

GAD'S HILL SCHOOL

CURRICULUM POLICY

POLICY UPDATED: **September 2025**
NEXT POLICY REVIEW: **September 2026**
REVIEW SCHEDULE: **Annually**
STAFF RESPONSIBLE: **PS**
GOVERNOR RESPONSIBLE: **Chair of Education Committee**

It is the core function and duty of the school to ensure that effective learning and teaching takes place. The governing body will ensure that there is a written policy on the curriculum (Part 1), supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work (Topic Overviews), which take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and which does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Part 2 of this policy sets out the ways in which the quality of learning and teaching is monitored and reviewed at Gad's Hill School to ensure that high standards are maintained and that quality of learning and teaching are improved at every opportunity.

Prior to Part 1 paragraph 2, and Part 1 paragraph 3, an explanation of the Curriculum intent and school context is given.

The Appendices contain our Curriculum Strategy case studies, explaining many of our curriculum-related decisions.

Related policies:

- E1 Assessment and Reporting
- E05 SMSC and RSE
- E7 Inclusion policy
- E8 Marking
- E12 Work Related Learning
- A05 Exam Procedures and Access Arrangements
- S3 Behaviour Management
- S5 Disability
- E3 Collective worship

Definitions:

- 'Fundamental British values' is taken from the definition of extremism as articulated in the Prevent Strategy. It includes 'democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'.
- 'Parents' is intended to include carers, guardians and other adults acting *in loco parentis*.
- 'Pupils' is used to include references to children of all ages who are taught by qualified teachers, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- 'School' means the educational setting the standards are applied in
- 'Special educational needs', as defined by the Department for Education.
- 'Statutory frameworks' includes all legal requirements, including but not limited to the requirement to promote equal opportunities and to provide reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities, as provided for in the Equality Act 2010.

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2. One Curriculum

Our One Curriculum is the presentation of the whole School's curriculum as a single coherent programme of study from Early Years to GCSE. We commenced work on compiling the One Curriculum in July 2019, drawing on a range of published research as we sought to map subject strands across the different phases of the School. The One Curriculum project has enabled us to review the continuity of learning. A case study of this is the work completed in 2023 to review the Key Stage 2 Humanities curriculum to ensure that it best prepared pupils with the necessary skills and knowledge required for secondary education and avoiding repetition of topic content. Now, teaching of History, for example, to older Junior pupils covers GCSE assessment objectives such as cause and consequence, change and continuity, significance, similarities and differences, the study of sources and interpretations and a thematic approach ('The changing role of women', 'London through time').

The One Curriculum is supplemented by Knowledge Organisers and Topic Overviews for each section of study. The theory behind our development of Knowledge Organisers is based on contemporary research in education with regards to Cognitive Load Theory and retrieval practice. A powerful moment in the creation of the One Curriculum was afforded when we physically mapped the full curriculum around all four sides of our sports hall. Teaching colleagues from Kindergarten up to Upper School were able to follow the full journey of their subject strand – in

English, for example, from the development of communication and language in the Nursery through to critical analysis of Shakespeare. In various reviews, we have thus been able to ask ourselves powerful questions: e.g. Does the curriculum reflect fully the cultures and backgrounds of our community? Do the set texts from age 3 to 16 represent a selection of the most important literature to have read by that age?

2.1. One Curriculum Intent

Gad's Hill School's One Curriculum is an ambitious and challenging curriculum for a child's educational journey from 3 to 16. It is designed to deliver strong outcomes in a broad range of GCSE subjects and other valuable areas of achievement, allowing leavers to progress to their first choice of further study and equipping them with the teamwork, independence and leadership skills necessary for rewarding careers and adult life.

The One Curriculum covers issues of critical importance on a global scale, as well as reflecting the rich history and cultural diversity of Medway, Kent and the South East of England. The curriculum favours opportunities to make learning enjoyable and incorporates significant opportunities for speaking and listening to produce articulate and thoughtful young people who are capable of empathy for others and keen to serve their community.

The curriculum allows for learning to be supportive and personalised, taking advantage of the high levels of expert guidance within each classroom, while still offering excellent value for money in its delivery. Through the school's curriculum, children learn how to look after their own wellbeing and develop compassion for the wider world.

3. Our Context for Our Curriculum

3.1. Mission, Visions, Values and Ethos

3.1.1. Our Mission

To enable our students to enjoy school, to achieve good academic qualifications and to develop those personal attributes and qualities which will guide them on their journey through life.

3.1.2. Our Vision

To be the first choice independent school for families in Kent who value a well-rounded education for their child. It is our intention that our students leave Gad's Hill as confident, mature, articulate, pleasant and self-reliant young people who are well equipped to enter the world through a university education or career of their choice.

3.1.3. Our Values

At Gad's Hill School, we promote 'The Greatest of Expectations':

- **Ambition & Success**
- **Community & Compassion**
- **Growth & Support**
- **Adventure & Opportunity**
- **Confidence & Responsibility**
- **Creativity & Expression**

These six strands of Expectations are at the heart of all we do as a school. They form a contract with our pupils and their parents, in that we commit to offer opportunities for every child to explore and develop themselves in these areas, and in return we expect all our pupils to engage with all aspects of school life. These are Expectations, therefore, both of the School and of our pupils.

We value ourselves, our community and our environment by demonstrating the Great Values:

Gratitude

We appreciate our and each other's worth and the opportunities we have.

Respect

We value ourselves and each other; showing courtesy, listening, and following rules.

Equality

We value our diversity and treat ourselves and each other fairly and with kindness.

Aspiration

We make choices which support ourselves and each other in being the best we can.

Tenacity

We show curiosity, resilience, and determination in all that we do.

3.1.4. Our Ethos

Children do well when they are happy at school and at Gad's Hill we pride ourselves on providing a friendly environment, where enthusiasm and hard work are the foundations for achieving success.

There is more to life than exam results alone and while Gad's Hill enjoys the reputation of receiving good GCSE results this is not our sole focus. We want to offer our pupils a foundation in life, working with them to become confident, motivated and articulate young people ready for the next stage in their education and life beyond.

3.2. School Context

3.2.1. Local Educational Context

The school's location puts 16 Grammar Schools within 11 miles of its gates. It is a source of pride that an overwhelming majority of our pupils who take the 11+ examinations for

Kent and Medway are successful, and indeed over the last several years approximately 50% of pupils leave at the end of Year 6 to attend local state Grammar Schools.

At the same time, Gad's Hill School is able to offer a secondary curriculum which seeks to develop strong personal and employable skills alongside GCSE success and - supported by the introduction of the Charles Dickens Scholarship Examination in 2017 - a growing number of pupils deemed 'selective' by the Local Authorities are opting to choose Gad's Hill over the Grammar alternative.

In recent years, an increasingly significant number of children have also joined (or re-joined) the school from the local state sector during KS3 or the early part of KS4 in recognition of the school's more supportive and less-pressured environment and its focus on developing confidence and leadership alongside GCSE preparation. Some parents recognise that their children face anxiety or other emotional or SEND issues in larger environments.

A strength inherent in the school's design is the potential for continuity of curriculum planning and progression through all Key Stages. The development of our One Curriculum project is intended to formalise the acquisition of greater subject knowledge over a child's journey, including between Kindergarten, Juniors and Upper School.

The school now enjoys increasingly strong ties with both the village community (for example, concerts and tea parties for elderly residents, trips to the farm, library and village post office, participation in Remembrance Sunday parades and services, use of our facilities by scouting organisations and local youth and adult sports teams) and local primary schools (for example, our senior pupils supporting their sports days), and we seek to enhance further those ties and serve more families from the more local vicinity.

Most pupils then go on to attend local Sixth Forms or colleges after leaving us after Upper Fifth (Year 11), guided by dedicated and impartial careers provision in KS4.

3.2.2. Upper Fifth (Year 11) Leaver Destinations

As we do not have 6th form provision, our pupils leave us at 16 to go to a variety of local schools and further education establishments. A large number of these schools/colleges are invited to the KS5 information evening to exhibit and speak to our pupils. In addition, pupils are provided with independent qualified careers advice to aid their decision making.

The most common destination for Upper School leavers is to transfer to local Grammar School sixth forms. An increasing proportion are choosing to transfer to FE colleges (Mid Kent, NW Kent), many gain their first choice. A small number move to local independent school 6th forms and some move into apprenticeships.

The success of our CCF sees a small number of students pursue further military training. In recent years, some have gone on to places at Duke of York Royal Military School or selection training for the army.

3.2.3. Family Backgrounds

Gad's Hill welcomes pupils from a broad variety of backgrounds.

A small but sizeable proportion of parents come from professional backgrounds (doctors, accountants, solicitors etc.) some of whom may have attended independent schools themselves.

A more sizeable percentage are what may be classed as "first-time-buyers" and are successful, often self-made, traders or business-owners. This segment includes a good range of builders, developers, shop owners, and professional tradespeople. Some of these have a very high net-worth but who retain their local connections and aspirations. Both these segments tend to enter the school at nursery or reception and most stay the course to GCSE though some leave at 11+ for the local grammar system. A third segment is dominated by professionals such as police officers, fire staff, teachers, estate agents, local government employees etc. Often they may not have planned on independent education for their children but may have chosen to send their children to Gad's Hill with the intention of improving their chances of 11+ success and a grammar school place, or made the choice as a result of their children not gaining 11+ or in search of a more holistic, supportive and nurturing environment for their children to develop in.

The above are, of course, broad generalisations and every family is different. Additionally, the school is proud that Gad's Hill is becoming an increasingly ethnically diverse place of learning, with an increasing number of families of Asian and African origins choosing the school. As such, the school is becoming more representative of the ethnicity of the area it serves. Across the whole school, 46% of pupils are White British. The curriculum has been developed in recent years to reflect and celebrate these different backgrounds and cultures.

The introduction of an Upper School scholarship programme offering fee discounts of up to 100% has further contributed to the broadening of pupils' backgrounds. The Upper School remains the most financially accessible independent school within the commutable distance.

3.2.4. Other Local Context

The school was founded as a girls' school in 1924 by the Burt family, but has been co-educational since 2001. The Upper School is located in a Grade 1 listed building, the former home of Charles Dickens, just west of Rochester and one member of the Governing Body is a member of the Dickens family, while another is a representative of the Dickens Fellowship. 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the death of Charles Dickens in the main house on site. The Nursery occupies a space in the Orchard of the old house.

The school has expanded and today it provides day education for pupils aged between 3 and 16 accommodated in both old and new buildings. Construction of a new school building commenced in August 2011; the Kindergarten and Junior School occupied the building in summer 2013. Following the introduction of the principle two form entry to the school, the new Kindergarten nursery facility in the Orchard opened in January 2015. While our Kindergarten is one-form entry, our Junior and Upper year groups are two-form entry.

Beyond the school's literary links, its location in Kent puts it within easy access of a number of sites of critical importance in British history, as well as significant physical and human geographical features. Proximity to Ashford and Dover allow for exploration of mainland Europe.

3.2.5. Contextual Summary

The school seeks to offer a curriculum which, in the younger years, prepares children fully for secondary education and raises attainment to a level where pupils could be deemed selective in Kent and Medway 11+ assessments. In Upper School, the school delivers an education which can be a credible alternative to the many local Grammar Schools and yet which is distinctly different in its learning environment and method of delivery in order to present a genuine choice to families within the catchment area.

The school must remain a strong consideration for families concerned about the wellbeing and happiness of their children, who may find other, more impersonal settings to be unsuitable and who value the development of strong personal character traits such as self-confidence, self-discipline, resilience, initiative and teamwork.

The school seeks to deliver a curriculum which offers considerable value for money and which is as accessible as possible to the diverse local community that it serves.

The school's curriculum should be designed to capitalise on its own unique historical importance and that of the surrounding area, as well as the county's position as a gateway to Europe and the wider world.

3.3. Existing Strengths of the School

3.3.1. Education Beyond the Classroom

Gad's Hill's curriculum provides considerable opportunities for children to learn beyond a traditional classroom environment. The Kindergarten makes use of garden space, both in the Nursery orchard and in outside play areas adjoining all classrooms. Moreover, younger pupils have sessions with a qualified instructor in the idyllic Forest School on

site, and frequently visit the neighbouring farm. Other events regularly take place such as the annual K2 sleepover and anti-bullying workshops. As children grow through the school, opportunities for educational visits increase and diversify to provide a full calendar of enriching experiences – a chance to see learning in context, whether that be urban regeneration in the Docklands, human anatomy at the BodyWorlds exhibition or a set drama text in production in the West End.

All these discovery experiences seek to foster an inquisitive nature in our children, and to push children beyond the bounds of their everyday lives. In the Upper School, the Combined Cadet Force (compulsory from Lower Fourth [Year 8] upwards) and the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme particularly require pupils to step outside their comfort zone, often engaged in physically challenging activities away from the school site on camps and field days and in service to others. The CCF also instils the importance of resilience, self-respect and self-discipline and high standards.

For its size, Gad's Hill has a reputation for exceptionally strong music concerts and productions. The calendar of music and drama is designed to be as inclusive as possible while still offering the opportunity for the most talented pupils to take a spotlight. In music, for example, all pupils prepare pieces for the Percussion concert in lesson time and both Junior and Upper School children can appear on the bill in the Developing Musicians' concert, while the Spring Music Festival adds an element of competition for the very best performers in the school. The Creative Arts are flourishing at the school and pupils have, for several years, enjoyed considerable success in ISA regional art competitions.

Opportunities for children to take part in sport are numerous, with the school benefitting from pitches, indoor and outdoor courts, a climbing wall and experienced fencing and karate coaches. The school balances the desire to offer competitive fixtures with a fitness-for-all mentality – making use of local facilities to offer everything from BMX to trampolining. Healthy bodies and minds are also well served by Wellbeing Days which offer the children the chance to take part in dance, meditation and yoga classes as well as community and artistic projects.

Gad's Hill learning extends beyond the timetable in the opportunities it provides children to learn about working together or developing leadership skills, with a very wide range of positions of pupil responsibility, including the school council, Heads of House, prefects, subject leaders, monitors, mentors and ambassadors. These post-holders are expected to give their time in service to the school and to others, as well as to uphold its ethos.

3.3.2. Expert Teaching

Throughout the school, an excellent teacher to pupil ratio ensures that all children receive quality tuition from qualified professionals, aided in the Kindergarten and Juniors by committed Teaching Assistants. In recent years the school has trained teachers for Qualified Teacher Status achieving Outstanding ratings, with the school receiving commendation for our in-house training provision.

While younger pupils benefit from the considerable expertise of primary specialists, they are increasingly taught by degree-level specialists in many subject areas, until Lower Shell (Year 6), when much of the curriculum is delivered by Upper School teachers, who are able to prepare children thoroughly for secondary education. This allows children to follow a broad curriculum at a younger age than in many local primaries, enjoying access to the same facilities used for GCSE lessons. Collaboration between teachers of different phases (for example, between the Upper School History department and Junior School specialists) allows for some challenging and enriching projects.

Our Professional Learning programme for teachers launched in Autumn 2021, focusing on 'Quality First Teaching' and 'Great Teaching' as defined by the Great Teaching Toolkit (Evidence Based Education, 2020) and ensures that high quality classroom teaching remains the main focus for all teachers.

Drawing on these and other published research, we have designed our own model to encapsulate our vision of quality teaching across the whole school: the PRAISE model. This establishes that teaching at Gad's Hill should be –

- Pupil Centred
- Relationship Invested
- Attentively Caring
- Input Explicit
- Scaffolded Success
- Empowered Autonomy

The School buys into TES Develop for access to staff and leadership training modules and all staff complete annual Career Development Profiles to demonstrate their engagement with professional development. As part of the Monday conference CPD programme, teaching staff are paired with peers for joint coaching sessions as an opportunity to discuss ideas they are implementing, reading they have undertaken and targets they have set themselves.

The regular publication of the Teaching and Learning Digest – an internal newsletter showcasing projects and topics of interest to colleagues across the school – evidences a commitment to evidence-based practice.

3.3.3. Pupil Achievements

Pupils achieve well at GCSE, with results that exceed those achieved by comparable cohorts nationally and pass rates in the core subjects are high.

More than ever before, we are focussed on ensuring a level of outstanding academic rigour in pursuit of the very best outcomes at the end of the Upper Fifth. In recent years we have appointed a Pupil Achievement Lead, tasked with developing our 'Stretch and Challenge' programme – not just for the more able and talented children but for all our pupils. As the ability profile of our Upper School has increased dramatically in recent years, so has the breadth and challenge of our pathways to GCSE examination.

Summer 2024 GCSE results showed an improvement over 2023, with 93% of all results at Grade 4 or higher (80% in 2023) and 70% at Grade 5 or higher (59% in 2023). Performance in all core GCSE subjects showed an improvement on the previous year, with 94% pass rate (4+) in English Language, 97% in English Literature, 94% in Maths, 88% in Biology and Chemistry, and 91% in Physics. 47% of overall grades were at Grade 6 or above.

What is most impressive, however, is the value that we add to our pupils – at rates that few other schools can match. The CAT4 tests we use are standardised against the results of 25,000 pupils across the country and they provide data on what each child ‘should’ go on to get at GCSE, based on their ability.

Additionally, the Gad’s Hill curriculum ensures that children leave with a number of important qualifications that complement GCSEs – an Institute of Leadership and Management diploma, BTEC in Teamwork and Personal Development, LAMDA certificates, Duke of Edinburgh awards, First Aid certification and leadership awards for example, all of which mean that leavers applications to sixth forms evidence rich experiences as well as academic commitment.

Beyond those qualifications, children of all ages are actively supported in pursuit of other achievements, not limited to the school’s own wealth of shields, trophies, ties and certificates, but extending to numerous other successes outside of school, including national sporting recognition, performing and creative arts competitions and regional and national theatre productions. The school works with families to ensure that a balance between schoolwork and rehearsal or competition is met and that the wellbeing of the child is considered.

3.4. Learning Focus Reviews

From September 2025, a revised programme for monitoring teaching and learning will be introduced, with a termly formal observation programme running in addition to a series of focussed learning walks. These will look at different strands of our GREAT values, and assess their implementation using the PRAISE model.

Throughout all ages, a recurring theme in lesson observations is the degree of trust placed in pupils to work independently or in peer groups. Even in the Kindergarten, children are encouraged to tackle tasks themselves and to exercise some autonomy in their learning. Observations make apparent that this allows children to develop a great pride in their work, and an enthusiasm to “show off” their learning. A fully operational reward system incentivises this attitude, and pupils delight in receiving recognition (either instantly from their teachers or in awards in assembly from the Headmaster) for their work.

Classrooms are, without fail, positive and supportive environments where children receive help from each other, from TAs or from class teachers. This help, particularly in

the younger years, is provided in a fully differentiated manner, ensuring that children's efforts are recognised while pushing them to achieve more.

3.5. Existing Strengths Summary

The school offers a curriculum rich in opportunities for learning beyond the classroom, which builds resilience, teamwork, independence and leadership through a constant encouragement to take measured risks and to lead learning.

The curriculum is particularly broad for younger pupils, who benefit from access within school to facilities usually only available to secondary school pupils, delivered by expert teachers for every stage of development – who create positive and supportive environments for learning. The curriculum should emphasise the importance of healthy lifestyles and choices and teach children how to ensure their own wellbeing.

The curriculum must seek to deliver challenge for all pupils, consistently in all lessons, and children's progress must be supported by strong feedback to ensure that next steps are known and acted upon. Opportunities should be provided for children to develop their independence.

The curriculum should encourage children to pursue their particular interests and celebrate achievements in all its elements. Qualifications in non-GCSE fields should be valued.

4. PART 1 paragraph 2: CURRICULUM

4.1. PART 1 (a) and (b)

- (a) *full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;*
- (b) *that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;*

4.1.1. Full-time Education

Pupils of compulsory school age attend Gad's Hill School on a full time basis:

KR – K2: 32 hours 20min per week

J3– U5: 36 hours 40min per week

KN pupils attend both part-time and full-time.

4.1.2. Supervised Education

The staffing ratio for children aged five or over is usually a maximum of 1:20, but in exceptional circumstances, with the agreement of the Governing Body, the ratio may be increased to 1:21.

The following qualifications and adult-to-child ratios are requirements under the EYFS Statutory Framework. Children must usually be within sight of staff and always within sight or hearing.

Children aged three or over.

In Reception classes, where the majority of pupils are five or over within the school year, the staffing ratio is 1:30 (as in maintained schools) provided that a person with Qualified Teacher Status, Early Years Professional Status, Early Years Teacher Status or another suitable level 6 qualification is working directly with the children. Such a person may be an overseas qualified teacher or an 'instructor' (someone with the necessary qualifications or experience or both, where the governors/proprietor are satisfied with the qualifications or experience). In such Reception classes, there is no requirement, as previously proposed, for at least one other member of staff to hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

In other EYFS classes for children of three and above, with a person with Qualified Teacher Status (or other suitable person as defined above), the ratio is 1:13, and at least one other member of staff is required to hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

In EYFS classes for children of three or above, without a person with Qualified Teacher Status (or other suitable person as defined above), the staffing ratio must be at least 1:8. At least one member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification and at least half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification.

Two-year old children must have a 1:4 ratio. Whereas rising 3s (those children who start school at the beginning of the term in which they have their third birthday) in the school nursery can count as a 3 year old and therefore a 1:8 ratio is applied.

All managers must hold at least a full and relevant level 3 qualification, and half of all other staff must hold a full and relevant level 2 qualification. A named deputy must be identified, and be capable and qualified to take charge in the manager's absence.

Break and lunchtime: The EYFS Statutory Framework does not specify different ratios for these times, but allows a reduction of direct staffing when the children are at rest or sleeping. This is with the proviso that all the relevant staff are in the vicinity and readily available. The school should undertake risk assessments to assess the level of supervision that is required taking account of the particular needs and vulnerabilities of children in the EYFS. Inspectors make a professional judgement on the level of supervision and raise an issue if they have concerns. Safety should always be the first priority. It is unlikely that it would be acceptable for lunch-time supervisors to hold no qualifications and for qualified staff to be distant from the EYFS children.

4.1.3. Areas of Experience

At Gad's Hill we strive to provide all of our pupils with a curriculum which provides experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. The curriculum is constructed to ensure equality of access for all of our pupils. Our Inclusion Policy details our provision. Curriculum planning promotes participation in a wide range of activities, and enables pupils of all ages to make progress according to their ability, increase their understanding and develop their skills.

Foundation Stage – KN and KR

Learning and development in KN and KR takes place through a wide range of adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Learning through play and first-hand practical experiences provide the children with the opportunity to develop in all seven areas. Learning and development in all areas is interlinked – several areas of learning and development will take place during any one activity.

In the KN (Nursery) classes, the majority of the day is timetabled as being Topic/theme/child initiated activities with free-flow between the two classrooms and the outside area. This enables the children to choose and move freely between adult directed and child initiated activities. The children gather for phonics sessions (Read Write inc, when children are developmentally ready) circle times, story times, Movement and Dance. On-going observational assessment takes place during this time and during other parts of the day.

In KR (Reception) lessons are timetabled – Literacy and Numeracy (referred to as Phonics/Handwriting/Writing and Maths) occur mainly in the mornings. However, these lessons are adjusted on a daily basis to take into account the needs and interests of the class as a whole and of individuals. Lessons aim to be as practical and multisensory as possible with a range of play-based activities involved within them. During the afternoons, the children have longer periods of free play/ child-initiated activity time and are able to freely access resources in the classroom or in the outside EYFS gardens. On-going observational assessment takes place during this time and during other parts of the day. KN and KR pupils attend Forest School weekly.

ICT is incorporated into all areas of learning and daily life. The children in KN and KR have access to, and take turns to use, iPads and IWB's. In KR most lessons involve the IWB for whole class, small group or individual work and the children often choose to use the IWB during their Child- Initiated times. CD players are also used as well as range of remote control toys, talking albums, talking points and microphones.

Pupils in K1-K2 have four periods a week of Physical Education, as well as Music and Spanish lessons each week. KN students also benefit from PE, Music and Spanish from specialist teachers.

The Read, Write Inc programme is used in KR and follows through into KS1. Read Write Inc phonics sessions are used in KN when appropriate.

All children in the Foundation Stage have access to a wide range of play-based resources/activities designed to encourage them to develop mathematical awareness and understanding.

For more information, please refer to policy **I8: EYFS**.

Key Stage 1

Pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught largely by their Form Tutor. English and Maths are taught as distinct subjects. However, opportunities are given for developing these skills across the curriculum. Topics are taught in a cross-curricular manner. SMSC is taught both in distinct lessons (PSHE) and is integrated into everyday life in the Kindergarten, for example through the Golden Rules. Within lessons, differentiation is planned for to ensure more/less able children are catered for. Pupils are taught by subject specialists for the following subjects: Spanish, PE (and swimming for K2), and Music. Key stage one pupils attend Forest School on a weekly or fortnightly timetable.

Key Stage 2 Allocation of Teaching Periods

Number of 40-minute periods allocated per subject per week:

	Year 3 (J3)	Year 4 (J4)	Year 5 (J5)	Year 6 (Lower Shell)
English	10	10	10	10
Mathematics	9	9	9	9
Spanish	2	2	2	2
Science	3	3	3	3
Computing	2	2	2	2
Creative Design (DT/Art/Food & Nutrition)	4	4	4	4
History	2	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2	2
Religion and Worldviews	1	1	1	1
Performing Arts (Drama/Music)	3	3	3	3
PE	3	3	3	3
Swimming	3	3	3	3
PSHE	1	1	1	1
Total	45	45	45	45

Key Stage 3 Allocation of Teaching Periods

Number of 40-minute periods allocated per subject per week:

	Year 7 (Upper Shell)	Year 8 (L4)
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English	7	7
DEAR	1	1
Mathematics	8	8
Spanish	2	2
Biology	2	2
Chemistry	2	2
Physics	2	2
Computing	2	2
DT/Food & Nutrition	2	2
Geography	2	2
History	2	2
Drama	2	2
Music	2	2
Games	3	3
Swimming	3	-
Art	2	2
CCF	-	3
PSHE inc. RE	1	1
Total	45	45

Key Stage 4 curriculum

The aim of the curriculum at Key Stage Four is to prepare students to take GCSEs in a range of core and optional subjects that will enable them to progress into the Key Stage Five course of their choice – whether that be a grammar school or non-selective sixth form, college or apprenticeship – and to equip them with key employability skills and a good foundation for success in higher education.

The curriculum consists firstly of core compulsory subjects – English (students are prepared for both English Literature and English Language), Mathematics and Science (students are prepared for examinations in the separate sciences, ‘Triple Science’)- which are examined at GCSE level, as well as being part of the CCF which provides all students with the opportunity to gain a BTEC in Teamwork and Personal Development as well as the ILM Level 2 award in Effective Team Member Skills. Students also take courses in PSHE and RaW (Religion and Worldviews)- and since 2024, this latter subject has involved teaching towards a Religious Studies Short Course GCSE qualification, as well as taking part in weekly Physical Education lessons. All students also have the opportunity to work towards gaining Duke of Edinburgh awards during Key Stage Four, which are highly regarded, LAMDA qualifications, and Emergency First Aid qualifications.

In addition, there is a selection of Option subjects, each of which is taken to GCSE. Students get to choose three of these Option subjects. In choosing a combination of Options, certain advice might be borne in mind. It is, educationally speaking, desirable to study a humanity, as well as – where there is an aptitude – a more practical or artistic subject. However it is possible that a student may have a particular leaning. The Option block system thus permits the choice of subjects towards particular inclinations, for example choosing a combination of more traditionally academic subjects or a selection of more artistic subjects. For the all-rounder, choosing three options can be an agonising matter, and discussions with subject teachers will be important. Each year a number of students find it difficult to give up subjects they have enjoyed in Key Stage Three, however the narrowing of the curriculum at Key Stage Four is essential in preparing students for success. We believe our curriculum provides students with the opportunity to study a range of core subjects and skills, as well as the ability to choose a more academic Options path, or a more creative one, or indeed a

combination of both. Students should also consider potential A-level or further study choices they wish to pursue at Key Stage Five when making their choices.

Students are also able to take GCSE Psychology as a blended-learning approach outside of our usual curriculum time. Students choosing to take GCSE Psychology will need to be self-motivated to complete the required self-study that will form part of this course. Select students will also have the option to take GCSE Statistics outside of our usual curriculum time, commencing in L5.

Below you will find Gad's Hill block system for optional Key Stage Four subjects. Following the Key Stage Four information evening, students are asked to submit ranked Option choices (in case of oversubscription to a particular subject) from blocks 1-3 and to indicate the additional qualifications from the fourth block below that they would be interested in. The blocks are fixed and one Option only from each of blocks 1-3 can be selected. There is no limit on the optional extra-curricular qualifications as long as students display the required aptitude to study the course.

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Other available qualifications
GCSE History	GCSE Geography	GCSE Computing	GCSE Psychology
GCSE Spanish	GCSE Art	GCSE Drama	GCSE Statistics
GCSE Music	GCSE PE	GCSE Food & Nutrition	LAMDA
GCSE Design Technology			Duke of Edinburgh Bronze
			Duke of Edinburgh Silver
			ILM Level 2
			Emergency First Aid at Work
			GCSE Religious Studies (short course)

Students are provided with the following information regarding Statistics:

How do I study statistics?

1. By invitation – Students are invited by the Head of Mathematics to study towards Statistics GCSE based on prior performance in maths assessments.
2. By request – Students may request to study for Statistics GCSE providing the following conditions are met:
 - a. Achievement of 4+ in all 'attitude to learning' scores across all subjects in the latest Gradesheet
 - b. Achievement of 4+ in English and Science in the latest assessed grade on the Gradesheet
 - c. Achievement of 5+ in Maths in the latest assessed grade on the Gradesheet
 - d. The understanding that attendance at after school sessions is compulsory, with an 80% minimum attendance rate
 - e. The completion and submission on time of all set Statistics work, including in the event that an after school session cannot be attended

Students who fail to comply with these requirements may not be able to complete the course.

In order to study Psychology GCSE, students must be achieving a 4 or above in English, Mathematics and Science in their latest Progress Test/Summer Examination and ongoing attainment in core subjects will be reviewed.

In an effort to raise pupil attainment at Key Stage 4, Heads of Departments and subject tutors will select courses most appropriate to our students, currently:

- GCSE English (Eduqas)
- GCSE English Literature (Eduqas)
- GCSE Maths (AQA)
- GCSE Biology (AQA)
- GCSE Chemistry (AQA)
- GCSE Physics (AQA)
- GCSE Science Trilogy double award (AQA)
- BTEC Teamwork and Personal Development (by CVQO through Edexcel)
- GCSE Spanish (AQA)
- GCSE Computer science (OCR)
- GCSE History (AQA)
- GCSE Geography (AQA)
- GCSE Music (AQA)
- GCSE PE (Edexcel)
- GCSE Drama (Edexcel)
- GCSE DT (AQA)
- GCSE Art (AQA)
- GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition (AQA)

All subjects are taught as three-year courses starting in Upper Fourth.

The school maintains the right to withdraw any pupil from entry for any KS4 qualification following the trial examinations if their conduct and/or approach to study is unsatisfactory.

See Appendix B for details of the KS4 study guide.

Key Stage 4 Allocation of Teaching Periods

Number of 40-minute periods allocated per subject per week:

	Year 10 & 11
English	8
Mathematics	7
Science	10
Games	3
OPTION 1	4
OPTION 2	4
OPTION 3	4
CCF	3
PSHE	1
RaW	1
Total	45

4.1.4. Special Educational Needs

Please refer to policies E7 Inclusion and A05 Examination procedures and access arrangements

4.2. Part 1 (c)

- (c) *where the principal language of instruction is a language other than English, lessons in written and spoken English, except that this matter does not apply in respect of a school which provides education for pupils who are temporarily resident in England and which follows the curriculum of another country;*

All lessons, other than timetabled MFL, are taught in English.

4.3. Part 1 (d)

- (d) *personal, social, health and economic education which–*
 - (i) *reflects the school's aim and ethos; and*
 - (ii) *encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act(a);*

Pupils are provided with a range of activities which provide personal, social, health and economic education, and which promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. SMSC is taught to all pupils from Kindergarten up as a 40 minute period PSHE lesson per week. Aspects of SMSC are also delivered via subject-based, cross-curricular classroom teaching, through assembly or Tutor Group activities, or through presentations by visiting speakers. The whole school follows the Jigsaw programme, adapting as necessary. The teaching will encourage respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. For further details refer to policy E5: SMSC.

4.4. Part 1 (e)

- (e) *for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that–*
 - (i) *is presented in an impartial manner;*
 - (ii) *enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and*
 - (iii) *helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;*

A programme of careers advice is delivered to enable pupils to choose courses of study at GCSE, A-levels and beyond, that are appropriate to their abilities. We aim to help them “know themselves” and how their strengths, weaknesses and interests relate to the world of work; to learn about different careers and opportunities; to obtain individual and impartial guidance; to have work experience and to gain information about training, education and occupations beyond school. For further details refer to the Careers and Work Related Learning Policy.

4.5. Part 1 (f)

- (f) *for pupils below compulsory school age (KN and KR), a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills;*

The school has KN and KR classes, with pupils below compulsory school age. The foundation stage curriculum has been described above in *Part 1 (a) and (b)*.

4.6. Part 1 (g)

- (g) *for pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs;*

Compulsory school age starts at the beginning of the term after that in which the child becomes five. Pupils must stay in some form of education or training until their 18th birthday if they were born on or after 1 September 1997.

The school's curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all of its pupils. The curriculum for key stages 1-4 has been described above in *Part 1 (a) and (b)*.

4.7. Part 1 (h)

- (h) *that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress;*

The school's curriculum is designed for all pupils to learn and make progress. Schemes of work are written, encompassing learning objectives and resources to enable students to learn and make progress in all lessons. CAT baseline testing is carried out in K2 and Upper Shell in order to measure progress and calculate value-added. Parent reports are shared at tutor parents' evenings. A programme of after school clubs and Gradebooster sessions are planned to help all pupils to learn and make progress. Progress is assessed, monitored and reported with the aim of progressing learning, please see policy E1: Assessment and reporting.

4.8. Part 1 (i)

- (i) *effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.*

The school aims to be effective at: "...developing in every young person the values, skills and behaviours they need to get on in life. All children should receive a rich provision of classroom and extra-curricular activities that develop a range of character attributes, such as resilience and grit, which underpin success in education and employment," (DfE).

Children have an opportunity to take part in a diverse selection of after-school clubs to develop additional skills and attributes pertinent to life. Additionally the house system enables children to work as part of a vertically grouped team, plan and deliver an event with the guidance of the teachers or even lead a team towards a goal, be it through academic or sporting competitions.

Key to the development of our pupils in the Upper School is the participation of all pupils in L4 up in CCF activities. These activities open the pupils to a wide range of experiences, encouraging pupils to think and learn for themselves by the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort outside a classroom situation. Skills fostered in CCF such as effective teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, responsible behaviour, and speaking and listening can all then be transferred into other learning environments, inside and outside school, as well as helping prepare our pupils for future life. Pupils also take on roles and responsibilities, and are exposed to a range of valuable experiences such as school plays, trips, volunteering, sports, assemblies, visiting speakers, and more. See also the SMSC and RSE Policy.

5. PART 1 paragraph 3: TEACHING AND LEARNING

5.1. General Principles of Good Practice

Within our procedures for learning and teaching there should be:

- 1** Clear learning intentions for each lesson / task / stage
- 2** Clear success criteria for each lesson / task / stage
- 3** The use of clear and effective feedback and self-evaluation
- 4** The use of open-ended questioning to promote reflective learning
- 5** The use of procedures to promote pupil self-assessment and target setting

The school will ensure that teaching and learning at the school:

- (a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
- (b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
- (c) involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
- (d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
- (e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
- (f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;

- (g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;
- (h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly;
- (i) does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- (j) does not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

5.2. Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils. Teachers must adhere to the DfE Teacher's Standards at all times.

Teachers must:

Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils:

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect ;
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions;
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils;
- provide a stimulating environment.

Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils:

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes;
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these;
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching;
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge:

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and cross-curricular areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings;
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship;
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject;
- if teaching early reading or early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

Plan and teach well-structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time;

- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity;
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired; (see Appendix C for homework allocations)
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching;
- and contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

Adapt the teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively;
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these;
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development;
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them

Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- knowing and understanding how to assess the relevant subject, therapy and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements;
- making use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress;
- using relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons;
- giving pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- having clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy; praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly;
- managing classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them;
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

5.2.1. Setting work for absent children

Our primary concern is naturally that any child off school because they are unwell should be resting and recuperating in readiness for a return to school, but in any case it is not frequently practicable for teaching colleagues to set online work for pupils for one day at such short notice. Teachers will instead be able to work with a child once they return to school to ensure that they catch up on what they have missed. In addition, all children in the Juniors and Upper School should be adept at accessing subject areas on Microsoft Teams and so, if children are not well enough to be in school but well enough to do some work from home during their absence, they should be able to find a wealth of resources – including the relevant topic Knowledge Organisers, from which children can

complete revision activities. Pupils also have access to several online learning resources – for example, Hegarty Maths, Kerboodle, Duolingo and so on – from which they can work independently. An unwell child may find that simply reading for pleasure is a suitable task that will still gently exercise their brain.

If parents know that their child is likely to be absent from school for **more than** one day for any approved reason, then we will be happy to provide work for them to complete at home so that they do not fall behind their peers. Parents should advise this likelihood when contacting the school to report the absence. Teaching colleagues will provide work in such cases as soon as their teaching commitments permit.

5.3. Whole school responsibilities

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position, including when using social media;
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions;
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others;
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- and ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality. Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

A CPD library is provided for staff in the school staff rooms. Termly 'Teaching and Learning Digests', our in-house e-newsletter, share good practice from within our own classrooms, training and research. Teachers from across the whole school contribute to this CPD initiative. A range of teachers provide evidence-informed CPD sessions as part of our Monday night staff meeting programme, as well as for our Initial Teacher Training in-school programme.

5.4. Evaluation and monitoring of effective teaching and learning

This policy seeks to ensure that these standards are rigorously monitored, that the evidence is reviewed and that action is taken to improve where a need for development is identified. Support and training will be offered where areas of weakness are found.

Regular CPD takes place during Monday staff meetings, as well as INSET days.

Teaching and learning is monitored through:

- **Learning Focus Reviews**
Formal 'Learning Focus Reviews' take place three times a year for all teachers throughout the school. Learning Focus Reviews last for two weeks. During a Learning Focus Review, each member of staff is observed teaching by a member of SLT or Middle Leader and feedback given. Student books are reviewed for evidence of pupil progress and feedback which enables learning. Discussions take place with students about their learning, as well as with Heads of Department. SLT review lesson observations, schemes of work, resources, pupil comments and student work. At the end of the fortnight, SLT meet to feedback and discuss the Learning Focus Review.
- **Learning Walks**
SLT, Middle Leaders and any other member of staff are encouraged to carry out Learning Walks on a regular basis. Learning Walks are purely to identify positive aspects of learning in order to share good practice at the Monday staff meeting. Any issues identified in the Learning Walk can be discussed with SLT.
- **Peer coaching**
All teaching colleagues have a pair or triad coaching group with whom they meet every half term as part of their Monday night CPD time. They share their targets for development, research they have undertaken and ideas for best practice. Pairs and triads are encouraged to undertake informal observations of each other to inform conversations.
- **Governor observations**
Governors are invited to observe teaching staff in order to better understand teaching and learning in the school, and to monitor effectiveness.
- **Assessment meetings**
Following more formal summative assessment times, Assessment Meetings take place for each stage of the school where pupil progress is scrutinized. Following these meetings, strategies to celebrate, extend and improve learning may be put in place for individual pupils or classes. Please refer to the Assessment and Reporting Policy.
- **Reports for Governors**
During the academic year 2023/24, Governors will receive a number of reports from school staff to ensure oversight of the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

Assessments

In KG half-termly assessments take place. In Juniors, formal assessments take place termly, with additional assessments carried out by teachers in interim half-terms. In Upper School, termly assessments take place.

Data from these assessments are processed and analysed by the Head of Upper School and Head of Lower School. This is then disseminated to teaching staff and the Director of Inclusion through assessment meetings and is stored on the SIS for access by staff.

Gradesheets are completed to disseminate the data to parents and students. Please refer to policy E1: Assessment and Reporting.

6. Policy monitoring and review

SLT will monitor and evaluate the current curriculum offered in the school.

SLT will:

1. consider future strategies in respect of academic and curricular issues, in order that pupils are prepared for the terminal exam-based public examination system;
2. consider further opportunities to enhance pupils' ability to achieve academic success across the curriculum, with a focus on the core subjects of Maths, English and Science;
3. discuss and propose strategies to ensure that the school meets its objectives in the school improvement plan, whilst taking into account changes in the national and local educational landscapes;
4. review progress data presented by Heads of School and Heads of Department
5. and maintain effective use of teachers and resources.

SLT will report to the Governing Body, making recommendations and proposals for approval by the Governing Body, and will then be responsible for the successful implementation and subsequent monitoring of those agreed proposals.

7. Appendix A: Key Stage 4 Handbook

A GCSE Induction Evening is held for pupils entering the U4th and their parents. At this Induction Evening pupils are issued with a Key Stage 4 Study Guide, which contains general information about GCSE examinations as well as individual subject information:

1. An introduction to the courses studied at KS4
2. Course costs

The handbook also contains specific subject information including:

1. Details of the exam board and specification.
2. A breakdown of the examination framework (coursework, theory, modules etc).
3. A term-by-term outline of the major aspects of the GCSE course.
4. A list of textbooks or other resources, which may be used during the course.
5. A list of resources which will be provided by the school (text books, maps, safety equipment etc).
6. A list of resources which the students may be encouraged to purchase (WHS, Letts study guides, worksheets, calculators, etc).
7. A detailed description of major coursework tasks.
8. A list of deadlines for draft and final submissions of coursework

8. Appendix B: Homework Allocations

Homework is set daily as per a published timetable. Children should write down details of the tasks set in their homework diary. Subject tutors must add information about homework assignments to the homework page of the SIS.

Key Stage 1

Written homework (Topic/English): one piece per week – 40 minutes.

Reading, including Accelerated Reader: every night - 10 minutes

Spellings: ten spellings to be learnt each week.

Maths: mathematics and/or written activity per week - 20 minutes.

In Year 2, in the summer term, an additional piece of maths or English is set on a Tuesday night, for collection on a Thursday – 20 minutes.

Key Stage 2 (amount in total, including at least 20 minutes independent reading)

J3 – 30 mins, Maths and English only

J4 – 40 mins, Maths, English and Science

J5 – 50 mins, Maths, English and Science

Remove – 1 hour, Maths, English and Science

Upper School:

Upper Shell	English 30mins	Maths 30mins	Biology 30mins	Chemistry 30mins	Physics 30 mins	
Lower 4	English 30mins	Maths 30mins	Biology 30mins	Chemistry 30mins	Physics 30mins	Humanities 30mins
Upper 4 Lower 5 Upper 5	All subjects for 30mins per week English, Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, GCSE Options x3* *Expectations in PE, Art, DT, FN, Drama and Music is that in L5/U5 additional work may have to be completed therefore independent study hours maybe higher at times.					

Aside from the independent work set by teacher's other forms of independent study can include (but not exhaustive): preparing and using revision materials for progress tests, completing tasks from Stretch and Challenge Menus, Reading and writing for pleasure and the use of online learning websites such as Seneca, Kerboodle, Mathswatch or BBC bitesize.

There is guidance available in the Supporting Learning in the Upper School Document that has been sent home.

9. Appendix C: Case Study: One Curriculum Project – Knowledge Organisers and Topic Overviews

Curriculum Strategy Case Study	
Issue	One Curriculum Project: Knowledge Organisers and Topic Overviews
Development Period	Summer 2019 – Spring 2021
Context	<p>In the summer of 2017 the first reformed GCSEs were introduced, covering more challenging content, the removal of controlled assessment in the majority of subjects and a greater focus on final examinations. Along with this was an increased focus on the importance of 'knowledge' within education, following a period of focus on 'skills'. In order to assist students with the learning of increased knowledge and exam preparation, education saw an increased focus on retrieval practice with several schools developing Knowledge Organisers as retrieval practice tools. Ofsted increased their focus on curriculum. The school had a desire to make greater use of being a through school by having greater oversight of a whole school curriculum, focusing on 'one curriculum' as one school.</p> <p>Educational research has shown that 'retrieval practice' is one of the most effective ways of learning information. Retrieval practice is simply the task of recalling information from memory. Regularly testing yourself on information is the most successful pattern of learning, and students forgetting information has been attributed to a lack of testing and revisiting information. This is why we are producing Knowledge Organisers. Used well, a Knowledge Organiser can support students in grasping the foundational concepts that will pave the way for future learning. The act of dredging up knowledge from memory, or retrieving it, increases the likelihood that it will be remembered next time, and the harder it is to recall this knowledge, the more powerful the effect. Regular testing, using Knowledge Organisers, helps move information into the long-term memory, freeing up the working memory to learn new skills and information.</p> <p>The theory behind our development of Knowledge Organisers is based on contemporary research in education with regards to 'cognitive load theory' and 'retrieval practice'. Cognitive load theory states that there are limits to the amount of information the working-memory can contain, therefore storing more information in the long-term memory frees up working-memory capacity for new information (so the more</p>

	<p>we can move information into the long-term memory, the more space there is in the working-memory for new learning). One of the best ways of cementing information into the long-term memory is retrieval practice. Retrieval practice is simply regular testing of information using memory, which is where the Knowledge Organisers come in. Regularly testing yourself on information is the most successful pattern of learning, and students forgetting information has been attributed to a lack of testing and revisiting information. The act of dredging up knowledge from memory, or retrieving it, increases the likelihood that it will be remembered next time, and the harder it is to recall this knowledge, the more powerful the effect. Regular testing, using Knowledge Organisers, helps move information into the long-term memory, freeing up the working memory to learn new skills and information.</p> <p>As well as the production of Knowledge Organisers, the One Curriculum project collates our whole-school curriculum for review with the production of Topic overviews for all subjects and year groups. Topic Overviews are a way of summarising the key elements from a subject's scheme of work and were presented by Helen Ralston at a ResearchEd conference. Prior to introducing Topic Overviews, each department produced schemes of work of their own design and formatting which provided limited opportunities for whole-school oversight and review. Departments will continue to use their detailed schemes of work for medium and short-term planning, however will also produce Topic Overviews which can be collated across the whole-school for long-term planning. We adopted the use of Topic Overviews across the whole school as part of our desire to review our whole-school curriculum as 'one curriculum', to ensure that it meets the needs of our students, contains the diversity we value as a school and progresses subjects throughout the school in a logical and deliberate manner. We want our curriculum to provide a whole school programme of learning for students at Gad's Hill that is deliberately designed, meets our intentions and has impact.</p>
Research	<p>Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction – Importance of review, recall practice, models and examples.</p> <p>Mark Miller: Organising Knowledge – The purpose and pedagogy of knowledge organisers</p> <p>Helen Ralston: A template to trigger and capture improved thinking on curriculum and assessment – developing topic overviews</p> <p>Kate Jones: Retrieval Practice, research and resources for every classroom. John Catt.</p> <p>Deliberately difficult – why it's better to make learning harder, David Didau</p> <p>Dr Robert Bjork – the benefits of testing</p> <p>5 ways to make knowledge stick, Teacher Toolkit</p> <p>Using Knowledge Organisers to improve retrieval practice</p>

	<p>Retrieval practice...in practice, Jamie Scott, Evidence Based Education: https://evidencebased.education/retrieval-practice-in-practice/</p>
CPD	<p>Monday night CPD, July 2019 – One Curriculum – sharing of vision for one whole-school curriculum. Introduction to knowledge organisers and topic overviews. Features and use of knowledge organisers. Outline of timings of the project.</p> <p>Inset Autumn 2019 – One Curriculum project: Retrieval practice, knowledge organisers and topic overviews. The vision for developing a whole school curriculum was shared, with the project outlined for 2019-2020. Explanation of the purpose and design of topic overviews and knowledge organisers. Teaching given on memory and retrieval practice and the use of knowledge organisers. Use of David Didau ‘Deliberately difficult – why it’s better to make learning harder’ and the focus on study-test-test-test=test. Use of Dylan William – forgetting due to a lack of extended practice, overlearning testing and revisiting. Dr Robert Bjork – benefits of testing. Use of knowledge organisers for retrieval practice. Three references for further reading provided.</p> <p>Inset Summer 2020 was planned and cancelled due to lockdown. This was moved to Autumn 2020, focusing on a review of knowledge organisers and useful features, feedback from the spring term pupil and parent survey and a decision on next steps.</p> <p>Autumn 2020 Inset presented an update on the One Curriculum project, presented feedback from the pupil and parent survey, set new deadlines for the production and use of Knowledge Organisers and Topic Overviews, and presented a CPD session on Retrieval Practice as part of our use of Knowledge Organisers.</p> <p>Gad’s Hill Teaching and Learning Digest – various editions available for staff and Governor viewing.</p>
External Training	<p>ResearchEd conference Kent December 2018: Helen Ralston presentation – Lightbulb moments</p>
Governance / Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed at SLT level during spring and summer terms 2019 • Reported to full governing body September 2019 • Agenda item at September 2019 Curriculum Committee, feedback gathered from staff • Regular updates to staff and governors
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge organisers developed and published to pupils and parents for each year group from KR-U5, for each subject for each half term. This project was temporarily interrupted in summer 2020 due to lockdown and a focus on a ‘recovery curriculum’. • Topic Overviews under development and due for end of summer 2020. Disrupted due to school closures as a result of Covid-19. All Topic Overviews produced by December 2020.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil and parent survey March 2020 – very positive with some helpful suggestions for further improvement. Results presented at Inset Autumn 2020 with follow up actions to be decided. <p>In summary, survey results showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils and parents find the Knowledge Organisers helpful and use them for revision, recap and consolidation of learning • Younger students are more likely to use KOs in lessons, whereas older students are more likely to use them at home • Although KOs are made for all junior subjects (except drama), not all children are aware of them • Pupils (and parents) would like to have their own copy • Pupils and parents would like to have them earlier • Pupils would like to have practice questions to help them engage with the KOs • Seniors would like the KO to more closely match progress tests • Parents would like feedback on whether their child is struggling with a particular section of the KO
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge organisers available for public viewing in reception and for pupils and parents on the SIS. From Autumn 2020 also available on Microsoft Teams for students. • Topic Overviews available for staff viewing on the SIS. • Inset presentation PowerPoint • Monday night CPD PowerPoint and follow up email to staff • SLT meeting minutes spring and summer 2019 • Curriculum committee minutes September 2019 • Governing body Director of Studies report September 2019 • Inset day screencast Autumn 2020 • Gad's Hill Teaching and Learning Digest – various issues available for staff and Governor viewing

10. Appendix D: Case Study: Feedback Policy

Curriculum Strategy Case Study	
Issue	Feedback Policy
Development Period	Autumn 2018 – Spring 2019
Context	<p>October 2017 ISI inspection recommendation: “Ensure that all pupils feel they understand how they are doing in their work through consistently effective marking and feedback.”</p> <p>Internal lesson observations indicated some outstanding examples of feedback throughout all phases of the school, but with inconsistency between departments. Marking policy contained prescriptive</p>

	<p>guidelines on marking code and indicated required frequency of book marking, without reflecting latest research studies into best and most time-effective practice nor making clear the place of marking within a broader framework of feedback strategies. Existing marking policy also failed to reflect on staff workload and impact of this on quality of feedback, nor did it seek to incorporate the knowledge of school staff on most effective practice in the school's context.</p>
Research	<p>Education Endowment Foundation – “Feedback studies tend to show very high effects on learning. However, it also has a very high range of effects and some studies show that feedback can have negative effects and make things worse”</p> <p>EEF's A Marked Improvement, April 2016. (“A mantra might be that schools should mark less in terms of the number of pieces of work marked, but mark better”)</p> <p><i>Mark. Plan. Teach.</i>, Ross Morrison McGill and @TeacherToolkit</p> <p>Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction – Importance of checking pupil understanding <i>during</i> learning, after learning small amounts of new material</p> <p>Feedback policies of other schools.</p>
CPD	<p>In Curriculum Groups, colleagues read sections of the EEF's review of evidence and chapters from <i>Mark. Plan. Teach.</i> Additionally, they read a selection of feedback policies from other schools and compared with the GHS Marking Policy. Curriculum Groups agreed key principles of assessment and feedback through three distinct modes: immediate; summary; review. CGs were then tasked to agree what work should be assessed in each manner, with what frequency and what this feedback would look like in practice. In this way, a new Feedback Policy was developed, which recognised the impact and relevance of immediate feedback alongside written marking. The Policy put pupil improvement back at the centre of feedback rather than evidencing for parents or inspectors. Following implementation of the policy, CG Reviews focussed on the quality of assessment and feedback provided in lessons, and ‘consistently effective feedback’ was a mandatory target for CG Development Plans in 2019/20. The Feedback Policy was revisited in January 2020 by CGs at staff conference, alongside marking scrutiny.</p>
External Training	<p>During 2018/19, a trainee teacher developed new approaches to ongoing feedback and marking through her training and implemented these in her department. These were shared widely across all colleagues alongside other examples of effective practice.</p>
Governance / Leadership	<p>Policy was approved by the governor-led Curriculum Committee in March 2019.</p> <p>SLT focus on feedback as part of ongoing CG reviews and monitor progress through CG Development Plans. Focused plans for improving feedback are implemented with individual teachers.</p>
Outcomes	<p>CG Reviews demonstrate examples of excellent feedback, both verbal and in writing. Work scrutiny January 2020 reveals strong examples of effective feedback. New work towards developing growth mindsets</p>

	trains and encourages pupils to engage better with both forms of feedback and to reflect on and self-evaluate learning.
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff conference minutes - Feedback policy - CG Development Plans 2019/20 - CG Reviews Spring 2019 onwards - CG Work Scrutiny feedback

11. Appendix E: Case Study: Key Stage Four Curriculum

Curriculum Strategy Case Study	
Issue	Key Stage Four curriculum
Development Period	September 2016-April 2018, updates made March 2021, review undertaken December 2021
Context	<p>In September 2017 we moved to a three-year Key Stage Four as a result of the introduction of more rigorous reformed GCSEs containing more content and a desire to allow children to study a range of subjects in greater depth for three years of their time in Seniors. This was first proposed to Governors, and approved, by the Head of Seniors in September 2016. Prior to this, children at Gad's Hill chose their option subjects at the end of Upper Four (Year 9), meaning that they then had two years to follow their chosen subjects to GCSE examinations at the end of Upper Five.</p> <p>Many schools had, over recent years, moved to a three-year Key Stage Four system. This had become an increasingly common scenario since the announcement (and first teaching) of the new, weightier and more challenging reformed '1-9' GCSEs introduced across the curriculum. Several advantages were outlined in the decision to move to a three-year Key Stage Four:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time to cover GCSE syllabus content and to prepare students for exams more rigorously. As an example, Geography and History were both currently allocated two 40-minute periods per week in Upper Four. This would be doubled under a revised system. • Opportunity to explore a subject more fully, beyond just "teaching to the test", including higher level content as preparation for Sixth Form and College courses. • Time in Upper Four to reinforce key foundation concepts to be built upon in Lower and Upper Fifth. • Pupils in Upper Four are studying subjects they have chosen – which should lead to better motivation and behaviour in that year group. • Less able learners do not need to struggle through a third potentially demoralising year of the most academic subjects before dropping them. • Pupils studying more practical subjects have considerably more time to complete project work. • Teachers are incentivised by the knowledge that their Upper Four pupils will be taking their subject at GCSE. • Lower Four becomes a more significant year as options choices approach.

The disadvantage of the proposed change was that children would be narrowing their field of study at an earlier age. This was discussed in depth by SLT and the Governing board who ultimately decided on a move to a three-year Key Stage Four for the reasons outlined above. We believe that our Key Stage Four still offers a broad and balanced curriculum for all students.

Up until Summer 2017, option blocks for Key Stage Four choices were constructed following pupil surveys which ranked subjects by preference. From these results, the Director of Studies produced a set of option blocks which took into account the survey results to try to give as many students their preferred options as possible. This process continued for the first year of the introduction of the three-year Key Stage Four, resulting in L4 and U4 option blocks being constructed at the same time for study between 2017-2019 and 2017-2020 but containing a different combination of subjects for the two year groups dependent on the survey results. The survey-based system resulted in different option blocks each academic year, with option blocks not being released to parents and students until the Key Stage Four information evening held in school at the end of April, following which students had four weeks to make their option choices from that year's blocks. Option blocks varied each year, some years students had to choose between History and Geography, other years they could choose both, some years students had to choose between CCF and French, another year between CCF and DT, and so on. Students and parents were not aware of what these options would be until four weeks before having to submit their choices.

This system also made it very challenging to plan for the most efficient staffing deployment and impacted on our ability to recruit effectively when required. This is because the Key Stage Four curriculum, and therefore staffing demand, was not finalised until May, not allowing any time for staffing review or recruitment before September. This also resulted in timetables being published to staff in August, prior to an end of August start.

Within this system, CCF formed an option within the option blocks. When moving to the three-year Key Stage Four, this meant that students who did not select CCF from the option blocks only had the opportunity to take part in this during L4. In the final year in which we offered CCF within the option blocks, 20 out of 24 students chose it as an option with French placed as the alternative option within the block. CCF was becoming an increasingly popular option at Gad's Hill, providing students with a wide range of benefits and qualifications. This made it increasingly difficult to place another subject against CCF in the option block system. A review of the benefits of CCF to the school, it's importance as part of our offering, it's increasing popularity

amongst pupils and parents, and our move to a three-year Key Stage Four led to the decision to remove CCF as an option from the option block system and to make it part of our core offering.

Following the Key Stage Four information evening in April 2017, the use of the survey-based option block system was reviewed. We attempted to provide bespoke option blocks for students following the survey of subject preferences from which options blocks of subjects were produced based on student wishes. Students then choose four subjects from these blocks and the vast majority of students got to do at least three of their top five choices. While many pupils have been happy with these arrangements, inevitably however, as is the case in every school, not every pupil got to do exactly what they wanted. Choices and compromises had to be made in order to be able to produce a timetable which worked for all students together. Following the April 2017 presentation of option blocks there were several complaints from parents and students not able to get everything exactly as they wanted it. Having designed a bespoke system, it made it much more difficult for parents to understand why they could not always have their top choices and made it a more personal issue due to the use of the survey-based system. By giving parents choices and attempting to provide for these we were inevitably setting parents and students up to be disappointed by not being able to provide for all of these individual requests. The Director of Studies presented to the Governing board the recommendation to explore the use of set option blocks at Key Stage Four not based on annual parental surveys and that would remain the same each year. This way students and parents would know in advance what options they will have at Key Stage Four and we would not be creating conditions in which students and parents feel let down and angry. The Governing board approved this recommendation.

The Director of Studies then researched many other school systems for producing option blocks and produced a Key Stage Four curriculum structure, similar to that used by Radley College, for discussion by SLT. The Head of Careers and Work-Based Learning contacting all local sixth forms to research their entry requirements to inform our structure of the Key Stage Four curriculum. This concluded that the vast majority of local schools were only considering the top eight results. The governors were presented with the new Key Stage Four structure at a full board meeting and voted to approve the change.

For the first time, parents were emailed the Key Stage Four curriculum structure and option choices three weeks in advance of the information evening. This meant that parents and students had the Easter holidays to discuss and consider their options.

	<p>When we held our first Key Stage Four information evening using this system it was very positive and calm, with no complaints. Parents and students were pleased with the structure and understood the reasons for it. Parents and pupils were not responding in anger, frustrating or fear by being surprised in public with the option blocks by communication being carefully managed in advance of the Key Stage Four information evening. While pupils and parents still are not able to achieve the ideal set of option choices they might wish, our justification of our option block system for educational reasons makes this disappointment far less personal. Our Key Stage Four curriculum and option block system is publically available on our website for all current and prospective parents.</p> <p>We continue to review our Key Stage Four curriculum to ensure that it is meeting the needs of students, offering triple science to select students for the first time in 2020. Following an increase in scholarship students, we are also exploring the possibility of offering short-course GCSE Religious Studies as an additional extra-curricular option from September 2021.</p> <p>In 2020 in recognition of the increased number of academic scholarship students as a result of the Charles Dickens' scholarship the decision was made to add Psychology GCSE as a blended-learning option outside the option blocks. SLT voted between available subjects and the result was Psychology.</p> <p>In December 2021 a robust analysis and review of the key stage four curriculum offering and option block structure took place by senior leadership in December 2021. No changes were made at that time.</p>
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All local sixth form entry requirements • Variety of schools in England for option-block systems • Variety of schools in England for three-year Key Stage Four models
CPD	
External Training	
Governance / Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three-year KS4 proposals discussed at SLT Spring-Summer 2016 • Three-year KS4 proposed to Governors September 2016 and approved • Option blocks discussed by SLT March-May 2017 • Option blocks approved by Governors March 2017 • Option blocks follow-up reported to Governors March and April 2018

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In recognition of an increased number of academic scholars as a result of the Charles Dickens' scholarship the decision was made to add Psychology GCSE as a blended-learning option outside the option blocks. SLT voted between available subjects and the result was Psychology. • A robust analysis and review of the key stage four curriculum offering and option block structure took place by senior leadership in December 2021. No changes were made at that time.
Outcomes	<p>Current Key Stage Four Curriculum and educationally-based option block system publically available:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Gad's Curriculum at Key Stage Four</p> <p>The aim of the curriculum at Key Stage Four is to prepare students to take GCSEs in a range of core and optional subjects that will enable them to progress into the Key Stage Five course of their choice – whether that be a grammar school or non-selective sixth form, college or apprenticeship – and to equip them with key employability skills and a good foundation for success in higher education.</p> <p>The curriculum consists firstly of core compulsory subjects – English (students are prepared for both English Literature and English Language), Mathematics and Science (students are prepared for examinations in single sciences, 'Triple Science', or trilogy science, 'Double Science') – which are examined at GCSE level, as well as being part of the CCF which provides all students with the opportunity to gain a BTEC in Teamwork and Personal Development as well as the ILM Level 2 award in Effective Team Member Skills. Students also take courses in SMSC (Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education) and REPP (Religion, Ethics, Philosophy and Psychology) which are not examined, as well as taking part in weekly Physical Education lessons. All students also have the opportunity to work towards gaining Duke of Edinburgh awards during Key Stage Four, which are highly regarded, LAMDA qualifications, and Emergency First Aid qualifications.</p> <p>In addition, there is a selection of Option subjects, each of which is taken to GCSE. Students get to choose three of these Option subjects. In choosing a combination of Options, certain advice might be borne in mind. It is, educationally speaking, desirable to study a humanity, as well as – where there is an aptitude – a more practical or artistic subject. However it is possible that a student may have a particular leaning. The Option block system thus permits the choice of subjects towards particular inclinations, for example choosing a combination of more traditionally academic subjects or a selection of more artistic subjects. For the all-rounder, choosing three options can be an agonising matter, and discussions</p>

with subject teachers will be important. Each year a number of students find it difficult to give up subjects they have enjoyed in Key Stage Three, however the narrowing of the curriculum at Key Stage Four is essential in preparing students for success. We believe our curriculum provides students with the opportunity to study a range of core subjects and skills, as well as the ability to choose a more academic Options path, or a more creative one, or indeed a combination of both. Students should also consider potential A-level or further study choices they wish to pursue at Key Stage Five when making their choices.

Students are also able to take GCSE Psychology as a blended-learning approach outside of our usual curriculum time. Students choosing to take GCSE Psychology will need to be self-motivated to complete the required self-study that will form part of this course. Select students will also have the option to take GCSE Statistics outside of our usual curriculum time, commencing in L5. Further information on these, and all, courses can be found in this Handbook.

Below you will find Gad's Hill block system for optional Key Stage Four subjects. Following the Key Stage Four information evening, students are asked to submit ranked Option choices (in case of oversubscription to a particular subject) from blocks 1-3 and to indicate the additional qualifications from the fourth block below that they would be interested in. The blocks are fixed and one Option only from each of blocks 1-3 can be selected. There is no limit on the optional extra-curricular qualifications as long as students display the required aptitude to study the course.

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Optional extra-curricular qualifications
GCSE History	GCSE Geography	GCSE Computing	GCSE Psychology
GCSE PE	GCSE Drama	GCSE Spanish	GCSE Statistics
GCSE Food and Nutrition	GCSE DT	GCSE Art	LAMDA
		GCSE Music	Duke of Edinburgh Bronze
			Duke of Edinburgh Silver
			ILM Level 2
			Emergency First Aid at Work

Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2016 Head of Seniors report to Governors • March 2017 Director of Studies report to Governors • May 2017 Director of Studies report to Governors • March 2018 Director of Studies report to Governors • April 2018 Director of Studies report to Governors • School website: https://www.gadshill.org/senior-school/senior-curriculum/
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12. Appendix F: Case Study: Distance Learning and Recovery Curriculum

Curriculum Strategy Case Study	
Issue	Distance Learning and Recovery Curriculum
Development Period	End of Spring – Autumn 2020
Context	<p>A week before the Easter holidays spring 2020, schools were closed by the government indefinitely. After the May half term, schools reopened for nursery, reception, year 1 and year 6, with year 10 expected to return for short periods of time starting 15th June. The school has been open every day (excluding weekends and bank holidays) throughout the entire period, including school holidays, providing supervision for children of critical workers 8.30-16.30 as requested by the DfE. The school has moved to a programme of Distance Learning using Microsoft Teams, incorporating screencasts, discussions facilitated on the chat pages, shared resources and assignments set and given feedback. Form tutors have called each child twice a week. SENCOs and learning support staff have been in regular email and telephone contact with EHCP and vulnerable children, and any identified by teachers as struggling, with an in-school support hub recently established and overseen by the senior SENCO. The Headmaster has conducted live conferences with each form group on a prearranged topic. SLT have continued to meet weekly.</p> <p>The School's strategy for the provision of Distance Learning was arrived at following lengthy discussion at Senior Leadership level, and agreed by all Heads of School and the Director of Studies. Consideration was given to a number of factors including existing published research, the national picture of remote learning delivery, the School's specific context, staffing availability, staff remote working capacity, availability of technology and the existing training and skillset of teachers, feedback from parents, SEND and inclusivity considerations and with the</p>

School's ethos and ethics in mind, including issues of pupil and staff wellbeing. As SLT continue to meet regularly throughout the partial site closure, the strategy has been constantly reviewed and refined, and every parent in the school was consulted and the survey results fed into further reviews and adaptations of delivery of teaching and learning.

A key finding of the Education Endowment Foundation's [rapid evidence assessment](#) is that *"Ensuring the elements of effective teaching are present – for example clear explanations, scaffolding and feedback – is more important than how or when they are provided. There was no clear difference between teaching in real time ("synchronous teaching") and alternatives ("asynchronous teaching")."*

The priority has therefore been given to ensuring that the provision of teaching and learning is theoretically sound. **Barak Rosenshine's** ['Principles of Instruction'](#) article is a well-known and well-respected summary of ten research-based strategies that the School has previously worked on in staff training sessions over the last two years and against which we have mapped our Distance Learning. Issue 8 of the Gad's Hill Teaching and Learning Digest comprehensively establishing the educational credentials of our system this term, with examples of:

- Daily review
 - New material in small steps
 - Questioning
 - Provision of models
 - Guided student practice
 - Checking of student understanding
 - Insistence on high success rates
 - Scaffolding for difficult tasks
 - Independent practice
 - Weekly and monthly review

In an 'ordinary' context, all of these principles of instruction would occur during lessons or during the subsequent assessment of submitted work. However, not all of them can take place during the phase of didactic teaching where the teacher delivers learning lecture-style, nor even via teacher-led question and answer sessions. They will occur in 1:1 conversations around the room when a teacher is able to engage with an individual and see the work that they have produced – not situations particularly facilitated by a group video call. Pre-recorded videos, however, allow for pupils to pause instruction, to skip back and to work at their own pace. We are aware that live meetings could also be recorded, but find it less likely that pupils will watch these back to find the instructional sections. We have therefore focused our strategy on pre-recorded instructional videos created by our own teaching staff, not live video calls.

Importantly, we believe that our approach to Distance Learning will have a much longer-lasting impact on pupils' ability to learn. Children at home engaging with our Microsoft Teams provision are developing significant independent study skills which will leave them well-equipped for the future. It is reported that Microsoft Teams had 13 million daily users in July 2019, a year before the current increase in working from home. In many cases, this has indeed proven difficult for some children who may be less practised in honing these skills – but to my mind the challenge in developing these skills only serves to prove their value. Prioritising work, developing comprehension of instructions and information, planning response strategies, improving problem solving abilities, resource management – these are all being challenged and enhanced by our Distance Learning. We believe that this is in contrast to attendance in live-streamed conversations, which remains an essentially passive approach to learning. We see a real longevity in our provision which will last well beyond lockdown: when children return to classes, live-streaming for those pupils is likely to become redundant, except in the case of further lockdown or perhaps a rare snow day; whereas short instructional videos produced by teachers can be reused and, excitingly, could give birth to a new style of 'inverted learning' homework, where children can prepare for in-school lessons by watching preparatory materials prior to their classes. We believe these skills are in line with the style of learning at grammar schools and university and therefore provide our students with a range of transferable skills.

While the use of Microsoft Teams was not in place right from the start of the partial closure of the school site, with the already established practice of setting work via the Homework Page of the SIS being used in the interim. The current use of Microsoft Teams is a sign of the way in which we have assessed, reviewed, canvassed and adapted our strategy in pursuit of constant improvement. We have addressed feedback regarding the accessibility and scope of assignments and the early frustrations relating to file types. Our current model of delivery is now far from that which existed before Easter. In the weeks that have followed, feedback has been getting better and better and is now significantly more positive than negative – noting that prior criticisms have been acted on promptly. 86% of parents who answered our survey in the Senior School reported that their children were making good progress with learning. 83% agreed that their child was receiving appropriate feedback from teachers and 86% of respondents felt their child could receive help when needed. 93% of respondents to our survey in the Senior School agreed that Gad's Hill have managed the impact of the crisis well.

It has been difficult to find significant national studies to give a clear picture of how many schools are using live-streaming as a means of delivering their curriculum. The surveys that seen (conducted by Teacher Tapp and the National Education Union) indicate that while a

number of independent schools (but by no means all) have decided to deliver remote learning via live lessons for at least part of their delivery, only a very small number of maintained schools have used live-streaming as part of their remote learning model. Anecdotally, we are aware of many grammar schools with 'outstanding' Ofsted ratings which have not opted to provide such a model.

The use of live video lessons have been trialled with some classes since the first half of the summer term and teachers have reported some reservations. Some of these could perhaps be more easily overcome – the time spent at the beginning of each session trying to resolve microphone and video issues, for example, would presumably reduce as pupils and their parents (and teachers) became more experienced, although there were a large number of pupils unable to make themselves heard at all on their technology at home. Some problems would remain, both technological (the clear frustrations of pupil with poor broadband connections) and practical (the difficulty in engaging with a child's work in a genuinely meaningful way or noisy interruptions from parents talking in the same room, answering their phones and bringing the conversation to a halt). Furthermore, these lessons revived some of the least positive attributes of classroom environments (the child who is afraid to speak in front of peers and hides from conversation, or the child who is asked a question and then sits in silence unable to think of a response for some time. In these cases the embarrassment can be all the more acute with parents listening in as well as children). Some sessions had very low turnout from pupils (3 children out of a class of 12 or more) although others were attended by more. No sessions had full attendance.

Essentially, what the trial appeared to show was that live video most closely recreates the trappings of a real lesson: a start and end time, a teacher present, a class that can catch sight of each other, expectations of conduct and behaviour and so on, rather than an impact on children's learning. By the end of the sessions, we were less convinced that significant learning had taken place, or – more to the point – that pupils would be any more able to return to the learning that they felt they had missed out on and cover it again. What the live video sessions lacked of the classroom was the flexibility and – most importantly – the opportunity to differentiate learning, to break out of teacher-led whole-class work and spend time with an individual who was struggling to comprehend. For those children we were particularly conscious of the presence, just off screen, of other people's parents listening in.

Parents have raised a number of other concerns which suggest that live-streaming lessons are not universally desired, including access to technology (a third of children in the school cannot guarantee access to a computer at any time, according to our survey) and other pressing family issues, including shielding or sick relatives. There are clear inclusivity issues here, and some parents have expressed concerns that

they feel enormous pressure or guilt in not being able to give their child access – or, more often, children, since it has often been parents with two or three children who find themselves unable to offer up the required screen time for all of them. We also have concerns about excessive screen time, privacy and safeguarding issues associated with online behaviours.

Part of our strategy to secure a successful future for the school is to ensure retention of the outstanding staff who are fundamental to our success. At Gad's Hill School we have a particularly strong sense of 'team' in the way that colleagues work and support each other. This exists from the top down and the SLT strive to pursue what we consider to be an ethical agenda. Teacher workload has been immense in recent weeks (as documented by weekly work schedule logging) and colleagues balance this with their own family commitments, often working late at night to catch up once their own children are in bed. Additionally, they have continued to work in school throughout the weeks since March 23rd to supervise pupils who have remained on site. For these reasons, it is profoundly challenging for many of our teaching colleagues to commit to regular lesson times.

One area where we can see a stronger argument for some live video interaction is in terms of assessing and promoting pupil wellbeing. Pupils did appear happy to be able to see each other and share ideas and their feedback on the meetings was generally positive – and focussed on the opportunity to talk with friends. We introduced the use of Teams to conduct live 'form time' sessions for those who wish to participate. With this approach, pupils were less likely to miss out on important learning if they could not access a scheduled live lesson at the right time, but those who enjoy the chance to interact with others have the opportunity to do so. This has been implemented across all Junior and Kindergarten classes. Senior school classes will also get this provision for the last three weeks of term.

The DfE announced on 15th June: *We know that in some schools, there will be capacity to welcome more children back, in group sizes of no more than 15, before the summer holidays. This may be because take-up amongst eligible children is lower than expected, or because there is additional space still available within the school and available staff to teach and supervise. There is no expectation on primary schools to welcome back additional children where they do not have capacity to do so.*

As a consequence of this update, we are pleased to say that we will be able to welcome back children in all year groups from K2 to J5, on a part-time basis, from 22nd June. In doing so, we are obliged to meet the protective measures set out in Government planning documents, which include keeping all class sizes below 15, staggering start, end and break times, preventing groups from mixing with each other around the school site, and avoiding teachers moving between groups as much as

	<p>possible. In order to meet all of these requirements, and taking into consideration the availability of teaching and support staff, we are able to offer two days per week in school for each child for these last three weeks of term. Distance Learning will continue on the remaining days. Supervision will also continue for children of key workers as directed by the DfE. Unfortunately the DfE have confirmed that no other senior year groups will be returning this term, however we will be exploring the possibility of face-to-face meetings with students.</p> <p>Autumn 2020 saw the return of all pupils full time, with a detailed Covid-19 risk assessment. Our INSET day covered the concept of a recovery curriculum, using guidance from Professor Barry Carpenter and the Chartered College of Teaching, as well as the use of retrieval practice in the classroom and principles of differentiation for children as different places in their learning. Teachers monitored and assessed pupils in the first half of the Autumn term and produced plans for interventions as needed.</p> <p>School closures were in force for the majority of the Spring term 2021. The school returned to Distance Learning using Teams, provided live teaching for all lessons. The majority of students engaged well with this. The school reopened fully three weeks prior to the end of the spring term. Students were reintegrated back into lessons successfully. Feedback from middle leaders highlighted that academically there were few concerns as students had continued to make good progress during distance learning. Pastorally, however, some issues were experienced with students learning to socialise again and with the youngest students having to relearn some basic skills. Teachers worked hard with students on these social and emotional skills, providing a range of outdoor trips when restrictions allowed. Teams continues to be used for homework in the Juniors and Seniors, as well as the setting of work for absent pupils. Resources are also shared with students using Teams subject and form pages, as well as notices. We took the decision not to conduct formal assessments of students in the three weeks they returned for the spring term, focusing instead on the importance of reintegrating them back into classrooms and social situations. Formative assessment continued to take place regularly in lessons, with teachers assessing student progress and providing interventions as required. The summer term formal summative assessment procedures and reporting to parents continues as planned.</p>
Research	<p>Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction forming the basis for our online learning.</p> <p>Education Endowment Foundation: Rapid Evidence Assessment: <i>"Ensuring the elements of effective teaching are present – for example clear explanations, scaffolding and feedback – is more important than</i></p>

	<p><i>how or when they are provided. There was no clear difference between teaching in real time ("synchronous teaching") and alternatives ("asynchronous teaching")."</i></p> <p>Rosendale Research School's approach to home education, via the Chartered College of Teaching: the benefit of teacher made videos and the use of feedback to students on set work</p> <p>Mrs Riley's blog: School closures, via the Chartered College of Teaching – new knowledge, or revision: the importance on focusing on revision during school closures, more than new concepts</p> <p>Chronicle: 'Zoomed out': why 'live' teaching isn't always the best, via the Chartered College of Teaching: How videoconferencing tools lead to teacher-centred learning and one-way communication, becoming 'Zoomed-out' with overuse of technology.</p> <p>Amy Forrester: 4 ways to maintain pastoral support – the importance of form tutor support during lockdown</p> <p>Janet Goodall: Supporting the home learning environment, Chartered College of Teaching compact guide – the importance of teachers supporting themselves as well as their pupils, not producing too much work so that parents feel they are failing, concentrating on what is important.</p>
CPD	<p>Gad's Hill Teaching and Learning Digest edition 8 summer 1 2020 (redacted) outlines the use of Distance Learning on Teams to ensure the inclusion of Rosenshine's principles of instruction. The EEF's guidance and documents regarding planning for home learning were shared with staff, as well as links to a selection of online CPD available via the Chartered College of Teaching, Teacher Toolkit, TES and Educare.</p> <p>Microsoft Teams – staff have been trained on the use of Microsoft Teams via a staff channel on Teams with a range of screencasts created by Louise Tucker and Paul Tassell. Help sessions by appointment have been held at the school.</p> <p>Autumn 2020 Inset: Recovery Curriculum and Inset Day Teaching and Learning Digest.</p>
External Training	<p>A Recovery Curriculum: Reconnection, re-igniting and resilience. Professor Barry Carpenter.</p>
Governance / Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued weekly SLT meetings • Teaching and Learning Digest sent to governors before May half term • Regular reports to be sent to governors in time for this half term's scheduled governing body meeting
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Teams for delivery of Distance Learning • Work set weekly on Fridays, with work regularly marked and feedback provided to students via the assignments • Screencasts produced by all teachers to aid instruction and modelling

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning Digest produced to showcase examples of best practice • Delivery of the full curriculum, with SMSC being delivered in online assemblies rather than lessons. • In school recovery curriculum for KN, KR, K1 and Remove from 1st June focusing on preparation for transitions, recovering of socialisation and key knowledge and skills • Twice weekly form tutor contact by phone • Online discussions utilising the Teams chat function • Additional support provided by SENCOs and learning support staff • Virtual live Headmasters Conferences • Weekly recorded assemblies by the Headmaster and other heads of phase • Pupil Intervention Plans Autumn 2020
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gad's Hill Teaching and Learning Digest edition 8 summer 1 2020 (redacted) • Parent survey results • SLT meeting minutes • Teacher weekly work logs • Microsoft Teams channels and assignments • Inset day Autumn 2020 screencast • 2020-2021 School Improvement Plan

13. Appendix G: Case study: MAT Learners project

Issue	More Able and Talented Learners Project
Development period	Launched Spring 1 2021
Context	<p>In Autumn 1 2020, it was identified that more could be done to stretch and challenge our more able pupils. Although subject staff differentiate in lessons to stretch pupils, it was felt that pupils could be further engaged and encouraged in a wider context, away from the classroom.</p> <p>As an independent but non-selective school, we believed it was important that we show our high achievers and their parents that we recognise their ability and talent and that we are actively there to support and encourage them. Over the last two years, partly as a result of the introduction of our Charles Dickens Scholarship programme, we have had an increase in higher attaining children enter the senior school. It therefore felt like it was the right time to trial something new that could then potentially be carried through to the whole school.</p>

Upon conducting research, it was apparent that many schools have a programme in place where children were identified as being more able (or able) through CATs scores, or talented through teacher input. Some schools offer enrichment days/trips out with the group, some offer additional clubs for the pupils and others provide parental guidance on how to stimulate their children in their learning. The most effective examples found were those schools that offered pupils challenges or tasks to complete outside of the class.

As a result of the research, it was agreed that a 'More Able and Talented' (MAT) programme would be trialled with our KS3 pupils from Spring 2021. The pupils were identified as:

- Most Able - Top 10% based on CATS
- Able - Top 20% based on CATS
- Talented - Teacher nominated

Before announcing to pupils, parents were provided with a parental guide which outlined how they can further support their child at home and how as a school we were looking to roll out this project. Parents were also asked to complete a questionnaire focusing on their child's talents and achievements. This was useful in seeing how parents and pupils perceived the project and their child's individual talents. Although not all parents responded, these questionnaire results will be shared amongst staff.

'Challenges' were then designed for pupils, spanning from creative to more traditionally academic. All 'challenges' were applicable to any topic the pupils chose and they were encouraged to challenge themselves outside their comfort zone. 'Challenges' are meant to be completed outside of school hours in order to stimulate their interests outside of the classroom and encourage them to take on a growth mind-set approach in order to inspire a continued positive learning attitude.

In Spring 1 2021, a MAT group was set up on Teams and 'challenges' shared with pupils. Due to Covid, this has had to be done online only and the original plan to meet with pupils termly has had to be delayed.

So far (mid Jan 2021), several pupils have shared their attempts at 'challenges' and these have been shared with all staff to see. The engagement from pupils and staff has been positive. It seems that pupils like that they are being given praise for additional work and that it is accessible for all MAT pupils and teachers to access. Praise has been given and pupils are expected to achieve distinctions, emails home, and publication on the school website for exceptional work. In the future it is hoped that enriching activities and trips can be planned for them.

Each term new 'challenges' will be created and teacher input and pupil engagement will help in the planning of this. Consistent monitoring of the Teams page and a spreadsheet record of challenges attempted is being kept, this will highlight how the project can be adapted to meet the needs of our MAT learners in the future.

It is also hoped that this project will then continue each year so there will be a KS3 and 4 programme in the future.

Research	https://mikegershon.com/elongate-their-learning/ https://www.nace.co.uk/ https://teacherhead.com/2017/05/28/teaching-to-the-top-attitudes-and-strategies-for-delivering-real-challenge/ https://www.thomastallischool.com/more-able-learners.html#:~:text=%E2%80%8BMore%20Able%20Learners%20are,all%20subjects%20or%20just%20one.&text=%E2%80%8BMore%20Able%20Learners%20comprise,Able%20students%20in%20all%20subjects.
CPD	<p>It was planned for TN to deliver a More Able and Talented CPD session across the school, however due to Covid this has had to be delayed.</p> <p>In the Autumn senior Assessment meeting JT spoke about this as a focus and asked for provision to be put in place for pupils underachieving in relation to what their CATs tests have indicated they should be achieving.</p>
External Training	Due to Covid, no external training has been arranged but it is intended to try and visit the Thomas Tallis School in London when it can be arranged. This is where TN found the majority of useful information.
Governance / Leadership	SB has checked through each document throughout the planning process and has provided guidance to TN before anything was released to staff and parents.
Outcomes	Will be reviewed at the beginning of Spring 2.
Evidence	<p>Parental emails sent.</p> <p>Staff emails sent.</p> <p>CPD session planned to be delivered.</p> <p>MAT group set up on Teams.</p>