ensuring students are involved in assessment procedures. Further guidance for staff as well as examples are available in the Teaching and Learning Guidance handbook.

- 3.4 In 2017-18, after the improvement of marking and feedback through dedicated focus in the School Improvement Plan, Action Research and the input of a range of members of staff, Thomas Gainsborough School has introduced new exercise books, designed to generate more consistency for all students in all subjects as well as dedicated opportunities for students to respond to feedback and improve their work "in situ."

4. Feedback

- 4.1 Feedback to support further progress is provided by teachers through:

- In class questioning
 - Detailed formative marking
 - Learning conversations
 - Summative grades given for particular pieces of work that will inform regularly collected progress grades
- Feedback will be sensitive and constructive, reflecting what has been done well and what is needed to be done in order to improve. The Thomas Gainsborough School Learning and Teaching Policy Guidance states that core subjects should be attempting to provide feedback weekly and all other subjects fortnightly. In practice, the minimum expectation for written feedback is every three lessons.

Feedback should also support whole school attempts to improve standards of literacy and written English, through the consistent application of the marking for literacy guidance (see Appendix 2)

In addition, students will be involved in the assessment process by:

- Being asked to respond to marking by completing an additional task/thinking/redrafting/correcting/reflection to ensure that they have understood and taken on board the feedback given.
- This may include peer and self marking activities. Different subject areas will adopt different practice within these broad principles.

5. Reporting

- 5.1. At the start of each academic year targets are set for each students' level of performance at the end of the Key Stage. These targets are established using information on students' prior attainment, external target setting tools and examinations at the end of the preceding year.
- 5.2. Up to five times each year, as identified in the school assessment calendar, teachers provide a judgement as to how students are progressing. These judgements are based on teachers' use of assessments.
- 5.3. For students within 5 terms of their final examinations, that is from Spring of Year 10 and Spring of Year 12, teacher's also provide a professional predicted grade.
- 5.4. For students in the Sixth Form, in addition to the targets and judgements, comments and next steps for students are recorded at 4 points each year, as identified in the school's annual assessment calendar.
- 5.5. Planned assessments and end of year examinations are reviewed each year with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for the curriculum area.
- 5.6. This information is shared with students, parents and tutors and forms the basis for conversations on Academic Review Days, during Academic Tutoring Meetings and at Subject Surgery appointments where applicable. These conversations are focussed on students progress and the next steps needed to support further progress.

6. Target Grades and Target Bands

- 6.1. Targets for whole cohorts and key student groups are shared with and moderated by the central Samuel Ward Academy Trust team. Progress towards key measures are reported to this team at least termly.
- 6.2. Targets are either expressed as a grade or a broader target band into which students performance is expected to fall.
- 6.3. All students are set challenging, achievable targets at the upper end of a range that they might be expected to achieve when compared to national rates of progress and attainment, to reflect the ambition that the school has for their outcomes at 16 and 18. These are based on a student's prior attainment - the school is ambitious for every student and therefore targets are set at one grade higher than might be expected when compared to national figures between the age of 11 and 16.
- 6.4. These targets for the end of their qualification are also reviewed each year and used to set targets for the end of each key stage. In KS3 there may be some amendment made to these end of year targets to reflect the curriculum pathway that a student is on, especially when there is variation in the number of lessons taught.
- 6.5. Targets are set using a range of available information including students prior attainment, their recent progress and national standards set out by the Department for Education. Information from external sources, for example Fischer Family Trust, will also be used to set realistic but stretching targets.

7. Security Judgement

- 7.1. The security of students performance at a particular target band is judged by each of their teachers to fall into one of three categories and also reported on at each point in the reporting cycle:

Extending	Working very well, at top of band, moving towards next grade
Secure	Working well, likely to gain grade within band
At Risk	Improvements needed

8. Responsibilities

The Deputy Headteacher (Teaching and Learning) and the Assistant Headteachers for each of the three main curriculum areas (Modern Arts, Communications and Enterprise) will oversee the application and implementation of this policy through routine line management, monitoring and evaluation activities, including work scrutiny, pupil voice and reviewing of progress being made.

8.1. Subject leaders will

- Set the curriculum in line with the TGS curriculum pathways and to ensure statutory coverage where applicable and reviewing periodically to reflect changes in priorities or methodology.
- Set a calendar of assessments in order to inform school assessment cycle
- Ensure that appropriate student and subject targets are set and reviewed
- Ensure that assessment is used regularly and effectively and is standardised to provide accurate judgements and professional predicted grades
- Lead standardisation of assessments with other relevant members of staff in school and across applicable teams in the Samuel Ward Multi-Academy Trust
- Lead and conduct regular work scrutiny to ensure consistent application of this policy in terms of feedback provided to students.
- Organise various forms of reporting and planning actions based on their findings, in line with the aims of the School Improvement Plan.

8.2. Subject teachers will

- Teach the curriculum as set out by subject leaders
- Ensure that standardised assessments are carried out, assessed and fed back on in order to inform the school assessment cycle
- Ensure that students are afforded regular opportunities to respond to feedback that they have received in order to make further progress.
- Contribute to the development of assessment in the subject team(s) they are part of

8.3 Heads of House will

- Carry out regular work scrutiny for individuals and groups of students as part of the monitoring of achievement and progress
- Monitor achievement and progress through Academic Review Days and regular Academic Tutoring appointments.
- Liaise with subject staff as appropriate to help address concerns over underachievement or below expected progress.

8.4 Tutors will

- Monitor achievement and progress through Academic Review Days and regular Academic Tutoring appointments.
- Liaise with subject staff as appropriate to help address concerns over underachievement or below expected progress.
- Refer ongoing concerns to the relevant Head of House.

8.5 Students will

- Work hard, meet deadlines and respond to comments that teachers make to help improve further.
- Set weekly and termly targets as per the Academic Review Cycle to meet objectives set on Academic Review Day.

8.6 Parents will

- Support their children by facilitating an environment where preparation tasks, revision and other home learning can be undertaken productively.
- Engage with Academic Review process by attending appointments three times a year.
- Liaise with form tutor and subject staff as necessary.

Appendices:

Marking for Presentation and Literacy Guidance



Curriculum & Assessment Policy Appendix 2

Marking for Presentation & Literacy Good Practice Checklist

These symbols should be used across all subjects in the school to ensure consistency of practice in using marking as a strategy to improve the accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Students should be given the opportunity as part of DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) to correct and/or improve written work based on this sort of feedback.

Symbol	Meaning	Potential Action by Student
Sp + Underline or Circle	Incorrect spelling	Write correction as appropriate
P	Punctuation error	Rewrite sentence with correct punctuation
G	Grammatical error	Rewrite sentence with correct grammar
C	Missing/misuse of capital letter	Write correction as appropriate
//	New paragraph needed	
?	Meaning unclear	Redraft sentence/paragraph

In addition, in each classroom and in all TGS exercise books is a poster showing expectations for all students in terms of how they should present their work. Feedback from teachers should include comments and suggested improvements in relation to this where appropriate, and to encourage students to take genuine pride in their work.

Presentation Rules

L.O. Learning Objective

Label each piece of work either C/wk or H/wk

Date and title underlined using a ruler

Use joined up/cursive handwriting

Start a new piece of work underneath

C/wk	L/O
	<p><u>Wednesday, 9th September 2017</u></p> <p><u>Guidelines for Written Work</u></p> <p>Unless your teacher tells you otherwise:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All work should be written in pen, not pencil.2. Only black or dark blue ink is to be used. Only use a different coloured pen for responding to feedback as directed by your teacher.3. Write the date in full on the top line, right hand side of the page.4. Label each new piece of work 'c/wk' or 'h/wk'5. All work should have a heading or a title which is underlined using a ruler.6. If a mistake is made it should be crossed threw through with a single line. No tippex.7. Paper should not be wasted. Each piece of work should follow on from the previous piece without leaving unnecessary spaces unless directed by your teacher.8. Try to use joined handwriting unless you are asked to print and make sure your writing is clear and easy to read.9. Rule off each completed piece of work.10. Be proud of your work! Keep your book neat and tidy. No doodling or graffiti <p><u>Thursday, 10th September 2017</u></p>

Full date in top right hand corner

Full title written clearly and neatly

Mistakes crossed through neatly

Rule off each piece of work