



# **The Thomas Adams School**

## **Policy Statement**

### **Curriculum Matters**

Updated August 20

Reviewed by Governors

## THE AIMS OF THE CURRICULUM

Our curriculum seeks to give students opportunities to:

- enjoy learning and come to see education as a life-long process;
- develop the attitudes, understanding and skills necessary, now and in the future, to exercise independence and initiative and to work, participate and thrive in a democratic society with an appreciation of justice and law;
- develop lively, enquiring minds and the ability to find and use information;
- question and debate rationally;
- apply understanding and skills in order to address issues, solve problems and carry out practical tasks;
- develop personal values of hard work, respect, tolerance and justice;
- understand the world in which they live and the interdependence of individuals, groups and nations;
- develop appreciation and concern for the environment;
- work co-operatively with others.

## CURRICULUM PRACTICE

The quality of learning activities must reflect these aims. We look to:

- provide experiences which promote active and purposeful learning;
- enable understanding and skills to be applied to issues, problems and practical tasks;
- raise students' expectations, encourage participation and increase self-confidence and independence;
- allow individual students to progress at a pace which provides both challenge and support;
- give opportunities for students to work together, be well managed and supported by appropriate resources.

Arrangements for the assessment and recording of students' achievements are integrated with the curriculum and:

- emphasise the need for a constructive response from teachers to their students' work;
- aim to ensure continuity between different learning activities, between the work done by different teachers, between primary and secondary school and other stages of transition;
- encourage students to take increasing responsibility for reviewing their own progress and determining new goals for themselves;
- provide full information to parents and, when appropriate, to those concerned with selection for further education, training or employment.

## MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR CURRICULUM PROVISION

The School aims to **provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets all statutory requirements enriched by a wide range of additional opportunities for learning and personal development.**

In accordance with the requirements of the Educational Reform Act 1988 as amended by subsequent Acts The Thomas Adams School provides students aged between 11 and 16 with a basic curriculum that

- is balanced and broadly based;
- promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development of all its students;
- prepares them for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that these requirements are met and for drawing up the curriculum policy for the School. The headteacher is responsible for implementing the curriculum and for taking day-to-day decisions on curriculum matters. The governing body ensures that any political or controversial issues included in the curriculum are presented in a balanced way.

The curriculum structure and associated timetables are arranged in such a way so as to make best use of the available resources in order to achieve the above stated aims.

### **Organisation of Teaching Groups : Setting/Grouping Arrangements, Years 7 - 11**

In Year 7 teaching is primarily based on the all-ability tutor groups, although some setting by ability happens in English and Mathematics, French and PE based on Key Stage 2 test results and teacher assessments, both formal and informal, taken in the Autumn term.

In all subsequent years, there is usually setting by ability in all subjects when it is possible. There is frequent assessment of students and the composition of sets is changed according to performance based on regular review.

#### **Year 7**

- ◇ Pupils are taught in mixed groups across the curriculum throughout the year with the exception of English, Mathematics, PE and MFL.
- ◇ In English, Mathematics and MFL the timetable is constructed to allow a setting arrangement in both halves of the cohort. The Year 7 cohort is normally setted in both halves of the year group during the Autumn term.
- ◇ Technology is taught in mixed ability groups across the year group to allow a consistent diet.
- ◇ PE divides its pupils into single sex games and non-games groups across the year group.

#### **Year 8**

- ◇ Setting arrangements exist in each half of the year group in English, Maths, Science and French.
- ◇ Mixed-ability groups exist across the year group in Technology and PSE.
- ◇ Art, Drama and Music have broadly banded groupings in Year 8 based on pupils' abilities across the subject areas.
- ◇ RE, Geography, History and ICT set according to pupils' ability in Humanities : a consensus is arrived at between the departments, based on a pupil's achievements across the subject areas.
- ◇ PE – c.f. Year 7 continues with a similar grouping arrangement.

#### **Year 9**

As per Year 8.

#### **Year 10 and 11**

- ◇ English, Maths, Science – setting arrangements according to ability across the year group.
- ◇ French : setting arrangement according to ability.
- ◇ PSE and PE are mixed ability.

- ◇ Option subjects : Art, Business Studies, Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (ASDAN), Drama, Geography, Graphics, History, Music, PE, RE, Technology [Catering, Product Design, Textiles], Music Tech, 3-D Art, Computer Science, German, Triple Science.

**Note:** where two groups are available in an option column, the groups will be set broadly by ability. Single option groups are mixed ability.

- ◇ Vocational course:

This course includes:

- one day's work experience
- one day doing a flexible programme of land based studies/catering
- the subject areas of English, Maths, Science, Technology, ICT, PE and Citizenship
- the opportunity to complete the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (ASDAN)
- additional subject support lessons

### **Teaching Methods and Organisation**

All departments have schemes of learning in place and a wide range of teaching methods and learning approaches are used. Whichever style is used we aim to assure that the teaching is structured, planned and based on high expectations and the pursuit of high standards for students of all abilities.

The School and its departments have a wide range of policy statements in place on all aspects of the curriculum.

### **ORGANISATION OF THE CURRICULUM: Key Stage Five (Years 12, 13)**

#### **Post 16**

Adams College currently offers the following courses at Level 3 either A Level or BTEC:

Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Drama, English Combined, English Language, English Literature, French, Geography, Government & Politics, Graphic Design, Health and Social Care BTEC, History, ICT, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Media, Music, Photography, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Science BTec, Sociology, Spanish, Sports Studies (BTEC).

Year 12 and Year 13: students following the College's Academic programme will normally take:

- 3 subjects at A2, each for 5 periods per week in Year 12 and 8 with a timetabled study period in Year 13. An Enrichment option of offered.
- English and / or Maths, GCSE retakes are offered in the Enrichment column. Students with under Grade 4 have to retake, if they have a Grade 4 the retake is optional.
- At certain points in the academic year, the Year 12/13 timetable will collapse to allow events, such as the Health Awareness Day, to take place as part of Extension Studies.

A2 courses have pass grades of A to E.

### **ASSESSMENT : KEY STAGE FIVE**

For the purpose of university admissions, a point score is often requested as a minimum entry requirement. This relates to the "UCAS Tariff."