



THE NELSON THOMLINSON SCHOOL

Curriculum Policy

Signed by Headmaster:

Date:

Signed by Chair – C, T&L Comm:

Date:

Introduction

The overall aims of the curriculum must be:

- to provide our pupils with an education that will prepare them to play a full part in adult life and employment
- to place equal value on all pupils
- to allow all pupils to achieve and develop a sense of self-worth and mutual respect
- to enable pupils to pursue areas of interest
- to satisfy the requirements of the National Curriculum, and any changes to examination requirements

Key Stage 3

Subjects and time allocations are as follows:

Subject	Hours per week		
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English (see note 1)	4	3/4	3/4
Mathematics	4	3	3
Science	3	3	3
Computing	1	1	1
French	2	3/2	3/2
Geography	2	2	2
History	1	2	2
Design & Technology	3	3	3
Music	1	1	1
Art	1	1	1
Spanish (see note 2)			
PE	2	2	2
RE	1	1	1

Notes:

- (1) English in Year 7 includes one hour aimed at developing literacy (the 'Literacy Hour').
- (2) Selected pupils study Spanish in Years 8 and 9, in addition, as part of their Modern Languages lessons.
- (3) For details on grouping policy, see below.
- (4) In RE the topics cover a variety of religions including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism.

- (5) The $\frac{3}{4}$ split in English and the $\frac{3}{2}$ split in French in Years 8 and 9 is due to the maintenance of a literacy hour for some classes and the addition of Spanish for the top sets and the 8/9T group.

Key Stage 4

The aims of the Key Stage 4 curriculum are as laid out at the start of this policy but, in particular, we aim:

- to provide a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum which involves contact with all areas of learning and experience – aesthetic and creative, human and social, linguistic and literary, mathematical, moral, physical, scientific, spiritual and technological
- to prepare students for a variety of post-16 opportunities, including further education and employment with training, through a curriculum relevant to their needs

A summary of curriculum time in Key Stage 4 is shown in this table.

Subject	Hours per week	
	Year 10	Year 11
English	4	4
Mathematics	3	3
Science	6	5
Option A	3	2
Option B	3	2
Option C	2	3
Option D	2	3
PSHRE	1	1
PE	1	2

Notes

1. Option blocks now operate on a 2 to 3 lesson split over two years. To allow the timetable to function, the timetable scheduler decides each year which two columns should have the extra time in Year 10, based upon requests from HoDs.
2. Those studying BTEC Engineering and the ASDAN CoPE courses do so on double time, as they are a double option choice.
3. **Optional Subjects**
The following optional subjects, here in alphabetical order, are currently available. Most are GCSEs (19) unless indicated otherwise (6):

Additional Science, Art, Biology, Business Studies, ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness, Chemistry, Child Care, Computer Science, Drama, Electronics, Engineering, Engineering BTEC, Environmental & Land-based Science, Food, French, Geography, History, ELP Humanities, Music, Physics, Religious Studies, Resistant Materials, Physical Education, Spanish, Sport BTEC, Textiles, Travel & Tourism BTEC, Workskills BTEC

Grouping Policy

In **Year 7** pupils are divided into nine teaching groups. Of these, one (7E) is a small group of pupils with learning difficulties to whom intensive remedial help is given. One of the others, 7N, is a larger group of pupils whose learning difficulties are not so acute but who also need support, especially in the area of literacy. The remaining seven 7T, 7H, 7M, 7L, 7S, 7W and 7G contain mixtures of ability from the rest of the ability range.

These arrangements do not apply to practical subjects in Year 7 where pupils are divided up into a larger number of groups to reduce overall class sizes, each containing the full range of ability. The other exception is Mathematics and Computing, where, at October half-term, a degree of setting takes place.

In **Year 8** the year group is divided into two half-populations for timetabling purposes and this also allows departments (or groups of departments) to set/band/mix as they think best fits their subject(s). Because of the different Levels that pupils have reached in Year 7 Maths, in Year 8 the X half contains the gifted mathematicians (integrated into Set 1) and the weakest c.30 pupils in Maths (who will be following a lower level than the others). Apart from this the two halves are as equal as possible, as judged by CAT scores, Levels, exam output, and by the critical eye of the Head of Year/Head of Section to ensure a positive ambience in both half-populations. Both halves will follow a similar curriculum.

Year 9 follows the pattern of Year 8.

In **Years 10 and 11** setting continues to apply in English, Mathematics, and Science. In the other exam subjects the number of groups and their composition depends upon numbers of pupils opting, but setting is introduced where choices and numbers allow.

Sixth Form

The essential aim of the post-16 curriculum is to provide the skills, qualifications and experiences needed for higher education and/or employment with training.

The majority of Sixth Formers will study the equivalent of three A Levels and one AS Level. Students in the Lower Sixth will therefore study the equivalent of four subjects. At the end of the Lower Sixth these students will be entered for an AS-Level qualification in each of their GCE subjects. Three subjects (or their equivalent) are continued into the Upper Sixth to full A Level.

In the Lower Sixth students are expected to spend their remaining lessons engaged in one hour of compulsory Sport and Fitness, private study and/or working towards their "Enrichment Portfolio". In the Upper Sixth all students are expected to attend at least two General Studies lessons per week and, at the end of the year, to sit the General Studies A-Level examination.

In addition to General Studies, the following Advanced Level courses (25) are available in the Sixth Form (in alphabetical order):

Applied Science, Art, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Computing, English Language, English Literature, French, Further Mathematics, Geography, Applied Health & Social Care, History, Information Technology, Applied Leisure Studies, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Physics, Product Design with Resistant Materials, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology, Spanish and Textiles.

Reviewed by the Curriculum Committee:

Review: Every 3 years or earlier if required.

Next review due: Feb 2018