WENTWORTH COLLEGE

# Curriculum Policy

Approved by: Manuel Guimaraes, Principal

Last Review: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:
• Part 1, Paragraph 2, Safeguarding, Handbook for the Inspection of Schools (Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements) – (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2017 (ISSR) effective March 2020. At Wentworth College students are encouraged to develop their potential, supported by extremely talented and approachable teachers, in a friendly, positive and secure atmosphere.

Our teachers are able to communicate their enthusiasm for their subjects through the careful pacing of courses, understanding which elements of the syllabus to emphasise and through the use of a diverse range of teaching materials. Each teacher has a subject-specific Curriculum Map which they have developed to foreground and justify the sequencing of topics within that subject, to enable students to improve their knowledge and raise achievement. In addition, each subject-specific Curriculum Map is supported by a Scheme of Work which has been adapted to take account of the sequencing of topics and to ensure the intent, implementation and impact of the programme is clearly outlined and met. At the beginning of each academic year Senior Management will alert each staff member of any student with SEND requirements so that the subject-specific Curriculum Maps and Schemes of Work for those subjects can be adapted to take into consideration the specific requirements of those students. Senior Management at Wentworth College will regularly monitor teaching alongside the subject specific Curriculum Maps and Schemes of Work to ensure that they enable effective delivery of the Curriculum.

Small class sizes allow students to develop the confidence to seek guidance and for teachers to identify and respond to problems quickly and effectively. We are fully committed to helping students build their self-confidence and believe that the best way to achieve this is through the careful monitoring of progress in a supportive environment.

All staff and students are on first name terms, emphasising the importance of the impact of relationships within the culture of Wentworth College. We conduct ourselves, and deal with all individuals, in a way that encourages mutual respect. This enables us to achieve the College's objectives, maintain our ideals and to provide a flexible, modern, caring and valuable education.

**Related Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Individual Needs and Learning Difficulties Policy
- Disability Access Policy
- PSHE Policy

**Design of Wentworth College's Curriculum**

The general principle governing the Curriculum at Wentworth College is that every student shall be entitled to, and shall take up, a programme of study which is balanced and broadly based, which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils
- prepares the students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of not only secondary education but also further education and adult life

The Curriculum at Wentworth College, and the subject-specific Curriculum Maps and Schemes of Work which have been developed from it, take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHCP, and do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and the mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The Curriculum at Wentworth College, and the Schemes of Work which have been developed from it, give pupils until the end of Key Stage 4, experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. In addition, the curriculum designed by Wentworth College ensures that all pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. The Curriculum, Schemes of Work, and lessons at Wentworth College actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs by:

(i) Enabling pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
(ii) Enabling pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
(iii) Encouraging pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the local area and to society more widely
(iv) Enabling pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of, and respect for, public institutions and services in England

(v) Developing further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
(vi) Encouraging respect for other people
(vii) Encouraging respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England
The timetable is divided into 35 periods spread over five days. Each lesson is 1 hour long with a number of these lessons timetabled as double periods (or even triple periods in practical and creative subjects such as Art, Photography, Drama, Media Studies and Film Studies). There is provision to use the lunch hour for additional lesson time, if required.

**Curriculum for the Sixth Form (Years 12 & 13)**

A level studies in most subjects are now linear (with the exception of Media Studies and Geography, when taught, where there are opportunities to take exams in November and May/June in both Year 12 and Year 13). The majority of subjects are offered over one or two years, depending on a student's previous educational background and academic performance. In the Sixth Form, we follow a traditional A level programme where students pick three subjects from the list below. In certain circumstances students in Year 12 may be encouraged to pick up a fourth A level or complete an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).

At Wentworth College there is no necessity for pupils to have gained at least an 'A' grade or 7+ at GCSE in the subject or a related subject, in order to study the subject at A level. Instead, the Director of Studies will discuss options with students and parents during the enrolment process to help tailor a programme of study that best suits the individual needs and academic ability of each pupil. Pupils should, usually, have achieved at least five GCSE passes grades A*-C or 9-4 in order to embark upon an A level programme, but we are flexible and are able to offer a programme of study which combines GCSEs and A levels. Again, in these circumstances, the Director of Studies will discuss options with students and parents during enrolment to help tailor a programme of study that best suits the individual needs and academic ability of each pupil.

Each subject is normally allocated 4 periods in Year 12 and 5 periods in Year 13, although there may be fewer lessons if the class size is particularly small; in certain subjects there may only be one or two students. There is no minimum number of pupils required at A level for a course to be offered, though Wentworth College reserves the right to withdraw a subject and offer a comparable alternative before the academic year commences in September.

In addition, all Sixth Form pupils follow a non-examined Enrichment and Enhancement programme and are offered the opportunity to participate in non-examined Physical Education. From October to April, the last Friday of every month is given over to a range of trips for Year 12 and Year 13 students. These trips, alongside termly Sixth Form debates, will further reinforce students' appreciation of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different values and beliefs. Debates will also serve to strengthen pupils' understanding of a diverse range of issues including drug misuse, grooming and exploitation linked to the sale of drugs, extremism and radicalisation, further education and the world of work. The Enrichment and Enhancement programme also includes visits by guest speakers, internal and external careers advice and careful UCAS preparation and support. KS5 (Sixth Form) PSHE and Careers PSHE education continues in the Sixth Form through the Enrichment and Enhancement programme. Core themes studied in KS4 are further developed, with particular emphasis on personal health, diversity awareness, fundamental British values, safeguarding and decision-making skills. The focus, here, is on the skills that pupils will require for successful university application, as well as the life skills and knowledge that will be needed to live independently upon leaving school. External speakers will support the internal delivery of the Enrichment and Enhancement programme. Support for pupils and parents, regarding university applications, is given in the form of several parents' evenings, higher education events and through individual discussions with the UCAS Co-ordinator. This provides the pupils and parents with an enhanced level of knowledge and support when applying to university.

On entering the Sixth Form, pupils are invited to select their own combination of A level subjects rather than being required to accept one of a set of compulsory groupings. The timetable, therefore, has to accommodate as many permutations as possible from the subjects available. In rare circumstances, however, not all combinations can always be met, but over the last 20 years no subject combination was declined. All subjects actively develop speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, subjects do not undermine, and where possible actively promote, Fundamental British Values.

Students are encouraged to use any free periods in their timetable for private study. Subjects on offer at A level include:

- Art
- Biology
- Business Studies
- Chemistry
- Economics
- English Literature
- Film Studies
- French
- History
- Mathematics
- Media Studies
- Photography
- Physics
- Politics
- Psychology
- Religious Studies
- Sociology
- Spanish

**Curriculum for Year 11**

A limited number of students join the College with the intention of following a full GCSE/IGCSE programme. Year 11 pupils follow a GCSE curriculum consisting of the core subjects of Mathematics and English Language (unless the pupil has already achieved a grade 4 or above in the subject), together with optional subjects chosen from the list below:

- Art
- Biology
- Business Studies
- Chemistry
- English Literature
- Film Studies

- French
- History
- Media Studies
- Photography
- Physics
- Religious Studies
- Spanish

Our Year 11 pupils will typically sit between five and eight GCSEs, though in certain circumstances we are able to accommodate students wishing to sit fewer than five and more than eight subjects. Decisions regarding subject choices and the number of subjects studied will be taken after discussions during the enrolment process between the Director of Studies and the Head of Year 11 with students and parents. Our aim is to tailor a programme of study that best suits the individual needs and academic ability of each pupil.

As with our Sixth Form programme, Year 11 students are invited to select their own combination of GCSE subjects rather than being required to accept one of a set of compulsory groupings. The timetable, therefore, has to accommodate as many permutations as possible from the subjects available, and we endeavour to enable any combination of subjects. All subjects actively develop speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, subjects do not undermine, and where possible actively promote, Fundamental British Values.

Our GCSE Curriculum aims to provide both breadth and balance for every pupil. As with our Sixth Form programme, in certain subjects there may only be one or two students. There is no minimum number of pupils required at GCSE for a course to be offered, though Wentworth College reserves the right to withdraw a subject and offer a comparable alternative before the academic year commences in September. The 35 periods in the week are completed by one dedicated PSHE lesson per week (running from October through to April) and one period of PE per week. Both PSHE and PE are compulsory for Year 11 students. Wentworth College also provides internal and external careers advice throughout the year and support in making subject choices at A level.

We do not offer a dedicated Year 10 programme of study or a two-year GCSE option. Therefore, educationally, joining Wentworth College in Year 10 is not ideal. However, many of our partners, including local hospitals and a number of Local Educational Authorities, see

Wentworth College as a bridge between specialised and mainstream provision. There are sometimes circumstances where the health reality and the overall well-being of a child must take priority over the educational reality. In such instances, and on advice from relevant agencies and health professionals, Wentworth College will endeavour to provide a programme of academic and non-academic study in line with the individual needs of the pupil.

That said, our aim with Year 10 students is still to provide as broad a range of subjects as possible and to prepare our students for the more intense Year 11 programme of study. Year 10 pupils will join Year 11 students by attending one dedicated PSHE lesson per week (running from October through to April) and one period of PE per week. These lessons, as with our Year 11 students, are compulsory. Wentworth College also provides internal and external careers advice throughout the year, alongside support in making subject choices ahead of Year 11.

**Homework**

Homework is an integral part of pupils' learning in all subjects and at all levels. It allows pupils to consolidate and practice what they have learned, and provides time for extension work and for independent learning. Crucially, it enables teachers to monitor the impact of teaching on the pupils' academic development (alongside end-of-topic tests, timed essays and mock examinations). The frequency of homework, and the nature of tasks set, will vary from subject to subject and will be in line with subject-specific Curriculum Maps and Schemes of Work.

Whilst the setting of homework, and the choice of tasks, is at the subject teachers' discretion, the Director of Studies will oversee and review homework setting on a termly basis, discussing with staff the most appropriate ways to ensure that homework tasks suit the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHCP, and to ensure that these tasks are in line with the subject-specific Curriculum Maps and Schemes of Work.

**Study Skills**

The College is committed to helping students develop effective study skills. Our approach for GCSE and A level students is based around individual subjects where subject-specific staff

teach study skills that are required for their subject at each stage. Individual support is also provided to those students whom staff feel require additional help. Any teaching of study skills will be tailored accordingly so that it suits the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHCP.

**Independent Learning**

The College is committed to developing, in students of all ages and aptitudes, the ability to work independently. We believe it is important to achieve a balance between teacher support and promoting independence. Students who learn to think for themselves, and take additional responsibility for their own learning, will achieve higher standards. The College promotes and develops independent learning through a number of means, both inside and outside of the classroom, and the Senior Management Team regularly reviews the strategies in place for helping students to become better independent learners.

**Advice on Higher Education**

Advice on higher education is provided to all students studying for A levels. Initial advice is given while students are determining their A level options and these sessions are supplemented by the Director of Studies, alongside subject teachers, during personal tutor meetings. The UCAS Co-ordinator meets with students individually throughout the year and the College holds a meeting for Year 12 students, at the end of the Summer Term, to discuss and prepare for university applications for the following year. Students who are interested in applying for Oxbridge (we are a centre for the entry exam) or for Medicine, Dental Surgery or Veterinary Medicine/Science are provided with additional help and advice prior to the UCAS application deadline on, or around, 15th October. We are extremely keen that parents/guardians should become involved in all stages of the higher education application process and send them advice booklets and information sheets. We encourage parents/guardians to meet with the UCAS Co-ordinator during the summer term to discuss the application process.

**Monitoring Academic Progress**

In order to ensure we provide the education most appropriate for the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHCP, we formulate subject baseline scores for each student within the first two weeks of them joining Wentworth College.

Occasionally, the formulation of baseline scores will take a little longer, particularly when students in Years 11 and 12 are trying a range of potential subjects before finalising their subject choices.

Wentworth arrives at the baseline score through a combination of academic testing within the first fortnight of a pupil arriving at the College, previous grades in external exams taken in the subject (or subject equivalent) and reports/references from the student's previous school/college. The purpose of these baseline scores (or 'target grades') is to establish a 'starting point' which allows the academic development of pupils to be monitored effectively throughout their time at the College, and to help identify patterns and anomalies within a pupil's profile. They are the starting point from which we can begin to monitor the impact of teaching on each student's academic development. This baseline score should be a detached and objective measure of what the pupil should be capable of (all things being equal). It is not a predicted grade. That is, it is not what subject tutors anticipate the outcome to be (necessarily), nor is it the grade we want our pupils to be aiming for. A predicted grade therefore, can fall short of or exceed the target/baseline.

The use of target grades does not come naturally to Wentworth College. We want all of our pupils to be the best that they can be and we do not like to set limits on what this might be. We are mindful that many of our pupils need to be liberated from the boundaries of low expectations. We cannot emphasise this enough; target grades are not a reflection of teachers' expectations. We, therefore, take the time to explain this to parents and students to avoid negatively labeling pupils or stifling their ambitions.

Nevertheless, we recognise that baseline scores offer management a starting point from which to monitor progress and a point from which to assess the impact of teaching on each student's academic development. Baseline scores, and subsequent termly progress scores, offer pupils and their parents a quantitative idea of where a pupil's current performance stands in relation to the broader context. The ability to take a 'snapshot' in this way will never tell the whole story, but it is not intended to (qualitative data from reports and regular contact with parents will continue to do that). The hope is that continuing to monitor and track current performance levels in this way can alert the College to potential problems with academic development sooner, thereby leading to quicker and more efficient interventions.

**Relationship with Parents/Guardians**

An extremely important part of the College's policy is that we keep in regular contact with parents and guardians. Parents/guardians are encouraged to telephone the College whenever they wish or are contacted, by us, throughout the year as the need arises. Parents/guardians are also always welcome to arrange a meeting with the Principal or a relevant member of the Senior Management Team, whenever they feel it is necessary. We offer two detailed progress reports per year and Parents' Evenings, which are held in the Autumn and Spring terms. Any queries regarding Wentworth College's Curriculum Policy should be made in the first instance to the Principal.

**Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team.