The Curriculum

Maidstone Grammar School is a school with a long and rich history but also a school that is modern and forward thinking in its approach.

In secondary school, children are usually taught each subject by a different specialist subject teacher. The teaching of each subject is managed by a Head of Department for that subject. The curriculum for the compulsory years of education is divided into Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.

Key Stage 3

Key Stage 3 is the first part of the National Curriculum for secondary schools. At MGS, Key Stage 3 is completed in Years 7 and 8.

The core subjects are English, Maths and Science. In addition, a wide range of other subjects are also studied. All students will take Art, Computer Science, Geography, History, Performing Arts, Physical Education, Religious Studies and Design & Technology. We also place importance on learning foreign languages. All students study two modern foreign languages from French, German, and Spanish. Some students have the opportunity to also learn Latin. All Year 7 students are also introduced to a range of key study skills and revision techniques through the ‘Learning to Learn’ course.
The timetable, which runs on a ten-day cycle, also includes Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education where staff introduce students to a wide range of issues. Assemblies and tutor time also form part of a student’s wider education.

During Year 8 students are guided towards an appropriate programme of study at GCSE, which they will take over three years. They will also take part in a Careers Day to help inform those choices.

**Key Stage 4**

Currently students in Key Stage 4 (Years 9, 10 and 11) study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details of all GCSE courses are given in a booklet distributed to Year 8 students during Term 3. A copy of last year’s booklet is available on request. The courses available may not be the same from year to year and it may not be possible to run every course every year. It will depend on the number of students wishing to study a particular subject and the availability of staff.</th>
<th>In total students usually study eleven GCSE subjects based upon the following structure: All students study English Language and English Literature. Mathematics: gifted Mathematicians may also study a qualification beyond standard GCSE. Biology, Chemistry and Physics as components of GCSE Combined Science. A Modern Foreign Language. A Humanity (History or Geography). Religious Studies Students will study three other subjects taken from: a third Science (making separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics), another Modern Language, Art, Business Studies, Classical Civilisation, Computing, Design &amp; Technology, Drama, Film Studies, Geography, History, Latin, Music, Physical Education, Food Technology. In addition, students will also take compulsory courses in PE and Games, and Personal, Social, Health &amp; Citizenship Education including Careers Education.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Olim Meminisse Juvabit
**Sex Education (PSHCE)**

All students in Key Stages 3 and 4 take part in the School’s PSHCE programme. This course brings together different strands, focusing on what makes a good citizen. As well as looking at and discussing international issues, students also learn about personal, health and economic education, study skills, the requirements of good citizenship, relationships and substance abuse. Part of this includes sex education and the PSHCE team cover the physical and emotional side of sex within a relationship. If you have any concerns about this strand of the PSHCE course then you may withdraw your son from these lessons, but not where it features in the National Curriculum, as in Biology.

**Behaviour**

Behaviour at MGS is outstanding. Students are expected to work to the best of their ability and meet deadlines for the completion of work. They are expected to behave in a way which shows respect for all members of the school and wider community. They should also expect to be treated with respect by others. We believe behaviour should be excellent on the way to and from school and on school trips. The Headmaster, staff and prefects will take action if work or behaviour is unacceptable. Whilst we encourage students to take responsibility for their own conduct and be self-disciplined, we recognise that on occasion sanctions become necessary. These may include an entry on the conduct card, detentions and, in the most serious of cases, fixed term or permanent exclusions. The Headmaster reserves the right not to enter candidates for public examinations if work and preparation have been negligent and there is no realistic chance of success. Cases such as this are very rare occurrences at MGS.

**Recognising Diversity**

MGS aims to ensure the right of every child in the school to learn in a safe, secure and supported environment where they feel free from the fear of intimidation, harassment, victimisation or ridicule from other students, staff or from groups of individuals. MGS aims to integrate the promotion of equality and recognition of diversity into all its activities from key policy decisions through to day-to-day operations. It does not tolerate harassment, victimisation or discrimination.

MGS acknowledges that bullying, whether physical or non-physical, may lead to lasting psychological damage for the individual. We promote a climate where bullying and violence are not tolerated and cannot flourish. Our policy on bullying has been developed in full consultation with parties within the school community.
Sport

Sport is an important part of school life at MGS. There are four full time specialist PE teachers who manage teams in a variety of sports. We also have a lot of help from external specialist coaches who support us to achieve excellent results. Recent seasons have been particularly good for rugby, football, cricket and athletics and many league and cup trophies have been won. At MGS, there is an extensive extra-curricular programme for sport. Inter-House competitions, clubs and team practices run at lunchtime and after school six days a week! The school has very good sporting facilities, which include a brand new Pavilion equipped with five spacious changing rooms and a teaching space, sports hall, gymnasium, weight training room, rowing suite, three rugby pitches, a football pitch, indoor and outdoor cricket nets, two grass and artificial cricket pitches and three tennis courts. There are also plans underway for the development of a 3G all-weather pitch. We also work with Maidstone Leisure Centre, Maidstone RFC, Aylesford Bulls RFC, ZooSport, and Invicta Rowing Club.
Performing Arts

In September 2017, we opened a brand new Performing Arts building with a recording studio, music technology room, music classroom, Drama studio and music practice rooms. The department offers a wide range of opportunities to help students explore their musical and theatrical talents. Performing Arts is an integral, dynamic and growing department at Maidstone Grammar School. All students, from complete novices to experienced performers are encouraged to develop and explore their musical and dramatic talents.

We offer a broad curriculum spanning across the key stages. In Years 7 and 8, all students have dedicated Performing Arts lessons, which establish a firm grounding in Music and Drama. Drama and Music are both GCSE options. Students are welcome to take one or both subjects. In addition, Music Technology is currently available at AS and A Level.

In terms of live events, there is at least one major performance event each term. These include musical events (classical, contemporary and ‘rock gig’ events are all popular in the school), small scale drama pieces and whole school productions. In recent years, the school has staged several productions: most recently, ‘Zorro!’, ‘School of Rock’ and ‘DNA’ by Dennis Kelly. This year’s production is the pantomime ‘Treasure Island’.

Our practice rooms are available for student use: be it to play an instrument, practise a dance or rehearse a dramatic piece. A significant number of students learn to play musical instruments in school with lessons delivered by our peripatetic music teachers. The Choir practices and performs a variety of vocal pieces throughout the year - both choral classics and more contemporary works. Our recent performances include ‘This is Me’ and ‘From Now On’ from The Greatest Showman. Students are also welcome to take part in our Big Band, or perform as part of our Gaudeamus Brass.

Fraternity
Art

The Art Department has a distinct profile at MGS, giving opportunities for students to explore a range of media, techniques, and styles. We pride ourselves on not having a house style, but rather a true diversity that starts with a clear focus on individual student interests and abilities.

The Department has excellent open-plan facilities to assist candidates to attain their full potential. Students at all levels are frequently invited to enter competitions, and our students have an excellent track record of prize and bursary winnings, such as the Downton Exhibitions at County Hall, the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies, and the Association of Men of Kent & Kentish Men.

Our Annual Student Summer Exhibition showcases our best GCSE and Sixth Form work, and attracts both corporate sponsorship and coverage in the local press.

Outdoor Education, Field trips and Residential Trips

Learning does not just happen in the classroom! A very wide range of specialised outdoor activities further extends our students’ knowledge and experience across all year groups. During our Extended Learning Week, there are a number of foreign residential trips to places such as Germany, France, Italy and Canada and, across the academic year, a number of departments take students on field trips and educational visits.

The School is justifiably proud of its Combined Cadet Force (CCF), which is open to students in Year 9 and upwards. The School has one of the oldest Combined Cadet Forces in the country (founded 1906) with Army, Navy and RAF sections. All sections have been successful over the years with many national and local competitions being won. RAF cadets have gained flying scholarships and private pilot's licences. Army cadets have been awarded scholarships at Welbeck and Sandhurst. Naval cadets have won places at Dartmouth. Our shooting team has been very successful. Cadets can take part in activities such as abseiling, first aid, map and compass work, climbing, fieldcraft, weapon handling and shooting, military knowledge, command tasks, canoeing, flying, gliding and sailing.

Skills are further developed in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, which has four sections at Bronze level: expedition, volunteering, skill and physical. Activities include; expeditions, community service, motor car maintenance and sub aqua diving. Possibilities are almost endless. Many students gain bronze and silver awards and some go on to gold.

Friendship
Students in Years 7-9 participate in a programme of activities aimed at extending their cultural and social experiences. Seven hundred children take part in an extensive range of activities both on and off site for a week in Term 6. Virtually every member of staff is also involved. Historically, there have been approximately 28 activities in total including up to six residential trips at home and abroad. The range of activities is enormous with everything from F1 to sign language and from Great MGS Bake Off to a panto for children from local primaries.

Year 10 undertake a week of work experience during this week.

Respect
EXTENDED LEARNING WEEK IN PICTURES

[Images of various activities and events]
Pastoral Well Being

Pastoral care is very important at MGS and we strive to ensure that every student feels known and cared for. Every student in the School is a member of a mixed aged vertical tutor group made up of students from Years 7 to 13. This gives the tutor group a “family feel” – older students support younger boys and everyone has the chance to take on roles and responsibilities from an early age, share experiences and develop lasting friendships. Vertical tutor groups also reflect the fact that we are preparing our students for a society in which they will live and work with people of all ages. Your son will be one of about three or four Year 7s in this tutor group family.

Each tutor group belongs to one of four Houses: Barton, College, Corpus Christi and Tonbridge, each named after different sites occupied by the school throughout its long history. Your son will be overseen by the same tutor and Head of House/Assistant Head of House throughout his time at MGS.

These staff work closely with subject staff, our Student Services Department the Senior Leadership Team to track and monitor all students both academically and pastorally. The House and pastoral system at MGS ensures that all students and their parents receive a continuity of care from Year 7 all the way through to Year 13 and into the world of work and higher and further education.

Each House has a Head of House supported by an Assistant Head of House. Their work is overseen by the two Assistant Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers on the Senior Leadership Team. In addition, we have an excellent Student Services Department, which includes two Student Services Managers, an AEN Manager, Inclusions and Attendance Manager and Careers Advisor. We also have an in school counsellor, adult 1:1 mentors and a 1:1 Mind worker to support students where required and our experienced pastoral team works closely with external agencies where appropriate.

Attendance

The School supports the DfE and Local Authority advice that children should not be removed during term time for holidays. Our default position is that requests for term time holiday will not be authorised. Only the School can authorise absence.

Should there be a need to apply for extraordinary leave of absence a form is available from the School Office or the School’s website for completion and return to the pastoral Deputy Head no less than 2 weeks before a planned absence. Parents should not enter into any holiday commitments before obtaining leave of absence.

In the case of illness we ask that parents phone the School Attendance Line on 01622 623922 at once and provide a letter for your son or daughter later. Difficult or urgent problems should be referred to the Student Services Department.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Alongside Teaching and Learning, Safeguarding is absolutely integral to everything we do at MGS. We have an experienced team overseeing safeguarding in the school. Mrs J Sewell (Deputy Head) is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Miss R Johnson, Mr P Conisbee and Mr N Shambler (Deputy DSLs) support her in this role. Any concerns should be reported in confidence to the DSL/DDSLs.
Other Useful Information:

Academic Information to Parents
You will receive three assessments per year. These will include target grades, current attainment data and Attitude to Learning marks. One of these assessments will also include a comment from each subject teacher about your son’s progress. During the year, there is a series of Parental Consultation Evenings and Information Evenings when staff are available to discuss progress, including a Welcome Evening for new parents in Year 7.

Additional Educational Needs
All students follow an inclusive timetable and we work hard to ensure that those students with an identified additional or special educational need fulfil their potential. This includes those with additional needs. All students are supported first and foremost by classroom teachers using the Graduated Approach as laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015. If you require further details about our AEN procedures or have other general enquiries, you should contact our AEN Manager, Mrs A Lawrence or Miss R Johnson, Assistant Headteacher/SENCO.

Amenities Fund
We ask all parents to contribute £60 per student for the year. This makes possible many of the activities for students. Year 7 parents can pay in advance at a reduced cost of £250 for five years. Sixth formers joining MGS pay £60 per year or £100 for the two years. The School is grateful for gift aid returns and the additional funding it generates.

Careers Education
All students in Years 7-13 receive a broad and balanced programme of Careers Education, Advice and Guidance, which follows DfE Statutory requirements. This is delivered through a variety of activities, including careers lessons in PSHCE, off-timetable days, visits from external speakers from education and employment, work experience and individual careers meetings. Mrs Acaster is the school’s Careers Leader, and can be contacted at careers@mgs.kent.sch.uk.

Gifted & Talented
All students within a grammar school are gifted by national standards and our curriculum provision for all reflects this. However, we do identify our most able students and they are flagged to teachers so that they can extend and develop them through the work they set.

Library
Our Library is the academic hub of the school, aspiring to support all your academic needs and ambitions. Mrs Jones and Mrs Beighton-Delille our Librarians manage the extensive Book, Journal and Media collections tailoring them to meet the needs of all our students and staff. The Library is open every day from 8.30am to 5pm (4.30pm on Fridays). We aim to support your academic achievement alongside inspiring, informing and encouraging your wider interests and career aspirations.
**Equipment**
All students up to Year 11 should have pens and scientific, non-programmable calculators. We provide normal stationery up to Year 11, but ask Sixth Form students to provide their own files and file paper. Students are responsible for the return of all books and equipment issued.

**Mailshots**
You will receive invitations to various School/PA events such as plays, concerts and speech days. ParentMail is our main route of communication with paper documents sent to those not registered.

**Parents’ Association**
All parents are automatically members of the Parents’ Association. You will receive a regular newsletter outlining PA events. The PA attends the various evening functions and are welcoming to all parents. They have been instrumental in raising significant amounts of money for the school in recent years including the purchase of a new minibus as well as supporting our new Pavilion project and supporting departments with the purchase of new equipment. Information on PA events will be circulated via ParentMail.

**Governors**
There are two foundation governors, one LA representative, four parents, one staff, seven co-opted governors and the Headmaster. The Chair of Governors is Mr M Rolfe. You may write to him or to the Clerk to Governors, Mrs D Friend, via the school. The Headmaster has information about formal complaint procedures, which involve the Governors or LA.

**School Meals**
The Refectory is run by Independent Catering and operates a cashless system based on the use of a swipe card. As of September 2018, the price of a two-course meal is £2.50.

**School Shop**
You can buy uniform, sportswear and stationery from our School Shop, which is on your left after you come in through the gatehouse or you can order on line on www.simmonds-ltd.com.

**School Uniform**
We believe that school uniform promotes our school identity and all that we stand for. Students in Years 7 to 11 wear a black blazer with the school badge sewn onto the breast pocket and a House school tie showing their House colour (Barton – blue; College – green; Corpus Christi – red and Tonbridge – yellow). Shoes and trousers are black and traditional in style; shirts are plain white and without a logo. When summer uniform has been declared students wear either short or long sleeved white shirts. There is a different dress code for Sixth formers.

**Welcoming**
**Sportswear**
Students in Years 7 to 11 should have a pair of navy-blue rugby shorts, rugby or soccer boots with British standard safety studs, a reversible blue and amber/navy blue rugby shirt, a pair of navy blue and amber rugby socks and a towel. Students also need a House T-shirt, shorts, socks and trainers. For Rugby and Hockey mouthguards are compulsory. For Football and Hockey shinpads are compulsory. For Rugby and Football studded boots are compulsory.

**Special Activities**
For Crafts and Chemistry, we recommend a white overall or apron. No responsibility can be taken for damage to clothing if an apron is not worn. Goggles for eye protection are provided for some lessons.

**Further Information**
For further information about the School please visit our website [www.mgs.kent.sch.uk](http://www.mgs.kent.sch.uk)