



St Olave's Grammar School

ACADEMIC CURRICULUM (2021-22)

The curriculum is everything that happens in the school which helps students learn and develop knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes. Learning takes place in the classroom and also, for example, through games, assemblies, theatrical and musical productions, residential courses, educational visits and community work. The curriculum at St Olave's is predicated on the prioritisation of engagement, challenge and enrichment, and is influenced strongly by the school's unique ethos with a strong focus on scholarship and on students developing a real sense of intellectual curiosity. The fostering of each of the ten Olavian characteristics is a key goal of our curriculum.

Academic qualifications and methods of assessment have been undergoing significant change over the last few years. Most of the changes have now taken place, but please note that the information given below, which is correct at the time of publication, may be subject to change – particularly with reference to AS-Levels.

1. The Lower School

In Year 7, the intake is divided into four unstreamed forms which all take: Art, Citizenship, Design Technology, Drama, English, Geography, History, Computing, Latin, Mathematics, Music, PE, Games, RS, Science and one of the three following Modern Foreign Languages: French, German or Spanish.

In Year 8, students choose a second language: Latin, or German or French.

2. The Middle School

In Year 9, students begin their courses of study for their GCSE options; the rationale is explicitly for enrichment rather than acceleration, and each student's curriculum experience in Year 9 remains rich and broad. All students study ten subjects for GCSE plus the compulsory RS short course GCSE, which is examined at the end of Year 10. Students take Mathematics; English Language and English Literature; Biology, Chemistry, Physics; at least one from French, German, Spanish or Latin; and at least one from Geography or History. Any remaining selections are taken from Art, Computing, Design Technology and Music. There are also compulsory non-examined courses in Citizenship, PSHE (including RSE) and PE.

If an insufficient number of pupils choose a subject for it to be viable, the School may decide to withdraw the course; if too many students apply for a course, the over-subscription criteria will be made clear to those affected. Due to timetabling restrictions not all combinations of subjects are possible though students are virtually always able to study the combination of subjects they choose.

In Year 11, the top two sets of mathematicians are usually given the opportunity to sit the Free Standing Unit, in addition to their GCSE in Mathematics; a select cohort will have the opportunity to take the Higher Project Qualification.

All subjects are examined in the summer of Year 11.

3. The Sixth Form

Please be aware that the process of A-Level reform is now complete; all A-Levels in all subjects are now linear.

Currently, students begin with four options in Year 12. They will nominate at the start of the Spring Term which option they wish to take at AS Level and thus cease studying at the end of Year 12. The student will be entered for this AS exam at the end of Year 12 and continue with the remaining three options to A-Level, sitting these examinations at the end of Year 13.

Therefore, most students will study four options in the Sixth Form, leading to one AS in Year 12 and three A-Level qualifications in Year 13. Please note that Mathematics and Further Mathematics counts as one option choice and students opting to continue with Further Mathematics to Year 13 will thus end up with four A-Levels.

Students select, subject to meeting Sixth Form entrance requirements, from a list that normally includes Art, Biology, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Design Technology, Economics, English Literature, French, Geography, German, History, Latin, Mathematics (& Further Mathematics), Music, Physics and Religious Studies. Spanish is not yet on the Sixth Form curriculum, but first teaching is scheduled to commence in 2024.

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A-level work is supplemented by an Electives Programme in Year 12 (including a special programme for students interested in medical careers and mathematical careers) and a Lecture Programme in Year 13 that offers distinguished visiting speakers the opportunity to present significant issues for question and discussion.

There is an even stronger emphasis at this stage on scholarship and on students developing independent study and research into areas of personal interest. A significant number of Sixth Form students pursue this through the Extended Project Qualification.

There are also compulsory non-examined courses in PSHE and each student has a personalised mentoring programme with their Tutor.

4. Games

Games activities are part of the compulsory curriculum for Years 7-12 unless students are excused on medical grounds. Year 12 students may alternatively opt to participate in the Le Chavetois Society.

5. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The School offers appropriate support to pupils who are experiencing difficulties in certain aspects of the curriculum. The SEND Coordinator manages this programme.