



Birchwood High School Curriculum Policy 2021 - 2022

Key Stage 3 Curriculum

Our KS3 curriculum is designed to build on students experience at KS2, whilst allowing for a greater breadth and depth of study. It introduces students to distinct specialist subjects, making use of subject specialist staff and facilities, whilst maintaining broad cross-curricular links. It has been reviewed for the upcoming year to take into account the potential impacts of lockdown and school closures on incoming Year 7 students.

For the upcoming academic year, we are increasing the time given to English and Literacy from 3 hrs to 3.5 hrs. This is in response to lockdown measures that have significantly impacted upon the incoming Year 7 students and the concern that they will need a greater focus on building their literacy skills in the early stages of secondary school.

Students will continue to follow a core entitlement of 3 hours for Maths and Science in both Year 7 and 8, designed to build upon the extensive work in each of these areas from their primary school.

They also have 3 hours of Expressive & Performing Arts (Art, Music, Drama) and Physical Education in both Years 7 and 8, stressing the importance of creative and physical aspects to the curriculum. Again, it is worth noting that we felt it vitally important to 'protect' these areas given the nature of lockdown and its impact upon children's participation in these areas being severely limited over the last 12 months.

Humanities have 3 hours with 1 hour each of History, Geography and RS in Year 7. This reflects the likelihood that students will have covered significant areas of these subjects at KS2

Technology will reduce to 3.5 hours in Year 7 to allow for the increased Literacy provision but will still maintain a significant portion of curriculum time.

Modern Foreign Languages will be allocated 2.5 hrs per week, again reflecting the need to build basic skills in this area.

All students follow French in Year 7, with more able linguists adding Spanish or German in Year 8.

We are re introducing a pathway model for some students with high levels of additional need to boost their basic literacy and numeracy skills, again reflecting concerns around the impact of lockdown and school closures on these specific students.

In Year 8 History and Geography allocation is increased to 2 hours per week to prepare all students for the demands of potential EBacc subjects. All students receive statutory PSHCE teaching in their form groups.

Students are taught in mixed ability groups in all subjects, apart from Maths, MFL and PE.

Year 7 2021 – 2022

English & Literacy	Maths	Science	PE	PSHCE	EPA	Humanities	MFL	Technology
3. 5 hrs	3 hrs	3 hrs	3 hrs	1 hr	3 hrs Drama Art Music	3 hrs History Geog. RS	2.5 hrs French	3.5 hours DT Food IT

Year 8 2021 – 2022

English	Maths	Science	PE	PSHCE	EPA	Humanities	MFL	Technology
3 hrs	3 hrs	3 hrs	3 hrs	1 hr	3 hrs Drama Art Music	2 hrs History Geog. RS(1)	2.5 hrs French Spanish German	2 hours DT Food IT

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

At Birchwood we operate a 3 year KS4 model to enable students to develop deeper knowledge and understanding of their chosen GCSE subjects. This designed to ensure that students are challenged in Year 9 to build firm foundations for their further GCSE study in Years 10 and 11. This model has been consistently supported by staff, parents and governors since its implementation. It is reviewed annually, taking into account student outcomes and wider educational developments as well as the views of our key stakeholders.

Students therefore make option choices in Year 8. A comprehensive package of advice and guidance is in place to ensure students make choices that are suitable for their future progression.

There are 3 curriculum plans in place for students to follow

Curriculum plan 1 gives students the opportunity to study the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) combination of GCSEs.

This must include a modern foreign language (French, Spanish, German) and a humanities subject (History, Geography).

It is current government policy that a significant number of students from each annual cohort should follow this route and we will advise accordingly

Curriculum plan 2 also gives students the opportunity to study the EBacc combination of GCSEs but has greater flexibility.

Students on this plan must include a modern foreign language (French, Spanish, German) **OR** a humanities (History, Geography) in their options. Students following this plan also have the opportunity to follow curriculum plan 1, allowing for breadth of student choice

Curriculum plan 3 will be retained for students who may require a more open combination of subjects at GCSE and / or BTEC level. As above, there is no bar on students following the same curriculum as students on plan 1 or 2 should they wish to do so.

Students will be advised on curriculum plans according to prior attainment, current rates of progression and projected future attainment in key subjects. There is, however, a flexibility to these plans, with students and parents able to request changes and amendments.

All students will study core GCSE subjects in English, Maths and Science, although the exact nature of content and level of qualification will vary.

All students will also retain an entitlement to core PE. This will be non – examined.

All students will receive an additional core entitlement to *PSHCE*. This encompasses elements of RS, Citizenship and PSHCE. This will be a non - examined unit.

Curriculum plan 1								
Core	Core	Core	Core	Core	Block	Block	Block	Block
English Language English Literature	Maths	PE	<p>Science</p> <p>All students study Biology, Physics and Chemistry.</p> <p>Higher attaining students in Science study these as separate GCSE subjects.</p> <p>The majority of students study these as part of combined Science qualification.</p>	PSHCE	History Geography	French Spanish German	<p>Music</p> <p>Music Technology BTEC</p> <p>Art</p> <p>Drama</p> <p>Dance</p> <p>French</p> <p>Spanish</p> <p>German</p> <p>Statistics</p> <p>PE</p> <p>History</p> <p>Religious Studies</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>Media OR Film Studies</p> <p>Design Technology</p> <p>Food</p> <p>ICT BTEC OR Computer Science</p> <p>Business Studies BTEC</p> <p>(Maximum two tech to be taken)</p>	

Curriculum Plan 2

Core	Core	Core	Core	Core	Block	Block	Block	Block
English Language English Literature	Maths	PE	<p>SCIENCE</p> <p>All students study Biology, Physics and Chemistry.</p> <p>Higher attaining students in Science study these as separate GCSE subjects.</p> <p>The majority of students study these as part of combined Science qualification.</p>	PSHCE	<p>History</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>French</p> <p>Spanish</p> <p>German</p>	<p>Music</p> <p>Music Technology BTEC</p> <p>Art</p> <p>Drama</p> <p>Dance</p> <p>French</p> <p>Statistics</p> <p>PE</p> <p>History</p> <p>Religious Studies</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>Media OR Film Studies</p> <p>Design Technology</p> <p>Food</p> <p>ICT BTEC OR Computer Science</p> <p>Business Studies BTEC</p> <p>(Maximum two tech to be taken)</p>		

Curriculum Plan 3									
Core	Core	Core	Core	Core	Block	Block	Block	Block	
English English Literature	Maths	PE	SCIENCE All students study Biology, Physics and Chemistry. Students study these as part of a combined Science qualification.	PSHCE					Music Music Technology BTEC Art Drama Dance PE History Geography Religious Studies Media OR Film Studies Design Technology Business Studies BTEC Construction BTEC ICT BTEC

Year 9 Teaching Time

English	Maths	Science	PE	PSHCE	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
4 hours	3 hours	4 hours	3 hours	1 hour	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5

Year 10 Teaching Time

English	Maths	Science	PE	PSHCE	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
4 hours	4 hours	4.5 hours	2 hours	1 hour	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5

Year 11 Teaching Time

English	Maths	Science	PE	PSHCE	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
4 hours	4 hours	4.5 hours	2 hours	1 hour	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5

KS5 Curriculum Policy 2021 - 2022

The Key Stage 5 curriculum again follows the principle of curriculum plans accessible to different groups of students and ensures that we retain the comprehensive ethos that drives the provision at other key stages. The range of subjects offered is broad and balanced.

From September 2021 we will expect all students entering sixth form to study for 3 or 4 courses. We would expect students to supplement this with enrichment opportunities and / or additional supplementary qualifications

For the majority students this will be A levels. These will be linear in structure, with examinations taken at the end of the two years.

However, we also have a significant number of students studying for BTEC qualifications. These have a greater degree of modular assessment.

A growing number of students in our sixth form combine both A Levels and BTEC qualifications and our curriculum is designed with this flexibility in mind.

Our Key Stage 5 curriculum aims to balance academic excellence, personal support and a wide range of student leadership opportunities .We currently have 250 students which is large enough to provide a diverse curriculum of 32 subjects. One core principle of our curriculum is to be flexible and respond to student led demand, therefore ensuring that we are able to meet the diverse and varied range of needs incumbent of a comprehensive school.

The majority of our Year 11 students apply for places in our Sixth Form to follow a predominantly A level curriculum, although an increasing range of BTEC vocational opportunities also exist. The curriculum is designed to support students as they step into Higher Education, University, Higher Level Apprenticeships or more aspirational employment.

Our Key Stage 5 curriculum therefore provides students with a strong platform from which to achieve excellent academic results, but also allows them to develop into well-rounded and tolerant young adults with plenty of enrichment and leadership opportunities.

Entrance Requirements

All applicants, both internal and external, will need to complete an online application form via ULAS.

We operate a Total Point Score (TPS) system that measures what students achieve at GCSE / Level 2. This works by taking the best 8 subject grades. These are then added together to produce a Total Point Score, as shown in the worked example further down.

Students Total Point Score will determine which curriculum plans are most suitable for them. Our curriculum plans are designed to ensure students are following appropriate courses based upon their prior levels of attainment.

We will offer all students information, advice and guidance in reference to their application to ensure students are making appropriate choices. Students must meet the entrance criteria for courses they wish to study.

At KS5 we will offer only level 3 courses for study. The only exceptions to this is GCSE English and GCSE Maths resits, which will be compulsory for any students we admit without a grade 4 in these subjects.

For this reason there will be an admission benchmark of TPS 36.

We may use discretionary admission for Birchwood DA students below this benchmark for Level 3 study.

Students will also need to meet the individual entrance requirements for specific subjects and courses.

Total Point Score

TPS (Total Points Score) is calculated by adding together a student's total GCSE / BTEC grades at Level 2.

GCSE Grade	BTEC Grade (Level 2) ICT, Business, Health & Social Construction
9	
8	DISTINCTION
7	
6	MERIT
5	
4	PASS
3	
2	
1	

Total Point Score - calculation		
Subject	Grade	Points
English Language	7	7
English Literature	6	6
Maths	5	5
History	4	4
Media	7	7
Science	4	4
Science	4	4
French	6	6
Total = 43		

Curriculum Plans KS5 2021 / 2022

Curriculum Plan 1 For admission to study 4 A levels students should have a TPS of 48 or above and the specific subject requirement.

We will consider students for 4 A levels below this threshold dependent on subject requirements and combinations.

Students will be expected to supplement their 4 core subjects with additional supporting qualifications and / or enrichment opportunities.

Curriculum Plan 2 For admission to study 3 A levels or 2 A levels & BTEC single students should have a TPS of 42 or above and the specific subject requirement.

We will consider students for A levels below this threshold dependent on subject requirements and combinations.

Students will be expected to supplement their 3 core subjects with additional supporting qualifications and / or enrichment opportunities.

Curriculum Plan 3 -

For admission to study BTEC qualifications students should have a TPS of 36 or above and the specific subject requirements

Students will be expected to supplement their 3 core subjects with additional supporting qualifications and / or enrichment opportunities.

Supporting Qualifications	Personal Enrichment	Work Experience
Core Maths	Clubs & Societies	Compulsory for all Year 12 students
AS Levels	Duke of Edinburgh's Award	
Extended Project (EPQ)	House Captains	
GCSE English / Maths	Leadership Committee	
Financial Studies	School Council	
BTEC certificates	Sixth Form Ambassadors	
Cambridge Pre U	Sixth Form Prefects	
General Studies	Sports Leaders	
(TBF Sep 2021)	Sixth form Trips and visits	

Courses and Entry Requirements 2021 /2022

Subject	Level	Entry Requirement
Art & Design (Fine Art)	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE Art or Graphics
Biology	A level	2 Grade 6's in GCSE Double Science or Triple Science including Biology
Business Studies	BTEC Diploma (Double)	TPS 36
Business Studies	BTEC Certificate (Single)	TPS 36
Chemistry	A level	2 Grade 6's in GCSE Triple Science including Chemistry
Computer Science	A Level	Grade 6 in GCSE Computer Science or a Grade 6 in Maths
Drama and Theatre Studies	A level	Grade 5 in GCSE Drama If GCSE Drama was not taken a Grade 5 in English (Language or Literature)
Economics	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics and Grade 6 in English Language or English Literature
English Language	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE English Language
English Literature	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE English Literature and English Language
Film Studies	A level	Grade 5 in GCSE Film or Media or Grade 5 in English Language or Literature
Financial Studies	LIBF Certificate (Single)	TPS 36
Football Academy	BTEC Extended Diploma (Triple)	TPS 36
French	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE French or the ability to study French to the equivalent level
Geography	A level	Grade 6 in Geography
German	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE German or the ability to study German to the equivalent level
History	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE History
IT	BTEC Certificate	TPS 36

Mathematics	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics (A grade 7 is highly recommended; exceptional students can succeed with a Grade 6 at GCSE but this is unusual)
Mathematics Further	A level	Grade 8 in GCSE Mathematics
Media Studies	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE Media or Film. If not taken at GCSE Grade 6 in English
Music	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE Music or Grade 5 in an instrument/voice if GCSE Music has not been taken
Performing Arts (Dance)	BTEC Certificate (Single)	TPS 36
Philosophy and Ethics RS	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE RS or Grade 6 in GCSE English Language
Physical Education	A level	Grade 6 GCSE in PE or Grade 6 in Combined Science including Biology
Physics	A level	2 Grade 6 's in GCSE Double Science or Triple Science including Physics and Maths
Politics	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE History or English Literature
Product Design D&T	A level	Grade 6 GCSE in any Design and Technology subject or Art
Psychology	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE English Language or Literature and Grade 5 in GCSE Maths
Sociology	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE English Language or Literature
Spanish	A level	Grade 6 in GCSE Spanish or the ability to study Spanish to the equivalent level
Sport Studies	BTEC Diploma (Double)	TPS 36