



# Curriculum

Parmiter's students follow a bespoke, adaptive and evolving curriculum that reflects the ethos and values of the school. Our curriculum aims articulate our intent and are at the heart of our curriculum planning.

- **We aim to enable every student to excel**

We offer a thoughtfully sequenced curriculum which encourages academic progress by allowing all students to master the foundations and develop the confidence to engage with ambitious and challenging material.

- **We aim to broaden and nurture students' interests**

We ensure all students have the opportunity to engage with, and enjoy the richness of, a wide range of subjects and experiences, and encourage them to pursue those they are passionate about.

- **We aim to develop students' sense of self and community**

We provide a safe environment in which all students can reflect on and evolve their personal points of view, and understand these in relation to the world around them.

We value student experience and strive to ensure our curriculum evolves to reflect what students need, should and want to study. We aim to ensure that all students, regardless of gender, race, religion, sexuality or disability feel represented in, and can fully access, our curriculum.

At the foundation of our balanced, broad and cohesive curriculum is the necessary development of the skills, understanding and common language of learning. Fluency in numeracy and literacy is essential for students to get the most out of their learning in all subject areas. Dedicated lessons in mathematical and linguistic fluency are expanded upon in all other subject areas.

Our curriculum choices are regularly reviewed to keep our curriculum relevant and meaningful for all students. Curriculum development is driven by our subject leaders, who will make use of student voice at all levels to ensure that our curriculum is valued, relevant and above all engaging for staff and students alike. Within the curriculum, staff are emboldened to respond to student interest through creative and flexible approaches.

Our aim is that our curriculum embodies our values of community, aspiration and opportunity so that every individual is empowered to grow and flourish.

## **Curriculum at Key Stage 3**

In Years 7 to 9, all students follow a curriculum designed to develop essential skills and knowledge in a broad range of subjects. Each department offers a relevant, balanced and sequenced curriculum that has regard to the National Curriculum. The curriculum model for the current academic year is included as an appendix to this policy; this indicates whether students are taught in mixed ability groupings or sets based on academic performance.

In Years 7 to 9, all students follow a Personal Development programme. This is delivered through a fortnightly timetabled lesson, a monthly Personal Development lesson with their form tutor and, where appropriate, visiting speakers, assemblies and workshops. The programme includes PSHCE (personal, social, health, citizenship, and economic education) and covers topics including Relationships, mental health, and emotional wellbeing; Careers and finance; Healthy lifestyles; Citizenship, rights, responsibilities and community. These topics are revisited each year through a spiralling cumulative curriculum and is supported by valuable visits from outside agencies. Sex and relationship education is delivered through the Science curriculum and the Personal Development programme.

It is expected that all students will follow a full curriculum at Key Stage 3. Exceptions to this are rare and only in circumstances where a student requires support and/or adaptation because of a diagnosed specific learning need or a serious medical condition.

More detailed information about the current Key Stage 3 curriculum and course outlines for current cohorts are all available on the school website.

## **Curriculum at GCSE (Key Stage 4)**

In Years 10 & 11, students follow a curriculum designed to prepare them for GCSE examinations and post-16 opportunities. The curriculum includes compulsory (core) and optional elements. Parmiter's is committed to offering a broad range of optional GCSE subjects so students can pursue their areas of interest. The curriculum model for the current academic year is included as an appendix to this policy; this indicates whether students are taught in mixed ability groupings or sets based on academic performance.

From September 2023, the core examined subjects are: English Language; English Literature; Mathematics; the Sciences and a Modern Foreign Language.

Students in Key Stage 4 in September 2023 follow a non-examined programme of Personal Development & Ethics. This is delivered through a fortnightly timetabled lesson, a monthly Personal Development lesson with their form tutor and, where appropriate, visiting speakers, assemblies and workshops. The Personal Development course is designed to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It includes Relationships, mental health, and emotional wellbeing; Careers and finance; Healthy lifestyles; Citizenship, rights, responsibilities and community. The Ethics programme is designed to develop a knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society. Students will also explore a range of moral and philosophical questions as part of their Ethics course.

All students participate in three Games lessons per fortnight.

Detailed guidance is offered to students and parents in order to ensure each student follows an appropriate curriculum. It is expected that all students will follow a full curriculum to GCSE. Exceptions to this are rare and only in circumstances where a student requires support and/or adaptation because of a diagnosed specific learning need or a serious medical condition. The study of additional GCSE / A Level qualification(s) outside of the school curriculum is not considered grounds for reducing a student's curriculum.

In contrast to some schools, we do not currently prescribe that all students study the suite of subjects required to fulfil the EBacc or the Attainment 8 criteria. However, students and parents/carers who do wish to will see that it is easily possible within the Key Stage 4 curriculum.

More detailed information about the current Key Stage 4 curriculum, the GCSE options process and course outlines for current cohorts are all available on the school website.

## **Curriculum in the Sixth Form (Key Stage 5)**

Parmiter's is committed to offering an extensive academic Sixth Form curriculum. All A Level subjects are taught as two year linear courses. All students are required to study at least three subjects to A Level at Parmiter's. To study four subjects to A Level, a student will have an exceptional set of GCSE results (details of specific criteria are available on the school website).

Those studying A Level Further Mathematics (and hence also A Level Mathematics) are expected to take two further subjects in Year 12. In Year 13, it may be possible for students to study only Mathematics, Further Mathematics and one further subject. This decision must be agreed by the Heads of Sixth Form and the teacher in charge of KS5 Mathematics. Requests will only be considered at the end of Year 12. This programme of study would only be suitable for students wishing to pursue a degree with a mathematical focus and where their performance throughout Year 12 (including in end of year examinations) indicates they are on track to achieve grades in Mathematics and Further Mathematics that will ensure future progression opportunities remain open to them.

All students attend a programme of Study Skills sessions during the first half of Year 12 and have the opportunity to take the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) to further pursue a particular area of interest.

In Year 12, all students attend a fortnightly Liberal Studies session. Students in Year 12 and 13 have a monthly Personal Development lesson with their form tutor. As well as guidance on careers education and personal well-being (including sex and relationship education), a wide range of outside speakers introduce students to a variety of political, moral and social issues.

In Year 13, all students attend a fortnightly pastoral period, providing further guidance on careers and higher education and preparing them for life after Parmiter's.

Students in Year 12 and Year 13 also attend a fortnightly Activities Period, where they choose from a range of options such as sports, musical activities, board games, sign language lessons.

More detailed information about the current Key Stage 5 curriculum, and course outlines for current cohorts are all available on the school website and in the appendix to this document.

## Beyond the Curriculum

The school is committed to providing a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom: Extra-curricular activities enrich a student's experience and are an integral feature of the school's ethos. These include subject-enhancement activities, clubs and societies, a wide range of trips and visits, community service, and a host of sporting, cultural, musical, house-based, public-speaking and dramatic experiences. Leadership opportunities are available to students in all year groups at form group, year group and whole school level.

**There are a number of other policies / documents that should be considered alongside this document in order to obtain a broader understanding of our curriculum package.**

These are:

- Teaching & Learning policy, that includes sections on:
  - Teaching & Learning - Parmiter's Pedagogy and Parmiter's Learner
  - Assessment, Recording and Reporting
  - Homework
- Relationship and Sex Education
- Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Development & Promotion of British Values Policy
- Careers Education Guidance Policy (includes work experience, work related learning and enterprise education)
- Careers Strategy Provider Access Statement
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Literacy at Parmiter's: Our approach

## Appendix – Curriculum model for the current academic year (2023/24)

### Years 7, 8 & 9

Subject	Number of 1 hour lessons per fortnight		
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	6 <sup>%</sup>	6 <sup>%</sup>	6
Great Big Read	2	0	0
Mathematics	6	6*	6*
Science	6	6	6* <sup>\$</sup>
French	5	4**	3**
German/Spanish	0	4 <sup>##</sup>	4*
Geography	3	3	3
History	3	3	3
Design & Technology	3 <sup>#</sup>	3 <sup>#</sup>	3 <sup>#</sup>
Music	3	2	2
Philosophy, Religion & Ethics (PRE)	2	2	2
Art	3	2	3
Drama	2	2	2
Computer Science	1	2	2
PE	4 <sup>#</sup>	4 <sup>#</sup>	4 <sup>#</sup>
Personal Development	1	1	1

Unless indicated, students in Years 7, 8 & 9 are taught in mixed ability form groups.

<sup>%</sup> In Years 7 and 8, one English lesson per fortnight is dedicated to 'Reading the World', a programme that focuses on wider reading and literacy skills for life.

\* indicates that students are taught in sets based on academic performance.

\*\* indicates that students are taught in more broadly banded sets based on academic performance (e.g. sets 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b).

<sup>#</sup> indicates students are taught in mixed ability groups that are different to their form groups.

<sup>##</sup> students are allocated to German or Spanish depending on their tutor group.

<sup>\$</sup> In Year 9, Science lessons are timetabled as discrete Biology, Chemistry and Physics lessons.

Please note that it may be necessary for the curriculum to be adapted in light of staffing changes for part of the academic year.

## Years 10 & 11

	Number of 1 hour lessons per fortnight	
	Year 10	Year 11
English	8	8
Mathematics	6*	6*
Science	12*	12*
Modern Foreign Language option (French, German or Spanish)	5*	5*
Option subject 1	5	5
Option subject 2	5	5
Option subject 3	5	5
Personal Development & Ethics (non-examined)	1	1
Games (non-examined)	3	3

Unless indicated, students in Years 10 & 11 are taught in mixed ability groups that are different to their form groups.

\* indicates that students are taught in sets based on academic performance.

GCSE subjects offered<sup>s</sup> to the current Year 10 and/or 11: Art & Design, Chemistry, Biology, Computer Science, Business, Design & Technology, Drama, Economics, English Language, English Literature, Food Preparation & Nutrition, French, Geography, German, History, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Physics, Religious Studies, Combined Science (Double Award), Spanish.

## Years 12 & 13

The curriculum is structured into 4 A Level subject blocks (blocks A, B, C, D), with additional blocks for Liberal Studies/Pastoral period, Study Skills / EPQ and Activities.

For the current academic year, all A Level subjects are timetabled for 8 or 10 hours per fortnight. The timetable allocation is determined by the demands of the A Level course, the availability of specialist staff and / or the teaching group size.

All students in Year 12 have 3 or 4 allocated study periods per fortnight timetabled to the Sixth Form Conference Centre. At other times, students have access to study areas but have the opportunity to choose where to work.

	Number of 1 hours lesson per fortnight	
	Year 12	Year 13
Option block A	8-10	8-10
Option block B	8-10	8-10
Option block C	8-10	8-10
Option block D	8-10	8-10
Liberal Studies / Pastoral Period	1	1
Study Skills / EPQ	1	0
Activities Period	1	1

All subjects are taught in mixed ability groups; there is no academic setting.

A Level subjects offered<sup>§</sup> to the current Year 12 and/or 13: Art, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Design & Technology: Product Design, Drama & Theatre, Economics, English Literature, French, Further Mathematics, Geography, German, History, Mathematics, Music, Photography, Physical Education, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology, Spanish.

<sup>§</sup> The subjects offered will only run if there is sufficient demand from students and the school is able to provide the specialist staffing required to deliver the course. The school cannot guarantee that every subject will run each academic year.

### **Admission on to GCSE and A Level courses**

Students will only be admitted on to a GCSE course or A Level course if they meet all published entry criteria for that course and there are spaces available on it. Where subjects are oversubscribed, the school will explain to parents/carers and students the criteria used to admit students to the course.

Where students are taught in mixed ability groups, group sizes are limited to ensure a positive teaching and learning experience.

At GCSE, these are:

- 28 students for subjects taught using standard classroom facilities.
- 22 students for subjects (excluding Food Preparation & Nutrition) requiring space-limited specialist teaching facilities.
- 16 students for Food Preparation & Nutrition

At A Level, these are:

- 24 students for subjects taught using standard classroom facilities.
- 20 students for subjects requiring space-limited specialist teaching facilities.