



**MIDDLE SCHOOL
CURRICULUM HANDBOOK**

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is broad and converges the requirements of the UK Primary National Curriculum and the Common Entrance 11+ and 13+ syllabi. Emphasis is placed on the core subjects English, Maths and Science, with each child also studying Geography, History, Religious Education, Art, French, IT, PE and Music (until Class 6). Topics in Personal, Social & Health Education are covered by Form Tutors weekly.

In Years 5 & 6, the children divide most of their lessons between two Class Teachers, one focused on Maths and the other on English and/or Humanities. They receive specialist tuition in Science, Music, French, Information Technology & PE. Key Stage 2 and Common Entrance 11+ exams are undertaken by the pupils in addition to regular internal assessments at the end of Year 6.

Whilst most teaching time is given to English, Maths and Science, ample time is given to other subjects to ensure a balance is maintained. The curriculum is designed to enable a range of teaching methods to be used and cross-curricular and individual investigative work is encouraged at all levels. It allows teachers more opportunity for creativity, enabling them to produce lessons that are not just informative but also fun.

The school's success rate Key Stage 2 and Common Entrance 11+/13+ examinations indicate that the curriculum meets all the requirements at these levels and enables pupils to make a smooth transition to Secondary Education. However, the curriculum is subject to regular review and update and new ideas are always encouraged. Subjects on the curriculum are overseen by a Subject Coordinator, who monitors the delivery of the subject syllabi within each section. Liaison between Sections is carried out to promote synergy and ensure that its requirements are met.

YEARS 5 & 6

Each class in Years 5 and 6 has a Form Tutor who oversees the pastoral care of the pupils. Increasingly, lessons are taught by specialist Subject Teachers.

English

The aim of the department is to train pupils in oral and literacy skills. In order to achieve this, the English syllabus and schemes of work incorporate the objectives and attainment targets set out in the National Curriculum and Common Entrance 11+ syllabus. As English forms the foundation for all other learning, cross-curriculum links are developed and encouraged at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. At Key stage 2 this is facilitated by the use of a uniform marking policy for English across the curriculum.

The areas covered in our work are:

- **Speaking and listening**
The purpose is the development of pupils' understanding of the spoken word and the capacity to express oneself effectively in a variety of speaking and listening activities, matching style and response to the audience.
- **Reading**
The emphasis here is on the ability to read, understand and respond to a wide range of writing.
- **Writing**
The intention is to nurture a growing ability to construct and convey meaning in written language, matching style to reader: The importance of spelling and neat handwriting is emphasised.

- **Drama**

Drama is an important part of our work in English. Presentations and performances are a regular feature in our programme.

Mathematics

The five main areas at the forefront of mathematics are:

- Numbers
- Measurement
- Shape and space
- Handling data
- Applying mathematics

The development of pupils within each of these areas is observed and their strengths and weaknesses assessed. The school includes within its syllabus, the objectives set out in the National Curriculum. The pupils are subject taught using a variety of books, work cards and equipment to develop successfully the various aspects of mathematics covered within their years at school. This includes the traditional learning skills, but a greater emphasis is now focused on showing the importance and relevance of such skills.

The pupils are encouraged to record their work in a variety of ways ranging from verbal, written, graphical, constructed, diagrammatic and symbolic to pictorial. The importance of mathematical concepts in a variety of subjects, for example Science, Information Technology and Geography, promotes a strong cross-curricular link.

Science

An interest in science is promoted within the school at a very early age. Children aged 4 to 8 years explore Science related topics under the supervision of their Class Teachers and are gradually introduced to the Science Lab. The topics are delivered through strands that run through the whole Junior School Programme.

Children in Years 5 – 6 follow a combined Science course and have access to a fully equipped Science Laboratory and a Specialist Teacher. The success of the course is based on a fine balance of theory and practical work designed to develop understanding while promoting the pupils' spirit of enquiry and developing their interest and enthusiasm in the subject.

The course is broad at its base and covers many topic areas. As the pupil progresses through the year groups, topics become fewer and are studied in more depth. The course is also designed to be spiral in nature, first acquainting the pupils with a topic and then revisiting the same concepts, each time with a greater degree of sophistication, provided that the earlier work was understood. This not only results in pupils gaining a great deal of satisfaction in arriving at the understanding of a concept, but also results in the pupils experiencing pleasure and confidence when meeting and recognizing that concept again.

By the end of the course, the pupils should have a sound scientific foundation on which their next secondary school science course can build. It is hoped that children will develop a lively interest and thirst for the subject, as well as an inherent understanding of how science is applied in the world around them.

Geography

Geography is indispensable to the understanding of the modern world. From Reception to Class 6, pupils are introduced to the study of real places (local and abroad), thematic studies and the acquisition of skills. The aim is that pupils enjoy their subject and that knowledge of the geographical concepts and an appreciation of the world in which they live, and the care needed for the preservation of Planet Earth and its peoples.

History

The study of the past is an important part of the curriculum. Covering a variety of topics from Ancient Civilization to the Twentieth Century, as well as African & World History, pupils learn to understand the past and its relevance to the present and future. Historical studies involve the use of primary and secondary sources, use of artefacts, field studies, museum visits and outside speakers.

French

The principal aim of the French Department is to develop the children's ability and confidence to use the language effectively for communication and to encourage an interest in the culture and civilization of France. The school uses a thematic approach to French teaching (e.g. food and drink, animals etc.) using a variety of resources. The emphasis is on oral communication. Children are actively involved through listening, role-playing, games, reading and interpreting information.

Cultural awareness is developed through activities such as food tasting and celebrating festivals. Only when patterns are well established are basic grammar and various other written skills introduced.

The department makes use of visual aids and audio equipment. French Lessons begin in Reception.

Art

The Art Department has, as its principal aim, the development of children's self expression, whilst experiencing the following well recognized areas:

- Drawing
- Understanding Art/Design
- Painting
- Printing
- Modeling and Constructing

The programme of study is such that nothing is left out. The younger children work with their class teachers, whilst from the age of age 9 years upwards; they work with a Specialist Teacher and have access to the main Art Room during lessons.

There are various extra-curricular art clubs and children have the opportunity to experience beads making, drawing, painting, needlework and various other crafts.

Music

The Music Department comprises full time Music Teachers and a number of Peripatetic instrumental teachers. Individual tuition is available for piano. There is a School Choir and School Band which performs on many important occasions in the school calendar.

Physical Education

The main aim of the PE department is to introduce pupils to a wide range of sports and activities. They are taught the technical skills for each sport and are made aware of the values and ethos associated with being good sportsmen and women, both in victory and in defeat.

As the pupils progress up through the school their skills and core strength and creativity are developed through gymnastics and dance. Their team games and ball skills are developed to enable them to participate in matches. By Year 6 all pupils will have taken part in competitions either as part of their House Team or in the school team. Teams are selected by Coaches and the Member of Staff in charge of the team.

At a competitive level the school has Inter-House and Inter-School matches in floor hockey, football, handball, athletics, table tennis and badminton. Pupils are encouraged to participate to the highest level and the school frequently is represented at the International School Sports Association of Ghana (ISSAG) games.

The pupils are taught by PE-trained teachers who have a broad knowledge of sports, specialist sports coaches and teachers who are real enthusiasts for their sports. These people all give up a huge amount of their spare time to enable pupils to gain full employment and development in all aspects of sports.

Personal Social & Health Education

Children from Reception to Class 6 have one lesson of PSHE per week. Related issues are also discussed during Circle Time (after Assembly) with Class Teachers and Form Tutors and are also embedded throughout the curriculum.

Topics covered include:

- Puberty, physical and emotional changes, how to deal with their feelings towards themselves, friends and family in a positive way.
- Research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events
- Bullying and learning to be resilient and when to ask for help
- Racism and human rights
- Rules and health and safety
- Democracy and the basic institutions that support it locally and nationally
- Internet safety, social networking and the media
- Drugs, peer pressure and risks
- First Aid

Religious Education

The aim of the Religious Education syllabus is to develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs and traditions on individuals and communities. It seeks to help pupils develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgments about religions and ethical issues, and to develop a positive attitude towards other people and a readiness to learn from diversity. We study a selection of World Religions and related cultural practices, including: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism & Buddhism.

Information Technology

Information Technology is now an essential part of the school curriculum encompassing all subjects whether it is information, recording data or programming. The main areas of the junior department syllabus are word processing, graphics, educational software and programming, together with the use of databases and their construction.

FORM 1 & FORM 2

Our Form 1 & 2 curriculum is largely based on the English Common Entrance (CE) syllabus culminating in the CE examination at age 13. The CE is widely regarded as an excellent foundation to IGCSE, providing a head start for pupils over their peers in preparing for the next stage of their education. It also provides a platform for any of our Form 2 pupils to meet the requirements of the leading UK Independent Senior Schools and transfer seamlessly, should they wish to continue their education there.

In Forms 1 & 2, pupils are taught by Specialist Subject Teachers, thus they begin to learn to be well-organised: to be in the right place and the right time and with the right books. They are divided into two parallel forms of mixed abilities in each year, with academic streaming for French.

The Common Entrance Board (ISEB) continues to bring its examinations steadily into line with National Curriculum requirements. The CE exam at 11+ correlates approximately with NC Level 4 and at 13+ with Level 6. The Common Entrance Board has stated that none of its syllabuses will in future contain material which does not feature in the National Curriculum Orders.

The academic demands placed on pupils is no doubt elevated in during these years. However, it also allows children the time and space to explore their individual talents and it is often at this level that they start to excel in a particular area, be it drama, music, sport, academics, or art, or a combination, or even in all areas. We build on the structures, attitudes and aptitudes developed in the previous years and thoroughly prepare the children for a fruitful continuing education.

The subjects examined at CE are: English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, French and Religious Education. Information Technology, Art, Music, PE are assessed internally and based on the requirements of the Keys Stage 3 curriculum.

The remainder of this handbook provides a summary of these subjects.

ENGLISH

INTRODUCTION

Our curriculum converges the requirements of the National Curriculum, National Literacy Framework and requirements of the CE syllabus. Pupils learn to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others confidently and effectively.

They learn to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction and media texts, gaining access to the pleasure and world of knowledge that reading offers. Pupils explore the patterns, structures, origins and conventions of English to better understand how language works.

The programme focuses on the developing pupils' proficiency in the following areas:

- Speaking and Listening
- Reading for meaning
- Appreciating the Author's craft
- Composition and writing skills
- Technical accuracy

AIMS

This programme seeks to:

- (i) Give pupils opportunities to take part in a broad range of speaking and listening activities, so that oral work becomes the basis for written work;
- (ii) develop the skills of reading to allow study of multi-cultural factual writing and literature suitable for the age ranges;
- (iii) Enable pupils to use various kinds of written language effectively for creative expression and practical communication by extending their grammatical and syntactical skills;
- (iv) provide a base for continuing study of language and literature, and encourage independent study and learning, including the use of libraries, reference books and ICT;
- (v) Give pupils opportunities to work with a wide variety of poetry, prose, plays and factual material;
- (vi) Provide enjoyment and stimulation to encourage a positive attitude towards every aspect of the subject.

FRENCH

INTRODUCTION

This syllabus has been devised in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum for modern languages. French is a compulsory subject at IGCSE and this course of study provides a strong foundation, spanning the four component areas: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. Classes in French are streamed to ensure adequate support is provided for those new to studying the language.

Through this course of study, pupils will develop an understanding of the spoken language dealing with a range of familiar topics, and identify and note main points and specific details, including opinions. They will take part in short conversations, giving and obtaining information and opinions. Pupils will demonstrate an understanding of a number of printed items, ranging from short, simple phrases to longer, more complex texts and identify and note main points and specific details. They will also be expected to produce pieces of writing, ranging from short phrases to longer passages in which they seek and convey information and opinions.

AIMS

This programme seeks to:

- (i) develop the skills which will enable pupils to understand the written and spoken language and use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication;
- (ii) give pupils opportunities to take part in a broad range of linguistic activities such as those set out in the National Curriculum for modern languages;
- (iii) provide a basis for continuing study of the language and encourage independent learning, including the use of dictionaries, glossaries and ICT;
- (iv) give pupils opportunities to work with authentic language materials;
- (v) encourage interest in the target countries;
- (vi) provide enjoyment and stimulation;
- (vii) encourage positive attitudes towards the use of foreign languages and towards speakers of foreign languages.

GEOGRAPHY

INTRODUCTION

This curriculum aims at encouraging pupils to use a range of geographical enquiry skills to develop their knowledge and understanding of places, patterns, processes, environmental change and sustainable development. They develop their ability to use geographical enquiry skills when developing knowledge and understanding of people, places, patterns and processes, environmental awareness and sustainable development, how to ask geographical questions and undertake enquiries inside and outside the classroom about people, places and environments. The programme develops their skills in analysing evidence, making decisions and evaluating information, ideas and opinions.

Pupils will learn to use skills specific to geography, including those of fieldwork and Ordnance Survey mapwork, and how to draw on many different sources and resources, such as maps and atlases, photographs and written and visual materials, including the use of ICT.

AIMS

The programme seeks to:

- (i) stimulate curiosity about the world;
- (ii) introduce pupils to people, places and environments;
- (iii) contribute to environmental awareness and education for sustainable development;
- (iv) develop understanding of physical and human landscapes, and introduce pupils to different societies and cultures, enhancing awareness of global interdependence.

HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

The syllabus is based on Key Stage 3 of the National Curriculum and fits in with most Key Stage 3 courses. The programme seeks to encourage an interesting and broad-based teaching of history in preparation for further study.

Our programme focuses on developing a pupils knowledge and understanding of chronology, causes and consequences of historical events, differences between ways of life at different times and historical interpretation. Pupils also develop skills in historical enquiry through a range of sources and their ability to organise, analyse and communicate using the appropriate historical vocabulary.

The syllabus is divided into three time periods: Medieval Realms: Britain 1066-1485, The Making of the United Kingdom: 1485-1750 and Britain and Empire: 1750-1914.

Pupils are expected to study history through sources.

For all three time periods, there are five common areas: War and Rebellion; Government and Parliament; Religion; Social History; General Topics (including local history)

AIMS

The programme seeks to:

- (i) inspire a love of History;
- (ii) stimulate pupils' curiosity about the way of life of people living in the past; (iii) develop pupils' understanding of their own and others' inheritance;
- (iv) enable pupils to consider the ways in which the past influences the present;
- (v) treat both the learning of facts and the acquiring of skills as vital, linked components of the subject;
- (vi) encourage the use of source material in the general teaching of the subject

MATHEMATICS

INTRODUCTION

Our programme converges the National Curriculum, National Numeracy Strategy Framework for teaching mathematics and the requirements of the CE syllabus. Pupils build on the skills which they developed in key stage 2 and increasingly make connections between different aspects of mathematics. They extend their calculating skills to fractions, percentages and decimals. They begin to understand the importance of reasoning about proportion. They start to develop facility in the use of algebraic techniques and symbols. They study linear functions and their corresponding graphs. Pupils progress from a simple understanding of the features of shape and space to using definitions and reasoning to understand geometrical objects. They undertake practical data handling work, introducing a quantitative approach to probability. Pupils work with increasing confidence and flexibility to solve unfamiliar problems, including word problems, and develop a positive attitude towards mathematics

AIMS

Our course of study seeks to:

- (i) encourage breadth of experience in the development of mathematical skills without in any way prejudicing thorough grounding;
- (ii) encourage the development of investigative thinking and the application of mathematical knowledge to unfamiliar problems.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Our Religious Education curriculum explores biblical studies, contemporary issues and world religions. It reflects the fact that the religious traditions the student population and Ghana are, in the main, Christian while taking into account other principal religions represented in the school. It thus meets the requirements of the 1944 Education Act (Section 28 where appropriate) and the 1966 Education Act (Section 375).

The syllabus provides a common body of knowledge which senior schools can assume when creating their religious studies courses. It is distinctive in that pupils study a full issues-based course which requires the ability to read, interpret religious texts and understand religion in its contemporary setting. It also provides a coherent course, balanced in terms of breadth and depth, and offers all pupils, of any religious persuasion or none, the opportunity to demonstrate their attainment, irrespective of their gender or ethnic or social background.

AIMS

The syllabus aims at giving pupils the opportunity to:

- (i) study the foundational biblical texts of the Judeo-Christian tradition;
- (ii) acquire knowledge and develop understanding of the beliefs, values and traditions of one or more religion(s);
- (iii) consider the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions associated with one or more religion(s);
- (iv) consider religious and other responses to moral issues;
- (v) identify, investigate and respond to fundamental questions of life raised by religion and human experience, including questions about the meaning and purpose of life;
- (vi) develop skills relevant to the study of religion.

SCIENCE

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is based upon the programmes of study for Key Stage 3 of the National Curriculum for Science and the CE syllabus for Science.

Pupils are taught practical techniques, scientific processes and how to record observations and measurements with appropriate precision. The analysis, interpretation, explanation and evaluation of their methods, results and conclusions will be examined. The impact of their own and others' experimental and investigative activities will also be explored.

During the course of study, pupils will be taken through topics in:

- How Science works;
- Biology - Organisms, their behaviour and the environment;
- Chemistry – Materials, their properties and the Earth;
- Physics - Energy, forces and space.

AIMS

This programme seeks to:

- (i) stimulate curiosity, interest in and enjoyment of science;
- (ii) help pupils to acquire a systematic body of scientific knowledge and to develop an understanding of science, recognising connections between different areas of science;
- (iii) enable pupils to use scientific ideas and models to explain phenomena and events and to understand applications of science;
- (iv) develop an awareness of the impact of developments in technology on the environment and in other contexts;
- (v) develop experimental and investigative abilities, paying due regard to safe practice;
- (vi) develop an ability to evaluate and communicate scientific evidence, and understand the importance of experimental evidence in supporting scientific ideas;
- (vii) develop an awareness of science as a social and cultural activity which has strengths and limitations;
- (viii) enable pupils to acquire a sound foundation of knowledge and understanding for future studies, and to facilitate the smooth transfer between schools in the independent and maintained sectors of education.

ART AND DESIGN

INTRODUCTION

Our programme aligns with the requirements of the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum. In art and design, pupils explore visual, tactile and other sensory experiences to communicate ideas and meanings. They mostly work with traditional and element of new media, developing confidence, competence, imagination and creativity. They learn to appreciate and value images and artefacts across times and cultures, and to understand the contexts in which they were made.

Their study of art, craft and design includes:

- i) work in, and across, the areas of fine art, craft and design, including both applied and fine art
- ii) exploration of media, processes and techniques in 2D, 3D and new technologies
- iii) study of a range of artefacts from contemporary, historical, personal and cultural contexts
- iv) understanding of art, craft and design processes, associated equipment and safe working practices.

Creativity, competence, cultural & critical understanding underpin the study of art, craft and design. Pupils need to understand these concepts in order to deepen and broaden their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Pupils achieve this through developing their ability to explore, create, understand and evaluate, which are essential skills that pupils need to learn to make progress.

AIMS

This programme seeks to:

- i) develop their ability to reflect critically on their own and other people's work, judging quality, value and meaning;
- ii) help pupils think and act as artists and designers, working creatively and intelligently
- iii) develop an appreciation of art and design, and its role in the creative and cultural industries that enrich their lives;
- iv) provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively;
- v) encourage pupils to explore areas that are new to them, including ideas, techniques and processes;
- vi) encourage their response to local cultural influences and engage with contemporary art, craft and design;
- vii) encourage work with creative individuals and in creative environments, across a variety of genres;
- viii) engage pupils in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary practice within the arts and make links between art and design and other subjects and areas of the curriculum.

ICT

INTRODUCTION

Our programme is based on the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum and understands that the increasing use of technology in all aspects of society makes confident, creative and productive use of ICT an essential skill for life. We view ICT capability not only as the mastery of technical skills and techniques, but also the understanding to apply these skills purposefully, safely and responsibly in learning, everyday life and employment. We focus on how ICT can be used to find, develop, analyse and present information, as well as to model situations and solve problems. ICT acts as a powerful force for change in society and our students are equipped to have an understanding of the social, ethical, legal and economic implications of its use, including how to use ICT safely and responsibly.

There are a number of key concepts that underpin the study of ICT, which pupils need to understand to deepen and broaden their knowledge, skills and understanding. They include: Capability, Communication and Collaboration, Exploring Ideas and Manipulating Information, Impact of Technology and Critical Evaluation. This course of study also builds important skills in pupils, further developing their ability to find information, develop ideas, communicate information and evaluate a work in progress.

AIM

This programme seeks to teach our pupils to:

- i) make choices about when and where it is appropriate to exploit technology to support them in their learning and everyday life;
- ii) work creatively and collaboratively;
- iii) be independent, discriminating and reflective when choosing when to use technology
- iv) apply ICT to real-world situations when solving problems and carrying out a range of tasks and enquiries;
- v) share their views and experiences of ICT, considering the range of its uses and its significance to individuals, communities and society
- vi) use ICT in other subjects and areas of learning with contexts that are relevant and interesting to them.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Our programme is based on the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum and seeks to develop students' competence and confidence to take part in a range of physical activities that become a central part of their lives, both in and out of school. It enables all pupils to enjoy and succeed in a variety of physical activity and develop a wide range of skills and the ability to use tactics, strategies and compositional ideas to perform successfully. When they are performing, they think about what they are doing, analyse the situation and make decisions. They also reflect on their own and others' performances and find ways to improve them.

As a result, they develop the confidence to take part in different physical activities and learn about the value of healthy, active lifestyles. Discovering what they like to do, what their aptitudes are at school, and how and where to get involved in physical activity helps them make informed choices about lifelong physical activity.

AIM

The syllabus aims at giving pupils the opportunity to:

- i) develop control of whole-body and fine manipulation skills and ability to respond physically and mentally to demands of a familiar or unfamiliar activity;
- ii) build understanding of how to apply and integrate skills and competencies to produce effective outcomes;
- iii) know and understanding what needs to be achieved, critically evaluating how well it has been achieved and finding ways to improve;
- iv) appreciate how to adapt when performing in different contexts and when working individually, in groups and teams;
- v) understand the nature of success in different types of activity.
- vi) use imaginative ways to express and communicate ideas, solve problems and overcome challenges;
- vii) explore and experiment with techniques, tactics and compositional ideas to produce efficient and effective outcomes;
- viii) understand that physical activity contributes to the healthy functioning of the body and mind and is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle promoting physical, mental and social wellbeing.