

Policy Title: Westonbirt Senior School Curriculum Policy
Staff Member Responsible: Deputy Head Academic
Last Review: September 2026

1. Rationale

Westonbirt School combines both Westonbirt Prep and Westonbirt Senior and provides full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996). Between them, they deliver high-quality education to boys and girls aged 2 to 18. The aims and objectives of the curriculum are the same throughout the entire age-range, but the way they are delivered is different. Please see separate policies for Westonbirt Senior School and Westonbirt Prep School.

The overall aim of Westonbirt School is to challenge, inspire and nurture young people to flourish; to provide them with the results and the character traits needed to thrive when they leave school. Outstanding teachers aim to unlock potential and instil a desire to learn in every pupil. The school provides an excellent environment and a broad range of opportunities to challenge every individual, enrich their educational experience and maximise their academic achievement.

2. Legislation

- Independent School Standards:
 - Part 1, 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and (b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work (i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and (ii) do 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 1, 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are— (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.
 - Part 1, 2(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
 - Part 1, 2(2)(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 all temporarily resident in England and which follows the curriculum of another country.

- Part 1, 2(2)(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 [Equality] Act.
- Part 1, 2(2)(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.
- Part 1, 2(2)(f) where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, 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.
- Part 1, 2(2)(g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs.
- Part 1, 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- Part 1, 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

2. Curriculum Aims

At Westonbirt School, the curriculum is designed to challenge all pupils, in a safe and secure environment conducive to learning with the opportunities to:

- Experience a broad and balanced education that enables every pupil, whatever their starting point, to fulfil their potential across a wide range of areas aligned with their abilities, skills and interests.
- To progress with confidence to the next stage of their life and education through a process which encourages them to become lifelong learners.
- To improve academic results across the broad subject range.
- To promote independent learning and appropriate use of information technology and AI.
- To enable them to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change and is receptive and respectful to other identities.
- To foster a spirit of enquiry amongst pupils and encourage them to engage with a range of contrasting viewpoints.
- To increase pupil participation in a range of challenging outdoor and super-curricula activities.

3. Regulatory Matters Relating to the Curriculum

Westonbirt School satisfies the regulatory requirements in the following ways:

- Westonbirt School maintains a written Curriculum Policy, as set out in this document and supplemented by the academic policies listed below. This policy outlines the structure and organisation of the curriculum. Further curriculum planning documentation, including curriculum overviews and schemes of work, is maintained within individual departmental areas.

- Westonbirt School's written Curriculum Policy, curriculum overviews, schemes of work and lesson plans are carefully developed and reviewed over time to reflect the age, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.
- The curriculum promotes the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Westonbirt School provides full-time, supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age. The curriculum encompasses linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and creative education, as detailed in this policy.
- All pupils develop speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills through the subjects they study, including English, Mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages, Science and English as an Additional Language (EAL), where appropriate. Departmental schemes of work support effective lesson planning, ensuring that teaching is appropriately sequenced and challenging, progressing at a suitable pace.
- The language of instruction at Westonbirt School is English.
- Westonbirt School provides a comprehensive programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE). The programme promotes respect for others, with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Westonbirt School's Futures and Enterprise Department provides accurate, up-to-date and impartial guidance on university admissions, careers and apprenticeships. This enables pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of higher education and career pathways and supports them in fulfilling their potential.
- The university admissions and careers guidance programme begins with GCSE options advice in Year 8 and 9 and continues through to university and careers fairs in Year 11 and the Sixth Form. Pupils considering applications to Oxford or Cambridge receive additional support through a dedicated programme led by the Head of Sixth Form.
- Westonbirt School does not have pupils below compulsory school age. Pupils above compulsory school age in the Sixth Form are provided with a full programme of activities appropriate to their needs, including academic and co-curricular opportunities.
- All pupils at Westonbirt School are supported to access the curriculum, learn and make progress. Adaptive and responsive teaching is central to the school's in-house professional development programme.
- The assessment, reporting and tracking processes enable staff to identify pupils' needs, implement appropriate interventions and adapt programmes of study where necessary. Baseline assessment data is used to inform these decisions, and we seek to provide bespoke programmes of support where individual circumstances require them.

- Westonbirt School prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society through the curriculum and wider school experience. This includes the content of lessons and activities, the academic enrichment programme, clubs and societies such as the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), off-site trips, and talks from visiting speakers through regular assemblies and Chapel services.

In the curriculum plans that follow there is an understanding that:

- All pupils are entitled to, and should be offered, a comparable range of educational opportunities, where every pupil is given the opportunity to learn and progress.
- There are differences in the abilities, aptitudes, interests and other characteristics of pupils. The School's policies, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils. Our SEND, EAL and Extra-Curricular policies outline how we ensure that individual needs are catered for, including those with an Education, Health and Care plan.
- The learning environment and teaching methodology are important factors in determining whether or not some of these aims are achieved.
- Staff follow a scheme of work through the year to build knowledge, confidence, skills and understanding not only in readiness for the GCSE, BTEC or A-level examinable programmes, but also to ensure they can be informed, ambitious and confident individuals.
- Co-curricular activities, such as school productions, fund raising activities, school teams, visits and residential trips all contribute to the total learning experience.

4. Monitoring Policy and Practice

Lesson observations, work scrutinies, academic reviews and data analysis through assessment and tracking all support the delivery of the curriculum and the monitoring of progress of students through it. These are undertaken in conjunction with the Head, Deputy Head Academic and Heads of Department on an annual basis.

Westonbirt is committed to a responsive approach, by systematically integrating pupil voice and stakeholder feedback into our curriculum design. Actively consulting with learners ensures that our curriculum remains relevant, engaging, and aligned with individual needs. By valuing students as active participants, we foster greater academic agency. A continuous cycle of feedback and evaluation enables staff to refine teaching practices, eliminate barriers to learning, and proactively adapt the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of our pupils.

5. Organisation of the Curriculum - Westonbirt Senior School (Years 7 to 11 and Sixth Form)

The Westonbirt curriculum operates a fortnightly timetable of 60 lessons (30 per week), which each lesson lasting 55 minutes.

Year 7,8,9

	Year 7		Year 8	
Subjects	Lessons per fortnight	Prep per week (mins)	Lessons per fortnight	Prep per week (mins)
English	8	40	8	50
Mathematics	8	40	8	50
Science	7	40	7	50
French	5	30	3	25
Spanish	-	-	3	25
History	3	20	3	25
Geography	3	20	3	25
Religious studies	3	20	3	25
Art	2	20	2	25
Drama	2	10	2	25
Computer Science	2	20	2	25
Music	2	10	2	25
PE	3	20	2	25
Food/Dance	1	20	1	25
Design Technology	1	20	1	25
Latin	3	20	3	25
PSHE	1	-	1	-
Games	4	-	4	-
Assembly	2	-	2	-
Totals	60	4 hours	60	5 hours

In Year 9, pupils have a choice of at least one language and three other option choices, in addition to the compulsory subjects listed below.

	Year 9	
Subjects	Lessons per fortnight	Prep per week (mins)
English	7	60
Mathematics	7	60
Biology	4	30
Chemistry	4	30
Physics	4	30
History	4	30

Geography	4	30
Religious studies	3	30
Language Block	4	
Optional Subjects	3x3	30x4
Games	4	-
PSHE	1	-
Outdoor Education	2	-
HPQ	1	-
Assembly	2	
Totals	60	7 hours

Mathematics is taught in ability sets.

For pupils boarding in KS3, supervised prep takes place between 6.45pm and 7.30pm, in one of the Study Rooms.

Year 10 and 11

At KS4, all pupils study English (Language and Literature), Mathematics and Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics). In addition, they are required to choose at least one Humanities subject (Geography, History or Religious Studies) and one Foreign or Classical Language (French, Spanish or Latin). Pupils then choose two other option subjects (if they have not chosen two humanities subjects or two languages) from the list below:

Fine Art, 3D Design, Business Studies, Computer Science, Dance, Drama, Further Mathematics, Food and Nutrition, Music, Physical Education, Latin, Functional Skills.

	Year 10	
Subjects	Lessons per fortnight	Prep per week (mins)
English (Language and Literature)	7	90
Mathematics	7	90
Biology	5	45
Chemistry	5	45
Physics	5	45
Language Option	6	45
Humanities Option	6	45
Option Subjects x2	6x2	45x2
Games	4	-
Elective*	1	45
Assembly	2	-
Totals	60	9 hours

* Electives refer to super-curricular activities, taken by pupils in Year 10. They allow pupils to go beyond the A-Level curriculum in a subject they are planning to study, or a career path they might eventually follow. Electives go beyond what school subject teachers are teaching, allowing pupils to demonstrate a passion for their chosen subject.

Year 11 – ***For 2026/27 only**

	Year 11	
Subjects	Lessons per fortnight	Prep per week (mins)
English (Language and Literature)	7	90
Mathematics	7	90
Biology	5	45
Chemistry	5	45
Physics	5	45
Games	4	-
Option Subjects x5	5x5	45x5
Assembly	2	-
Totals	60	9 hours

Extra lessons in Music, Speech and Drama, Tennis and Golf Coaching, Learning Support and English Language Training are, where possible added into pupils' timetable. During non-timetabled lessons pupils work supervised in one of the study rooms.

For pupils boarding in KS4, supervised prep takes place in the boarding house for 1hr 30mins per day.

Sixth Form

	Year 12		Year 13	
Subjects	Lessons per fortnight	Prep per week	Lessons per fortnight	Prep per week
Each A Level/BTEC	12 x 3	5hrs per subject	12 x 3	5hrs per subject
Games	4	-	4	-
EPQ	3	-	3	-
Leiths Option	6	-	6	-
Totals	Variable	15	Variable	15

Most pupils study three subjects in the Sixth Form, made up of A Levels and BTECs. In exceptional cases, pupils can study four subjects.

BTEC courses are the equivalent (in terms of UCAS points and teaching hours) to one A Level; BTEC Double Business is equivalent to two A Levels (in terms of UCAS points and teaching hours).

Subjects offered are:

Agriculture BTEC	Computer Science	Latin
Art and Design: 3D Design	Design and Technology	Leiths School of Food and Wine
Art and Design: Fine Art	Drama and Theatre	Mathematics
Art and Design: Photography	Economics	Media Studies
Biology	English Literature	Music
Business Studies CTEC	BTEC Sport	Physics
Business Studies (From 2027)	French	Psychology
Chemistry	Further Mathematics	Politics
Classical Civilisation	Geography	Religion, Philosophy and Ethics
Spanish	History	BTEC Travel and Tourism

Extra lessons in Music, Speech and Drama, Tennis & Golf coaching, Learning Support and English Language Training are, where possible added into blank spaces in the pupils' timetable.

Pupils also have the option of taking the Leith's Food and Wine course.

Some qualifications in first languages, such as Chinese, German, Japanese and Russian can be facilitated but are not given curriculum time. During non-timetabled lessons and evening preps, pupils work under supervision in their study bedrooms or in the Sixth Form Study Centre.

6. Co-curricular activities

Westonbirt School operates a comprehensive co-curricular programme of sporting, creative and academic activities between 4.30pm and 5.30pm each day. A comprehensive timetable of activities is published to pupils and parents via SOC's.

Appreciating the value to pupils of being able to compete in games, the School endeavours to provide pupils with the opportunity to compete against external teams and individuals in as many games as possible.

7. Communication about the Curriculum

Westonbirt School communicates with parents about its written curriculum through a variety of material available on its website and parent portal. Regular parents' evenings, information evenings and option evenings are carefully designed to update parents on how their children are progressing in their academic studies. Parents are invited to contact directly any suitable member of staff, include their child's tutor, by telephone or email.



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Detailed policy information relating to Careers, Trips, Learning Support, PSHE & RSE, Marking & Feedback, can be found on the website and/or available on request.