



Cobham Hall

Curriculum Policy 2023

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Abbreviations

A Level	:	Advanced Level
EAL	:	English as an Additional Language
GCSE	:	General Certificate of Secondary Education
IELTS	:	International English Language Testing System
IGCSE	:	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
UCAS	:	University and Colleges Admissions Service

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the main features of the School's curriculum and is supported by the School's various plans and schemes of work. The policy is available to parents, prospective parents and others through the School website and is available in hard copy upon request to the School Office. In addition, the policy may be inspected at any point in the School day in the School Office.

Cobham Hall aims to provide excellence in education and to support all of its students in the passage from childhood towards adulthood. At the same time, it seeks to develop in every student self-discipline, responsibility, spiritual and moral values, leading to the highest possible standards of behaviour, consideration for others, pride in oneself and in one's achievements. The academic curriculum provided by the School plays a key role in helping us to meet these aims, and we seek to offer a broad, flexible and forward-looking curriculum which encourages among students intellectual curiosity, sound learning and a spirit of enquiry in the pursuit of academic excellence.

The overall aims of the curriculum are to:

- provide a challenging, academically rigorous, and inspiring education which promotes a love of learning
- promote the pursuit of excellence and learning of the highest quality
- give students a broad and balanced experience of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education which broadens horizons and promotes high aspiration
- enable students to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy
- provide for students above compulsory school age
- provide a programme of activities which offers a wide range and which is appropriate to students' needs
- ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to make good progress, relative to their own starting point
- provide a curriculum appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of students, including those students with a statement of educational need
- provide for any students who may attend the School who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a learning difficulty or disability education which meets their requirements
- provide an age-appropriate programme of Wellbeing which continues throughout a student's school career, and which reflects the School's aims and ethos and which includes adequate preparation of students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, according to the themes of:
 - health and wellbeing
 - relationships
 - living in the wider world (including economic wellbeing and careers education)
 - respect, tolerance and an understanding of protected characteristics
- uphold and promote fundamental British Values, and to value diversity and global perspectives, through the academic curriculum, the Wellbeing programme and the programme for tutor periods, and assemblies
- provide supportive and impartial guidance and information for students on their futures, including; subject choices, higher education and careers

2. Provision for Students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

The School is committed to allowing equality of access and opportunity to all students, regardless of their

background, ability and any particular individual difficulties or disabilities which they may experience. The Student Support Department plays a key role in this work, seeking to identify, through screening and ongoing monitoring, the particular needs of individual students and putting in place strategies (and, where necessary, additional assistance) designed to help them fulfil their potential.

Students who have an EHCP or a special educational need or disability may have their curriculum modified to take account of their particular needs, as appropriate. Such decisions are made by the Deputy Head/Director of Studies in consultation with the student, his/her parents/guardian, the Head of Upper/Lower School and on the advice of the Head of Student of Support. Where a student has an EHCP, the requirements of the plan are closely followed to ensure that the School provides an effective and accessible educational experience. For students with a learning difficulty and/or disability an individual Student Profile is made available to assist with provision inside and outside the classroom. The progress of all students on the School's Learning Support Register is regularly reviewed and support is amended as appropriate.

3. PSHE

The School runs its PSHE programme which is designed to complement the academic curriculum, underpinning attitudes and values of Cobham Hall whilst preparing the students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, according to the themes of:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Living in the wider world (including economic wellbeing, digital literacy and careers education)
- Respect, tolerance and an understanding of diversity and equality

The PSHE programme of lessons for all students runs throughout the academic year and is supplemented by assemblies and presentations on a variety of key topics.

4. Subject Advice

Through the tutor system, presentations, taster sessions and information evenings, students are helped to make the best possible choices of GCSE, IGCSE and A Level courses. Guidance is given appropriately and impartially to whole cohorts and their parents in such presentations, and to individual students and their parents by the Heads of Upper and Lower Schools, subject teachers, Heads of Department/Faculty and senior academic staff. Further information is made available in the GCSE and A Level Options Booklets that are available on the School Website.

5. Careers Guidance

Students from Year 10 to Year 13 have access to the Unifrog online platform. Careers interviews are arranged for students in Year 11 and in Year 12, and also on request through the Head of School for students in other year groups. Careers Education is also included within the School's tutorial and registration programme. Students in Year 12 have external speakers visit to deliver sessions and guidance on taking a gap year, apprenticeships and university. Students in Year 10 undertake work experience in the summer term.

6. Higher Education

An extensive system of guidance on, and support for, Higher Education applications is led by the Head of Upper School and Sixth Form Pastoral Team. Guidance is also provided by the Heads of Faculty and academic staff on applications to UK universities through UCAS, applications to non-UCAS options such as Art Foundation, applications for Degree Apprenticeships and applications to universities and colleges in the USA, Canada, continental Europe, Hong Kong and other relevant destinations overseas.

The School's support includes: individual meetings with the Head of Upper School for all students in Year 10, 11, 12 and 13, personal statement workshops and small group sessions at appropriate stages in the UCAS cycle for the Sixth Form. One to one personal statement sessions for each year 12 and 13 student with Upper School Pastoral support staff. Students in Year 12 and 13 are provided with the opportunity to visit a UCAS Fair and also have external speakers deliver sessions on Apprenticeships, Apprenticeship Degrees and University.

7. English as an Additional Language (EAL)

For students whose first language is not English, additional support is provided, as appropriate, by the EAL Department (formerly referred to as EAL). This provides class or individual tuition, as appropriate, in the four core areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening in order to allow non-native speakers of English fully to access the curriculum, to prepare them for appropriate examinations, to exploit their academic abilities and to enjoy all of the social and cultural aspects of life at the School. In some individual cases, students who require EAL support follow a modified curriculum in order to accommodate this. For some students extra, individual, EAL tuition in addition to class lessons is needed. This is arranged through the EAL Department, in consultation with parents and guardians, and with the Deputy Head/Director of Studies

In Key Stage 3 (Years 7 – 9), EAL lessons are provided to those students who need it, usually in place of the core English lessons or one of the Modern Languages of French or Spanish.

In Key Stage 4 (Years 10 – 11), EAL lessons are provided to those students who need it, usually in place of core English. Students are prepared for IGCSE English as a Second Language and are also supported in developing the English language skills they need to use in their other subjects. The most advanced students are prepared for the IELTS examination during Year 11, allowing them to follow three mainstream courses in the Lower Sixth, plus IELTS.

In the Sixth Form, EAL lessons prepare students for the IELTS examination and advanced examinations if appropriate and also provides language support for their work in their Sixth Form courses. Students will sit A Level examinations in 2 or 3 subjects with an EPQ depending on language ability.

Some of these students also sit public examinations in their own language (if available), by arrangement with the Deputy Head and parents.

8. Remote Learning

Our blended and remote learning policy allows us to provide online support to students who are not able to be in school for some other long-term approved absences, at the discretion of the Head. Blended Learning refers to a hybrid system, whereby some individual students in a class may be learning from home while the

majority of peers are in School. Remote Learning refers to whole classes, year group bubbles and/or the whole School learning from home. The latter would be in response to local or national lockdown situation in which schools were required to close. In either case, our teachers adopt one of two options in how they teach their blended and remote classes depending on the content and intended learning goals of the students. Option A is live-streaming lessons through the online platform Microsoft Teams. Option B is the setting of specified independent tasks, to be completed and submitted in real-time during the timetabled lesson. Blended and Remote Learning is only available via permission from the Head, and cannot be made available on a day-by-day basis. Parents and guardians must contact the relevant Head of Upper or Lower School in the first instance to discuss their child's individual circumstances and not teachers directly. Further information on learning from home is given in the Remote Learning Policy.

9. Organisation of the Curriculum

The academic curriculum at Cobham Hall is divided into three stages: Key Stage 3 (Years 7 – 9); Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11); and the Sixth Form/Key Stage 5 (Years 12-13). Details of these are set out on the following pages.

• The Key Stage 3 Curriculum

Students entering the School in Year 7 (which is the first year at Cobham Hall School) follow a curriculum which offers all the subjects of the National Curriculum, together with a second modern language for every student. In Year 8, students choose two languages from French, Spanish and Latin. Students continue to study these languages in Year 9.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum has three principal aims. The first is to provide a seamless transition between Year 6 (the end of Key Stage 2) and Year 10 (the start of Key stage 4), regardless of prior experience, as part of an effectively sequenced knowledge-rich curriculum. The School recognises that students join the School from a variety of educational backgrounds and is able to make adjustments to an individual's programme of study if appropriate to accommodate for this. This is to ensure that all students are at or above a common standard across all of their subjects, in preparation for the formal start of their GCSE courses in Year 10 (although some subjects - Sciences and Mathematics - begin the GCSE courses in Year 9). The second is to enable students to experience breadth and balance in their curriculum, so that they are exposed to an enriching and generative body of knowledge to deepen their learning and experience and are able to make informed choices for their GCSE option subjects. The third is to provide progression, stretch, and challenge to inspire, empower and challenge students to develop their knowledge and understanding as they prepare for the formal start of their GCSE and IGCSE courses. The structure of the Key Stage 3 curriculum is as follows:

Core subjects, through to GCSE	English, Maths), Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics, taught in combination for Years 7 and 8, as discreet subjects in Year 9), the Cobham Hall Perspectives course, a modern language (French or Spanish), or English as an Additional Language [EAL], where appropriate
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Other subjects, taken by all students	Art and Design, Computer Science, Drama, Geography, History, Music, PSHE, Physical Education, Latin or and a second modern language (or EAL).
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Students who speak English as an Additional Language are assessed for their ability in English on entry to the School and their languages curriculum is adapted to suit their needs and abilities. English as an Additional Language is taught to those students who would benefit from it and usually replaces a student's lessons in English, French or Spanish.

The Key Stage 3 PSHE programme is modular. Students rotate through all units over the course of the three years. These units are interspersed with whole year group presentations and guidance to students on age-appropriate issues such as smoking and internet safety.

The Cobham Hall Perspectives Programme is a skill-based curriculum which provides students with opportunities to acquire and develop a range of transferable skills. This programme has dedicated weekly lessons that are delivered by teachers from different subjects.

In addition to the academic curriculum, all Year 7 - 9 students participate in the School's Saturday Enrichment Programme. The minimum expectation for each Year 7 - 9 is set out in the Saturday Enrichment Handbook, which is published annually. Typically, students select between 11 to 14 Saturday Activities per year. The extensive co-curricular programme also offers students with a range of clubs and activities during lunch and after school. Students are expected to select at least two activities per week as set out in the Co-curricular Booklet.

• **The Key Stage 4 Curriculum**

The curriculum in Key Stage 4 (Years 10 – 11) ensures that all students follow a common core whilst allowing them to make choices about a number of the non-core subjects they study, to reflect their individual interests and aptitudes. When choosing their GCSE/IGCSE option subjects students are encouraged to select a combination of subjects which maintain a sensible breadth of study where that is appropriate for them. This advice is balanced with each student's relative strengths in his/her subjects. It will be easier for a student who is strong across a wide range of subjects to achieve breadth and balance in their subject choices than a student whose abilities are focused on fewer subjects. Ultimately, it is more important for each student to take option subjects which they enjoy and in which they are likely to do well, than for them simply to choose a broad spread of subjects.

The structure of the curriculum for these two years is as follows:

Core examined subjects	English (certified as two GCSEs – Language and Literature), Maths, Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics, taught as separate subjects but certified either as two or three GCSEs), Global Perspectives IGCSE or English as an Additional Language, for those for whom that is appropriate. Additional Maths are available for suitable candidates, and this is something to be agreed upon.
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Other, non- examined, core courses	PSHE Physical Education
Option subjects, from which students select three GCSE/IGCSE courses	Art and Design, Business Studies, Computer Science, Drama, French, Geography, History, Latin, Music, Physical Education, Spanish. The School reserves the right to withdraw or add GCSE and IGCSE subjects to further develop the breadth and balance of the curriculum

The School reserves the right to review the numbers of students requesting to access each available option subject, and may choose to remove the subject from the option list if numbers are too low to make its provision viable.

Each student's choice of GCSE/IGCSE option subjects is agreed in the light of suitability indicators provided by each faculty, in discussion with their tutor and with their parents and is monitored by the Heads of Upper and Lower School.

The PSHE programme is modular in Years 10 and 11 and includes: citizenship and respecting equality, relationships and sex education, emotional wellbeing and mental health, physical health and wellbeing and economic enterprise education. Students rotate through all of the units over the course of the year. These units are interspersed with whole year group presentations and guidance on specific modern day issues.

The Global Perspectives IGCSE is a forward-thinking course taken by all Year 10 and 11 students. It encourages students to development and apply a range of skills to a range of challenging topics that have a global significance.

In addition to the academic curriculum, all Year 10 and 11 students participate in the School's Saturday Enrichment Programme. The minimum expectation for Year 10 and 11 students is set out in the Saturday Enrichment Handbook, which is published annually. The extensive co-curricular programme also offers students with a range of clubs and activities during lunch and after school. Students are expected to select one or two activities per week as set out in the Co-curricular Booklet.

• **The Sixth Form Curriculum**

The aims of the Sixth Form curriculum are:

- to provide an academic curriculum which is appropriate for each student in its range and demands
- to foster a love of learning, and a sense of aspiration in all students
- to provide a challenging, academically rigorous, and intellectually stimulating learning environment
- to encourage and develop academic skills of increasingly independent study, research and thought
- to encourage and develop wider personal skills to allow a confident entry into higher education and to create adaptability and resilience
- to encourage students to consider and discuss issues relevant to them as they move towards

adulthood and participation in the full range of rights and responsibilities as citizens

Subjects are taught as two-year linear courses with all examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth.

Universities look for three very good A Level grades, plus evidence of breadth and engagement – which can be shown in a variety of ways both academic and non-academic. Hence our programme at Sixth Form follows the three-subject plus EPQ model. In addition to this, we aim to send our leavers out into the world with the adaptability and resilience to make a success of their studies and an impact in their early professional careers.

We require students entering the Sixth Form to take three subjects from the outset, as well as taking, EPQ and EAL (if applicable), allowing them to focus in depth on their chosen options. Lesson allocation is five 60-minute periods per week per subject, except EAL which is 5 periods in Year 12 and 3 period in Year 13. Students in Years 12 and 13 also have one taught lesson of PSHE per fortnight, and one lesson of Global Critical Thinking lesson to further develop their skills and aptitudes beyond the scope of the A Level curriculum. In addition, students in Year 12 benefit from taking part in Cobham Hall Future Perspective Programme, which is designed to equip students with essential life skills and self-awareness to prepare them for their future. It covers a range of topics, starting with personal goal setting and life planning, followed by time management, personal strengths, leadership, first aid, decision making, effective communication, self-confidence, career options, and more. The curriculum also delves into financial literacy, including budgeting, salaries, financial aid, and living independently.

Students in Years 12 and 13 also benefit from the Saturday Enrichment Programme as well as the extensive Co- and Scholarship Programmes. Additionally, students are individually developed through opportunities for entrepreneurship and community service through participation in the Gold Duke of Edinburgh scheme. The School reserves the right to review the numbers of students requesting to access each available option subject and may choose to remove the subject from the option list if numbers are too low to make its provision viable.

This Review: November 2023

Next Review: Autumn 2024

This Policy has been approved by the Education Committee of the Court of Governors, on 22nd November 2023