

The Curriculum at Maidstone Grammar School

Aims and Objectives

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum that delivers an enhanced National Curriculum
- To develop independence of thought, curiosity and learning amongst pupils.
- To provide appropriate specialisation of study to match pupils' aptitudes and interests at Key Stages 4 and 5.
- To maximise pupil achievement in public examinations to ensure progression to the next stage of education, training or career development.
- To develop pupils as individuals with an understanding of their duties and rights as citizens and the ability to take increasing personal responsibility for their work and life.
- To provide a wide range of opportunities and activities within the Extended Curriculum to further develop pupils' skills and knowledge.
- To do all we can to make sure all students progress to the best of their ability in all that they do.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 and 8)

The courses provided to Key Stage 3 pupils are based on the programmes of study set out in the latest version of the National Curriculum documentation. The programme is enhanced to allow every student to study two modern foreign languages. We offer French, German and Spanish. In addition, a third of the cohort (the top attainment band) will also study Latin.

The curriculum is structured in three bands which are based on literacy ability. These are determined by literacy testing undertaken by the school in the summer before admission to Year 7. The tests used are The Edinburgh Reading Test and the British Spelling Test (NFER). On the basis of these results pupils are placed into learning groups across three bands of ability. Teaching takes place in these groups for all subjects except Modern Languages which are set according to Language choice. ICT and Technology are also taught outside of form groups as these are taught in smaller teaching groups.

Key Stage 3 students study the following subjects:

Mathematics	English
Science	ICT
Technology	Religious Studies
History	Geography
Two Modern Languages	Art
Performing Arts (Music & Drama)	Physical Education
PSHCE	

Students in the top bands in Key Stage 3 also study Latin.

In order to develop applied and independent learning skills in students, in each of Years 7 and 8 the standard timetable is at times suspended for students to engage in a project based activity learning programme.

Personal Social Health Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCE)

This is a compulsory course that is followed by all pupils in both Key Stages 3 and 4. Within this course the following areas of National Curriculum Programmes are covered, though elements of those programmes will also be covered in other subject disciplines:

- Careers Education
- Citizenship
- Economic well-being and financial capability
- Personal well-being

In addition elements of target setting and action planning by students are also covered in these lessons.

Key Stage 4 (Years 9, 10 and 11)

In Key Stage 4 pupils complete their GCSE programmes over three years. Examinations are taken at the end of the year in all subjects. Similarly, controlled coursework should not normally take place in Year 9 though courses with more 50% or more coursework provision may complete some of their project work in Year 9 if they wish. All students follow a programme that will lead to them gaining the English Baccalaureate

The structure of the curriculum followed by every student in Year 9-11 is as follows:

Compulsory Examination Subjects

English
English Literature
Mathematics
Double Combined Science (2 GCSEs)
Religious Studies

Humanity

Every pupil must study either History or Geography.

Modern Languages

Every pupil must study a modern foreign language from the two that they studied at Key Stage 3.

Additional Subjects

Pupils must then study four additional subjects. One of their choices must be a subject which is not from the list of English Baccalaureate subjects. They may choose from the following subjects:

Art	Business Studies
Classical Civilisation	Computing
Drama	Geography
History	Latin
Media Studies	Music
Physical Education	A Second Foreign Language
Technology	
Triple Science (Biology, Chemistry & Physics)	

Non-Examined Compulsory Subjects

In addition to 11 GCSEs all students will undertake non-examined programmes of study in:

PSHCE

Physical Education

Key Stage 5 (Years 12 and 13 also called 'The Sixth Form')

The school has clear entry qualifications for Years 12 and 13 based upon GCSE success criteria (see the annual School Sixth Form Prospectus for details). Transfer into Year 12 from Year 11 is not therefore automatic and students must apply to be considered. In addition the school admits some 50 students from outside the school into Year 12. In the event of oversubscription for these external places there are criteria for admission which apply (see annual School Sixth Form Prospectus for details).

The school offers students the opportunity to study either four A Levels or three A Levels and 1 AS Level. Entry requirements for these courses are set out in the Sixth Form Prospectus for the Year.

The subjects offered on this programme are:

Art	Biology
Business Studies	Chemistry
Classical Civilisation	Design Technology
Economics	English
Film Studies	French
Geography	German
History	Further Mathematics
Mathematics	Music
Media Studies	Physical Education
Music Technology	Physics
Philosophy	Psychology
Politics	Spanish
Sociology	

Work Related Learning and Enterprise Education

Pupils gain their first experience of Work Related Learning in Key Stage 3 with the some business orientated activities..

In Key Stage 4 pupils can opt for Business Studies and some other courses have an element of work related aspects of education within them.

Year 10 students must complete a compulsory work experience programme.

In Year 12 all students again participate in a work experience programme for a week as the final aspect of work related learning in the school.

In addition to the above provision the PSHCE programme and CEIAG programmes all contain elements of work related learning.

The content of courses and material taught can be found through the departmental entries in the school's website.

The Extended Curriculum

The extended curriculum at Maidstone Grammar is extensive and varied. MGS is committed to a wider curriculum and all students in Key Stage 3 and 4 take part in the Challenge Programme and the Sixth Form embark on a programme of service called CAS. Amongst the opportunities available to pupils are:

- Sports programme: cricket, football, rugby, hockey, basketball, netball and others as well as the opportunity to gain coaching qualifications through the Youth Sports Leadership Award.
- Music programme: choirs, ensemble groups, orchestra, wind band, rock groups, jazz band.
- Combined Cadet Force: Army, Navy and Royal Air Force sections.
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.
- Harvard, Oxford and Cambridge Debating Competitions.
- Grey Zebra Drug Counsellors.
- 'Mind' Mental Health Support.
- Peer Mentors in school.
- Primary Peer Mentors.
- Academic mentors inside and outside school.
- School Prefects who take responsibility for the supervision of younger pupils.
- Academic support groups in subjects.
- Overseas Visits.
- School Council.
- Millennium volunteers.
- Interact Society.
- Growing Young Scientists Project.

All of these activities extend the learning and skills base of our pupils to allow them to become more able to develop those skills of independence and civic participation which are essential elements of the school's aims. In all there are 58 clubs, societies and activities within the school.

Additional Educational Needs

Support for children with Special Educational Needs is based around Wave provision with students being supported in classrooms through differentiated strategies based on SEN profiles established by the SEN Department (Wave 1), by small group support through withdrawal from some lessons for special assistance from Teaching Assistants on a specific learning programme (Wave 2), by individual support from a Teaching Assistant inside the classroom or individual withdrawal to work with an outside specialist (Wave 3) or a combination of these strategies.

A small number of students enter the school with difficulties in English because it is not their first language. These are supported by external assistance from the EAL service and by a small team inside school.

Gifted and Talented students are identified using a CAT score test to identify the top 15% of the year group. Departments can also determine whether a student has a particular talent in their subject discipline. Provision is increasingly inclusive.

Schemes of Work provide for open ended tasks to allow extension work and enable students to develop responses at different levels. In addition specialist programmes are available to those pupils who wish to participate. The school tries to personalise curriculum decisions where possible to allow extremely able students to extend themselves.