



## Statement of intent: the curriculum at St James

The curriculum at St James is personalised and aspirational, ensuring that every child is supported to achieve their best while studying a broad, creative and interesting range of subjects. The KS3 and KS4 curriculums are aligned to ensure that students are given the opportunity to master the subjects that they follow through five years of study that complement each other and build on key skills and knowledge to ensure that they are firmly embedded and that students are able to apply what they have learnt in a variety of contexts.

Our KS3 curriculum is followed in years 7 & 8. The KS3 curriculum places a strong emphasis on building 'cultural capital' – we want our students to be inquisitive learners about the wider picture; to feel confident in approaching unknown texts and tasks and applying their wider knowledge; to develop their knowledge of the world beyond what they will be assessed on; and to learn more about the world that surrounds them and within which they are living. KS3 is where we aim to establish a strong skillset of positive work habits in our students so that they can be successful as they move through the school, feel confident in what they can achieve, and feel prepared as young people to enter the next stage of their education when they leave us. It sees a strong focus on supporting our students to build their resilience and independence so that they feel confident to rise to the challenge of GCSEs and the world of work beyond.

Year 9 is a transition year which focuses on ensuring students develop, embed and master the skills and knowledge that they have learnt at KS3 and how they can transfer their knowledge and skills to apply them at KS4. This means that all Controlled Assessments are completed in years 10 & 11 and that full mock exams also take place in these years, leaving year 9 to focus on the understanding of what is required in the final exams, rather than the undertaking of them.

At St James we firmly believe in the value of studying languages. The majority of students study French and Spanish in years 7 & 8 before choosing one language to continue through to GCSE at KS4 (with the other being offered as an option subject so that they have the possibility of studying two languages).

The value we place on languages is equal to that that we place on the suite of qualifications that form the Ebacc; values which represent our aspirations for our students. Every year approximately 75% of our students are entered for the Ebacc.

The Ebacc is not appropriate for all students however, and our curriculum therefore includes alternative vocational courses and/or additional hours in the core subjects of English, Maths and Science for these students to ensure that they are supported to be successful and progress to post-16 courses of their choice successfully without the need to re-sit a GCSE.

In summary our KS4 model sees students studying either 9 or 10 subjects in total: all students will study English Language & Literature, Maths, Combined Science, Religious Studies, a Humanity (History, Geography or Travel & Tourism), a Language (or additional core subject/vocational course lessons) and two option subjects of their choice.

Students choose their options in year 8 from a full range of vocational and GCSE courses. We offer a breadth of choice as it is our firm belief that our students are talented in many different areas and that an option process should provide as many options as possible.

Vocational: Enterprise, Health & Social Care, Health & Fitness; Engineering; Performing Arts (Drama), Music, IMedia, Travel & Tourism.

GCSE: Psychology, Sociology, Statistics, French, Spanish, Media Studies, Food Nutrition; Design & Technology, Art, IArt, Music, Geography, History, Separate Sciences, Computing

This breadth of choice is also seen in the KS3 curriculum. Students study English, Maths, Science, D&T, Art, Drama, Music, French, Spanish, Geography, History, PSHE, Religious Studies and PE. However, as with the personalised nature of the KS4 curriculum for some students, some students in KS3 will not study languages and will follow a combined Humanities course to facilitate time for them to follow a 'Fast Track' curriculum. This curriculum provides students with additional lessons in English & Maths to support their progress in the core subjects with the intention that they will make rapid progress and return to the other curriculum at some time during years 7 & 8.

The development of our students as young people; raising their awareness of the society in which they live and their roles within it; and preparing them for life after school are of fundamental importance to us, and are key drivers in our PSHE & SMSC provision across all key stages. Students have PSHE lessons at KS3 and then there is a programme of PSHE days that students attend at KS4 that are mapped to ensure a thorough provision. We also use elements of the curriculum to help support our students develop their resilience and to ensure they are fully prepared for post-16 study and the world of work, through for example, revision skills lessons in KS3 and a Maths: Skills for Work programme in year 9.

Offering our students' learning experiences beyond the classroom is a key part of our curriculum and our enrichment programme is firmly embedded within every day school life. We have a strong tradition of providing outdoor education opportunities, after school activities, educational trips, visits and events and a week-long Enrichment Week in the summer term. We track the attendance of our students at these experiences and endeavour to ensure that all students partake in enrichment during their time at St James.

Examples of our wider curriculum offer include:

- Student Leadership Opportunities
- Student Council
- Ten Tors
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award
- 1633 Challenge
- Year 7 residential trip
- Book & Film Clubs
- Writing workshops
- Poetry Slams
- Wildlife Champions
- Jurassic Coast Challenge
- Music and Performing Arts termly showcases
- Theatre visits and workshops
- Sports teams and fixtures
- Netball residential weekends
- Visits to Universities
- STEM activities and events
- Public Debating Clubs and competitions
- Musical tuition, clubs and workshops
- Art, Computing and Drama clubs
- Annual school productions

Amy Grashoff, Headteacher, Spring 2019.